



## What is Love?

*This worksheet walks families through each of the descriptions of Love. Since there are 14 different phrases, you may want to break the discussion up over a few days, giving everyone time to reflect more on each characteristic.*

### Love is Patient.

1. Read -What does it mean to say that “Love is Patient”? The word “patience” means “to hold oneself up against” in Greek. It does not mean to passively wait. On the contrary, the word “patience” is much closer to “perseverance,” and especially to persevere towards a greater good. It is the opposite of being reactionary in word and thought and turns away from irritability and resentment by choosing to use self-control.

Discuss - When have I/we been patient? When have we not been patient?

### Love is Kind.

2. Read -What does it mean to say that “Love is Kind”? “Kindness” translates to “showing oneself to be useful,” especially in the realm of morals and treatment of other people. Kindness is both an attitude and an action. We are kind in our relationships, but we also act kindly in trying to be helpful and useful to those we love. We do not simply watch people struggle; we get involved. We think about the needs of others and attempt to help them in those needs. Kindness shows conduct that is mild and pleasant, even under provocation. It is the opposite of acting bitter, sharp and disagreeable.

Discuss - When have I/we been kind? When have we not been kind?

## Love does not Envy.

3. Read - What does it mean to say that “Love does not Envy?” The word “envy” refers to being covetous, jealous or resentful of blessings or achievements given to someone else. This emotion causes the loved one to be seen as a competitor, and withholds feelings of joy and happiness. It breeds ill-will towards others and desires their diminishment. True love, however, understands that the happiness of our loved ones increases our own love. It is an addition to our joy, not a lessening because we desire the happiness of the other.

Discuss - When have I/we felt envy? How can we change it to Love?

## Love does not boast.

4. Read - What does it mean to say “Love does not boast?” Being boastful is different from sharing good news or a happy event that has happened in your life. Being boastful, first and foremost, means being overly impressed with yourself. It squeezes out concern for other people. In fact, boastfulness inspires a spirit of superiority and disdain towards others. By contrast, those who Love treat others with concern, respect and kindness, even esteeming others over themselves. True Love fosters humility, not boastfulness.

Discuss - When have I/we been boastful? How can that change?

## Love is not Proud.

5. Read - What does it mean to say “Love is not proud?” Pride and boastfulness are related, that is why they are mentioned one after the other in this Scripture passage. Pride is the state or feeling about yourself that leads to boastfulness. Pride is the mindset and attitude while boasting is the speech and conduct. A proud person is convinced that he or she is superior and refuses to apologize or help others. They have an inflated opinion of their own importance. A person without pride, however, hurries to help others and does not consider any task “too low,” so long as they are being helpful and responsive to others in their need.

Discuss - When have I/we thought I/we were better than others? Is that the way Love calls us to see ourselves?

## Love is not Rude or Self-seeking.

6. Read - What does it mean to say that “Love is not rude or self-seeking?” A rude person acts in a way that is improper, disgraceful, and even shameful,

in words or deeds. The opposite of being rude is to treat others with respect and the dignity that is bestowed on them by God. Likewise, a person who is self-seeking is selfish, with a sense of entitlement. He or she is always concerned with seeking their own happiness first, even at the expense of others. But the life of Christ teaches us that we should not seek our own happiness exclusively, or even mainly. Instead, we should see the welfare of others as being as important as our own, even when self-sacrifice or self-denial is necessary.

Discuss - When have I/we deliberately been a cause of embarrassment? Do I/we often seek our own happiness at the expense of our loved ones?

Love is not easily angered.

7. Read - What does it mean to say “Love is not easily angered?” Scripturally, this description means that one who Loves is not quickly exasperated, and also is not hastily incited to wrath, nor does he or she seek to cause others to become exasperated or wrathful. True love, on the other hand, inspires one to govern the temper, restrain emotions, and discipline feelings and reactions.

Discuss - Have I/we deliberately tried to exasperate others, so much so that they become filled with wrath? Have I/we noticed certain things that I/we do that exasperate others?

Love keeps no record of wrongs.

8. Read - What does it mean to say that “Love keeps no record of wrongs?” Someone who keeps a “record of wrongs” is manipulative, creating inventories of mistakes and seeking to control others because of their failings. He or she sees the faults and failings in others, but mistakenly assumes he or she has no need for forgiveness.

Discuss - When have I/we kept track of other peoples’ failings? Even if those failings hurt me/us, can I/we offer forgiveness? Do I/we also need to be forgiven?

