

Godly Love vs Carnal Love II

Fred R. Coulter—April 12, 1998

Let's come to 1-Corinthians 13, and what we are going to do, we are going to come to these things that show the very attributes of God. This is very important ***because love is the essence of being God-like; or God-like love is the essence of God-likeness!*** I want you to understand something very clearly as we are going through. I'll give you a little summary before we get into it in detail. What we have are 14 descriptions of love, given in seven pairs. Let's read them. We'll just go right through them. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8:

- 1) Love is patient *and* is kind...
 - 2) ...love envies not, does not brag about itself...
 - 3) ...is not puffed up. *Love* does not behave disgracefully...
 - 4) ...does not seek its own things, is not easily provoked...
 - 5) ...thinks no evil, Does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth ...
 - 6) ...*Love* bears all things, believes all things...
 - 7) ...hopes all things, endures all things....
- And then you could tie it all in at the end here:
- 8) ...Love never fails

What you have with the love of God, the *agape love*, is a sure guarantee that *will not fail*. The love of God cannot fail, because if you say that the love of God fails, then you're saying God is a failure, because God is love. *Yes*, you would be doing that! So, all of these are the attributes of God.

What you might do, get out your handy-dandy little concordance and look up all of the things God is:

- God is love
- God is merciful
- God is gracious
- God is kind
- God is longsuffering

Put all of those together and that then is summarized here in 1-Cor. 13.

Exodus 34:5 is when the LORD descended to show His glory to Moses: "And the LORD came down in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy to the thousandth *generation*...' (vs 5-7). I might mention here that God is going to keep mercy for thousands.

I talked to a young woman yesterday who's, I think, just in her early 30s, who grew up in the Church and didn't pay much attention to it; went out into the world. But God didn't give up on her. Now she's been called back and God has opened her mind to understand. I talked to her yesterday, and she wants to be baptized.

Remember this: it is not over till it's over. God is not done with the children who have been in the Church. They may have to go out and become like the prodigal son or daughter, but God is not done with them. That's why we need to *hope all things, believe all things*, and all of that because God is going to do greater than what we expect, brethren. I was really happy to hear that.

Actually we have the toughest job of all, to try and teach all of the various factions of the Church of God, to heal all the problems of all the Churches of God, and ***the only way it's going to be done is with the love of God!***

- It isn't going to be done with reorganization.
- It isn't going to be done because of a corporate structure.
- It isn't going to be done because of an organization.
- It isn't going to be done because of what I'm doing.
- ***It's going to be done because of what God is doing.***

I want to do what God wants me to do, and *it will!* God is merciful, kind, and longsuffering. Listen, if God can forgive Manasseh and Ahab there's hope for everybody who's attended church. Think of that! You know, I've mentioned Manasseh is like 55 years of Bill Clinton. Aren't you glad he's restricted to two terms?

Verse 7: "Keeping mercy to the thousandth *generation*, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin... [that is upon repentance] ...but Who will by no means clear *the guilty*... [*if* there is no repentance] ...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, to the third and to the fourth generation" (v 7). So these are some of the attributes of God.

Let's see the fruits of the Holy Spirit. I think if you put this together with it then you will see how God wants it done. That this *agape* love from God comes from God's Spirit, comes down from God to us.

Galatians 5:22: “But the fruit of the Spirit... [that is, this is what the Spirit is going to produce] ...is **love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control**; against such things there is no law” (vs 22-23). Why? *Because these are the very attributes of God!* There’s no law against God—is there? *No! God is Lawgiver!* Just the opposite!

Verse 6: “Because in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision of any force, nor uncircumcision... [In other words, you can’t start out in the Spirit and finish in the flesh. You have to grow in the Spirit.] ...rather, *it is the inner working of faith through love.*”

How do we grow in faith? *Faith works by love!* How do you grow in faith? *By growing in love!* Love is the greatest. I mean, there it is all the time—right? There it is right there. You’re not going to grow in faith by browbeating. You’re not going to grow in faith by sending out desperate letters. Maybe there’s a time for correction because we’ve sinned, that’s true. But then ask God Who leads us to repentance—correct? *Yes!* That’s what’s going to happen here.

