

Becoming Like Christ, Teacher's Guide

Lesson 3: Love That Looks Like Jesus

1 Corinthians 13:1–13

Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

The doctrine at stake in this lesson is the primacy of love in the character God is forming in His people. Paul places this chapter in the middle of a long discussion about spiritual gifts precisely to put those gifts in their place. The Corinthians prized the visible and the spectacular; Paul insists that without agape love, the love God showed us in Christ, all of it is worthless. Make sure the class leaves convinced that love is not one virtue among many but the heart of Christlikeness, the thing without which the most impressive Christianity is nothing. This is agape, a settled commitment to seek another's good, modeled and supplied by Christ Himself, not a sentimental feeling.

There is a significant doctrinal guardrail in verses 8 through 13 that must be handled with exegetical care. Paul contrasts love, which never fails, with prophecy, tongues, and knowledge, which he says will cease and pass away because they were partial, belonging to the time before the complete or perfect had come. The natural reading, in harmony with the rest of the New Testament, is that these miraculous, revelatory sign gifts served a temporary purpose: to confirm the word while the New Testament was being given (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3–4). Once the complete revelation of God's will had come, recorded in the inspired and all-sufficient Scriptures that thoroughly equip us for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16–17), the partial means that pointed toward it were no longer needed. Teach this carefully and from the text, showing that we today look not for new revelations or miraculous gifts but to the completed Word, while love abides forever. Avoid both the error of expecting present-day sign gifts and any sensationalism; let the text drive the conclusion.

Beyond the doctrine, this lesson aims squarely at the heart. Verses 4 through 7 function like a mirror, and few passages expose us more thoroughly. The pastoral aim is to let the class feel the gap between this love and their own hearts, not to crush them, but to drive them to the Christ who is Himself this love and who supplies it by His Spirit through His Word. Teach so that people leave both marveling at how perfectly this describes Jesus and resolved, by His grace, to love one specific person more like Him this week.

Question 1

Student Question:

Paul begins by insisting that the most impressive spiritual gifts, eloquent tongues, prophecy, knowledge, mountain-moving faith, even sacrificial giving and martyrdom, all amount to nothing without love (1 Corinthians 13:1–3). What does it tell us about God and about the Christian life that love, not ability or achievement, is the one indispensable thing? Why is it not enough merely to do impressive things for God?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Begin by setting the stage Paul is actually writing into. This is not an isolated poem; it sits between chapter 12 and chapter 14, both of which concern spiritual gifts and the divisions they were causing in Corinth. The church was proud, competitive, and fractured. Some members felt superior because of their gifts; others felt worthless. Paul's stunning claim cuts straight through all of it: tongues, prophecy, knowledge, faith, even giving away everything and surrendering the body to be burned, all of it is nothing without love (1 Corinthians 13:1–3).

Notice how absolute Paul is. He does not say that gifts without love are less valuable; he says they profit nothing and that the gifted person is nothing. This is one of the most leveling truths in Scripture. God is not finally impressed by ability, eloquence, knowledge, or even sacrifice if love is absent. The thing He prizes, the thing that is indispensable, is the love that looks like His Son. Everything else is borrowed scaffolding; love is the building.

Help the class feel why this must be so. God is love (1 John 4:8), and His whole purpose is to conform us to the image of Christ, who is love embodied. To have gifts without love is to have the tools of the trade while missing the trade itself, like a surgeon with a full set of instruments and no intention to heal. Press the point gently: it is entirely possible to be busy, gifted, knowledgeable, even sacrificial in religion, and still be missing the one thing that matters most.

This first question opens the major theme of the whole chapter, so do not rush past it. Let it unsettle the room a little. Most of us instinctively measure ourselves and others by what we can do. Paul measures by whether we love. That single reorientation, if it lands, will color the rest of the lesson and a good deal of the Christian life.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Love as the one indispensable thing in the Christian life (1 Corinthians 13:1–3)
- Spiritual gifts and achievements as worthless without love
- God's people measured by love, not by visible ability or accomplishment
- God is love, and His purpose is to form Christ's love in us (1 John 4:8)
- The danger of religious activity that lacks the heart of Christ

Discussion Prompts

- Why does Paul say a gifted person without love is nothing, rather than merely less than they could be?
- Where are we tempted to measure spiritual maturity by ability instead of love?
- What would it change in your week to treat love as the one indispensable thing?

