

Love Is Not Selfish or Provoked
I Corinthians 13:5

Introduction:

- I. We continue our series today by discussing another facet of love.
 - a. Not only is it patient, kind, humble, and well-behaved, it is also selfless.
 - b. This has been translated several different ways:
 - i. Does not insist on its own way, does not think of self, etc.
 - 1. Several “standard” translations say, “does not seek its own.”
 - a. Literal, but what does it mean? We will study that today.
 - ii. Is not provoked, irritable, resentful, annoyed, aroused to anger.
 - 1. It literally means, “Not stirred up.”
- II. These two, as several have been already, are paired together to show two sides of a characteristic of love:
 - a. It does not enforce its own rights, and it does not get angry when others enforce theirs.
 - b. This has to be one of the most difficult descriptions of love that must describe us.

Discussion:

- I. Love seeks not its own.
 - a. Paul has already addressed several problems in the Corinthian church.
 - i. Favoritism with preachers, adultery, lawsuits between Christians, how to treat spouses, eating food sacrificed to idols, how to act in worship, and the meaning of spiritual gifts.
 - ii. In his discussion of “food sacrificed to idols,” he delves into the idea of how we must think from day to day.
 - 1. Chapter 8
 - a. Be careful that your rights do not become a stumbling block to others (8:9).
 - b. Renounce your rights when they might hurt the faith of others.
 - 2. Chapter 9
 - a. Paul in the beginning of Chapter 9 gives himself as a primary example.
 - i. Does Barnabas or I not have the right to have a wife? (9:5)
 - ii. Do we not have the right to be paid to preach the gospel? (9:6, 14-15)
 - iii. Though I am free from all...(19-23).
 - 3. Chapter 10
 - a. Don’t let anything cause you to lose your salvation, especially selfishness and arrogance (1-13).
 - b. He sums it up beginning with verse 23

- i. All things are lawful, but not all things are expedient.
 - 1. In other words, I may have the right, but it's not always proper to exercise that right.
 - ii. Then he commands us to do what is proper in every situation!
 - 1. Let no man seek his own, but each man another's wealth.
 - a. This is a command! We must do what is best (expedient), and we must do what edifies others.
 - iii. It is in this context that he says, "Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."
 - 1. We live to do what leads others close to God, and we **MUST** do those things that will accomplish this goal, including, but not limited to, surrendering our rights for the common good.
 - c. Paul said, "I do not insist on things that are truly my right to have."
 - i. Then he said, "Imitate me, as I imitate Christ."
 - 1. Come to think of it, did Jesus have a wife? Did Jesus get paid by the multitudes? I don't remember reading anything about that.
 - 2. Did Jesus insist on his "rights?" Or did he say, "Not my will, but yours be done?"
- b. Paul wrote to the Philippian church (which did not have so many of the problems that Corinth had) about the same thing.
 - i. Philippians 2:1-4 –
 - 1. If there is any comfort... – Is there consolation in Christ?
 - a. Be of the same mind (Get along).
 - b. Have the same love (All of you treat each other right).
 - c. Have the same mind (Have the same goal).
 - 2. Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit
 - a. Like the preachers he has talked about in chapter 1!
 - i. Do not be a Christian to be selfish, do not be a Christian who forces others to think like you!
 - ii. Consider one another to be of more value than yourselves.
 - iii. Look after each other's benefit!
 - b. Then he gives someone as an example—the same one he used with Corinth!
 - i. Have this mind in you that was also in Christ Jesus...(5-11).
 - ii. Why did Jesus live? (Matt. 20:28)

- II. Love is not provoked.
 - a. As I said at the beginning of this lesson, this is heavily dependent on the first point of the lesson.
 - i. When someone insists on his own way or rights, it annoys and irritates those around them.
 - ii. Someone who does not truly relinquish his rights will feel resentment and anger when another person exercises rights.
 - 1. That feeling of, “That’s not fair, I want to do that, too.”
 - b. Paul tells the Ephesians to put away falsehood and treat others like they are members of one another.
 - i. He follows with, “Be angry and sin not; let not the sun go down on your wrath.”
 - 1. Anger gives Satan an opportunity.
 - 2. We need to put away the sins of being provoked:
 - a. Bitterness/Resentment
 - b. Anger/Wrath/Getting Even
 - c. Clamoring/Arguing/Fighting
 - d. Evil Speech/Gossip
 - e. Malice/Desire to hurt
 - ii. Thoughts become words, and words become actions.
 - 1. What if I told you that you have the mind of a murderer?
 - a. Matthew 5:21-26 – One who holds a grudge is like a murderer.
 - b. This goes both ways – If you are angry, put away the anger. If others are angry with you, make it right—before you worship!