

# Do We LABOR In Love



Imitate Us as We Imitate Christ

(Part 2)

## 1 Thessalonians 1:1-4

1 Corinthians 13:4-13; John 15:9-17; 1 John 3:13-19

### A Call to Prayer

- Have you heard the pastor's call to Church prayer?
- Are we filled with compassion for each other, for the lost, for the persecuted, for the 2.9 million babies murdered this year so far, for those in slavery, for those suffering famine and pestilence, etc. . .
- The pastor calls us to prayer again this week.

### Are We Growing?

- Are we DELIBERATELY growing as disciples of Christ?
- Are we living the 5 D's of discipleship?
- Or are the things of the world more important? Consider 1 John 2:17.
- Or do you believe that growing within a church body is not necessary?

### A Church to Imitate: Thessalonika: Their Labor of Love (1 Thess 1:3)

- (v. 4) "beloved brethren"
  - They were loved by God. We mentioned 8 characteristics of this love.
  - They were loved, as brethren, by Paul. EVERYONE born of God loves those who have been born of God. (1 John 5:1-2)
    - ✗ Not to love the brethren is evidence that you are not born-again. (1 John 2:3-4, 9-11; 4:7-8, 20-21; 3:14-15)
    - ✓ LOVE IS AN ACTION WORD! LOVE IS SOMETHING WE DO - NOT SAY.
- Two signs of the end times:
  - The love of many will grow cold (Matthew 24:12; Rev 2:4-5). In contrast to "abounding more and more" (Philippians 1:9; 2 Thess 1:3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5) or "fervently". (1 Peter 1:22; 4:8)

➤ Many will leave the faith. (Matthew 13:20-22; 24:5-12, 24; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 4:3-4)

♥ **Thessalonians' Labor** (κόπος - kopos - laborious toil; wearying kind of toil; done to the point of exhaustion) of **LOVE**. Love obeys (does) the commandments/ will of God. (John 14:15, 21, 23, 24; 15:14; 1 John 5:2-3)

- ♥ This kind of labor is motivated, energized, done out of *agape* love.
- ♥ This is a fervent love for God because of all He has done in saving us and making us His own. **Meditate on Luke 7:47.**

➤ Love for God is **demonstrated** only in **ONE WAY** - **OBEDIENCE!** (John 14:15, 21, 23-24; 15:10, 13-14; 1 John 5:1-3)

- ♥ This is a fervent love for the brethren. (1 Peter 1:22; 4:8; Proverbs 10:12; John 13:34-35; 1 John 3:16-18; 4:10-11)

- Biblical love is absolutely **necessary** for a Church. THAT LOVE (as defined by God) is **necessary** if a Church is going to mature to all that God wants it to be. And, yet, it has grown **cold**. (Matthew 24:12)
- This LOVE is evidence that we are saved! Without this kind of LOVE we are still in DEATH! We are NOT SAVED! (1 John 2:9; 3:14; **4:20**)
- LOVE is the first fruit of the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)
- When a person and a Church is **FILLED** with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) then love will **naturally** and **effortlessly** flows out! (Galatians 5:16)
- The Holy Spirit uses the word ἀγάπη agape {ag-ah'-pay} for love.
  - ✗ It is more than friendly or brotherly love φιλέω phileo {fil-eh'-o}.
  - ✗ It is certainly not romantic or sexual love **eros**.
  - ✓ This love is at its core **selfless**. (1 John 3:16; Ephesians 5:2)
  - ✓ This love expects **nothing** in return - it is UNCONDITIONAL. (Luke 6:35)
  - ✓ This love finds **joy** in **giving**. (1 John 3:16-18)
  - ✓ **This love loves when it is not loved**. (Matthew 5:44)
  - ✗ This love is **unnatural** to human nature - it is supernatural - it is the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)
  - ✓ This love **demonstrates** itself in **obedience**. (Romans 13:8-9; John 14:21, 23-24; 15:10, 12-13; 1 John 5:1-3) This love is **holy**.
  - ✓ This love is the love that Christ **commanded** His disciples. (John 13:34-35) **This love is not optional**.
  - ✓ This love is to be **fervent**. (1 Peter 4:8; 1:22)
  - ✓ Christians are to **pursue** this love. (1 Cor 14:1; 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22)
  - ✓ Christians are to **"increase and abound in love"**. (1 Thess 3:12; 4:9-10; Philippians 1:9; 2 Thess 1:3)
  - ✓ Christians love **because** they themselves are loved by God. (1 John 4:10-11, 19)
  - ★ The standard of this love is "as Christ has loved us"! (John 13:34; Ephesians 5:2; Colossians 3:12-13; 1 John 3:16; 4:10-11)

- ★ This love is SEEN/FELT by others. (John 13:35; 1 John 3:16-18)
- ★ This love works - just as grace works – just as faith works. (1 John 3:16-18; James 2:14-26; Hebrews 6:10-12)
- ★ This love is an act of the **WILL** not the emotions or feelings.  
→ Consider 2 Peter 1:5-10; Colossians 1:10.

