

1 Cor 13:4-7

Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

We are going over the definitions of love from 1 Cor 13:4-7, seeing what love is and isn't based upon these verses. Through these devotionals you may notice that I refer a lot towards marriages and friendships, because if the world needs to see love in us as Christians, I think it needs to start in the home and in the church. If the world sees our marriages and friendships with other Christians falling apart, why would they ever want to come to Jesus, because they already have bad marriages and friendships in the world. That's why through these devotionals I refer to marriage and friendships within the church.

So the second thing that love is, goes hand in hand, in a sense, with the first thing that we looked at yesterday.

Love suffers long and is kind

We saw yesterday that "*suffers long*" also means "*patience*". But not only "*patient*" but also "*kind*", which we will look at today.

So what do you think of when you hear the word "*kind*"?

Maybe you think of letting someone go ahead of you in line at the grocery store. Maybe you think of giving to a charity or a homeless person. It could be giving a couple bucks to a homeless person or helping your neighbor shovel snow out of their driveway. Those are kind things, but to love and be kind is more than just that.

Let's look at the same verses we did yesterday and not only see Jesus as being patient with Peter, but also kind towards him as well.

† **Luke 22:31-34** *And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren." But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."*

We know that Jesus was patient with Peter and even prayed for Peter, even though Jesus knew that Peter would deny Him. But also notice something else that Jesus does not do. Jesus didn't start yelling at Peter and calling him names.

Jesus didn't say, "*You idiot Peter, you are so full of pride and you are going to fall big time, you loser.*" No, Jesus did not, and would not ever say anything like that to someone

that He loves. Instead they are words of kindness and encouragement. ***But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.*** And when Jesus tells him to ***strengthen your brethren*** that is also a lesson for Peter and use, to do the same for others, as He has done for Peter and us.

Maybe your spouse or the person you are dating or friend or a family member has messed up, what kind of words do you have for him or her?

“You idiot, I can’t handle you anymore, I’m out of here!”

How do you think Peter would have felt if Jesus said that to him? Peter would have walked away and never returned. But because of Jesus’ kind words, and words of encouragement, Peter did come back to Jesus, His head hung low because he knew he messed up, yet Peter also knew that Jesus loved him and that he could come back.

Do you and your spouse, or friend have such a good relationship, that they know that even though he or she may have messed up, that they can come and confess that to you, and you will respond with words of kindness, or will they get a tongue lashing from you?

So next time they mess up, why not say, *“I know you messed up, but I have been praying for you that God would deliver you from this, and I want you to know that I am here for you also. What can I do to help you?”* Your response shows if you have real love towards him or her.

Kindness also goes beyond words but can be with actions too. Have you ever heard the expression, *“your eyes speak louder than your words”*? You can say anything you want with your mouth, but if you are rolling your eyes or fidgeting about while you are try to pretend to have kind words, people can easily see that, especially someone who loves you and knows you so well. Maybe in the above example you say you will help them out, but you find every excuse not to. Your actions are speaking louder than your words.

Remember the woman caught in adultery? (Check it out in John chapter 8) The religious leaders wanted this woman stoned, so they threw her down in front of Jesus and asked what He thought. And Jesus responded with both words of love and action to match His words.

† ***John 8:6-7 & 10-11 This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.”***

When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?” She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.”

Jesus defended this woman, because of love, but not only that, He was willing to come down to her level (*Jesus stooped down*) and defend her.

So in love, let both your words, as well as your actions show kindness to others, even if you have to stoop down to your knees to pray for, and with him or her.

† **Philippians 2:3 (NLT2)** *Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves.*