Love in suffering is kind. Longsuffering also means that *you suffer long.* When we first left Worldwide we began the Biblical Church of God and immediately grew to 250 and had five congregations, 11 elders, and we had a constitution. It was déjà vu United. So, we didn’t really repent, we just reorganized, and we went from the dictatorship of one to the dictatorship by committees. The only difference is, one is more political than the other. That fell apart. That’s when I hit bottom.

But in that situation I can look back and see that *there wasn’t the love of God* that God wanted. Since love is the greatest, He wants that. So, we’ve all been put through trials so that we know that’s what God wants, and we know that’s the only thing that is going to really heal and fill the void. Nothing else is going to do it. And so that’s why it’s very, very important that we understand this concerning suffering, and so forth.

Well, this woman—Esther Greisinger—was a diabetic, nearly blind, had the tendons in her right leg pulling up so that she could hardly walk, and had to walk with a cane or walk with a walker. After a while she had to just be in a wheelchair suffering terribly with pain. Gradually she couldn’t see at all. Her husband, who had been attending church while they were in Worldwide, but unable to quit smoking, was finally told to leave because, ‘You can’t quit smoking, and you’re an evil man.’ So, he would bring her to church and sit out in the car and smoke.

But she was very diligent, and she was very kind, and she would encourage everyone in her longsuffering.

Though she was in pain, people who were depressed would call her and she would cheer them up. And yet, she had everything in the world to complain to God that was wrong—but not one word. Then when they were in their worst and most desperate straights, her husband Robert had a massive stroke and almost died, and was in the hospital.

So, here she is in a wheelchair at home nearly blind, and her husband in the hospital nearly dead, and it finally gets to the point he can come out of the hospital and come home; had to have to have home nursing come in. There he is confined in the bed. You know how when you have a massive stroke your one side is such that you can’t walk, and there he was that way, and having to have the therapy and the nurse come in, and Esther taking care of him.

It was really a sad, pathetic situation. And everyone would say, ‘God, if You’re a God of love, why would You let this happen to these people with all the suffering, and suffering upon suffering, upon suffering mounted up so high. Where is Your love, where is Your mercy?’ ***His mercy and love was shown in the suffering,*** because Robert gradually was healed, and he asked to be baptized.

He did quit smoking. He knew all the commandments because he’d been keeping them for how long anyway because of his wife. I had the blessing and privilege of baptizing him. And then he kept his first Passover, which was a very, very moving event. Then before the Passover of the next year, Esther died. At the funeral Robert cried out and said, ‘Why, Lord? Why, Lord?’ Because he had depended on her for so much. I just stopped the service, walked over to him and I said, ‘Robert, Esther was ready. That’s why.’ But even in that suffering, Robert had to prove that he could stand by his own before God. *And he did!* He died right after the next Passover.

There are a lot of brethren out there like that; and I can’t reach them, but you can. *They’re both going to be in the resurrection.* Was all that suffering worth eternal life? *Yes, it was,* because all that suffering was just in the flesh—wasn’t it? *Yes!* Was God merciful? *Yes!* Was God kind? *Yes!* Not everything appears as we view it. That’s why it says, *love is longsuffering and kind.*

1-Corinthians 13:4: “...love envies not...” You don’t want what other people have. If someone is blessed and increased, you rejoice with them, even if you’re not. You don’t go to God and say, ‘God, why did you bless him instead of me? I’ve gone to

church longer than that person's gone to church. I've kept so many Sabbaths and Feasts. I've tithed. I've done all these things.' *NO!* You don't envy. And it ties in with 'love vaunts itself.'

