

From The Pulpit Of



IMMANUEL  
BAPTIST  
CHURCH

## Do Everything in Love

No. 43  
Series: 1 Corinthians

1 Corinthians 16:13-24

April 26, 2026  
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### Text

<sup>13</sup> Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. <sup>14</sup> Let all that you do be done in love.

<sup>15</sup> Now I urge you, brothers—you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints—<sup>16</sup> be subject to such as these, and to every fellow worker and laborer. <sup>17</sup> I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence, <sup>18</sup> for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such people.

<sup>19</sup> The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. <sup>20</sup> All the brothers send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

<sup>21</sup> I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. <sup>22</sup> If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! <sup>23</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. <sup>24</sup> My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

### Introduction

How was your air this morning? Was it ok? Did it have the right percentage of O<sub>2</sub> in it? Was it clean enough that the contents didn't damage or poison your lungs? In my work, we handle chemicals like pure N<sub>2</sub>. If it displaced all the air in this room, it would cause us all to be asphyxiated and die before most could tell anything was wrong. We rarely think about the air we breathe, but it's the most essential thing we need to stay living. In the same way, one commentator said, "[love] is the very atmosphere in which the Christian lives and moves and has his being." Another said, "Self-sacrificing love is the model given to us by Christ and the key to the health and growth of his church and to the maturing of both individuals and the communities to which they belong. Christ-like love is a principle manifestation of God's renewed humanity, the sign that God's work in us — the work which will ultimately result in the resurrection of the dead and our complete renewal — has already begun to manifest itself." If the church loses its **first love**, it dies and everything falls apart. As we find ourselves at the end of 1 Corinthians, we see that Paul gives a series of commands grounded in love, and he finishes the letter by telling the church that he loves them. Love was one of the high points of the letter in Chapter 13, and now he closes with it. As we start, I want to make it clear that love surrounds everything in this text. It is the air this passage breathes, and it is to be the air that Christians breathe. This text wants us to **Do Everything in Love**. As we go through the text, we'll see that Love Leads, Labors, Links, and Lasts. Now first, **Love Leads**.

**Love Leads 13-14** – **13** sounds like commands a general barks to troops on the front lines of battle but with faith included. He is calling them to stand their ground and fight. The Corinthians have not been sufficiently **alert/watchful**. The enemy attacked, but they were asleep. Divisiveness, sexual perversion, selfish conflicts, idolatry, pride, flaunting gifts, greed, and false teaching that undermined the crucifixion and denied the future resurrection of the body have all entered. **Watch out!** Stand your ground in the **faith** and **ethics** of Christ. **Be alert** and ready for Christ's second coming! **Act like men** is a call to maturity and courage. Grow up and be brave. Play the Man. **Be strong** by God's grace. Fight the good fight of the faith. The Christian life isn't easy. Don't be an evanjellyfish who is more concerned about being winsome by compromising with the culture rather than fighting in loyalty to Christ, his word, and his church. **14** And do it all **in love**. Love for the Lord and his people must be the **leading** motivation for all our fighting, **Chesterton**. Christian maturity fuses backbone and compassion, **1Cor13**. The Corinthians lost their way because they lost site of the gospel and the love of God in Christ. So, they stopped loving, **Chrysostom**. As a general, Paul calls them to stand like loving soldiers in defense of and service to their king and his bride, the church. *The same command applies to us. Love for Christ and his church must lead us to Labor for Christ. Now we see examples of Labors of love.*

**Love Labors 15-18** – The household of Stephanas are brought up again as examples. They were introduced at the beginning of the letter (1:16). Paul baptized them. Fortunatus and Achaicus likely part of that household. They came to Paul, bringing news and questions from the church. Literally **first converts/fruits**. Christ was the **firstfruits** of the resurrection (15:20;23), promising all will be raised from the dead. They were some first converts, exemplary, promises of many more believers to come throughout the region of Corinth, Achaia. They humbly, lovingly devoted themselves to **service** to the church as **fellow workers and laborer**. **17** Paul missed the church, and they encouraged Paul and made up for the absence of the Corinthians, just like they encouraged the Corinthians. Believers should **recognize** and **submit** to godly servant leaders. *Are you a servant leader? Do you recognize and honor others who serve? We should all labor in advancing Christ's kingdom and in refreshing/encouraging the church, because like we are all Linked by love.*

