

We come this morning to finish the four descriptions of love in v7—if you recall last week—I suggested that there exists an evident connection—between the first and fourth description—Love bears all things...love endures all things—the first word "bears" all things refers to the carrying of a weight—I suggest last week that love bears—all sufferings for God, chastisements from God, and the burdens of others...

The second word "endures" all things—refers—"to perseverance through difficulty and opposition"—it carries the idea of continuation or staying power—it doesn't give up—it endures to the end—it's durable—it's able to continue through all forms of affliction and opposition...

The word literally means—"love remains under all things"—that is—it remains constant and consistent under all opposition, Edwards—"Whatever assaults may be made upon it, yet it still remains and endures, and does not cease, but bears up, and bears onward with constancy and perseverance and patience, notwithstanding them all..."

- I. What Love Endures
- II. How Love Endures
- III. Why Love Endures

I. What Love Endures

1. The first thing that needs underscoring—is the fact of opposition—to endure necessitates resistance and conflict...
2. Simon Kistemaker—"The verb *to endure* denotes perseverance and persistence in all circumstances. It means to endure in times of pain, suffering, deprivation, hatred, loss, and loneliness..."
3. Now—I think it's right to say—that the opposition referred to—is that associated with what's gone before...
4. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things...
5. When love acts in this way—it will face opposition—it will be opposed—both from within and from without...
6. Let me put it like this—because Christians are meek and gentle—they will be taken advantage of and mistreated...
7. Love is always mistreated—it's taken advantage of—yet—it does not give up—but continues—it endures all things...
8. This can be further seen—if we were to keep in mind the various imageries used to describe the Christian life...
9. For example—it is a long and difficult marathon, Heb.12:1—"let us run with endurance the race that is before us..."
10. In addition—we are soldiers in the midst of a war, 2Tim.2:3—"you must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ..."
11. These are brought together in 2Tim.4:7—"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith..."
12. These are Paul's final words—he looks back over his Christian life—and describes it in terms of endurance...
13. Thus—in answering the question—What does love endure—love endures all and any opposition it may face...
14. Yet—to be more specific—this opposition can be summarized into two categorizes—[1] outward and [2] inward...
15. [1] Outward opposition—by this I mean the opposition that results from our enemies—Satan and this world...

16. That is—the world (comprised of the unconverted)—who are under the power and control of the wicked one...
17. Or—perhaps I can put it this way—by outward opposition I mean—all opposition that originates from without...
18. Matt.13:20-21—"but he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles..."
19. This is a part of our Savior interpretation of the parable about four soils—which refer to four different people...
20. The stony ground—hears and receives the word with joy—but because he has no root—he endures for a while...
21. Thus when he experiences opposition—he immediately stumbles—or, he falls away from the faith and returns to the world...
22. But—what I want you to see is the cause of this opposition—"because of the word"—that is—the word of God...
23. He experiences opposition as he speaks and lives the word—this brings against him tribulation and persecution...
24. For example—think of a man who comes to church next week on Easter—he makes a decision to follow Jesus...
25. Yet—in the weeks that follow—he reads in the Bible that he can no longer live the way that he used to live...
26. He can no longer live with his unmarried girlfriend—he can no longer smoke marijuana with his friends at work...
27. Furthermore—when his buddies heard about his decision—they now shun him, mock him, and make fun of him...
28. These things he endures for a while—but finally decides to give up his profession—if it entails such treatment...
29. Matt.24:8-13—"all these *are* the beginning of sorrows. 9 Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. 10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved..."
30. Within this chapter—our Savior speaks of two events—the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world...
31. The first is a shadowing of the second—thus—I do not deny that these verses may refer to that first event...
32. Notice [a] opposition—hatred, false teaching, and lawlessness—these must be endured if anyone's to enter heaven...
33. Notice [b] endurance—"but he who endures to the end shall be saved"—that is—saved from everlasting judgment...
34. [2] Inward opposition—by this I mean—the inward struggles associated with—remaining sin and unbelief...
35. This gives rise to all forms of inward affliction and turmoil—suffering, grief, agony and anguish of heart....
36. This in some ways—seems to me—the greatest opposition the Christian faces—his own remaining sin and unbelief...
37. Let's be honest—have you ever felt like simply giving up—the opposition within simply seems too strong...
38. Now—what typically happens is this—outward opposition creates all sorts of confusion and inward opposition...
39. For example—you share the gospel with your extended family members—only to experience tension from them...
40. This—lays heavy upon our hearts—which in turn results in all forms of grief, sorrow, and worse of all—unbelief...

41. Ps.31:9-10—"have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am in trouble; my eye wastes away with grief, yes, my soul and my body! 10 For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing; my strength fails because of my iniquity, and my bones waste away..."
42. Notice [a] trouble—in v8—he speaks about various enemies—who these are we are not told—but we do find they created trouble...
43. Notice [b] grief—twice within this passage—he speaks about grief—in addition to sorrow and sighing (groaning)...
44. Notice [c] sin, v10—"my strength fails because of my iniquity"—that is—in the midst of it all—my sin—gives the greatest opposition...
45. Let me put it like this—outward trouble (or opposition), results in inward grief and sorrow—because of our sin...
46. For example—let's say you share the gospel with a friend or perhaps someone who just met at the grocery store...
47. They look at you like you're crazy—they call you all sort of names—they make a big scene and then walk away...
48. What happened—you've experienced opposition—but then you begin to think to yourself—am I really crazy?...
49. Or else—perhaps you become downcast and discouraged—and before you know it—your greatest opposition comes from within...
50. Heb.12:1—"therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us..."
51. The writer exhorts us to lay aside two things—every weight and sin—every weight refers to anything that hinders us...
52. Sin—of course refers to anything contrary to God's law—both of these must be laid aside—if we are to run the race with endurance...