Question 2

Student Question:

Paul says that without love he is only a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal, all sound and no substance (13:1). Where in your own life have you been tempted to settle for the appearance of spirituality, looking the part, saying the right things, performing, while love was thin underneath? What would it look like to care more about being loving than about looking impressive?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This second question turns the truth inward, and the target is the gap between appearance and reality. Paul says that without love he is a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal (13:1), an instrument that makes a lot of sound and communicates nothing. In pagan Corinth, such instruments were used in the worship of idols, a fitting picture: religious noise that points to nothing real. The danger is not that we will stop performing religion, but that performance will become a substitute for love.

Bring this close to home. It is possible to say the right things in a Bible class, to be present every time the doors are open, to pray fluently and speak the language of faith, while love runs thin underneath, while we are impatient at home, cold toward the difficult person, secretly competitive with a brother or sister. The Corinthians were spiritually gifted and spiritually immature at the same time, and so can we be.

Invite honesty without inviting despair. The point is not to shame anyone for caring how they come across, but to reorder our deepest concern. Would we rather look impressive or actually love? Jesus reserved His sharpest words for those who were religiously polished and loveless (Matthew 23:23–28). Encourage each person to name one place where they have settled for the appearance of spirituality, and to ask the Lord to make the love real beneath the surface.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The contrast between religious appearance and genuine love (1 Corinthians 13:1)
- Performance as a counterfeit for Christlike love
- The peril of being gifted yet spiritually immature
- Jesus' warning against religion that is polished but loveless (Matthew 23:23–28)

Discussion Prompts

- Where have you been tempted to look spiritual rather than to actually love?
- What is the difference between caring about others and caring about how you come across?
- What is one place this week where you can choose real love over appearance?

Question 3

Student Question:

The love Paul describes is agape, a chosen commitment to seek another's good, not a passing feeling or mere affection. Notice that every quality in verses 4 through 7 is something you can decide and do, being patient, being kind, refusing to envy or boast. How does it change our understanding of love to see it as something we choose and practice rather than something that merely happens to us (compare John 13:34–35)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Now define the love Paul means, because everything depends on it. The word is agape, and the New Testament fills it with content unknown to mere sentiment. It is not primarily a feeling, not the warm rush of affection or attraction, but a settled commitment of the will to seek another's good. This is the love with which God loved us: not because we were lovely, but while we were still sinners and even enemies (Romans 5:6–8). It is the love Jesus commanded, a new commandment, that we love one another as He has loved us (John 13:34–35).

This matters enormously for how we obey. If love were only a feeling, we could not be commanded to do it; we cannot summon feelings on demand. But Paul describes love almost entirely in verbs and actions: it is patient, it is kind, it does not envy, it does not boast, it bears, believes, hopes, endures. Every one of these is something a person can choose to do, by God's grace, even toward someone they do not naturally like. Love, in this sense, is not waiting to feel something; it is deciding to seek another's good and acting on it.

Help the class see that this is both freeing and demanding. Freeing, because you do not have to manufacture warm feelings before you can love; you can begin to act in love now, today, toward the very person who irritates you, and often the feelings follow the action. Demanding, because it removes our favorite excuse, I just do not feel love for them. Christ did not feel His way to the cross; He chose to seek our good at infinite cost. The love that looks like Jesus is chosen, practiced, and sustained by His grace working in us (Galatians 5:22–23).

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Agape as a chosen commitment to seek another's good, not mere feeling (1 Corinthians 13:4–7)
- God's love shown to the unlovely and even to enemies (Romans 5:6–8)
- Christ's new command to love as He has loved (John 13:34–35)
- Love expressed in actions that can be commanded and chosen
- Love as fruit the Spirit grows in the obedient believer (Galatians 5:22–23)

Discussion Prompts

- How does seeing love as a choice rather than a feeling change the way you obey God?
- Why can God command love if love is only a feeling, and what does that tell us?
- Toward whom could you begin acting in love this week, even before the feelings come?