**Love Links 19-20** – Paul shares greetings to show the Corinthians that they are organically linked to and accountable to the churches across the sea in **Asia/Western Türkiye**. Aquila and Prisca were believers that Paul met and worked with as tentmakers and in ministry in Corinth before they moved on to Ephesus. They moved but kept serving Christ and hosted a church in their home. Paul greets them on behalf of all the brothers and sisters around him. He then tells them to **greet one another with a holy kiss**. This is typical in his letters. **Kiss** a common greeting in their culture (not ours!!!), but **holy** because there was no sexual impropriety among family and no duplicity with division in the church. He is calling for sincere and innocent greetings and healthy relationships within the church. As I read this passage over and over, it made me so happy! If you have experienced a loving family or very close Christian fellowship, you know the joys and loves that link believers together. Everyone is shouting, waving, smiling, hugging, kissing. That's what the church should be. We are one, big family. We have a meal together every week! We should view every Sunday as a joyous family reunion. We should greet one another not with performative

friendliness, but with hearty handshakes, hugs, eye contact, genuine concern, and welcoming greetings, knowing that we love one another and are accountable to one another. *Is this how you view Sunday gatherings and fellowship with other believers? Do you know you are linked to them in Christ? Do you see them as beloved family? Do you pray for one another? Do you pray through the membership list? Do you pray for and encourage your small group outside of meetings?* We should, because love links us. And finally, our love should last to the end.

**Love Lasts 21-24** – It was common for an author to dictate with an amanuensis acting as scribe. It was also common for the author to review the manuscript and then sign their name and add a greeting to approve the content and prove the authenticity of the letter. Paul does this here and in all his letters, **2Thes. 22** At first, the **curse** seems strange as a final closing. Paul knows there are false teachers in Corinth. He was concerned that some may be calling Christ accursed, 12:3. Here he explains **love** for Christ as the covenant Lord and Savior is central to the gospel. Believers must love the Lord and long for his second coming. **Our Lord, come!** a traditional Christian prayer asking for Christ's second coming and the restoration of all things.

Paul has been arguing against bad theology (a defective gospel) and lack of love through the letter. Some had downplayed the cross and elevated themselves. Some had an over-realized eschatology and undermined the Christian hope by denying the future resurrection of the dead. In the midst of this, they had lost their love for Christ and their love for one another. Being perceptive of this, Paul started with a focus on humility and faith in the cross. Now Paul says, **The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.** Jesus came and lived a perfect life on our behalf. He humbled himself and loved **us to the end** by dying on the cross to pay the penalty for our sin. Then he loved us so much that he rose from the dead to prove that he had defeated sin and death on our behalf. He also rose as the **firstfruits from the dead** to show us that all who trust in him will likewise be resurrected in glory one day. And the only proper response to this message of Christ is that we love him in return. We receive his gift by faith and respond in repentance with love, **John-Rom.**

*Have you experienced the grace of the Lord Jesus? Have you experienced the love of God in Christ Jesus? If not, it's free! Receive Jesus today as your Savior. He offers himself. Repent in love for him and submit to him as Lord. If you say you have, that love should last. It should endure through all trials and temptations by the grace of Jesus, and it should endure looking forward to his second coming. It should cause you to love your fellow believers and even your enemies. There was some conflict between Paul and some from the church in Corinth, and yet, he closes by telling them that he loves them, 24. Even after everything in this letter, he ends with his love for them. Do you love others, even during conflict? I also challenge you to search your heart. Do you love Jesus because of what he did for you on the cross? Do you look forward to his coming?*

**Conclusion** – The entire Christian life should be defined by love, love for God and others, love for Christ and his church. This must be the air we breathe. Without it, we are suffocated and spiritually die. True Christian love leads us, labors amongst us, links us, and lasts forever. So, whatever you do, do everything in love!

**Lord's Table** – A table for those who love Christ and his church. For those who have demonstrated that love through believer's baptism and linked with a local church through membership. A family meal of fellowship with one another where we look back at Christ's work on the cross and look forward to his second coming and the feast we will share with him at the consummation of all things. Take elements back to your seat, and we will all participate together as one body.

This sermon was addressed originally to the people at Immanuel Baptist Church, Chicago, Illinois, by Pastor Brock Brockway on Sunday morning, April 26, 2026. It is not meant to be a polished essay, but was written to be delivered orally. The mission of Immanuel is to be a multiplying community that enjoys and proclaims the Good News of Christ in the great city of Chicago.

End Notes:

Leon Morris - [love] is the very atmosphere in which the Christian lives and moves and has his being.  
Ciampa & Rosner - Self-sacrificing love is the model given to us by Christ and the key to the health and growth of his church and to the maturing of both individuals and the communities to which they belong.  
Christ-like love is a principle manifestation of God's renewed humanity, the sign that God's work in us — the work which will ultimately result in the resurrection of the dead and our complete renewal — has already begun to manifest itself.

G. K. Chesterton - The Defendant - The true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him.

1 Corinthians 13:1–3- If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Chrysostom - If love had been present, the Corinthians would not have been puffed up, they would not have divided into factions, they would not have gone to law before heathens, or indeed at all. If there had been love in the church, that notorious person would not have taken his father's wife, they would not have looked down on their weaker brethren, and they would not have boasted about their spiritual gifts.

2 Thessalonians 3:17 - I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the sign of genuineness in every letter of mine; it is the way I write.

1 Corinthians 12:3 - Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.

John 15:13 - Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

1 John 4:10–11 - In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Romans 5:6–8 - For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly...God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 John 4:19 - We love because he first loved us.