Let's see the opposite of this kind of love. Here's what happens when you have envy, and you have vaunting of the self; boasting. Yes, boasting of how good they are.

- blow your own whistle
- puff up yourself
- tell everyone how good you are
- how much you know
- who you know
- where you've been

God could care less! So you've been around the world 50 times. Do you love God?

Luke 18:9—and He spoke this parable: “And to some who trusted in themselves...”—because they boasted about themselves, and envied and lusted against others. Envy comes in two ways:

1. by comparing yourself that you are much better
2. by saying that you need what the other person has.

“...that they were righteous, and despised others...” (v 9). There's no love there!

Here's the same kind of attitude, without love, Luke 11:42. “But woe to you, Pharisees! For you pay tithes of mint and rue and every herb, but you pass over the judgment and the love of God...” Jesus said to the Pharisees, ‘I know you. You don't have the love of God dwelling in you.’

- Should we go back and do what the Pharisees do then?
- Should we follow their Seder, should we follow their practices?
- Should we wear their yarmulkes and their prayer shawls?
- Should we do their praise dancing?

None of that has the love of God in it. That's all physical things.

“...It is obligatory *for you* to do these things, and not to set aside those *lesser things*” (v 42).

Here the Pharisee doesn't have any love, but he sure loves himself—doesn't he? Doesn't have the love of God, Luke 18:11: “...‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers—or even as this tax collector.’”

He's judging, criticizing, putting down—right? *Yes, he is!* Look at that. We shouldn't be extortioners, we shouldn't be unjust and we shouldn't be adulterers. Brethren, all of those things

are required anyway. What did Jesus say? *When you've done all that you're commanded, you're unprofitable servants!* This is what you ought to do; this is nothing to brag about.

Verse 12: “I fast twice in the week... [so I'm better than anybody else] ...and I give a tithe of everything that I gain.'... [to the tiniest little teeny-weeny seed] ...And the tax collector... [that he was judging and criticizing] ...standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat himself on *the* chest, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner’” (vs 12-13). God is looking on the heart as well as on the knee, so we don't need to envy. Let's be happy and rejoice. If someone succeeds in something, praise God and thank God for it. Be happy and rejoice.

Verse 14: “I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself **shall be humbled...**” That's what happens when you are envying and when you're vaunting, and when you're having this kind of behavior. Not just brought low, ‘abased.’ The day is coming. So, remember as the wheel turns, it's going to happen. As the chickens come home to roost, it's going to happen. We don't have to worry. God will take care of it.

“...and the one who humbles himself shall be exalted” (v 14). The way you humble yourself is with the love of God. You don't put on a pseudo humility and say, ‘Oh, I'm humble. I fast, I'm humble. I tithe, I'm humble. Oh God, I deserve this.’ No! Be thankful that God has called you and you have the Spirit of God. What we are all worthy of, every one of us: ‘the wages of sin is death.’

This leads to judging other people. You judge people physically: too fat, too thin, too tall, too young, too old, you're a woman, you're a man, you're bald, you have too much hair. Right? *Yes!* You are what you are. Jesus said you are not going to think and make yourself one cubit taller. And you're not going to think and change your hair one white or black, unless you have Clairol. So, accept all these things. We don't look down upon a person if a person is sick and ill and say, ‘Well, you deserve it. You sinned.’ Maybe they did sin. What if they do deserve it? Should you rub it in and stomp them into the ground? *No! Pray for them!* Pray that God will heal them and help them, and give them the understanding they need. It's all very important.

I'm going to give you four Scriptures down which goes into this section concerning envy; showing that envy never profits.

1. Proverbs 14:30
2. Mark 15:10

3. Romans 1:29—these are all the works of the flesh—
4. Titus 3:3-7

1-Corinthians 13:4. "...[Love] does not brag [vaunt] about itself..." I like to watch some professional sports. But after a while I get tired of it. You can only watch so many passes caught, so many touchdowns run in, so many tackles made. What happens? *They're all number one! They vaunt themselves and they taunt each other!*

All that competition is *not* the love of God—that's of the world. I'm not saying don't watch football, don't watch basketball, but just understand what you're watching. It's just in the flesh. If you're team loses, don't go into a depression. God doesn't care one way or the other.

