

"The Doctrine of Consecration"

Part 6

Romans 12:1-15:7

Introduction: In the past 5 weeks we looked at the first 8 verses of Romans 12 and we labeled this section as:

I. The Introduction to Christian Service.

In these first 8 verses we looked at the CHALLENGE to all believers in verse 1, we looked at the exhortation to CHANGE in verse 2, we looked at the ATTITUDE required of the believer for service in verse 3 and then we looked at the EXERCISE of spiritual gifts in 4-8. Now as we move on in this study, we come to the second part of the Doctrine of Consecration.

II. The Obligation of Christians Toward Others

Romans 12:9-15:7

Part 1

Notice Romans 12:9a

Paul begins this section by addressing our love for others. This is the key ingredient for a successful Christian life. I want to take the time tonight and look at the characteristics of love from Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

² And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

³ And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

⁴ Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

⁵ Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

⁶ *Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;*

⁷ *Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

⁸ *Charity never faileth:*

The description that Paul gives of love here is very important for us to understand. The word "charity" is used here for love. The word for love which is used here is the word "agape" and it speaks of an unconditional, sacrificial love. Agape love is NOT A FEELING. **AGAPE LOVE IS A DELIBERATE ACT OF THE WILL.** The greatest picture is seen when we look at the cross. God **CHOSE** to love us while we were sinners and His enemies.

Romans 5:8-10

⁸ *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

⁹ *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*

¹⁰ *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*

Let me give you an overview of how Paul described agape love in 1 Corinthians 13 because this will show us how we are to love others.

1. Love suffereth long

To be long suffering means to be patient with others. But it goes even further than this. To be long suffering means that we do not seek to retaliate when we are wronged. But there is even more. To be long suffering means that we do not even entertain the option of retaliation when someone hurts us or someone close to us **EVEN** when we have the means and the opportunity to do so.

When we are controlled by the Holy Spirit, we will not seek vengeance against those who hurt us or hurt those who are around us but instead we will **CHOSE** to love them just as God loves us. Let me show you what Matthew Henry says about the long suffering of love.

It can endure evil, injury, and provocation, without being filled with resentment, indignation, or revenge. It makes the mind firm, gives it power over the angry passions, and furnishes it with a persevering patience, that shall rather wait and wish for the reformation of a brother than fly out in resentment of his conduct. It will put up with

many slights and neglects from the person it loves, and wait long to see the kindly effects of such patience on him."

2. Love is kind.

This is the flip side of vengeance. When agape love flows from the life of the believer we will not seek to retaliate when we are hurt by others but instead, we will seek to show kindness to those who have caused the pain in our lives. You see when we are controlled by the Spirit it will be our desire to do all we can for the benefit of others. We will desire to show patience, long suffering, and kindness with the hope that we can see a transformation in their lives.

3. Love does not envy.

To envy someone is to resent them because of their success or advantage and to also desire to see them stripped of their success or advantage. To envy someone is not just to be jealous because of the success they have but it is a burning desire to see them stripped of their success.

Now let me show you how love quenches envy. In 1 Samuel we find the story of Saul and David. Saul was the king of Israel, but he had sinned and therefore God chose David to be the king after Saul. Now we need to also know that Saul had a son by the name of Jonathan, and he qualified to be the king following his father's reign. But Jonathan understood that God had chosen David. That would be something that would be difficult to swallow. In 1 Samuel 20 we find a conversation between Jonathan and David and I want you to notice the exchange.

1 Samuel 20:13-17

¹³ *The LORD do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father to do thee evil, then I will shew it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and the LORD be with thee, as he hath been with my father.*

¹⁴ *And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the kindness of the LORD, that I die not:*

¹⁵ *But also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth.*

¹⁶ *So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the LORD even require it at the hand of David's enemies.*

¹⁷ *And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul.*

Jonathan had no resentment for David. He accepted the plan of God and he chose to love David as he loved his own soul. Jonathan would not be the king, but he fully understood that God had appointed David to be the king.

4. Love does not boast.

The word "vaunteth" means *"to brag excessively about one's accomplishments"*.

Now let me explain how serious boasting is. When we boast to other people, we are doing it in order to make them feel inferior to us. Boasting is presenting ourselves as superior to those we are talking to. Really, when we boast to others, we are guilty of attempting to cause them to envy us. You see when we boast to others, we are telling them something about ourselves that we believe shows us as superior and it makes them feel inferior. Therefore, it is putting the person we are talking to in a situation that would cause them to envy us.