Question 4

Student Question:

Paul says love does not envy or boast, is not arrogant or rude, does not insist on its own way (13:4–5). These are precisely the sins that were tearing the Corinthian church apart. Which one of these gets the firmest grip on you, the envy that resents another's blessing, the boasting that needs to be noticed, or the insistence on having your own way? Be specific about where it shows up.

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This self-focused question takes Paul's specific list and lets it search us. Love does not envy or boast, is not arrogant or rude, does not insist on its own way, is not irritable or resentful (13:4–5). It is no accident that these are exactly the sins fracturing Corinth. Envy resents the blessing or gift another person has. Boasting and arrogance need to be seen as superior. Rudeness and insisting on one's own way trample others to get what we want. These are the everyday sins that quietly poison homes, friendships, and churches.

Encourage specificity, because vague confession changes nothing. Ask each person to find the one that has the firmest grip on them. For some it is envy, the low ache of resentment when someone else is praised, promoted, or blessed. For others it is the need to be noticed, to steer the conversation back to themselves. For still others it is the quiet tyranny of always needing things their own way, in the home or in the congregation.

Then point to the remedy. We do not overcome these by simply trying harder to suppress them; we overcome them as we behold and receive the love of Christ, who though He was rich became poor for our sake (2 Corinthians 8:9), who did not insist on His own way but said not My will but Yours be done (Luke 22:42). The cure for a grasping, self-centered heart is not gritted teeth but a heart increasingly captured by the self-giving love of Jesus. Invite each person to name their besetting sin here and bring it honestly to the Lord.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Love's refusal of envy, boasting, arrogance, rudeness, and self-will (1 Corinthians 13:4–5)
- The self-centered sins that divide homes and churches
- Christ's self-emptying love as the pattern and cure (2 Corinthians 8:9; Luke 22:42)
- Transformation through beholding Christ, not mere self-effort

Discussion Prompts

- Which of these, envy, boasting, or insisting on your own way, grips you most firmly?
- Where specifically does it show up in your daily relationships?
- How does the self-giving love of Jesus address the root of that sin in you?

Question 5

Student Question:

Paul writes that love keeps no record of wrongs and does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth (13:5–6). How does this reflect the very heart of the gospel, in which God in Christ does not count our trespasses against us (2 Corinthians 5:19; Psalm 103:10–12)? Why is a love that refuses to keep score so central to the character of Christ?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This question reaches into the gospel itself. Paul says love keeps no record of wrongs and does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth (13:5–6). The phrase keeps no record is an accounting term; love does not maintain a ledger of offenses, totaling up grievances to be collected later. This is precisely what God in Christ has done for us: in reconciling the world to Himself, He does not count our trespasses against us (2 Corinthians 5:19). He removes our transgressions as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:10–12).

Make the connection explicit and let it land. A love that keeps no record is not natural to us; it is the very fingerprint of God. By default we keep careful books on those who hurt us, ready to produce the evidence. But the cross is the great cancellation of debts, where the record that stood against us was nailed away (Colossians 2:13–14). To love this way, to release the offense, to refuse to keep score, is to extend to others the mercy we have received. We forgive as we have been forgiven (Ephesians 4:32).

Notice too that love rejoices with the truth and not at wrongdoing. Real love is not soft on sin; it does not delight when an enemy stumbles or when gossip is confirmed. It longs for what is right and rejoices when truth and righteousness prevail, even at cost to itself. This guards us from a sentimental counterfeit that calls indulgence love. The love of Christ is holy: it covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8) without ever celebrating sin.