To vaunt means to puff up or blow up. Some people puff themselves up so much they ought to literally blow up. That's why in what I do you don't hear me say anything what I do, this or that or the other because if I've done it—so what?

- That's yesterday— isn't it?
- Is that going to change today? *No!*
- Is it going to make me better today? *No!*
- How about tomorrow?
- Well, if I don't do today what I need to do today then what am I going to do tomorrow?

It doesn't matter how many people you've met. It doesn't matter who you knew. ***If you don't know God, it doesn't matter*** if you know the most important person in the world—does it? We need to understand that. *Let your boast be in God!*

1-Corinthians 1:23: "But we proclaim Christ crucified. To *the Jews it is* a cause of offense..." They can never understand how God became a man, not realizing that in the very first chapter of Genesis God said 'Let Us make man in Our image after Our likeness,' for the very purpose that God could become man and man could become God. So, it's a terrible stumbling-block. They have never recovered to this day. Judaism has never.

"...and to the Greeks *it is* foolishness; but to those who are called—both Jews and Greeks—Christ *is* God's power and God's wisdom.... [that's where our hope lies, brethren] ...Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men... [if there be any foolishness of God, we could add] ...and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (vs 23-25)—if there be any weakness in God. He's using oxymoron's here to drive home a point.

Verse 26: "For you see your calling, brethren, that *there are* not many who are wise according to the flesh... [you're trying to act like wise, and you know everything' all puffed up] ...not

many who are powerful, not many who are high-born *among you*. Rather, God has chosen the foolish things of the world, so that He might put to shame those who are wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world so that He might put to shame the strong things. And the low-born of the world, and the despised has God chosen..." (vs 26-28). Maybe you're in God's Church. Some people say, 'Well, why did God call me?' *Well, maybe just because you're despised!* Maybe just because you're an oddball, don't fit anywhere, and God had mercy on you. Sometimes I feel like that. And that's just the way it is.

"...even the things that are counted as nothing—in order that He might bring to nothing the things that are; So that no flesh might glory in His presence. But you are of Him in Christ Jesus, Who was made to us wisdom from God—even righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; So that, as it is written, 'The one who glories, let him glory in *the Lord*'" (vs 28-31). Don't boast in yourself, boast in God. Thank God for what He's done.

1-Corinthians 4:7: "For what makes you superior *to others*? And what do you have that you did not receive?..." You see how foolish it is to get all puffed up about yourself. *Whatever you have you received from God. Everything that there is*, every thing that's physical, everything that's spiritual.

"...But if you also received *it*, why are you boasting as if you did not receive *it*?" (v 7). In other words, why are you saying to yourselves and each other, 'I am spiritual,' which if you may be, it came from God. Be thankful and be humble, and don't be boastful, 'For God had to call me.' No, God is not compelled to call anybody. He chooses of His own will and volition. So, it's all foolishness to brag and boast.

Let's come back to 1-Corinthians 13:4. again: "...does not brag about itself, is not puffed up. *Love* does not behave disgracefully..." (vs 4-5). That means in a rude and a brash way. And boy, how many lives have been ruined in the Church because of that? We don't need that! I remember when I was going to Ambassador College, when I came there I thought that everyone was going to live by the Truth. When I was in the ministry I thought that's how all the ministers treated each other. Boy, was I in for a surprise. When I came to Pasadena the years '72-'75, I didn't know it, but upstairs in the exalted evangelist lounge at the handball court, where no one, unless you were politically correct, could get up there.