5. Love is not puffed up.

Now at first glance we would think that being "puffed up" would be the same as "boasting" but that is not the case. They are related but they are not the same. When Paul speaks of being "puffed up" he is referring to the "attitude" of the individual. The "boasting" is the manifestation of the attitude. Therefore, when Paul says here that love is not "puffed up" he is saying that love does not have the attitude that it is superior to other people.

6. Love is not unseemly.

This means that love is not rude. Love is very considerate of the feelings and the circumstances within the lives of others. Notice the words of another teacher concerning agape love:

"It inspires a disposition to please, and leads to that propriety of conduct which is so beautiful in itself and so acceptable to mankind. It is always unwilling to give offence, and leads us studiously to avoid, both in conduct and speech, whatever may seem unbecoming in ourselves and offensive to others. It introduces politeness into conversation, and guards against that harshness and indelicacy of expression which are inconsistent with good manners, and hurt the feelings of mankind."

7. Love does not seek her own.

This means that love is not selfish. Love is always concerned about others and not itself. When love is exercised it is completely selfless and it is focused upon meeting the needs of others and is willing to make great sacrifices in order to do so.

8. Love is not easily provoked.

This means that love is not easily aroused to anger. Love does not get irritated. Love does not lash out in anger and irritation. Love is patient with others. Love suppresses the feelings of anger.

9. Love thinketh no evil.

This means that love "keeps no records. Many people will "say" they have forgiven someone who has offended them but when there is a disagreement about something at a later date the truth reveals that they took the past offense and use it to fire back at the one who had offended them.

10. Love does not rejoice in iniquity.

The thought here is that when I see someone else fall into sin, I do not rejoice over that. When we rejoice over someone falling into sin it is selfishness. You may ask, "How could that be selfishness?" It is selfishness because deep down on the inside you have rejoiced over the fall of someone else because it makes you feel better about yourself. Their lifestyle before this may have convicted you because of their walk. But now you have something on them and in your mind, you see yourself as better than they are because they have fallen into sin. That is selfishness on your part if that describes you. Love does not rejoice in the sin revealed in another person's life.

11. Love beareth all things.

Let me show you how Vines defines the word "beareth".

"To cover over with silence, to keep secret, to hide, conceal, of the errors and faults of others"

The idea here is that when we love someone, we will never have a desire to expose their past sins or their present weaknesses but instead we will do all we can to keep them covered over. This does not mean that we ignore sin in a person's life. To love someone is to point out the sin in their life. Let me show you the words from Spurgeon on this thought.

Love beareth all things- "Love covers; that is, it never proclaims the errors of good men. There are busybodies abroad who never spy out a fault in a brother but they must needs hurry off to their next neighbour with the savoury news, and then they run up and down the street as though they had been elected common criers. It is by no means honorable to men or women to set up to be common informers. Yet I know some who are not half so eager to publish the gospel as to publish slander. Love stands in the presence of a fault, with a finger on her lip."

13. Love believes all things.

When Paul tells us, that love believes all things he means that love focuses upon the positives in a person's life. Love believes that the positives they see in a person's life are glimpses of the person's life being turned around. When we love other people with agape love, we see the best in them. We do not focus upon the negative characteristics in their lives. Every one of us has flaws and negative characteristics but love refuses to be discouraged by the negatives. Love sees the positives and loves believes the best. Probably one of the best places to see this characteristic is in parents who are believers. It is seen as you watch the love they have for their wayward son or daughter. No matter how far the son or the daughter strays the mom and the dad pray and believe that someday they will return back to where they need to be.

14. Love hopes all things.

Let me back up to the previous point to help you to grasp this characteristic. As love continues to believe all things which means it holds on to the positives within a person's life and the years pass by and we see no "change" within their lives our faith can begin to grow thin. That is where hope comes in. Hope is the deep-down refusal to never give up. Hope holds on to the Truth of God's Word.

15. Love endures all things.

When love has covered all things and when it has believed all things and when it has hoped for a long time, but there is still nothing but darkness in the situation then love endures all things. No matter what it is that love faces it will endure all things. Love never fails.

Notice Romans 12:9a again.

Love is to be without "*dissimulation*". This means love is to be "without hypocrisy". Love is to be real. So many people wear the "mask of love" and by that, I mean they pretend to love others, but their love is fake. Behind the scenes they use the same tongue that speaks of love to do nothing but to slander and criticize other people.

Conclusion:

The love spoken of here by Paul is agape love and this is the love that comes from God and can only be displayed by believers.

Romans 5:5

⁵ *And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*