

Do not gossip

A perverse person spreads dissension, and a gossip separates the closest friends. [PROVERBS 16:28](#) NET

Do not grumble against others

[JAMES, TO BELIEVERS:] *Do not grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be judged.* See, the judge stands before the gates! [JAMES 5:9](#) NET

Grumbling or complaining against others is an outward expression of inner condemnatory judgment of them – which leaves oneself open to such judgment.

Adverse Force**Do not use violence**

[THE KING OF NINEVEH:] Every person and animal must put on sackcloth and must cry earnestly to God, and everyone must turn from their evil way of living and from the violence that they do. [JONAH 3:8](#) NET

Do not murder

You shall not murder. [EXODUS 20:13](#) NET

Do not rape

[MOSES, TO THE ISRAELITES:] *But if the man came across the engaged woman in the field and overpowered her and raped her, then only the rapist must die.* [DEUTERONOMY 22:25](#) NET

The NT does not propagate the death penalty. Nevertheless its mention in regard to such actions shows the seriousness of the crime.

Do not oppress

Thus says the Lord GOD: Enough, O princes of Israel! *Put away violence and oppression, and execute justice and righteousness. Cease your evictions of my people,* declares the Lord GOD. [EZEKIEL 45:9](#) ESV

Pray for persecuted Christians

CHAPTER 31**Love****I. Loving Qualities**

Love: Insights	260
Love: Commands.....	261
Mercy	262
Gentleness.....	263

II. Antitheses of Love

Selfish Attitudes	264
Ill Feelings.....	265
Adverse Speech.....	265
Adverse Force	266

I. Loving Qualities

The importance of love could hardly be more emphatically stated by the Bible. Love should encompass every area of our lives and be the basis of all that we do in relating to people. Other personal qualities reflective of love are also regularly applicable in our relationships with other people (and are also discussed in this section).

Note that the teaching in this and the subsequent chapters in *Part G. Relating to People* is also relevant to the preceding part of this book, *Part F. Church Life*.

Love: Insights

What love is

Love is patient, love is kind, it is not envious. Love does not brag, it is not puffed up. ⁵It is not rude, it is not self-serving, it is not easily angered or resentful. ⁶It is not glad about injustice, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. [1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7](#) NET

In v. 7, “believes all things, hopes all things” means that love: “...is ever ready to believe the best of every person” and that “its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances...” (AMP).

The supremacy of love

[AN EXPERT IN THE LAW, TO JESUS:] “Which commandment is the most important of all?” ²⁹Jesus answered, “The most important is: ‘Listen, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ ³¹The second is: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” [MARK 12:28B-31](#) NET

[PAUL, SPEAKING OF THE WAY OF LOVE:] And now I will show you a way that is beyond comparison. ^{13:1}If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but I do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so that I can remove mountains, but do not have love,

III Feelings

Control and avoid anger

When you are angry, do not sin, and be sure to stop being angry before the end of the day. ²⁷Do not give the devil a way to defeat you. ... ³¹Do not be bitter or angry or mad. Never shout angrily or say things to hurt others. Never do anything evil. [EPHESIANS 4:26-27, 31](#) NCV™

Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters! *Let every person be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger. ²⁰For human anger does not accomplish God’s righteousness.* [JAMES 1:19-20](#) NET

Do not hate

You must not hate your fellow citizen in your heart. [LEVITICUS 19:17A](#) NCV™
If anyone says “I love God” and yet hates his fellow Christian, he is a liar, because the one who does not love his fellow Christian whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. [1 JOHN 4:20](#) NET

Get rid of any bitterness or malice

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. [EPHESIANS 4:31](#) ESV

Do not be jealous

Wild parties, drunkenness, sexual immorality, promiscuity, rivalry, and jealousy cannot be part of our lives. [ROMANS 13:13](#) GW

Adverse Speech

Do not quarrel

Starting a quarrel is like a leak in a dam, so stop it before a fight breaks out. ... ¹⁹Whoever loves to argue loves to sin. [PROVERBS 17:14, 19A](#) NCV™

Do not slander

So get rid of all evil and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. [1 PETER 2:1](#) NET

II. Antitheses of Love

We have various tendencies that work counter to love. These largely involve selfish attitudes and ill feelings – along with the adverse speech and actions that they produce. These greatly inhibit and harm our relationships with others, and must be avoided.

Selfish Attitudes

Do not pursue selfish ends

Don't act out of selfish ambition or be conceited. PHILIPPIANS 2:3A GW
... but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. ROMANS 2:8 ESV

Do not be greedy

How horrible it will be for you, scribes and Pharisees! You hypocrites! You clean the outside of cups and dishes. But inside they are full of greed and uncontrolled desires. MATTHEW 23:25 GW

Do not covet

'And you shall not covet your neighbor's wife. And you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, or his male servant, or his female servant, his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.' DEUTERONOMY 5:21 ESV

We are not to crave or desire anything that belongs to another.

