

Sunday, January 28, 2018—I Corinthians 13:4-8 Charity IS/DOES, Part 2

Introduction

- Last week we continued expounding upon the text of these verses by looking at what “charity” IS and DOES. Please recall that I elected to tackle this section by looking first at what “charity” IS NOT/DOTH NOT (negative) and then look at what it is IS/DOES (positive).

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)

- In our last study we covered the first 4 things that “charity” IS/DOES:
 - Suffereth long (v. 4)
 - Is Kind (v. 4)
 - Rejoiceith in the truth (v. 6)
 - Beareth all things (v. 7)
- This morning, keeping the following definitions for “charity” in mind I would like to look at the remaining 4 positive things that “charity” IS/DOES.
 - *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

- **Believeth all things** (v.7)—the word translated “believeth” occurs 264 times in 220 verses in the Greek text supporting the King James Bible. Of these occurrences 239 time the word is translated as some form of the word believe. In a few other occurs the word is rendered in English as some form of trust.
 - Luke 16:11—“commit to your trust”
 - Romans 3:2—“committed”
 - Romans 4:24-25
 - Galatians 2:7—“committed unto me”
 - Galatians 2:16—“believed”
 - I Thessalians 2:4—“be put in trust”
 - I Thessalonians 4:14
 - Titus 1:3—“committed to me trust”
- The English verb “believe” carries the following meaning according to Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828):
 - To credit upon the authority or testimony of another; to be persuaded of the truth of something upon the declaration of another, or upon evidence furnished by reasons, arguments, and deductions of the mind, or by other circumstances, then personal knowledge. When we *believe* upon the authority of another, we always put confidence in his veracity.
 - To expect or hope with confidence; to trust.
- I Corinthians 13:7—what does it mean then when the verse states that charity “believeth all things?” Does this mean that charity accepts everything as true?

- Contrary **beliefs** are possible, but that contrary **truths** are not possible. In short, we can **believe** everything is true but we cannot **make** everything true.
- I Corinthians 13:7—charity is not so empty minded to believe that all things are true. Rather charity “believeth” all things that are “true.” Charity believes everything that God says in his word. This does not mean that believers will all believe the same things because we already now from verses 1-3 that much can be done in the name of Christ without charity.
- *Hopeth all things* (v. 7)—hope is what sustains a person through the storms of life.
 - Romans 8:24-25
 - I Corinthians 15:19
- The concept of hope encapsulates this truth; it is for the **future**, not the **present** that man exists.
 - “This is true of all hope: it is of the Christian's hope that it is affirmed; but it is true of hope, whatever be its character or its object. At least thus much is true, that what we hope for is that which we possess not at present. And it is thus that hope becomes such a stimulus to exertion, such a solace in affliction, such a light amid surrounding darkness, such a stay when no other stay remains. Extinguish hope, and happiness is gone. Let the faintest glimmering of hope remain, and man's misery is not complete. . . “But if the present thus invariably fail to satisfy, and if hope, on which the heart lives and feeds, be bounded by the, present state of existence, it follows that, as those things which have been hoped for come to be possessed, they are found to be as unsatisfying as all else; and thus the history of human life is the history of disappointed hopes. Either the object of hope is never attained, or, when attainment has transformed the future, into the present, that which has been bright to hope becomes dull and insipid in possession; and the heart still sighs and longs for something which it possesses not. It is, of course, of the natural heart we speak thus. The sum of all that it seeks, as well as of all that it possesses, is vanity and vexation of spirit.”
- I Thessalonians 1:10—the hope and future longing of our souls is the Lord Jesus Christ. Our hope his inseparably tied to the one who rose again from the dead.
- I Timothy 1:1—Christ is the believers hope not only in this life but also for the life to come.
- *Heaven*—should the question be put to almost any Christian — what is it that is the object of your individual hope? The answer, in most cases, would be — Heaven. And this, surely, is according to the word of God.
 - Colossians 1:5—THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH IS A HEAVENLY, NOT AN EARTHLY HOPE. Heaven, not earth, is our future dwelling-place. Whatever links of connection there may be in that day between heaven and earth — whatever benign

influences the Church may be employed of God to exert on the earth and its inhabitants — heaven, not earth, is our distinctive place and portion.

- Ephesians 1:3
- Philippians 3:20
- How does one get from here to heaven? There are but two options: 1) death, 2) the return of the Lord to catch away the saints. Both of which are associated with the hope of the believer.
- *Resurrection*—there is another point on which the faith and hopes of Christians generally rest upon. The expectation of being happy with Christ in heaven after death, in the case that death does occur.
 - Philippians 1:21, 23—Paul’s desire was to be with Christ
 - II Corinthians 5:8—and while it is most true, and, in its place, most important, that departed saints are happy with Christ in heaven, it is not this disembodied state, this state of happy, departed souls, which is set before us in Scripture as our hope. This disembodied state is not the full and final object of the believers hope.
 - II Corinthians 5:1-3--what is this house which is "from heaven?" Surely it cannot be our disembodied state while in heaven awaiting the resurrection of the body! No, it is the resurrection-body itself which the apostle says we earnestly desire: "if so be," he proceeds, "that being clothed we shall not be found naked."
 - II Corinthians 5:4—it is not death, and a state of happiness between death and the resurrection, for which the apostle waits, and longs, and groans. It is the resurrection-state, the being clothed upon with the house which is from heaven, the swallowing up of mortality in life. Afterwards he does intimate, that even to be disembodied is better than to be in these mortal tabernacles.
- Such was the state of the apostle's mind on this important subject. While in this body, or tabernacle, he could not but groan. Why so? Because, while at home in the body, he was absent from the Lord. On this account he was willing, and in Philippians he says he had a desire, to be "absent from the body, and present with the Lord." But though preferring the disembodied state to the present one, it was not for the disembodied state that he groaned and waited, as the definite, final object of his hopes. "Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon." It was for the resurrection-body, the resurrection-state, the resurrection-glory, that he longed. And *resurrection, not death, is the believer's hope.*
- *The Coming of Christ*—heaven is our hope; and, that if the Lord should tarry, and we should fall asleep ere He return, we shall be happy with Him in heaven until the resurrection. But it is not this state of separate spirits which is placed before us in Scripture as our hope, but *the return of*

Jesus, to raise the sleeping saints, and to change those who are alive and remain, that both being caught up to meet Him in the air, we may thus, in bodies like to His glorious body, be "forever with the Lord." This is the hope set before us as individual believers.

- I Thessalonians 4:13-17—what was to assuage the sorrow of the Thessalonians? Was it that Christ had come and fulfilled his word? No, it was the return of Jesus, accompanied by the departed saints.
 - I Corinthians 15:51-52
 - Philippians 3:20-21
 - I Thessalonians 1:10—in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, the coming of Christ is mentioned in every chapter.
 - I Thessalonians 2:19-20—it was at the coming of Christ Paul expected to have the full joy of the success of his labors among the Thessalonians.
 - I Thessalonians 3:13
 - I Thessalonians 5:23
 - Titus 2:11-13—the blessed hope of the church is the glorious appearing of our great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.
 - Titus 3:7—the hope of eternal life extends only to those who have been justified. Only those who have trusted the shed blood of Jesus Christ as the only payment for their sin and Christ's resurrection from the dead share in this hope.
- I Corinthians 13:7—charity hopes and trusts in all that God has said he would accomplish.