Help the class feel how central this is to Christlikeness. A heart that keeps no record and refuses to gloat over another's fall is a heart being remade in the image of the God who forgives. Ask whether there is a ledger they are still keeping, and whether the Lord is calling them to close the book.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Love keeps no record of wrongs, reflecting God's refusal to count our trespasses (1 Corinthians 13:5; 2 Corinthians 5:19)
- God's removal of our sins as the pattern for forgiveness (Psalm 103:10–12; Colossians 2:13–14)
- Forgiving others as we have been forgiven (Ephesians 4:32)
- Love rejoices with truth and does not delight in wrongdoing (1 Corinthians 13:6)
- Holy love that covers sin without ever celebrating it (1 Peter 4:8)

Discussion Prompts

- What ledger of wrongs might you still be keeping, and against whom?

- How does God's refusal to count your sins shape the way you treat those who hurt you?
- What is the difference between a love that covers sin and a love that excuses it?

Question 6

Student Question:

Paul says love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things (13:7). Think of one relationship right now that is testing your patience or your hope, perhaps a difficult family member, a friend who has wounded you, or someone hard to love at church. What would it look like this week to bear, hope, and endure rather than to give up or retaliate?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This question presses verse 7 into the hard places of real relationships. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things (13:7). Bearing carries the sense of covering and protecting rather than exposing. Believing and hoping mean love chooses to think the best and to keep hoping for a person's good rather than writing them off. Enduring is the steadfastness that stays put when love is costly and the change is slow.

Be careful and honest here, because this can be misheard. Love that bears and endures is not the same as enabling abuse or pretending evil is not evil; love also rejoices with the truth (13:6) and seeks the genuine good of the other. But within the ordinary friction of human relationships, the family member who frustrates us, the friend who has wounded us, the brother or sister at church who is hard to love, this verse calls us to a remarkable patience that refuses to give up easily.

Make it concrete. Ask each person to bring to mind one relationship that is currently testing them. Then ask what bearing, hoping, and enduring would actually look like there this week: a word withheld, a kindness extended, a refusal to retaliate, a prayer for the person rather than a complaint about them. This is the very love Christ showed us, who bore with our weakness, kept hoping for us, and endured the cross for the joy of bringing us home (Hebrews 12:2-3; 1 Peter 2:23). To love like this is to look like Him.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Love bears, believes, hopes, and endures all things (1 Corinthians 13:7)
- The difference between patient endurance and enabling wrongdoing
- Love that thinks the best and keeps hoping for another's good
- Christ's bearing and enduring love as our pattern (Hebrews 12:2-3; 1 Peter 2:23)

Discussion Prompts

- Which relationship is most testing your patience and hope right now?
- What would bearing, hoping, and enduring look like there this week?
- How does the way Christ endured for you strengthen you to endure for others?

Question 7

Student Question:

Paul declares that love never fails, but that prophecies, tongues, and knowledge will pass away, for they are partial and belong to the time before the complete had come (13:8–10). What is Paul teaching about the temporary purpose of the miraculous gifts in contrast to the permanence of love, and how does this fit with the truth that the completed New Testament is now our full and sufficient revelation (2 Timothy 3:16–17)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Here we begin the chapter's great contrast, which the next, heaviest question will complete. Paul says love never fails, but as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away (13:8). He then explains why: we know in part and prophesy in part, but when the complete comes, the partial will pass away (13:9–10). The gifts the Corinthians prized were, by their very nature, partial and temporary; love is permanent.

Set this in the broader teaching of the New Testament. The miraculous, revelatory gifts, prophecy, tongues, supernatural knowledge, served a specific purpose during the founding era of the church: to confirm the spoken word before the New Testament was complete in writing. The Lord worked with the apostles, confirming the message by accompanying signs (Mark 16:20), and salvation was attested by God through signs, wonders, and gifts of the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 2:3–4). These gifts were the scaffolding around the building going up; they were never meant to be permanent.

What is the complete, or perfect, that Paul says will replace the partial? In context, Paul contrasts our present partial knowledge with the full and finished. The understanding most consistent with the rest of Scripture is that the partial means of revelation gave way once God's complete revelation had come, the inspired Scriptures that are God-breathed and able to make us complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16–17). The faith was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3); God has given us everything we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). We do not look for new prophecies or fresh revelations today, because the revelation is finished and sufficient.