### LOVE Defined (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

1. ♥ Love suffers loooooooooooooooooooooooooong. Love is patient.
    - Love is **THICK SKINNED!**
    - Love forgives **just as** it has been forgiven. (Colossians 3:13)
  2. ♥ Love is kind (useful, gracious, serving). Love **enslaves** itself to others. (Matthew 20:27-28; Philippians 2:5-9)
- WE WILL or WILL NOT TO LOVE.**
3. ♥ Love does not envy/is not jealous.
    - ✗ “I want what he has.”
    - ✗ “I wish he did not have what he has!”
  4. ♥ Love does not parade itself or brag or boast. This love is the opposite of being proud. Pride leads to all sins. Christ came and humbled Himself and made Himself of no reputation, and we are to follow His example. (Philip 2:6-8)
  5. ♥ Love is not puffed up (arrogant). This is the feeling that you are better than others. See 1 Corinthians 4:6-8.  
→ Our attitude needs to be like John the Baptist – John 1:27; 3:30.
- WE WILL or WILL NOT TO LOVE.**
6. ♥ Love does not behave rudely. Love is polite. Love is caring about others around you. Love is considerate of others.
  7. ♥ Love does not seek its own. Love seeks to help and lift up others.
  8. ♥ Love is not provoked. Love is not aroused to anger. Love does not become upset when things are done against it. (1 Pet 2:21-24; Acts 7:60)
- WE WILL or WILL NOT TO LOVE.**
9. ♥ Love thinks no evil. The word “think” is an accounting word. Literally, this exhortation says, “Love does not take into account what is done against it.” Another translation is, “Love keeps no records of evil.”
  10. ♥ Love does not rejoice in sin (unrighteousness). (See Isaiah 5:20)
    - ★ Gossip is the opposite of this characteristic.
    - ★ Love pursues holiness.
    - ★ Love does not lead others into or entice them to sin.
  11. ♥ Love rejoices in truth. God’s Word is truth. Righteousness is living by the Word of God. Love does not compromise the truth – **ever!** (Ephesians 4:15; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:18)

**WE WILL or WILL NOT TO LOVE.**

12. ♥ Love bears all things. Love protects. Protecting others will expose us to ridicule, exposure, and possibly harm. Love does not gossip **or even** listen to gossip. Love forgives gossip. Love even is willing to take the consequences of another’s sin in order to protect them. (Eph 5:2)
13. ♥ Love believes all things. Love is not suspicious. Love does not speculate. Love always thinks the best of a person. Love will consider someone innocent until he proven guilty. Love trusts. (Galatians 6:1)
14. ♥ Love hopes all things. Love never lets go. Love always hopes for the best.
  - Love is always optimistic.

**WE WILL or WILL NOT TO LOVE.**

15. ♥ Love **endures** all things. “Endure” is ὑπομένω hupomeno {hoop-om-en'-o} and is a military term used of an army assigned to hold a position at **all** costs. Love **keeps** on loving even against the greatest odds. See Acts 7:60. There is no end to “enduring”. “Enduring” by definition keeps on going!!!!
  - ★ Christ endured ridicule, gossip, slander, rejection, and was crucified. (Hebrews 12:2; 1 Peter 2:21-23)
  - ★ Christ laid down His life for His sheep! (John 10:18; 1 John 4:10-11; 3:16)

### 16. ♥ Love **NEVER** fails.

- ☆ “to fail” is πίπτω pipto {pip'-to} means “to fall”; “to decay”; “to perish”; “to be ruined”; “to diminish” etc.
  - ☆ “**never**” is οὐδέποτε oudepote {oo-dep'-ot-eh} has to do with **time**. There is never anytime that loves fails. **Love loves all the time.**
- WE WILL or WILL NOT TO LOVE.**

**Has our love grown cold?  
OR  
Are we abounding more and more in  
love?**

## CHRIST-LIKE LOVE