

Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

 Our English word “love” has many definitions. Merriam-Webster lists nine definitions for the noun love, plus four definitions for the verb love. “Love” can mean the love God has for mankind, the love a person has for a best friend, the love a parent has for a child, or the physical act of making love. When we read the word “love”, we understand the type of “love” that is referenced through the context of surrounding words – however, even then the precise definition can be a guessing game. The ancient Greek language had nine different words for “love”. Six Greek definitions can be found at <https://trinitybereans.org/2022Mark/LoveGreekDefinitions.pdf>. Agapé love is assumed when discussing God’s ‘love’ for us.

1 Corinthians 12:31 [The last verse from the previous lesson]

But eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.

Love

Q1. How does our society define “love”? Does the Word of God define it the same?

Society?

Word of God?

Q2. Is this generalization accurate? Society defines “love” as in “What is best for me?” (inward-focused). God defines “love” in terms of how can we best serve others (outward-focused)?

Yes | Your thoughts?

No

Q3. What is one attribute or characteristic of God?

1 John 4:8

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

¹If I speak in the tongues [languages] of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

Q4. What comes to mind when you read “a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal”? Is it pleasant?

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Q5. Would you like to be around a person who has no empathy, sympathy, or compassion?

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Q6. In this Book (or epistle or letter), Paul has discussed the need for servanthood (refer to 1st Corinthians 9:19). Can a person be a true servant with no love?

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²If 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.

 On pages 4&5 of the StudySheet for 1st Corinthians 12:1-31, we discussed the differences between knowledge and wisdom.

 Knowledge defined: “the state of fact of knowing; learning; awareness; sum of what has been learned or discovered” [Life Application Bible, NIV version, Tyndale/Zondervan Publishing, ©1986, Page 2468]

 Wisdom defined: “ability to make good use of knowledge; ability to recognize right from wrong; good judgment” [Life Application Bible, NIV version, Tyndale/Zondervan Publishing, ©1986, Page 2499]

Q7. Interestingly, Paul omitted “wisdom”. Why did he mention “knowledge” and not wisdom?

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Q8. What is “prophecy”?

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Q9. As you read verses 1&2, what point is Paul making?

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Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

1st Corinthians 13:3-7 [The Message (MSG)]

³⁻⁷ If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don’t love, I’ve gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I’m bankrupt without love.

- Love never gives up.
- Love cares more for others than for self.
- Love doesn’t want what it doesn’t have.
- Love doesn’t strut,
- Doesn’t have a swelled head,
- Doesn’t force itself on others,
- Isn’t always “Me first,”
- Doesn’t fly off the handle,
- Doesn’t keep score of the sins of others,
- Doesn’t revel when others grovel,
- Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,
- Puts up with anything,
- Trusts God always,
- Always looks for the best,
- Never looks back,
- But keeps going to the end.

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

Q10. What is the difference between obligation and love?

Obligation?

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Love?

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 **Obligation defined** (partial list of meanings): 1. a. A social, legal, or moral requirement, such as a duty, contract, or promise, that compels one to follow or avoid a particular course of action. [Copyright © 2003-2022 Farlex, Inc. <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/obligation>]

 **Love defined** (partial list of meanings): 1. A strong feeling of affection and concern toward another person, as that arising from kinship or close friendship. 2. A strong feeling of affection and concern for another person accompanied by sexual attraction. 3. a. A feeling of devotion or adoration toward God or a god. 3. b. A feeling of kindness or concern by God or a god toward humans. 3. c. often Love: Christianity Charity. . . . [Copyright © 2003-2022 Farlex, Inc. <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/love>]

Q11. What is agapé love? Refer to [Six Greek definitions for “love”](https://trinitybereans.org/2022Mark/LoveGreekDefinitions.pdf) [at <https://trinitybereans.org/2022Mark/LoveGreekDefinitions.pdf>].

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Q12. Based on verses 1-3, is “love” important? If so, why?

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Q13. It seems to me that if by my prayers I could “move mountains (verse 2)” or if I gave all I owned to the poor (verse 3), I would be well on my way to a good time in Heaven. Why would Paul write that if I “have not love, I am nothing” (verse 2) and if I “have not love, I gain nothing” (verse 3)?

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Matthew 22:36-40

³⁶ "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' [from Deuteronomy 6:5] ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' [from Leviticus 19:18] ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Q14. The phrase “surrender my body to the flames” is curious. To what do we think Paul is referring? Can a person martyr himself or herself without loving a person he or she saves?

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Q15. Did Jesus love the Jews and Gentiles of the time of His direct ministry? Does Jesus love people of our present day? Does Jesus Love you?

Jesus' ministry?

People, today?

You?

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Day 4

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⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Q16. Verses 4-6 provide an excellent list of “love” behaviors for the Believer. Are these behaviors easy to accomplish? Why? Or why not?

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Q17. Are we a failure to Christ Jesus and to these principles if we are unable to follow them?

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⁸Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

Q18. Why does Paul write “Love never fails”?

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Q19. When will prophecies cease and tongues be stilled and knowledge pass away?

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Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. (2) I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. (3) And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. (4) He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.

Q20. What (or Who) is meant by "when perfection comes"?

¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.

Q21. Is it a good thing from God's perspective that we grow up?

Matthew 18:1

¹ At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"
² He called a little child and had him stand among them. ³ And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Day 6

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

¹² Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

Q22. We find a curious phrase: "a poor reflection as in the mirror". What might Paul mean?

Q23. Who will we see face-to-face?

Q24. What does the second sentence mean: “Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known”?

Now I know in part?

Then I shall know fully?

Even as I am fully known?

¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Q25. Why is “love” greatest?

1 Thessalonians 1:3

We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:8

But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

1st John 4:8

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

1st John 4:16-19

¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. ¹⁷ In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us.

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