Well, of course, I was never invited up. I was never politically correct. I was really shocked and dismayed that what they did, they sat up there

and told dirty jokes and played cards. Now brethren, that's *unseemly* behavior. And then get up in the pulpit and blast and condemn all the brethren for not sending in enough money. 'We want more racquetball and more beer.' Those that were there, they would come to work at nine, and they would go play handball at 11:30, and they would finish about 1:30, and then they'd go have lunch with a martini and come back to work, and work from 3 till 4:30 and go home. And those were the ones who were making \$200,000 a year! No! It doesn't work. You can't behave yourself unseemly. Those things are not right.

"...does not seek its own things..." (v 5). You don't have your own agenda. You don't have your own way. You try and always follow the way of God. What happens if you just seek your own? Well, you're going to be in real trouble. So, if you have the love of God, what do you really seek?

Let's see what it's like. Here's what you are to seek. Here's how we are to be with the love of God. Brethren, this is what I hope God will grant us in His Church. Grant us with all this. I don't know where you've come from, your background, but I have certain ideas in talking to everyone, and I know that you've all had different stories and different problems, and difficult things.

I know most of you here because you're rejects, or you have left those who have sinned, and in doing that you also become a reject from them because you're not politically correct. And you go to church and you hear all of these lies, and you hear all of these smooth things. God doesn't want that. It's going to come to an end.

Here's what God wants, Philippians 2:1: "Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of *the Spirit...*" That's what we want because, brethren, ***our fellowship first begins with God the Father and Jesus Christ***; and if we have that on a daily personal basis, when we come together on the Sabbath can we not leave behind all the picayunish little physical things that trouble us and drag us down? *Yes, we ought to be able to!* God loves everyone that He's called. Let's ask God for the love for those that have called to assemble with us, because we are a motley crew as I read there 1-Corinthians 1. By our own volition, choice and will out in the world we'd never associate with each other—would we? *No!* But God has called us with His love

- so that we do associate with each other
- so we can learn the love of God
- so we can understand each other
- so that we can appreciate each other.

Fellowship of the Spirit.

"...if any *deep* inner affections... [if someone hurts, you hurt with them; if someone suffers, you suffer with them] ...if any *deep* inner affections and compassions, fulfill my joy..." (vs 1-2). Wouldn't this be a joy to God, and joy to everyone if we could do this.

Verse 2: "Fulfill my joy, that you be of the same mind... [that's the mind of Christ] ...having the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing." Not that we're robots and automatons, but joined and knit together in such a way that we have that love of God.

Verse 3: "*Let nothing be done through contention or vainglory...*" I hope we've all fled that. We don't need that. I hate it when there's strife. I hate it when there's pomposity, human vanity and stupidity. That doesn't work. What does it do? *Just offends the brethren; turns them off!* God doesn't want that.

"...but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself" (v 3). That's the opposite of exalting the self—isn't it? *Yes, it is!* And besides, you never know, the person that you may look down upon may in the Kingdom of God have a higher reward than you. You never know. So, you esteem the other better than yourself. You don't compare and say, 'Well, ta-da-da-da-da. I'm this and that person is ta-da-da-da-da-da that, therefore I am better or whatever.' No, you esteem the other person better and you help them, and you pray for them, and you encourage them.

Verse 4: "Let each one look not *only* after his own things... [not just for yourself] ...but *let each one also consider* the things of others.... [to make sure that the other person is growing in grace and knowledge] ...Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus" (vs 4-5). That's a tremendous thing, brethren. Let the mind of Christ be in you. Now notice how He humbled Himself; the very epitome of love. Didn't Jesus say, 'I love you with the same love that the Father has loved Me.' You have no savior unless Christ loved you. You have no savior unless Christ humbled Himself. You think you've given up something? Look what Christ gave up; He emptied Himself.

Verse 6: "Who, although He existed in *the* form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself *and* was made in *the* likeness of men..." (6-7). He didn't come down to this earth and say, 'Why, you people, don't you know I created all of these things. What's the matter with you? Why don't you accept Me?' He came down and took it. When He was reviled, He didn't revile again.

