

Sunday, January 21, 2018—I Corinthians 13:4-8 Charity IS/DOES, Part 1

Introduction

- Last week we began expounding upon the text of these verses by looking at what “charity” IS NOT and DOTH NOT. By way of review and introduction please recall the following points from last week.
- Verses 4 through 7 constitute the second paragraph of the chapter, verses 1 through 3 were the first. Technically verse 8 begins a third paragraph but we are going to include the first expression of verse 8, “charity never faileth” with verses 4 through 7.
- If you look at the structure of verses 4 through 7 you will see that Paul begins verse 4 by stating two things that “charity” IS/DOES: 1) suffereth long, and 2) is kind. Then, halfway through verse 4 Paul digresses to outline 8 things that “charity” IS NOT/DOTH NOT in verses 4 and 5 and half of verse 6. Halfway through verse 6 there is a contrasting “but” and they a shift back in verses 6, 7, and 8 to the remaining 6 things that “charity” IS/DOES.

Charity Is NOT/DOTH NOT	Charity IS/DOES
Envieth not (v.4)	Suffereth long (v.4)
Vaunteth not itself (v.4)	Is Kind (v.4)
Is not Puffed up (v.4)	Rejoiceth in the truth (v.6)
Doth not behave itself Unseemly (v.5)	Beareth all things (v.7)
Seeketh not her own (v.5)	Believeth all things (v.7)
Is not easily Provoked (v.5)	Hopeth all things (v. 7)
Thinketh no evil (v.5)	Endureth all things (v. 7)
Rejoiceith not in iniquity (v.6)	Never faileth (v. 8)

- Given this structure we are going to take these verses as a unit and look at each side of this coin one at a time. Please bear in mind that we are using the following definitions for “charity:”
 - *Webster’s 1828*—“ **In a general sense, love**, benevolence, good will; **that disposition of heart** which inclines men to think favorably of their fellow men, and to do them good. In a theological sense, it includes supreme love to God, and universal good will to men.
 - 1 Corinthians 8:1. Colossians 3:14. 1 Timothy 1:5
 - *OED*—“1) **Christian love**: a word representing *caritas* of the Vulgate, as a frequent rendering of *ἀγάπη* (agape) in N.T. Greek. With various applications: as
 - C) **The Christian love of one's fellow human beings**; Christian benignity of **disposition expressing itself in Christ-like conduct**: one of the ‘three Christian graces’, fully described by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiii.

- “But the 16th cent. English versions from Tyndale to 1611, while rendering *ἀγάπη* sometimes ‘love’, sometimes ‘charity’, . . . used ‘love’ more often (about 86 times), **confining ‘charity’ to 26 passages in the Pauline** and certain of the Catholic [Jewish] **Epistles** (not in 1 John), and the Apocalypse, **where the sense is specifically 1c** below.” (*OED* etymological information)

What Charity IS/DOES

- *Suffereth long* (v.4)—the Greek word translated “suffereth long” carries the following general meanings: 1) “to persevere patiently and bravely in enduring misfortunes and troubles” and 2) “to be patient in bearing the offenses and injuries of others.” It is variously translated in the King James Bible as follows:
 - Matthew 18:26, 29—“have patience”
 - Luke 18:7—“bear long”
 - Hebrews 6:15—“patiently endured”
 - James 5:7—“long patience”
 - II Peter 3:9—“longsuffering”
- According to Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828) the English word “longsuffering” means: “bearing injuries or provocation for a long time; patient; not easily provoked.”
 - Exodus 34:6
 - Galatians 5:22
 - Ephesians 4:2
 - Colossians 1:11, 3:12
 - II Timothy 4:2
 - II Peter 3:9, 15
- I Corinthians 13:4—the verb “suffereth long” is a present active statement which means that the action is occurring while the speaker is making the statement. Charity ALWAYS “suffereth long”

- *Is Kind* (v.4)—the verb translated “is kind” is once again a present active statement which means “to show one's self mild, to be kind, use kindness.”
- The English word “kind” carries the following relevant meaning: “disposed to do good to others, and to make them happy by granting their requests, supplying their wants or assisting them in distress; having tenderness or goodness of nature; benevolent; benignant.”
 - Ephesians 4:32
- The scriptures also have a lot to say about kindness: 1) good will; benevolence; that temper or disposition which delights in contributing to the happiness of others, which is exercised cheerfully in gratifying their wishes, supplying their wants, or alleviating their distresses; benignity of nature. 2) Act of good will; beneficence; any act of benevolence which promotes the happiness or welfare of others. Charity, hospitality, attentions to the wants of others, etc., are deemed acts of *kindness* or kindnesses.
 - Joel 2:12-13—“great kindness”
 - Jonah 4:2—“great kindness”
 - Isaiah 54:8—“everlasting kindness”
 - Ephesians 2:7
 - Titus 3:4
- I Corinthians 13:4—charity is kind it seeks the happiness of others. “Charity” is the exact opposite of the negative statements the follow it.
- *Rejoiceth in the truth* (v.6)—last week we saw that “charity” does not rejoice in sin and unrighteousness.
 - Romans 1:18; 2:8; 3:5
 - II Thessalonians 2:12
- I Corinthians 13:6—“charity” does however rejoice or “experience joy and gladness in a high degree” in the truth.
 - Philippians 4:8
- Truth is an important concept in scripture. The word “truth” occurs 235 times in 222 verses in the King James Bible. The notion of objective and absolute truth is under attack in our culture.

Moral relativism is used all the time as a justification for all sorts of iniquity and unrighteousness. “Charity” does not rejoice in these things rather it rejoices in the truth.

- ***Beareth all things*** (v.7)—“charity” allows one “to support; to sustain; as, to *bear* a weight or burden” or hold up and preserve under pressure as in a weight bearing wall.
 - Genesis 4:13—“greater than I can bear”
 - I Corinthians 9:12—“suffer all things”
 - I Thessalonians 3:1, 5—“forbear”
- I Corinthians 10:13—“charity” provides a mechanism whereby believers are able to bear all things.