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in the truth.

9. Read - What does it mean to say “Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in the truth”? “Truth” in this verse refers to virtue, piety, and goodness while “evil” refers to the wrongdoing, injustice, and harm done to others. Practically, this means we can become more concerned with being right,

winning arguments, and getting our way than we are with peace, empathy, and concern for one another. We should not be happy when others fall into ruin or disgrace themselves. We do not rejoice in the evil we encounter, but neither do we ignore it. Rather, Love induces us to seize the opportunity to encourage and foster the triumph of truth and goodness.

Discuss - Do I/we ever feel happy that people “got what they deserved?” How can we reframe our understanding of Love to want what is good for others?

## Love bears all things.

10. Read - What does it mean to say “Love bears all things”? The Greek term for “beareth” in 1 Corinthians 13:7 is from a verb stemming from the term “roof”. The thought being conveyed is somewhat of a simile. Genuine love covers others just like a roof covers the contents or inhabitants below. True Love “covers” others in 2 kinds of ways. Firstly, Love keeps private or silent certain things. Specifically, love will conceal the imperfections, faults, and errors of others. Secondly, Love protects, preserves, and sustains by covering. Love keeps out harmful influences like a roof keeps out water. One who loves does not allow affliction, detriment, insult, offense, or indignity to come upon the object of his or her affection. Moreover, there is no circumstance or situation in which Love will not do these things. That’s why we can say “Love bears ALL things.”

Discuss - When have I/we been willing to cover - protect and keep silent - those I/we love? When have I/we failed? When do I/we find this hard to do?

## Love believes all things.

11. Read - What does it mean to say that “Love believes all things?” To “believe all things” means that we give others the benefit of the doubt. It means that we expect the best from them, so we don’t assume the worst when we have doubts. It means we are willing to trust each other.

Discuss - Do I/we automatically assume the best about those we love? Or do we usually assume what is negative and the worst about them?

## Love always hopes.

12. Read - What does it mean to say that “Love always hopes?” The Greek word translated “hope” is from *elpidzo*, meaning “to hope or wait for

salvation with joy and full confidence.” Used 32 times in the New Testament, this word expresses more than a wish or desire, but a confident belief in the unseen. Scripture calls Jesus our “hope” ([1 Timothy 1:1](#)). Hope not only concerns our belief in Christ but describes who He is to us. The hope within us is Christ Himself. If He lives within us, His hope will be seen in how we treat others. Living with such an attitude reflects the way of Christ, leads to holy living, and brings glory to our heavenly Father. Part of hoping is seeing the potential of others, and believing that everyone is capable of change and grace. Love believes not just that people can change, but also that God can work in anyone’s life for the better. No one is beyond the Love of God.

Discuss - Are there times when I/we have lost hope about a person or situation? Can I/we rededicate ourselves to Hope?

Love always perseveres.

13. Read - The Greek word *hupomenei* carries the idea of “remaining” or “enduring.” Love doesn’t quit or give up. Love lasts. The love spoken of in 1 Corinthians 13 is not a fleeting romance or a fading feeling. It reminds us that Love is not just an emotion that comes and goes. Love is a decision. Godly love always perseveres. During good times and bad, Love endures the challenges of life and remains steadfast. Jesus modeled enduring love: “Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end” (John 13:1) During his most difficult night, he washed the feet of his disciples and prayed for them. His love endured ridicule, abandonment and death on the cross. It persevered until the end.

Discuss - Do I/we see Love as just an emotion? Are we ready to give up if “we don’t feel it?” Can I/we move into a deeper, more mature understanding of Love?

Love never fails.

14. Read - What does it mean to say that “Love never fails”? The next sentence gives us more understanding of this, as it contrasts love with other spiritual gifts: “But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.” Prophecies, tongues, and knowledge are all temporary. Not so with love. Because love is a basic attribute of God and because God is eternal, love will also be eternal. Love will never fail. Love does not falter or fade. It is constant and will last forever.

Discuss - Have I/we ever felt the type of love that “never fails?” Have I/we ever given it?

**Ending:** These 14 phrases define the type of Love that is God. When we say “God is Love,” we mean that God perfectly keeps and fulfills each of these 14 descriptions. It is harder, if not impossible, for people to love in this way, in every situation and with all people. But, this is the kind and type of loving that we are challenged to strive towards. As you journey towards Easter, take the opportunity to ask God to help you and your family love more deeply, to love as God loves.