



Part 4: Love is the Greatest

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## 1 Corinthians 13:13

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

**If you want to positively affect your relationships – try love.**

### **Love is greater than:**

#### Giftedness

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. – 1 Corinthians 13:1

#### Insight

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. – 1 Corinthians 13:2

#### Accomplishments

If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. – 1 Corinthians 13:3

**Love is “what seeks the best for its object.”**

### **Christ’s love says, “You matter to me, no matter what.”**

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.”

– 1 Corinthians 13:4,5

#### No matter where you are (in relationship to me)

- Behind me; Love is patient, kind
- Above me; Does not envy
- Below me; Does not boast, is not proud

*(Continues on back)*

## No matter how difficult you make it (to love you)

Love is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. – 1 Corinthians 13:5-6

*To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly be broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket – safe, dark, motionless, airless – it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. The alternative to tragedy, or at least to the risk of tragedy, is damnation. The only place outside heaven where you will be perfectly safe from all the dangers of love is hell. – C.S. Lewis*

## No matter how long I have to hang in there (with you)

It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.  
– 1 Corinthians 13:7-8

## Becoming a better disciple of Christ means becoming a better lover

1. Loving more people than you've ever loved before
2. Growing in the kinds of people you love
3. Loving over longer periods of time  
Love is patient...not easily angered...always perseveres (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)
4. Loving in more ways that you've loved before  
Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. – 1 Corinthians 13:4-5

### **The measure of a life is love.**

## Next Steps

1. Take some time to read the book of 1 John, paying special attention to the theme of love.
2. Make a list of the people you are intentionally trying to love right now. Then add a couple more people to the list.
3. Google "Husband Dies Saving Wife From Joplin Tornado" for a moving example of sacrificial love.

### **Small Group Questions**



- 1) In light of 1 John 3:10,14; 4:8,16, do you think Christians make a big enough deal of love?
- 2) Of the four ways in which we can become a better disciple/lover, in which area do you need the most growth?
- 3) Can you relate to the C.S. Lewis quote? How?
- 4) How can we pray for each other?