

Love Is... Patient and Kind

Ready:

“Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud” - 1 Corinthians 13:4

Set

In Roman Corinth, there was a well-known Temple of Aphrodite (the Greek goddess of love). As Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 13, he was redefining the understanding of love that the Corinth people had come to know. The love that Aphrodite represented was distorted and disgusting. They needed to know the true love of God, which was one of patience and kindness.

It's easy to project our culture's understanding of love onto our understanding of God's love. The culture of sport has defined love as circumstantial. When your score is better than the other team's score, you are deemed worthy of praise and affection. The same goes for producing statistics--your victory is your measure of value.

Yet God's love is entirely counter-cultural. This love is not earned or deserved. In fact, it is given in the midst of your brokenness. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). Out of God's love, He gave His son Jesus. You did not do anything to earn this love. It is by His grace that you have been saved.

Before Paul goes into all the things that love is *not*, he gives us a foundation of what love *is*. The patience and kindness of God cannot be bought or distorted.

Think of the best coach that you ever had. Was he or she patient and kind? Probably! It's because patience and kindness beckon us to change. They are not qualities that produce quick and tangible results, but they point you towards a desire for something more. In sports, a kind and patient coach moves you towards improvement and hard work over the course of a season or many seasons. In Christ, patience and kindness turns us from our sin and points us to the sacrificial love of God.

Go

- Who is the best coach you ever had? Why were they the best coach?
- In what ways have you felt like you had to earn God's love?
- How have you seen God display His patience and kindness towards you?

Workout

John 3:16; Romans 2:4; Ephesians 2:8-10

Overtime

“Father God, thank You for redefining what love is. You are love. The only reason we can love is because You first loved us. I confess receiving and giving Your love based on my performance. Please transform my understanding of love to match Yours.”

Bible Reference:

John 3:16

Romans 2:4

Ephesians 2:8-10



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