

Ephesians: Good News of the Church

[1 Corinthians 13:1-8a](#)

"The More Excellent Way"—September 11, 2022



Introduction

It's been a hard few years. As we are going through political turmoil, cultural turmoil, ethnic turmoil, and medical upheaval, Christians have found themselves on all different sides of these issues. Some of us have deep convictions about those issues which effect the decisions that we make.

By His grace, we have landed on the conviction that Jesus is Lord – He is King – He is Savior. By His death and resurrection, He has made us a new humanity, and He has placed us in a new kingdom. Our relationship here to the world is different than everybody else's. We have missional relationships given to us by Jesus. ([Matthew 28:18](#)) Everything else is secondary.

Although we have differences that may put pressure on our relationships, God has given us a means to deal with that pressure. It is LOVE! It's easy to love people like you, but we are made differently. The bride of Christ will prevail because He loves us.

This passage is intended to be read by the church of Corinth because they needed this word. ([1 Cor. 1:10-13](#)) There were divisions in the church. Paul wrote this letter to tell the way to come together - it is love. Paul knew that if he didn't have love in writing this letter, no one would hear or listen. Paul knew that the church could survive because we are different than the world - we have love.

Paul begins by telling the Corinthians what love does in vs. 4-8. These are not descriptive terms; they are verbs. God loved the world "in this way" that He gave His only Son. Love is an action word. How is your love life? How is your love for Jesus? The way you love Jesus is how you love His body. ([Matthew 25:35-40](#)) How are you showing love to the person in front of you, behind you, beside you? In the midst of conflict, there is a way that is better than any other way - there is a most excellent way. It is LOVE.

Read & Discuss Vs. 4- 8a

In these verses, Paul shows us what love is and what love isn't.

Love is patient - It hangs on. It waits. How patient are you with others?

Love is kind - goodness in action. Our God is kind. ([Romans 2:4](#)) Jesus wants us to love all kinds of people - even those who disagree with us or who are radically different than us.

Love is not jealous or envious - it isn't dissatisfied with the situation that God has put us in. How have you or do you respond to different situations in which God has placed you?

Love does not brag - parades itself or is motivated for self-applause.

Love does not act inappropriately - it isn't rude. Love doesn't act shamefully. We have to be careful how we talk to each other especially on social media. Before you post or share something on social media, do you consider how others might perceive it?

Love is not self-serving - it's not inward. All the body parts are essential for the growth and encouragement of the church. In love, we should seek to serve others without thinking of self. ([Luke 10:25-37](#))

Love is not provoked - it doesn't easily become angered. We don't have to agree on everything, but we shouldn't respond in anger. Let Christ fill your heart with love so that you are not provoked to anger. ([James 1:20](#)) How do you respond when talking with others about differences of opinion regarding matters of conscience?

Love does not keep count of wrongs suffered - it is not resentful or unforgiving. When God forgives us, He wipes the slate clean. We must forgive. ([Matthew 18:21-22](#))

Love does not rejoice in evil or unrighteousness - we don't rejoice when people fail or fall. God has made us ministers of a Gospel of grace even to our enemies. Love motivates us to build a bridge to reconciliation.

Love rejoices in the truth. If there has ever been a day when we have to get the truth in our hearts and minds, it is today. We need truth - a lot of truth. The way you get truth is to hear the truth. Do you have a regular Bible study plan? Have you considered joining a DiscipleLIFE (Sunday School) class?

Love bears all things – Love protects all things - it covers a multitude of sins. ([1 Peter 4:8](#)) You don't ignore someone who has sinned, but you can go to them in love. ([Matthew 18:15-22](#)).

Love believes all things – it's optimistic. God is working on all of us, and His grace helps us. We should encourage each other and believe in each other. Is there a relationship that you have given up on due to differences? God, by His grace, has saved and changed you. Be an anchor for other believers.

Love hopes all things - it is confident that the grace of God that began a work in us will complete that work. ([Philippians 1:6](#))

Love endures all things - Love is patient with people AND in all kinds of difficult circumstances.

Does this all sound like too much? If your love life is not governed by vs. 4-8, you are the opposite of all of what love is. We aren't where we should be or could be in all these areas, but we need to go back over the list to see where we are. What are the areas in which you could do better, by God's grace? Is there a broken relationship in your life that needs mending, forgiveness, reconciliation, love? ([1 Corinthians 16:14](#))

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to confess? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

*Next week's sermon text: we turn to Ephesians 2:1-10 "Raised to Life with Christ"