II. How Love Endures

1. Here—I mean to show—that the "endurance" referred to in our text—is a distinctly Christian "endurance"...
2. That is—it's more than merely putting up with—but—its enduring—in the right way and for the right reason...
3. [1] Love endures joyfully—that is—it endures all opposition with a joyful heart—knowing its ultimate purpose...
4. Jas.1:2-3—"my brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance..."
5. This of course does not mean—that we necessarily give thanks for the trial itself—but for the results of the trial...
6. Let me put it like this—true joy—Christian joy—exists and even thrives—in the midst of severe opposition...
7. Jn.16:22—"your joy no one will take from you"—the world didn't give it—and the world can not take it from you...
8. Now—brethren you know—this doesn't mean—that Christians endure severe opposition—with a forced smile...
9. Opposition often brings with it sorrow—and at times deep sorrow—but joy exists alongside and beside sorrow...
10. For example—our Savior is describes as "a man of sorrows"—and yet—was anointed with the oil of gladness...
11. Thus—love doesn't endure all things bitterly or reluctantly—it endures all things—with a joyful and glad heart...
12. [2] Love endures obediently—that is—regardless of opposition—love obeys God and completes its work....

13. That is—Christians—in the midst of all forms of opposition—maintain their post—and obey while enduring...
14. Perhaps I can put it like this—Christians endure in the path of righteousness—regardless of fierce opposition...
15. For example—think of a professing Christian couple—who have begun to experience all sorts of opposition...
16. Some from without the marriage—but most of it from within—from their own hearts—and one wants out...
17. Let's say the husband files for divorce—he simply can no longer endure the problems associated with the marriage...
18. There is no biblical reason to leave—he simply can no longer endure it—why—well here's why—he lacks love...
19. Love to God and love to his wife—He loves himself more—but not so true love—true love—endures and obeys...
20. In other words—it endures in the path of duty or obedience—at all cost—nothing can hinder it—or stop it...
21. [3] Love endures affectionately—that is—love endures all opposition—with a heart for God regardless of what comes...
22. This is obviously within the text—love endures—remember what I said before—Paul here personifies love...
23. Thus—when he says love endures—he means—a loving person endures—or a person endures—because of love...

III. Why Love Endures

1. [1] The Father's PROMISE—this is the overarching reason, why love endures—God's covenant mercy endures...
2. Let me put it like this—Christians endure only because—God endures in His covenantal kindness and mercy...
3. Ps.136:1—"oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy [His lovingness] endures forever..."
4. That is—His mercy endures forever—regardless of opposition—regardless of what we do and what we don't do...
5. The Hebrew word rendered "mercy" "love" or "lovingkindness"—is a word associated—with God's covenantal love...
6. Why does God endure or continue in His lovingness toward us—the only reason is—His covenantal promise...
7. Perhaps I could put it like this—His covenantal mercy is durable—it endures through all opposition against it...
8. Maybe I could put it like this—God is persistent and consistent to His promise—that we will endure to the end...
9. Titus 1:2—"in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began"—this is the promise I refer to...
10. If God promised us eternal life—before time began—then it was made with Christ—as our covenant Head...
11. [2] The Spirit's POWER—that is—the Holy Spirit indwells each Christian to ensure—that each one endures...
12. Perhaps I can put it like this—the Spirit indwells each Christian—working within them fresh supplies of grace...
13. That is—true grace, will, without exception, endure to the end—true grace is indestructible—it's permanent...
14. 1Peter 1:23—"having been born again, not of perishable seed but imperishable"—that is—grace that endures...

15. 1Peter 1:3-5—"blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time..."
16. Notice [a] a better land—that is—we as NC Christians have a better inheritance—than the old covenant Hebrew...
17. V4—"to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away"—this is in contrast to Canaan...
18. Notice [b] a better hope—that is—the Christian, or the NC Israelite—has a better hope of entering that inheritance...
19. What is the bases of this hope, v5—"who are kept by the power of God through faith"—that is—the Spirit of God...
20. God's Spirit—keeps us through the wilderness—ensuring that every redeemed Israelite—enters the promised land...
21. Notice—the Spirit keeps us through faith—that is—He continually gives us faith—that we never fall away...
22. 1John 4:4—"you are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world..."
23. [3] The Son's PERSISTENCE—that is—our love for Him and others endures—because His love endured for us...
24. In other words—His enduring the cross—secures the fact—that every true Christian—will endure in love...
25. Jn.13:1—"now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end..."
26. Notice [a] who He loved—"having loved His own who were in the world"—that is—His beloved disciples...
27. This doesn't deny He loved the rest of His people—but that He had a peculiar love for those—left in the world...
28. That is—He loved His needy people—who were left in this world—a world filled with all sorts of opposition...
29. He knew very well—the opposition that they would face—they would be hated, persecuted, and most—killed...
30. Notice [b] how He loved—"He loved them to the end"—that is—to the end or purpose for which He came...