

The Body of Christ, Spiritual Gifts, and Spiritual Maturity, Part 16
“The Power of Love”
1 Corinthians 13:7

Overview of vv. 4-7:

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

On Verse 7:

1. A summation with respect to the character of love
2. A shift from negatives to positives, with a clear emphasis on *what love does*
3. A clear emphasis on love’s power, love’s strength
 - Repetition of “all things”
 - Word order in Gk. “*All things* bears, *all things* believes...” etc.
4. A chiasmic arrangement of these four characteristics

The amazing resilience of love!

1. Love Bears All Things

- (1) “Bears” - Gk: STEGE → STEGO Old verb from STEGE: “roof”
- “to bear up” “to bear patiently” “to endure” (cf. 9:12) “to cover” “to protect”

(2) Love bears patiently *all things that may be difficult and disappointing!*

-1- Bears in silence all annoyances and troubles.

-2- “Love covers all sins.” Prov. 10:12

-3- Its disposition is to protect the good name and reputation of a brother.

2. Love Believes All Things

- (1) “Believes” - Gk: PISTEUE → PISTEUO “to believe”

(2) Love believes *all that is best* with reference to one’s brother or sister.

- Always trusts

- **Is not gullible, but refuses to yield to suspicions of doubt concerning a brother**

- “Prefers to be generous in its openness and acceptance, rather than suspicious and cynical.”
D.A. Carson

- The flesh is ready to believe all things about a brother in an evil sense (cf. v. 6)
Love does the *opposite!* It will hold out to the last!

- Luther: “Excuse him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.”

3. Love Hopes All Things

- (1) “Hopes” - Gk: ELPIDZE → ELPIDZO “to hope”

(2) Love hopes *all that is best* with reference to one’s brother or sister.

- When the evidence is negative, love hopes for the best.

- Love hopes for the best even when disappointed by repeated failures or offenses

- So love is ready to forgive; ready to give a ‘second chance’
- Ready to forgive ‘seventy times seven’ (Matt. 18:22)

4. Love Endures All Things

- (1) “Endures” - Gk: HUPOMENE → HUPOMENO “to be patient” “to persevere”
Lit: “to abide under”

(2) Love perseveres *through all that is difficult or disappointing!*

- Love perseveres to the end.
- Love *never* stops loving though there may be many disappointments.