- He came down and healed.

- He came down and helped.
- He came down also to rebuke and correct,
- He came down to instruct and to raise up His apostles and start His Church.
- He came down to be the sacrifice for us—*that covenantal sacrifice for the New Covenant.*

“...and took the form of a servant...” (v 7). Which in the Greek is ‘doulos’—which means *a slave*. No slave is ever going to say, ‘Well Lord, You were God and came down here to be a human being, but you don’t know what it’s like to be a slave.’ Yes, He did! He served everyone—didn’t He? He was rejected, He was despised in a greater way than you and I.

We can be rejected and despised, but what are our accomplishments? *Nothing!* What were God’s accomplishments? *He created everything*, and yet, He was still rejected and despised.

Verse 8: “And being found in *the* manner of man...” Means everything. I was thinking on that the other day. When He was a baby, He had diapers. He nursed at His mother’s breast. He had to learn to crawl, had to learn to walk. But the Father was with Him always, and He was filled with the Holy Spirit from conception.

“...He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross” (v 8). Some people aren’t even willing to be obedient to keep the Sabbath. Do you think they are going to be in the Kingdom of God when Christ was obedient unto the death of the cross? *Not going to happen!*

(go to the next track)

Verse 9: “Therefore, God has also highly exalted Him...” Remember what we read? He who humbles himself shall be exalted. Who humbled himself greater than Jesus? *No one!* Who is exalted more than Jesus? *No one!*

“...and bestowed upon Him a name which *is* above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *beings* in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord to *the* glory of God *the* Father” (vs 9-11).

We’ll see where v 10 is fulfilled in type. Revelation 5:9—this is after Christ was given the scroll to open it, open the seven seals, and then the 24 elders sang this hymn: “And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are You to take the book, and to open its seals because You were slain, and did redeem us to God by Your own blood, out of every tribe and language and people and nation.’” That is a marvelous thing, brethren.

God is doing things that we don’t even know

about. When we get to the point that we think we are the only ones, we’re the most small-minded people in the world. Even Elijah, after he did what he did, ran away after they killed the 450 prophets of Baal. Then Elijah got afraid after he prayed for the rain and the flood came, so he ran away from Jezebel. Went down in a cave quivering and whimpering and said, ‘O God, I’m alone. I’m the only one left. They killed all your prophets and I’m down here.’

God was merciful. He didn’t answer him in the thunder. He didn’t answer him in the earthquake. He answered him with a small, still voice and said, ‘Now Elijah, behold, there are 7000 who haven’t bowed the knee to Baal.’ And he didn’t even know one of them. And I often wonder with that. how many more people God has that we don’t have a clue about. Wherever they may be on the surface of the earth, of every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people.

Verse 10: “And did make us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth.’ And I saw and I heard *the* voices of many angels around the throne, and *the* voices of the living creatures and the elders, and thousands of thousands” (vs 10-11). Do you ever think you ever heard a choir? Whew, imagine what that’s going to be like, thundering up there before the throne of God.

Verse 12: “Saying with a loud voice, ‘Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing.’ And every creature that is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and those that are on the sea... [there’s the fulfillment of Phil. 2 right there] ...and all the things in them, I heard saying... [I don’t know how the whales are going to bless God. I don’t know how the fish are going to do it, and I don’t know how the birds are going to do it, but they’re going to do it.] ...‘To Him Who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, *be* blessing, and honor, and glory, and sovereignty into the ages of eternity” (vs 12-13).

This is why God wants us to have the love of God. Stop and think how puny all these stupid little doctrines. How puny all of the hard-handed judgments and criticism we’ve had against each other. Sometimes we need to stand for Truth and show what’s wrong, that’s true. But we don’t need to kill each other in the mean time. God has called us to something so great and marvelous and powerful that it is absolutely just the greatest thing that has ever been.

