

The Body of Christ, Spiritual Gifts, and Spiritual Maturity, Part 8
“Love is Patient and is Kind”
1 Corinthians 13:4

The Apostle’s Teaching on the Characteristics of Love – Intro

1. Everything in these verses is behavioral
2. Paul is interested to apply these things especially in relationships in the body of Christ
3. Paul begins his portrait of love as it shows itself amidst the sins and offenses of a fallen world
4. “Love” – Gk. AGAPE

How love shows itself when there is sin or offense.

1. Love is Patient:

“Love suffers long”

Where there is sin or offense, love *restrains me* from a fleshly response to my brother.

**(1) “Patience” “Long-suffering” Gk: MAKROTHUMIA MAKROS + THUMEI
“long” + “passion”**

- **Endurance of injuries or offense without retaliation**
 - Has reference particularly to *persons*, and injuries or offense from persons
- **Distinct from another Gk word for “patience” (or “perseverance”)** cf. James 1:3; Rom 1:3
 - HUPOMONE - Lit: “bearing under”
 - Has to do with difficult circumstances and trials; bearing up by looking to God amidst trial.

(2) God-like!

- **God bears long with sinners!**
 - Men may resist and antagonize God, and thus arouse His anger.
 - When He withholds His anger, He is patient; He is long-suffering.
 - cf. **Romans 2:4; 9:22; 1 Timothy 1:16**

(3) Christ-like!

- **Jesus bore long with sinners!** (Heb. 12:3)
- **Jesus bore long with us!** (Rom. 2:4; 1 Tim. 1:16)

(4) Inward and Outward dimensions

- **Inwardly: I feel the offense or injury, but inwardly am restrained.**
In the exercise of love, I keep myself from anger, bitterness, or resentment.
- **Outwardly: There is then no outward “lashing out”**

2. Love is Kind:

Where there is sin or offense, love enables me to show kindness to my brother.

(1) “Kind” Gk: CHRESTOS

- Useful, helpful, gracious, kind, friendly, gentle in behavior

(2) Paired with the more passive “longsuffering,” this is the corresponding *active* side of this dimension of love.

- Both longsuffering and kindness are listed as fruits of the Spirit Gal. 5:22
- cf. also Rom. 2:4; 2 Cor. 6:6

(3) The predominant character of Jesus’ ministry!

- **He encountered sinners all around Him, every day!**
 - He felt the contradiction, the antagonism of their sin – felt it intensely!
 - He never “stewed” in anger, bitterness, or resentment!
- **He showed kindness to all around Him!**

(4) When faced with sin or offense in my brother, I am called to exercise love!

- To be truly useful and helpful to my brother! How so? To show him kindness!

Further Application

1. Consider the power of this feature of love in the body of Christ!
2. Consider this feature of love in God’s saving work.