

## DESCRIPTIONS OF LOVE: 1 CORINTHIANS 13

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**Patient:** The Greek verb for patience denotes “longsuffering” or “forbearance,” particularly in respect to personal injuries or wrongs suffered. The Christian spirit of love does not seek to retaliate. It is not quick to anger.

**Kind:** Kindness is a readiness to do good, to help, to relieve burdens, to be useful, to serve, to be tender, and to be sympathetic to others. It has been said, “Kindness is love in work clothes.”

**Does Not Envy:** Envy makes one resentful of others’ good fortune. It covets others’ gifts, possessions, or positions of influence. Our commitment to love should prompt us to consciously rejoice over the successes and talents of others.

**Does not Boast:** Boasting, or bragging, is a sinful preoccupation with oneself. Braggarts crave attention. They want others to praise their abilities, knowledge, successes, and even their sufferings for God. Because they desire recognition, they speak too highly and too much of themselves. Braggarts build themselves up, but loving people build others up.

**Is not Arrogant:** The Greek word for arrogant can be literally rendered “puffed up” or “inflated.” Arrogance is contrary to love because it focuses on self more than others. Arrogant people, especially religious ones, think they are better than other people, but love doesn’t have a superiority complex.

**Is not Rude:** The verb for “rude” conveys the idea of acting disgracefully, contrary to established standards of proper conduct and decency. Loving people are considerate of how their behavior affects others, even in little things.

**Is not Selfish:** Love, 1 Corinthians 13:5 states, “does not insist on its own way.” This means that love does not seek its own interests or its own advantage. Loving leaders and teachers put themselves out to serve others, they reach out to people in need, they are self-forgetful and ultimately self-renouncing.

**Is not Easily Angered:** Angry people are focused not on others but on their own emotions and issues. A remarkable quality of love is that it is not easily provoked to an emotional state of anger. “It is not irritable.”

**Is not Resentful:** Another lofty, redeeming quality of love is that it is not resentful. The literal translation is: love “does not reckon the evil.” Life lived according to the “more excellent way” doesn’t keep a journal of injustices and emotional hurts. Love forgives and blesses those who have caused offense.

**Is not Joyful Over Evil but Rejoices in Truth:** Love “does not rejoice at wrongdoing” (1 Cor. 13:6). A loving heart is saddened by wrongdoing because it destroys people and displeases God. But the truth has just the opposite effect—it makes love sing for joy like a morning bird on a summer day. Love quickly recognizes conduct and attitudes that accord with the truth and takes great pleasure when truth prevails.

**Bears all Things:** Love bears up under the heavy load of life’s problems and sufferings. It holds steadfast and remains strong despite opposition, deprivation, and hard work. Love is courageous.

**Believes all Things:** In dealing with loved ones, love is not suspicious or cynical, but open and favorably disposed toward them. It seeks to understand each person in the best light with an understanding of life's complexities.

**Hopes all Things:** Hope is not a sentimental wish; it is faith in God's ultimate triumph and in God's good intentions for his people. This gives him realistic optimism and confidence in the future, even in the face of repeated difficulties and disappointments. Hope in the Lord and trust in his sure promises enabled Paul to put problems and failures in perspective.

**Endures all Things:** Love lasts; it holds out; it perseveres in the face of opposition, unkindness, and difficulties; it never gives up. Serving Christ and his people cannot be done without labor and self-sacrifice. Love gives a person the power to endure all things.