Seek the interests of others before your own . . .

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] *None of you should be looking to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ...³³Just do as I do; I try to please everyone in all that I do, not thinking of my own good, but of the good of all, so that they might be saved.* 1 CORINTHIANS 10:24, 33 GNT

. . . Do so even at great cost to yourself, as Jesus Christ did

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] *For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that although he was rich, he became poor for your sakes, so that you by his poverty could become rich.* 2 CORINTHIANS 8:9 NET

I am nothing. ³¹*If I give away everything I own, and if I give over my body in order to boast, but do not have love, I receive no benefit. ...¹³And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.* 1 CORINTHIANS 12:31B; 13:1-3, 13 NET

Love: Commands

Live a life of love . . .

As you have heard from the beginning, his [God's] command is this: *Live a life of love.* 2 JOHN 1:6B NCV™

Live in love as Christ also loved us. He gave his life for us as an offering and sacrifice, a soothing aroma to God. EPHESIANS 5:2 GW

. . . Do all things in love

Everything you do should be done in love. 1 CORINTHIANS 16:14 NET

Love others as you love yourself . . .

Do not take revenge on anyone or continue to hate him, but *love your neighbor as you love yourself.* I am the LORD. LEVITICUS 19:18 GNT

. . . “Love your neighbor as yourself” sums up God's law

Owe no one anything, except to *love one another, for the one who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.* ⁹*For the commandments, “Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not covet,” (and if there is any other commandment) are summed up in this, “Love your neighbor as yourself.”¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.* ROMANS 13:8-10 NET

The whole moral law – all that involves our relationships with other people – is summed up by the command to love others as we love ourselves. In doing so, we fulfill or carry out the law.

Love your enemies and do good to them

[JESUS:] *But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. ...³¹Treat others in the same way that you would want them to treat you.* LUKE 6:27-28, 31 NET

Mercy

Mercy involves such things as: not penalizing those subject to one's judgment and retribution (due to things like wrongful action or debt); and doing more than one is bound to do in helping others. It is showing kindness beyond what is required of one or is otherwise considered fitting.

Show mercy

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. LUKE 6:36 NET

You must see that justice is done, and must *show kindness and mercy to one another.* ZECHARIAH 7:9B GNT

Be merciful and God will show you mercy

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. MATTHEW 5:7 NET

The final clause refers to being shown mercy by God.

Forgive others and God will forgive you

If you forgive others for the wrongs they do to you, your Father in heaven will forgive you. ¹⁵*But if you don't forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.* MATTHEW 6:14-15 CEV

Do not judge others, or God will judge you accordingly

Do not judge others, so that God will not judge you, ²for God will judge you in the same way as you judge others, and he will apply to you the same rules you apply to others. MATTHEW 7:1-2 GNT

We will all face God's judgment but the above passage speaks of the same condemnatory standard of judgment being applied by God to those who exercise it themselves.

Be generous and share with others

[PAUL, INSTRUCTING TIMOTHY WHAT TO TEACH BELIEVERS:] Tell them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, to *be generous givers, sharing with others.* 1 TIMOTHY 6:18 NET

All day long he [a lazy person] continues to crave, while *the righteous one gives without holding back.* PROVERBS 21:26 ISV

Gentleness

Be humble, gentle and patient

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] I, therefore, the prisoner for the Lord, urge you to *live worthily of the calling with which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ...* EPHESIANS 4:1-2 NET

Be meek

[JESUS:] *You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'* ³⁹*But I say to you, do not resist the evildoer. But whoever strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other to him as well.* ⁴⁰*And if someone wants to sue you and to take your tunic, give him your coat also.* ⁴¹*And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two.* ⁴²*Give to the one who asks you, and do not reject the one who wants to borrow from you.* MATTHEW 5:38-42 NET

The concept of "meekness" involves an approach of non-retaliation and even non-resistance in the face of offences. It is characterized by humility and gentleness.

The command to "not resist the evildoer" (v. 39a) is given in respect to one's own rights; it is not saying that we should not stand against an evil person on behalf of others. The illustrations that follow (vv. 39b-42) show that one should not retaliate and not insist on one's rights. Some commentators view these as hyperbole, while others consider such a view to be watering down the extent of what is being taught.

Seek peace, including peace with others

Turn away from evil and do good; *seek peace and pursue it.* PSALMS 34:14 ESV

Do everything possible on your part to live in peace with everybody. ROMANS 12:18 GNT

Pray for persecuted Christians