

What is Love—Love is...

Study Questions

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Warm-up

1) Name one of your favorite people or fictional characters, and give an example of how they have demonstrated love (It may help to read through this week's passage a couple of times before answering).

A little deeper

2) [1 Corinthians 13:4-5] In verses 4-5, *love* is described in terms of actions—things it (regularly) does and things it does not (regularly) do. We usually think about these verses in terms of how we should love our neighbor (as in the Great Commandment, Matthew 22:36-40), but... **How might we apply verses 4-5 to the ways in which we love God? Are there any areas that are often easier or harder than others?**

3) [1 Corinthians 13:6] Love doesn't delight in evil, but instead rejoices with the truth. **What are some situations where it can be tempting to delight in evil?** (For example, consider situations involving enemies, non-believers, or people who are otherwise very different from ourselves.)
How might it look to bring both love and truth to these situations instead?

4) [1 Corinthians 13:7] Verse 7 lists a number of things love "always" does, yet taking this too literally has led to pretty terrible things like cover-ups and undue discrimination. **Who does love protect, and what does it protect them from? Who and how does love trust?**

What is the source of love's hope?

In what ways does love always persevere? In what situations might it appear to give way?

5) 1 John 4:8 reminds us that God is love. Re-read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 again, replacing the word *love* with *God* (and *it* with *He*).

Does it work to replace *love* with *God* in this week's passage? If not, what would you change?

Bringing it home

6) Our culture prizes many values that don't always align with love: independence, liberty, convenience, security, etc. **If you're brutally honest with yourself, which values interfere with the way you love God or love others?**

Reflection & Prayer

7) How can you further open your heart to the love that comes from God? Is there anything you need to repent of? Praise God for his perfect, boundless love. Confess those things that keep you from loving fully, and ask God to fill your heart to overflowing with His love.