

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: 1Corinthians **13:4-8a**.
- B. This is the next to last in our series of lessons on love. I trust you have profited from these sermons as much as I have in preparing them.
- C. Paul says some wonderful things about agape love in 1Cor. 13:7. Four specifics mentioned give us **enduring proof** of God, the Bible and the Xian way of life.
- D. A Xian gentleman once said, "Even if there is no God, the Xian life is the only way to live." I think he understood the enduring proof of love.

## I. LOVE ALWAYS **PROTECTS**.

- A. I am using the NIV translation of 1Cor. 13:7.  
(1Cor 13:7; NIV) ...It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.  
(1Cor 13:7; NAS) ...bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
- B. The Greek word here means "to cover" w/silence, or keep secret or to conceal.
- C. Moffatt's translation is helpful; "love is always slow to expose" the errors/faults of others.
- D. There is a very strong motherly instinct to protect her young. This is a second meaning, which says that love forbears or protects in threatening circumstances.
- E. Publicly advertising the sins of others may not be the best way to help them. If the sinner makes it public, that's Biblical (Jas. 5:16), but if we do it we may not be showing love.
- F. There are a few, extreme cases when sin must be publicly mentioned by others and addressed. But in the vast majority of cases, public exposure of sin (through gossip, etc.) is not appropriate.

## II. LOVE ALWAYS **TRUSTS**.

- A. See again 1Cor. 13:7. The idea here is to have faith in, or believe in.  
(1Cor 13:7; NIV) ...It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
- B. First, we are to trust in, or have faith in God. Xians **must live by faith**, it's not optional (2Cor. 5:7).  
for we walk by faith, not by sight--
- C. Why is it, that God gives us the roll call of those approved in Heb. 11? It was because these people lived by faith. They trusted God and that is a sign of love (Heb. 11:2).  
For by it the men of old gained approval.
- D. Second, we are to have trust or faith in our fellow man. God trusts the church to preach His word (He didn't give angels that power). God trusts the church to edify itself in love, and meet the physical needs of its members and those in the world around them. When we love one another we will trust each other to do their part in serving as a Xian.

## III. LOVE ALWAYS **HOPES**.

- A. See again 1Cor. 13:7. Biblical hope is NOT, "I wish I want, I wish I think..."  
(1Cor 13:7; NIV) ...It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
- B. Biblical hope is **desire plus expectation**. This can best be illustrated in the negative. (I desire \$1,000 in the mail, but I don't expect it therefore--I have no hope that I'll get it. I expect to get bills in the mail, but I don't desire them, therefore--I have no hope of not getting them.)
- C. Spiritually speaking, hope saves (Rom. 8:24).  
For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he *already* sees?
- D. To those who desire to go to heaven (that which is not seen), they should expect to get there. Those who desire heaven will do everything in their power to get there. Couple this with what God has done by X, they expect to be there.
- E. "Success will come in God's work. God cannot fail or be defeated."
- F. People who love, desire and expect the best in others. It's easy to give to someone who loves you!

#### IV. LOVE ENDURES.

- A. See again 1Cor. 13:7. We are to endure or persevere:  
(1Cor 13:7; NIV) ...It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
1. To avoid influencing others away from the Lord (1Cor. 9:12b).  
Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ.
  2. So others can be saved (2Tim. 2:10).  
For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.
  3. Because of the joy set before us--heaven (Heb. 12:2).  
...fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
  4. Because X showed us how (1Pet. 2:21-23).  
For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, **22 WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; 23** and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;
- B. People who love don't quit. They realize that God will ultimately bless our efforts even though we may seem as failures.
- C. People who love persevere because they:
1. Believe God provides a way of escape.
  2. Answers prayers.
  3. Gives strength in the midst of trial.
  4. Gives wisdom to those who ask.
  5. Forgives our sins.

#### CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. There is a God, and the Xian life of love is the only way to live.
- B. A loving person will always protect, trust, hope, and persevere. Wouldn't you like to be around that kind of person? Better yet, would you like to be that kind of person?
- C. Agape is a decision, you must decide to love. May each of us make the decision to love each day.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.