Let’s come back to 1-Corinthians 13—the formula to have the love of God, and *love is the*

essence of God-likeness. If we're going to be Godlike we must have love.

"...is not easily provoked..." (v 5). I will have to admit, brethren, that's one of my greatest weaknesses. Yes, it is! That's a hard one to overcome. But God willing, given time, God's Spirit and understanding, with Christ in me I can overcome it.

"...thinks no evil" (v 5). Boy, I tell you that's why we need to be very careful what we're watching on TV and listening to on the radio. Have you ever had one of these stupid ads stuck in your head, and you can't get rid of it? One happened to me the other day. 'Don't forget a Mazzetta'—Mazzetta cheese—'Don't forget a Mazzetta.' It's going to take me another two days to get rid of it.

"...thinks no evil" means, *don't be imputing evil motives to people.* Though some people may not have overcome enough that they can do things in a way that you really think they ought to, but who are you to be their judge, to condemn their heart. Accept what they do on the surface of what they do. Don't think evil and say, 'Well, I know why he did that, or she did that.'

- Can you read a mind?
- Can you understand a heart?
- Do you really know the motive?
- *No! I can't! You can't!*
- Are we sometimes taken advantage of because of that, by giving the benefit of doubt? *Yes!*
- Is it not better to be taken advantage of a little bit than to think evil and impute wrong motives and judge the heart when that's God's prerogative and domain? *Yes!*
- Can God heal it and overcome it? *Yes!*
- Have you lost anything? *No.*

Verse 6: "Does not rejoice in iniquity..." I don't rejoice in the things that happened because people get hurt. I tell you, these tornadoes that were down there in Alabama—250 mph wind. Oh my, my, my. And you see the houses torn apart, hundreds of them, ripped away. Don't rejoice in iniquity. Don't watch that kind of thing. You don't need to do that. Even if your enemy is done in, don't rejoice in it. Thank God that He delivered you, but do as David did with Saul and Jonathan—*mourn!*

"...but rejoices in the Truth" (v 6). That's what we need to be looking to, the Truth of God, the love of God all put together.

Verse 7: "*Love bears all things...*" Think on that. What is God going to ask you to bear? *I don't know!* But whatever it is, all things that come to you, bear them. That means bear up under. That means to

hold up as to having pillars to strengthen and uphold. You bear all things.

"...believes all things, hopes all things..." (v 7). That's very important, because in hoping you can realize that even those who have gone astray, as I mentioned before, God can bring them back. If God can call people out of the world, the Catholic Church, or the Protestant Church, can He not call them out of an apostate Worldwide or UCG or whatever? *Yes, He can! Hope for them!* I don't condemn the people. I condemn the practices that are ungodly because God does.

- I hope that there will be repentance.
- I hope that there will be change.
- I hope that those people who have conducted themselves in an evil and a wrong way—even out of maliciousness or ignorance—that they come to repentance and be in the Kingdom of God.

We all need to have that hope. If someone offends you, hope that they will learn and overcome and you don't have to go correct them or do anything. Overlook it; be forbearing.

"...hopes all things, endures all things." I don't know what it's going to be like when we come to the beginning of sorrows, but there's going to be a time when we come to the beginning of sorrows. I've got a booklet at home that someone mailed me from a converted Russian. I think he was a converted Russian Jew in the Soviet Union who, in believing Christ, was thrown into jail, into prison. The worst part of his ordeal was for three years he was placed in a cell 30 feet below the surface of the earth with no light. They slid his little tray of pittance of little food under there. He said when you're down there you lose all track of time. You lose all track of when things begin and end. You sit there and pretty soon you understand that the only thing that really counts is the love of God. The only thing that he could do toward the last of the three years that he was there was say, 'O God, help me. O God, help me.'

