

#3 PROPERTIES OF LOVE: DOES NOT ENVY, PARADE ITSLEF, IS NOT PUFFED UP (1 Cor 13:4-7)

A. Our text is truly a portrait of the Lord.

1. As we study that portrait, His image should be reproduced in our lives (Jas 1:22-25; 2 Cor 3:18).

2. It's not just important that we understand the features of love presented by Paul, it is critical that we exhibit this love in all of our actions.

a. Every descriptive word of love in our text is a verb – an action word.

[We have had a lesson from verse 4, which teaches, “Love suffers long & is kind”.

In this lesson we'll discuss love in the negative: “Love does NOT envy...parade itself... IS NOT puffed up.”

Why does Paul approach the subject of love in the negative here? Perhaps these traits were more familiar.]

I. LOVE DOES NOT ENVY

A. The word “envy” is “zealos” – the root word: “to boil”.

1. When we have envy there is an inner seething, steaming or boiling over because of someone else's happiness or success.

B. Envy is such a powerful & destructive force, that it will cancel out the good we attempt to do.

Jas 3:14-16 – *But if you have bitter envy & self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast & lie against the truth.* 15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. 16 For where envy & self-seeking exist, confusion & every evil thing are there.

1. James said every evil practice stems from envy.

Satan envied God's hold over man. **Cain envied** Abel's acceptance by God. **Jacob envied** Esau's birthright & blessing. **Joseph's brothers envied** his relationship to Jacob. **Jewish leaders envied** Jesus power & relationship with the people (Mk 15:10). **The laborers** in the vineyard parable (Matt 20:1-16). The **Corinthians envied** each other (1 Cor 3:1, 3).

C. **The Scriptures depict** three men whose character was free of any desire envy.

1. Jonathan watched David's rise to power, & yet he did not envy him (1 Sam 18:1).
2. Paul knew of men preaching for wrong reasons, & yet he did not envy their influence (Phil 1:15-18).
3. Jesus did not envy the authority of the religious hierarchy of His day.
 - a. "I do NOT seek My own glory" (Jn 8:50). "I do NOT receive honor from men" (Jn 5:41).

D. **Let's put this** into practical terms.

1. Why DO we envy? Why is there in us is an inner seething, steaming or boiling over because of someone else's happiness or success.

a. Selfishness: we want what others have for ourselves at any cost.

b. A failure to trust God: we think that our Heavenly Father is mismanaging our lives.

2. Why would we NOT envy?

a. Because we love to see others happy & successful in good ways (Rom 12:15).

b. Because we trust that our Father in Heaven has made us each unique & has given to us the things He wants us to manage.

II. LOVE DOES NOT PARADE ITSELF – BOAST

A. **Having love for others** will stop us from "going on" about ourselves too much.

1. Love will not allow us to speak about ourselves in such a way as to make others feel inferior to us.
2. In the Corinthian church, many were bragging about their spiritual gifts as if they had developed them themselves.

1 Cor 4:7 – *And what do you have that you did not receive?* Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

B. **There is a modest** (self-effacing, unassuming, unpretentious, humble, reserved) quality in love that does not parade itself or boast.

1. A person who loves is always more absorbed in his own unworthiness than in his merit.
2. When we become truly impressed by the fact that God has loved even us, people who were dead to Him by their sins, then His love will become a controlling factor in our lives (**2 Cor 5:14**), & that will stop us before we boast.

3. The boaster says, “I want you to know all about me”, but the one who loves says, “I want to know all about you.”

Psa 94:4 – *All the workers of iniquity boast in themselves.*

Psa 34:2 (David) – *My soul shall make its boast in the Lord*; the humble shall hear of it & be glad. **Psa 44:8** (sons of Korah) – *In God we boast all day long, & praise Your name forever.*

III. LOVE IS NOT PUFFED UP – ARROGANT

A. **Arrogance** is an attitude of overbearing superiority or self-importance.

1. Arrogance is the attitude that causes *envy & boasting*.
2. The Corinthians were arrogant or “puffed up” on several points.

Their association with preachers (**1 Cor 3:4; 4:6**). Their tolerance of sin (**1 Cor 5:1-2**). Their spiritual gifts (**1 Cor 12:14-21**). Their knowledge (**1 Cor 8:1**).

a. Like eggs ...too full of themselves to hold anything else (Josh Billings: Henry Wheeler Shaw).

c. Would be really rather gloat over man with a superior self-important attitude - than to find acceptance & approval from the Lord?
I don't think so!

B. **There are two** Biblical principles to consider:

1. *Arrogance & divine wisdom cannot coexist in the same person.*

2. *An arrogant person defeats his own purpose.*

Prov 8:13 (Personification of wisdom) – The fear of the LORD is to hate evil. ***Pride & arrogance & the evil way & the perverse mouth I [wisdom] hate.***

Luke 14:11 – For ***whoever exalts himself will be humbled***, & he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Prov 11:2 – ***When pride comes, then comes shame***; but with the humble is wisdom. **29:23** – ***A man's pride will bring him low***, but the humble in spirit will retain honor.

a. So arrogance is an act of foolishness; an arrogant person is a fool.

C. **God's positions of honor** go to the humble not to the arrogant.

b. Notice that Solomon linked pride & arrogance together as attitudes hated by wisdom.

1. Jesus became a servant & humbled Himself in obedience; He was highly exalted (**Phil 2:6-10**).

Jas 4:6 – But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: ***God resists the proud***, but gives grace to the humble” (**1 Pet 5:5**; **Prov 3:34**).

a. He did not boast nor was He arrogant after His resurrection from the dead.

2. The greatest in the kingdom of God is a servant with child-like qualities (Matt 23:11; Lk 18:17; Matt 18:3-4).

1 Pet 5:5-6 – Yes, *all of you be submissive to one another, & be clothed with humility*, for “*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*” 6 Therefore *humble [to depress or bring low] yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.*

William Cary was a great linguist & a shoe repairman by trade. He translated the Bible into over 30 different Indian dialects. When he left his trade to go to India & perform his work as a translator, India was submerged in a caste system. A repairer of shoes was very low on their social scale. Once, Cary was at a dinner party, & a man of high social standing didn't ask him about his linguistic work, but rather stated, “I understand that you were a shoemaker.” Cary said, “No, your lordship, I was only a shoe repairman.”

It takes the wind out of your sails – when you try to insult someone & they go one step lower than you were trying to put them.

Phil 2:3-5 – *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.* 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

CLOSING

A. If the love we see in 1 Corinthians 13 is in us – then we will conquer the urge that occasionally rises up in us to envy others, & to be boastful or arrogant.

GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR SALVATION:

Hear the gospel of Jesus Christ; read it in your Bible: Acts 2; 3; 13; 17; Rom 10:17

Believe Jesus to be Lord and Christ, the Son of God and Savior: Acts 2:36; John 3:16; 8:24; 20:30-31; Acts 4:12; Titus 1:4

Repent of your sins: Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 1 John 3:4

Confess your faith in Jesus Christ: Matt 10:32-33; Acts 8:37; Rom 10:9-10

Be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins: Acts 2:38; Rom 6:3-4; Gal 3:27; Acts 2:38; 1 Pet 3:21

Be obedient to the Lord, He will be your Judge: Titus 2:11-12; Heb 5:9; 2 John 9; Rev 2:10; John 12:48