

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.

Week two in our daily devotional series on Love.

When we think of love, how many times do we think of it as something that has to be done? Yet as we have been learning, and will learn, almost half of what we will learn is what Love does and the other half of what Love does not do.

Something to think about when you think about love and showing that love, because it's not always doing something for someone to show him or her love, but it could be something that you need to stop doing to show your love.

So, for our eighth thing we will look at concerning love, is yet another thing that love is not.

Love is not provoked

So what does provoked mean anyway?

Webster's dictionary definition is: *to incite to anger*
Or for a provoker: *mean to arouse as if by pricking*

Simply put, it does not want to cause someone to be angry. Maybe you have gotten upset with your spouse or friend and you can't stand the fact that they are happy or don't see a problem. So what do you do? Start giving little jabs (*to arouse as if by pricking*) or snide remarks to start to making him or her angry with you.

You do this because you are angry and you want them to be angry as well. In simple today terms, you are trying to pick a fight with him or her.

As the one doing the provoking, this is wrong and is no way to communicate with someone you love. On the other hand, you may be the one being provoked. If you are, you must stop and realize that there is a reason they are doing this to you.

So, how do you each handle it?

James tells us how.

† **James 5:16** *Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*

A lot of arguments and even break ups or divorce happen because someone is upset with the other person and because they are upset, they want the other person to feel that same way also. It's like rubbing two sticks together; eventually it will cause a fire.

But if you rub a stick into water, no fire will happen, just a softening of that hard stick to the point that it would start to bud and bloom.

So how does this apply to our situations? The hard stick or sticks are those who are stubborn and refuse to heed God's word, and end up causing an argument. But if one is stubborn or just angry, God's word spoken out of love is like a refreshing stream of water (the Holy Spirit) being poured upon the other person's life.

So instead of trying to have an argument, why not stop and get into God's word, and as His word refreshes you and calms you, then go and talk to your spouse or friend and share with them God's word and God's heart. ***Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.***

On a hot day, I would much rather have a cool drink of water than a hit in the mouth with a hard stick.

Which will you be?

† **Proverbs 15:1** *A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.*