

## Radio Sharin' Hearts, Characteristics of Agapao Love

Since love is the issue, it is vital to understand its specific characteristics in order to evaluate whether love is present or absent in our own lives as well as others. Although we can each fail on occasion there should be a consistent active lifestyle in showing what is in our hearts, in attitude and actions.

We must never forget that love is a choice of the will and we have been given all things that pertain to life and godliness. (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 1:3) What Peter is pointing to is that if told to do this, this the provisions to follow through is within our grasp and ability to do through Jesus Christ.

While I Corinthians 13 deals particularly with one's love for other people, it is a basic principle and foundation that one's love for GOD is revealed by our love for others. (I John 4:20-21: "If someone says, I love God and hates his brother, he is a liar, for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him; that he who loves God must love his brother also.")

If that verse leaves your emotions in an uproar and wanting to escape the condition of loving a person that is causing you lots of pain, remember love is always a choice of the will and it may take the feelings and emotions a long while to catch up with what you are choosing to believe as Truth and applying that Truth until "all of you" can be at rest. Feelings are not a part of the Truth or solutions necessary for applying to one's life.

Before we give the attitude/action words of love, the question is asked: Why are unbelievers often not characterized by extreme fear or fleeing, (as mentioned in Proverbs 28:12) and believers are fearful of God's judgment?" The answer is simple; it is found with the conscience. The unbeliever's conscience is often dull in comparison to the believer's conscience, which is sharpened by the presence of the Holy Spirit and the knowledge of God's Word. Unbelief will weaken, wound, and sear the natural man's conscience and since most live by feelings or information only, they are unaware. Carnal or self-absorbed Christians can also fall into this same dilemma.

The Characteristics of I Corinthians 13:4-7: (Balance between being and doing) Where ever attitude is emphasized, action is implied. Where ever action is noted, attitude is implied. We can't really separate the thinking from the action or doing. Here is a couple of examples to get us started.

V 4. Love IS patient (attitude), love IS kind (action), and is NOT jealous (attitude), love does NOT brag (action) and is NOT arrogant (attitude)

V 5: does NOT act unbecomingly (action), it does NOT seek its own, is not provoked, does NOT take into account a wrong suffered,

V 6: does NOT rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the Truth,

V 7: bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

CHARACTERISTIC	MATURE LOVE	VS	LACK OF LOVE
"Patient"	calm, slow to anger, quiet spirited		upset, put out, forceful, nasty, frets.

**I Samuel 13:8-14 Saul not waiting on Samuel to come and offer sacrifice. Timing in obeying is crucial.**

"Kind"	gentle, useful, ministering, friendly		harsh, self-protecting, withdrawn
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**Luke 10:25-37 Good Samaritan helping hurting stranger: Ephesians 4:32 Be kind one to another forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. Galatians 5:22-23, Fruit of the Spirit, Luke 6:31 And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them lifewise.**

“Not Jealous” glad for others’ prosperity, generous discontent, advantages, grasping,

**Mark 10:35-45 James & John requesting greatness for themselves. Possessive, greedy, rivalrous, covetous, envious, grumbling, complaining, hating, begrudging.**

“Does not brag” careful speech, modest, not forward. Talking big, haughty in spirit, showing off, parading oneself, seeking applause, calling attention to self, sounding own praises.

**Ephesians 4:29: speech to edify others; Acts 5:1-11: Ananias & Sapphira lying about gift to church.**

“is not arrogant” lowly in mind, modest, quiet conceited, puffed with pride, haughty in spirit, overbearing, domineering, dictatorial, superiority, self-exalting.

**Colossians 4:6 your speech seasoned with grace. Eccl:3:7b, A time to speak and a time to keep silent.**

“does not act unbecomingly” considerate, tactful, respectful, sensitive thoughtless, embarrassing to others, rude, coarse, shameless, dishonorably, indecent.

**Philippians 2:5-8: We can be on solid ground when we follow the mind of Christ. Proverbs 25:11 Words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver.**

“does not seek it own” submissive, unselfish agenda, yielding self-assertive, demanding recognition/consideration, rebellious, looks out for #1, must have own rights, self-seeking.

**1 Thessalonians 5:15 Don’t give evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue good, both to yourselves & others.**

“is not provoked” calm disposition, subdued, peaceful, warm irritable, sharp, incensed, annoyed, quick-tempered, touchy, hyper-sensitive, easily ruffled, edgy, sarcastic, tantrums, wrathful/raging, exasperated, cutting, excitable.

**Colossians 3:15 Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body, and be thankful. Hebrews: 12:14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord. Proverbs 6:16-17: A proud look, and a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren are an abomination to God..**

“does take into account a wrong” forgiving, sincere, open resentful, holds grudges, bitter, broods over wrongs, vindictive, deceitful, repeats offense done by others. “Serves them right”.

**Colossians 3:13: bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another, even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. Luke 17:3-4, Forgive as often as necessary Matt. 6:6-15 The Lord’s prayer.**

“rejoices in truth” sadden at misfortunes, covers faults of others, glad at others righteous lives. Lack of love shown in gloating over the faults of others, exposing others, finding pleasure in other’s misfortune.

**Proverbs 24:7, 16 Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles, lest the Lord see it and it displease Him and He turns away His wrath from him. He who gives a right answer kisses the lips.**

“bears all things” stands up under pressure, “watertight attitude”. “end or your rope, weary in doing, collapsing under pressure, retreating,

**Example 2 Chronicles 15:7-8 Be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded. 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 Testimony of Paul. Philippians 4:12-13 We do all things through Jesus Christ. Proverbs 24:10 If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small.**

“believes all things” Looks for the best in others, gives benefit of doubt, confident in others, trusting, over generous, vulnerable. Lack of love: suspicious, doubtful, critical, skeptical, self-protective.

**Philippians 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition but esteem others better than yourself. Galatians 6:1 Bear one another's burden.**

“hopes all things” optimistic, sees the bright side, sunny cheerful, Lack of love: pessimistic, gives up on others, despairing, gloomy, sour.

**Proverbs 13:12: Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.**

“endures all things” persevering, steadfast, holding on, sustaining, undiscouraged, positive fortitude. Lack of love: giving up, ceasing, fleeing away, discouraged.

**2 Timothy 2:3-5,10; We are soldiers here and required to endure hardness for Jesus Christ. Endure all things for the elect.**

This is pretty convicting to all of us and we close by finding an answer in 1 John 4:18: “There is NO FEAR in love, but perfect (mature) love casts our fear, because fear involves torment (punishment and wanting to escape), but he who fears has NOT been made perfect (mature) in agape love.”

If we find our selves with lack of love, then we need to look at the characteristics and

- a) agree with God where we are lacking,
- b) choose to know, claim, and invoke the Truth in our lives, regardless of how to feel about a situation.
- c) Start a habit of daily declaring the Truth within (attitude) and by faith apply (action) what God has provided through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to make changes. Remember you do not have to like the person or situation that troubles you. Like is our strength, love is His and He alone can provide the impossible to be possible. START TODAY.