



Charity-Agape Characteristics

Many years ago, I was presented with a perplexing question, not to mention that it was me doing the asking. Regarding the agape characteristics, the question was, “what is kind?” Honestly, I couldn’t answer it. And, neither could a single soul I asked. I ask you, what is kind? If you can’t provide a biblical answer, how can you say that you live your life according to agape? You’re beginning to understand my dilemma. If I didn’t understand one single word, kind, did I understand the others? These, and many other questions, prompted this ongoing study of agape as related to God’s Holy Word.

The beautiful chapter of 1 Corinthians 13 begins thus:

(1 Cor 13:1-3 KJV) Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. {2} And though I have the gift of



prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. {3} And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

We learn many things, the chiefest being that without an agape lifestyle, we are nothing. Our works, actions, and manners among men bring no real profit. That said, let’s jump into the individual characteristics and endeavor to speak, play

heavenly music, manifest holy spirit, study God’s Word, walk by faith, give our all, and drop into bed at night completely wasted. With agape in operation, we’ll experience untold profit.

THE GREATER LOVE SUFFERETH LONG

1 Cor 13:4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

‘Suffereth long’ means, ‘is of long duration when putting up with the rushing of the mind [anger].’ Allow agape to quiet you as you lead people to salvation.

THE GREATER LOVE IS KIND

1 Cor 13:4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not it-

Charity-Agape Characteristics

self, is not puffed up,

‘Kind’ means, “is useful or beneficial to the church.”

Manifesting kindness is answering a call to love, to serve without expecting anything in return. It is all-out giving, making the benefits of God available to everyone!

THE GREATER LOVE ENVIETH NOT

1 Cor 13:4 Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

“Envieth not’ comes from the Greek word *zeleo*. Think ‘zeal.’ We are not to have zeal that results in any type of harm, stirring up, or wrong provoking. Our zeal, which means our mental energy and fervent character, is supposed to be used to move God’s Word. We are to provoke others to do the same.

THE GREATER LOVE VAUNTETH NOT

1 Cor 13:4 Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not;

charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

‘Vaunteth not’ means, “to not be a braggart.” The Greek means, “to not show one’s self a boaster or braggart.”

Let’s keep bragging in balance, and not vaunt ourselves above others.

Jesus said:

(Mat 7:20 KJV) Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

A man’s gift maketh room and by a man’s fruit, ye shall know him. So many times, I’ve seen a person grow into an area of expertise after an initial show of something special he could do for others. The same holds true with spiritual gifts. If we allow these characteristics to permeate our lives, we will be living according to agape and won’t want to vaunt ourselves.

THE GREATER LOVE IS NOT PUFFED UP

1 Cor 13:4 Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not it-

self, is not puffed up,

‘Puffed up’ means, “to inflate with pride and vanity, to be proud, vain, arrogant.” It is literally inflation of the mind.

Knowledge puffs up, inflates, but charity builds up. This negative puffing is akin to a jelly fish. It blows up and moves around, but you can’t really do anything with it. Agape builds up and is strong. As it is integrated into a person’s life, it strengthens, builds, and fortifies.

THE GREATER LOVE ACTS NOT UNSEEMLY

1 Cor 13:5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

‘Acts not unseemly’ means, “to behave in a manner open to censure.”

This characteristic is a fashion we work to develop.

Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye

Charity-Agape Characteristics

may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

It requires renewed mind thinking - thinking right thoughts every day. It requires boldness, believing and caring for others. It requires changing your focus to God, thereby changing your outward fashion. It requires living your life so that it is never open to censure. Let us eliminate all unseemliness.

THE GREATER LOVE SEEKETH NOT HER OWN

1 Cor 13:5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

We are to seek profit by bringing salvation to others. Agape does not seek the things of its own. If we seek after our own things, we will not want to profit others. We won't really be interested in helping them; we will only be concerned with ourselves. We are to seriously seek after the kingdom of God and use our spiritual perception to win people to God. Salva-

tion is the main focal point of this characteristic.

THE GREATER LOVE IS NOT EASILY PROVOKED

1 Cor 13:5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

In our quest to live according to agape, let us not be stirred on insignificant matters. Let us allow agape in the renewed mind in manifestation to spring to life so that we are not stirred negatively. Let us live our lives without sharpness.

In the positive sense, sharpen yourself by considering one another, provoking one another unto agape and good works. Do not forsake the fellowshiping of the saints. We are to sharpen each other by teaching each other how to love and how to do good works.

THE GREATER LOVE THINKETH NO EVIL

1 Cor 13:5 Doth not behave itself unseemly,

seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

'Evil' is translated "bad, of a bad disposition, worthless, corrupt, depraved." Further, "wicked, criminal;" an evil person is one who causes pain and suffering.

Three behaviors come to bear under this characteristic: controlling our tongue, our lust and our appetite.

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat [the bema] of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in his body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be good or bad*.

The tongue, lust and appetite are most difficult to control, but they can be controlled.

The Greater Love Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but In The Truth

1 Cor 13:6-7 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; {7} Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Charity-Agape Characteristics

The greatness of agape in our lives has enough strength to cover and protect, and believing, hope, and patient endurance that we will ever need to stand for God and His people.

Agape does not delight in unrighteousness, but delights in, and with, the truth.

1 Cor 13:8-12 *Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. {9} For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. {10} But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. {11} When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. {12} For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

When that which is perfect is come, then, then, then it says. The manifestations of word of knowledge and word of prophecy are only in part. We'll become spiritual adults when Jesus returns to gather us together—The Departure. Until that happens, we have these 'spiritual toys' to get us through. With all nine manifestations, we still see in a glass darkly. The 'then' is when Jesus Christ returns. Then, we will have new bodies. Then, we won't need speaking in tongues and the other manifestations. Until that time, these manifestations are in the church.

The Greater

1 Cor 13:13 *And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.*

Now abides the great hope of the return of Jesus Christ [The Departure]. This isn't worldly hope 'like I hope to win the lottery.' Worldly hope might never happen. Godly hope will happen and refers to a future event. You just can't have it now. Believing is for things that you can have now. Inside of the

church, we have both believing and hope.

The greatest thing that we have inside of the church, which operates both our believing and our hope for the future, is charity—the greater of all three.

We are to follow after the greater which is agape.

We are now ready begin the great 14th chapter of 1 Corinthians. This is the only place in the Word of God where the three worship manifestation—speaking in tongues, speaking in tongues with interpretation, and prophecy—are described.

Much love in Christ,

Jerry D. Brown