Keep the tone one of marveling, not merely arguing. The point Paul drives home is not first about chronology but about value: even at their height, the gifts were partial and passing, while love endures forever. The Corinthians had their priorities upside down, prizing the temporary and neglecting the eternal. We can make the same mistake whenever we chase the impressive and the immediate over the patient, lasting work of love.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Love never fails, but prophecy, tongues, and knowledge will cease (1 Corinthians 13:8)
- The miraculous gifts as partial and temporary by nature (1 Corinthians 13:9–10)

- The purpose of sign gifts: to confirm the word as it was being given (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3–4)
- The completed Scriptures as God’s full, sufficient revelation (2 Timothy 3:16–17; Jude 3)
- Prizing the eternal (love) over the temporary (the spectacular)

Discussion Prompts

- Why does Paul call prophecy and knowledge partial, and love permanent?
- What purpose did the miraculous gifts serve in the early church?
- Where are we tempted to chase the impressive over the lasting work of love?

Question 8

Student Question:

Paul uses two images to describe growing up into mature love: setting aside childish ways, and moving from a dim mirror to seeing face to face (13:11–12). In what area of your life are you still loving like a child, easily offended, demanding your own way, impatient? What is one childish way you sense the Lord asking you to put away as you grow up into Christ?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This self-focused question uses Paul’s own images of maturing. When I was a child, he says, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways (13:11). And he adds the famous picture: now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face (13:12). The ancient mirror gave only a blurred reflection; one day, in Christ’s presence, we will see clearly. In the meantime, we are called to grow up.

Bring the childishness into focus, because spiritual immaturity often looks exactly like childishness. A child is easily offended, demands its own way, cannot delay gratification, sulks, keeps score over small slights, and craves attention. The Corinthians, for all their gifts, were spiritual infants (1 Corinthians 3:1–3), quarreling and jealous. We can be the same: thin-skinned, self-centered, impatient, our love stunted and small.

Ask each person to name one childish way the Lord is calling them to put away. Perhaps it is the habit of taking offense, or of needing to win every disagreement, or of pouting when overlooked. Growing up into Christ (Ephesians 4:13–15) means these things steadily lose their grip as love matures in us. Encourage the class that this growth is real and possible: we will not see perfectly until we see Him face to face, but we are meant to be putting away childish ways now, by His grace, one specific habit at a time.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Maturing love means putting away childish ways (1 Corinthians 13:11)
- Seeing dimly now, face to face then (1 Corinthians 13:12)
- Spiritual immaturity as a real danger even for the gifted (1 Corinthians 3:1–3)
- Growing up into Christ as the goal of maturity (Ephesians 4:13–15)

Discussion Prompts

- In what area are you still loving like a child rather than like Christ?
- What is one childish way the Lord is asking you to put away?
- How does the hope of seeing Christ face to face motivate you to grow now?

Question 9

Student Question:

Paul ends with the great summary: now these three remain, faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of these is love (13:13). Why does love stand even above faith and hope as the greatest and most enduring of all, the one thing that will not pass away when faith becomes sight and hope is fulfilled? How does this whole chapter, with its contrast between love that abides and gifts that cease, reshape what we should most desire and pursue in the Christian life?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This is the heaviest doctrinal question of the lesson, gathering the whole chapter into its climax: now these three remain, faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of these is love (13:13). To grasp why love is greatest, hold together the two contrasts Paul has been drawing. First, against the gifts: prophecy, tongues, and knowledge will cease because they were partial, the scaffolding of the founding era, needed only while God's revelation was being given and confirmed (1 Corinthians 13:8–10; Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3–4). With the complete revelation now delivered in the inspired and all-sufficient Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16–17; Jude 3), we no longer look for new prophecies or miraculous sign gifts. Those means have served their purpose and passed. Love has not.

Second, even against the great abiding graces. Faith and hope endure throughout this life and are precious beyond words, yet there is a sense in which even they are oriented toward something not yet possessed. Faith will one day become sight (2 Corinthians 5:7); hope that is seen is no longer hope, for who hopes for what he already has (Romans 8:24)? When we stand in the presence of God, faith will have reached its object and hope will have received its fulfillment. But love will not be obsolete in heaven; it will be perfected. Love is the one thing in this chapter that belongs equally to this age and the next, the very life of God Himself, for God is love (1 John 4:8, 16). That is why it is the greatest.

