
Context:

Paul writes to the Church of Corinth reprimanding them for their competitive mindset concerning various gifts given to the church.¹ The underlying issue Paul addresses concerns not only the elevation of certain gifts, but also the elevation of the people who possess them. This would ultimately lead to division in the church. Therefore, he seeks to help the believers focus on whether these benefits to the church were motivated out of love for each other. If these gifts to the church were not done out of love, they were becoming a detriment instead of a benefit. It is from this context that Paul makes these comments about genuine love to help them assess whether their behavior was flowing from a heart of love. Believers today still struggle with having our behavior flow from a heart of genuine love and are also helped by Paul's instruction on Love. (John 13:34-35) Garland writes, "Paul now personifies love to show its superior acts. First, many observe that he does not use adjectives to describe love but verbs, fifteen of them in three verses. Love is dynamic and active, not something static. He is not talking about some inner feeling or emotion."² Paul says,

⁴ Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. – 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

¹ David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 605.

² *Ibid.*, 616.

Instructions: Write down one way you can increase your love for others.
(Possible focus on Spouse, Relative, Friend, Pastor, Church, Church Member, Boss, Co-worker, etc)

<p>I will be patient in these ways...</p>	<p>I will show kindness in these ways...</p>
<p>I will not be envious or jealous when...</p>	<p>I will not boast or brag when...</p>
<p>I will not be arrogant when...</p>	<p>I will not be rude or careless when...</p>
<p>I will be selfless in these ways...</p>	<p>I will not become irritable or resentful when...</p>
<p>I will not keep record of wrongs by forgiving when...</p>	<p>I will allow my love to protect or bear all things in my relationship by...</p>
<p>I will not assume something negative or sinful when...</p>	<p>I will be more hopeful in my relationship by...</p>
<p>I will let my love be steadfast even when...</p>	