

Doctrinal Summary of
Love: Evidenced by Characteristics of Its Operation

In 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 Paul identifies several characteristics of how unconditional love functions.

“Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge it will be done away.”

Each of these characteristics will be functioning when an individual is operating in unconditional love.

1. Love is patient: It really performs the continuous type of action to endure provocation in a mentality of tranquility without fear of or reaction to the provocation.
2. Love is kind: It really participates in and is affected by the continuous type of action to graciously provide the needs of another at its own expense.
3. Love is not jealous: It really does not perform the continuous type of action to pursue for itself something like what another person possesses.
4. Love does not brag: It really does not participate in and is not affected by the continuous type of action to heap praise on an oneself.
5. Love is not arrogant: It really is not acted upon in a continuous type of action to inflate or exaggerate the reality of oneself.
6. Love does not act unbecomingly: It really does not perform the continuous type of action to behave in an indecent manner that results in shame.
7. Love does not seek its own: It really does not perform the continuous type of action to zealously strive to accomplish desired objectives that are derived from itself.
8. Love is not provoked: It really is not acted upon in a continuous type of action to be brought to irritation.
9. Love does not take into account a wrong suffered: It really does not participate in being acted upon in a continuous type of action to reckon to another's account what is inherently worthless as a result of failing to meet the standard of God's design.
10. Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness: It really does not perform the continuous type of action to celebrate what fails to meet the standard of God's design.
11. Love rejoices with the truth: It really performs the continuous type of action to celebrate together with that which corresponds to reality.
12. Love bears all: It really performs the continuous type of action to cover or conceal in protection all things.
13. Love believes all: It really performs the continuous type of action to place dependency upon all things to do what is claimed.
14. Love hopes all: It really performs the continuous type of action to confidently expect the future reality of all things.
15. Love endures all: It really performs the continuous type of action to abide under the pressure of all things.
16. Love never fails: It really does not ever perform the continuous type of action to collapse

Unconditional love is either operational or non-operational at any given moment in the believer's life. Self-discipline and restraint can mimic some of unconditional love's characteristics. However, when unconditional love is operating in the believer all these characteristics are manifested as evidence of its presence and function.