Let this reframe what we most desire and pursue. The Corinthians strained after the spectacular gifts, the things that would not last. Paul tells them, and us, to pursue the thing that abides. We are not to spend our lives chasing the impressive, the immediate, the things that pass away, but to give ourselves to growing in the love that looks like Jesus and lasts forever. The greatest measure of a life, in God's sight, is not what we accomplished or how gifted we appeared, but how we loved.

Handle this with care and with worship, not as a club to win an argument but as a window into the heart of God. The truth that the sign gifts have ceased is not a cold doctrine; it is the

flip side of a glorious one, that God has finished speaking and given us everything we need in Christ and in the Scriptures, so that we can pour ourselves into the one thing that remains. And the truth that love is greatest is not sentimentality; it is the deepest reality of the universe, the character of God Himself, the thing we are being made to share forever. Help the class leave longing, above every gift and ability, to love.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Faith, hope, and love remain, but love is the greatest (1 Corinthians 13:13)
- The sign gifts ceased as partial, replaced by the complete revelation (1 Corinthians 13:8–10; 2 Timothy 3:16–17; Jude 3)
- Faith becoming sight and hope being fulfilled, while love is perfected (2 Corinthians 5:7; Romans 8:24)
- Love as the eternal life of God Himself (1 John 4:8, 16)
- Pursuing what abides rather than what is spectacular and passing
- God's completed Word as full and sufficient for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3)

Discussion Prompts

- Why is love greater even than faith and hope, and what does that reveal about God?
- How does it help to know that God's revelation is complete and that we look to His Word, not to new gifts?
- What would change if you measured your life by love rather than by accomplishment?

Question 10

Student Question:

Look back across the whole chapter: the emptiness of gifts without love, the patient and kind portrait of love in action, and the declaration that love is the greatest and most enduring thing. Name one specific way you sense Jesus wanting to form His love in you through this passage, and one concrete step you will take this week to love a particular person the way He has loved you.

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The capstone question gathers the whole chapter and asks for a concrete response. Walk the class once more through the movement of 1 Corinthians 13: the emptiness of even the most impressive gifts without love (verses 1–3); the searching, patient, kind, self-giving portrait of love in action (verses 4–7); the contrast between the gifts that have ceased and the love that never fails (verses 8–12); and the great conclusion that love is the greatest and most enduring thing of all (verse 13).

Remind the class that this chapter is, above all, a portrait of Jesus. He was patient and kind toward us; He did not envy or boast or insist on His own way; He kept no record of our wrongs; He bore, believed, hoped, and endured all the way to the cross. To grow in this love

is simply to become like Him. That is the whole aim of this study, and this chapter sits very near its center: the love of Christ is the heart of Christlike character.

Now press for two specifics, because love does not happen in general. First, one way each person senses Jesus wanting to form His love in them through this passage, the line in verses 4–7 that exposed them, the ledger they need to close, the childish way they need to put away. Second, one concrete step this week to love a particular person the way Christ has loved them, a name and an action, not a vague intention.

Close with hope and with the gospel. We do not work up this love by sheer willpower; it is the fruit the Spirit grows in us as we abide in Christ and walk in His Word (Galatians 5:22–23; John 15:4–5). The love described here first came to us before it ever flowed through us: we love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). Send the class out not crushed by the height of this standard but drawn to the Christ who is this love, asking Him to keep forming it in them until the day they see Him face to face.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- A synthesis of 1 Corinthians 13: gifts without love, love in action, love that endures, love the greatest
- The chapter as a portrait of Christ Himself
- Love as the heart of Christlike character and the aim of spiritual formation
- Love as the fruit of abiding in Christ, not mere willpower (Galatians 5:22–23; John 15:4–5)
- We love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19)

Discussion Prompts

- Which line of this chapter most exposed your heart, and what will you do about it?
- Name one specific person and one concrete way to love them like Christ this week.
- How does knowing He first loved you free you to love others?