

The Body of Christ, Spiritual Gifts, and Spiritual Maturity, Part 15
“Love Rejoices in the Truth”
1 Corinthians 13:6

The Apostle’s Teaching on the Characteristics of Love – vv. 4-7 Overview:

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
5. These things are impossible to the flesh! cf. Gal. 5:16-26

Love does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth!

1. What is Natural to the Flesh: Rejoicing in Iniquity

(1) Definitions

“love...does not rejoice in iniquity”

- Gk: KAIRE → KAIRO “to rejoice” “to delight”

ADIKIA “unrighteousness” NKJV and KJV: “iniquity” ESV: “wrong-doing”

- Includes all forms of moral evil.
- Not to be taken here in the *abstract* sense; rather a particular sin displayed in a life.

****Rejoicing in some sin, delighting in some evil upon hearing of it or learning of it.
Particularly, some moral failure is in view.**

(2) Delighting in Evil – What is in view.

-1- Outside of Christ, it is very natural to fallen man to delight in evil.

- To approve of it in others; even to encourage it! cf. Rom. 1:32
- To delight in hearing of someone else’s moral failure.

-2- The believer can be guilty of a secret delight or a morbid interest in another’s moral failure.

- A fleshly thing!
- One can be guilty of this while at the same time feigning moral indignation!
- Registering a kind of sorrow while still being very interested in the details!

-3- This is at the heart of gossip: An inordinate delight in hearing of a brother’s sins or stumbling or scandalous behavior.

- This can be hidden away under the guise of “spiritual concern”
- “I’ll certainly pray! ...Tell me more!”

-4- One may enjoy endless discussions about what is wrong with the church

- Especially what is wrong with *other* churches!
- At the same time feeling a spiritual superiority.

-5- If my disposition toward my brother is not one of desiring his blessing:

- If I am envious toward a brother, I may delight in hearing of some moral failure.
- If I am at odds with a brother.
- If I am unduly critical of a brother and wish to tear him down (to build myself up).

2. What is Characteristic of Love: Rejoicing in the Truth!

(1) Rejoicing together in the truth

“but rejoices in the truth”

- A different verb for “rejoice” SUGKAIRE SUG = “together” + KAIRE = “rejoices”
 - “rejoices with the truth”
 - or “rejoices together (with others) in the truth”

- Fellowship in the body still very much in view here! cf. 12:26

(2) Rejoicing in the truth

- Not abstract!
- Rejoicing in the truth lived out! Some spiritual advance. An evidence of God’s blessing!
- Particularly some spiritual advance seen in another brother or sister!

-1- Foundational to this: A Disposition of desiring blessing upon my brother sister.

- Praying for such blessing
- Ready to rejoice when God works

-2- Manifestations

- Rejoicing in the spiritual progress of another individual.

- True repentance and faith
- Progress in sanctification - An evident increase in spiritual hunger

- Rejoicing in the spiritual progress of other covenant children.

- Rejoicing in the spiritual progress of another church (!)

-3- The Unity of the Church guarded and nurtured.

- When I truly rejoice in some spiritual advance in the truth, some progress, this brings me closer to my brothers and sisters.
- My brother certainly rejoices! Do I rejoice with him?