At that point Sabbath-keeping is not important. You don't even know what day it is. None of us have gone through anything like that. And I tell you: "...**endures all things.**" For some of us, we endure going through a day of trial and stress. We come to the end of the day in exhaustion and say, 'Man, that was a hard day.' But I tell you what, we need to keep things in mind like this man went through to understand we've gone through nothing.

"...endures all things. Love never fails.... [The love of God cannot fail! God cannot fail!] ...But whether *there be* prophecies, they shall cease..." (vs 7-8). Let me just mention here that

does not mean the prophecies of God. I know that has been used as a justification when the Church, in making a mistake, and the prophecies didn't come out the way they said they would, they said, 'Well, it says prophecies will fail.' Whose prophecies were they? God's or men's? *They were prophecies of human interpretation—weren't they.*

Matthew 24:34: "Truly I say to you, this generation... [whichever one is the end-time generation] ...shall in no wise pass away until all these things have taken place. The heaven and the earth shall pass away, **but My words shall never pass away**" (vs 34-35.) If the Word of God is Truth and there's no lie in it, how can any prophecy of God fail? Did any of the prophecies concerning Christ fail? *No!* What prophecies have failed? *Human interpretations wrongly interpreting Scriptures have failed!*

And this is what it's talking about in 1-Corinthians 13:8; those are the prophecies that will fail. "...But whether *there be* prophecies, they shall cease; whether *there be* languages, they shall cease..." By the way, God created all languages. So, for people to say you have to have sacred names—*they shall cease.* What language are we going to speak when we're resurrected? *I don't know, but God will put it in our minds at the resurrection what kind of language we will speak,* just like He created Adam and Eve with a language already in their brains—right? *Yes!*

"...whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part" (vs 8-9). We better always understand that brethren. We don't know everything. We don't understand the prophecies. But if we love God, we will when the time comes that we need to.

Verse 10: "But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be set aside. When I was a child..." (vs 10-11). All childish things hold back from growing up in a maturity of Christ. This is what Paul is talking about. You come from a childish love to a mature Godly love. That's a total change.

Verse 11: "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I reasoned as a child; but when I became a man, I set aside the things of a child." That's what we need to do in the Church of God. We need to put away all the childish things and the petty little things that come along. Let's focus on the love of God.

Verse 12: "For now we see through a glass darkly... [we can't see everything clearly, but we see darkly] ...but then *we shall see* face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know exactly as I have been known." That's going to be a wonderful

thing, brethren. Jesus prayed the last prayer, 'Father, I pray that they will know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom You have sent them.' And that is eternal life.

Verse 13: "And now, these three remain.... [Living and remaining—now is living. What we're talking about are the issues of life.] ...faith, hope and love; **but the greatest of these is love.**"

Brethren, that's what we really need. That is the difference between carnal *eros/phileo* love, which can never substitute for the true *agape* love of God. The true *agape* love of God **comes down from God to you with His Holy Spirit.** Has come down to you through the sacrifice and the love of Jesus Christ. We need to have that come *out from us to each other, and then back to God, and God back to us.* That's how then we can really truly grow. ***The Feast of Unleavened Bread is the greatest way to put away the leaven of sin, is to be filled with the love of God!***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scripture References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 13:4-8
- 2) Exodus 34:5-7
- 3) Galatians 5:22-23, 6
- 4) 1 Corinthians 13:4
- 5) Luke 18:9
- 6) Luke 11:42
- 7) Luke 18:11-14
- 8) 1 Corinthians 13:4
- 9) 1 Corinthians 1:23-31
- 10) 1 Corinthians 4:7
- 11) 1 Corinthians 13:4-5
- 12) Philippians 2:1-11
- 13) Revelation 5:9-13
- 14) 1 Corinthians 13:5-8
- 15) Matthew 24:34-35
- 16) 1 Corinthians 13:8

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Proverbs 14:20
- Mark 15:10
- Romans 1:29
- Titus 3:3-7

FRC: mds
Transcribed: 01/15/2002
Formatted/Corrected: June/ 2012