

In last month's newsletter, I stated, "It is the love of God operating within us that allows His power to flow through us." In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul placed great emphasis on the need to remain in God's love, knowing it impacted their fellowship and protected the true purpose of God's power at work in their lives.

This month, I want to lay out the attributes of God's love—His very nature at work within us—and the actions it produces. We find these attributes listed in detail in **1 Corinthians 13:4-7**. Let's take a closer look:

Suffers Long: To remain steadfast in patience when provoked, holding back sudden anger or rash punishment. Love continues in faith, exercising self-restraint, and endures until the proper moment for action comes. (See: **1 Thessalonians 5:14, 2 Peter 3:9, Matthew 18:26, 29**)

Kind: It is expressed through practical help and encouragement. It goes beyond words, offering assistance, comfort, and strength to those in hardship or distress.

Does not Envy: Won't chase after admiration or acceptance to elevate itself. Will not manipulate others to win affection or gain followers for selfish advantage. (See **James 3:16**)

Not Boastful: It won't brag, boast, or think too highly to elevate above others in pride.

Not Puffed Up: Does not inflate his thinking in pride. Is not high-minded, thinking he's more knowledgeable than others. (See: **1 Corinthians 4:6**)

Not Behave Rudely or Unseemly: Avoids behaviors which are ugly, indecent, unbecoming & inconsiderate. It does not disregard how behavior affects others.

Does Not Seek Its Own: Not to seek an opportunity for personal gain only, but to consider others' needs as well.

Is Not Easily Provoked: Does not allow to be quickly agitated or inflamed, keeping steady and calm when faced with the words and actions of others.

Thinks No Evil: It does not log every offense in an accounting sense, keeping a ledger of wrongs for the purpose of reckoning. Instead, it releases the offense to pursue a reconciliation.

Rejoices Not in Iniquity: Not relieved by an injustice avoided, or conversely glad in another's injustice, moral wrongfulness, or unrighteousness. This type of judgment rejoices when others fail, and we should not rejoice or find satisfaction in these times. (See **1 Corinthians 6:9; Mark 14:10-11**)

Rejoices in the Truth: Delights when truth is restored and embraced, rejoicing together in what was once lost but now recovered. (See **Luke 15:9-10, 24-32**)

Bears All Things: To patiently cover with silence and protect or preserve by covering. To fend off something which threatens, to bear up against, and to hold out against while supporting the thing that is important.

Believes All Things: To extend trust and faith, choosing to see others through God's perspective—valuing not just who they are now, but who they can become in Him.

Hopes All Things: Hope that is directed and centered in a person. See: (**Ephesians 1:13**)

Endures All Things: To abide under. To bear up courageously, to tarry, to be strong under suffering, with fortitude. Endures, abideth—which is a word used often throughout **1 John**. (See: **1 John, Hebrews 10:32, 2 Tim. 3:10-12**)

Love Absolutely Never Fails: It is never driven out of one's course when it is set. It can't lose, fall from its position, or become powerless to affect the circumstances.

These attributes describe the love of God in action, leaving little room for us to redefine love according to our own ideas. God knows what He is talking about when it comes to love—He gave us the example in Christ. **Hebrews 12:3-4** says it plainly:

“For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.”

There is no doubt that in this world we will face challenges—within ourselves, with others, and from the enemy himself. **Any of these can derail us if we are not continually mindful of the attributes of God's love.** That is why the admonition in Hebrews is so powerful: “Consider Him.”

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” (**Ephesians 3:20-21**)

When we consider Him, it positions us exactly where we need to be for His power to work within us. And what is the purpose of that power? That His church might shine forth His glory—not just in our generation, but for every generation—to reveal the superiority of His nature.

And in this, we will not fail, because love never fails.

Love,

JANN T. BUTLER

