

2026 07 26/ 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

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Thy Kingdom Come



We are continuing the Lord's prayer focused on "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven." We know that the gist of Jesus' teaching is focused on loving God and loving others. What is then love? 1 Corinthians 13, the chapter of love, shows us what love is; "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." (NIV)

I feel those words are like a heavenly breeze into my heart. We can swallow these words very sweetly like honey; however, it is bitter in our belly! Which means, to live the LOVE as is written makes us suffer, unless we are not overflowing with the love that God loves us. Which means we need the power and also wisdom of the Holy Spirit to live as the word says. Today, we will limit our focus on actual relationships between you and somebody close to you.

God's Kingdom on Earth means that it comes in the concrete life's situations. It comes in traffic. It comes in the family group chat, your marriage, and friendship. And nowhere is that prayer tested more than in how we treat difficult people. Because it is easy to love people who are easy to love: your best friend, or your favorite grandchild, or the person who always agrees with you. Jesus said as much: "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them." (Luke 6:32, NIV).

The Kingdom doesn't come through easy love. It comes through love that costs something. Love for the demanding person who never seems satisfied. Love for the disappointing people. Love for the destructive person who has wounded you deeply. That is where "Thy will be done on Earth" gets real. So today, I want us to look at three kinds of people we all know; maybe we're even related to them, maybe we're married to them, maybe we work for them. And I want us to ask: what does real and biblical love actually look like when we're standing in front of them?



But before we can answer that, we need to go back to where all real love begins. First John 4:19 says it in simple words: "We love because He first loved us." (NIV). Did we love God, and God sent His son to us? No. When we were enemies of God, God first loved us. And we were able to love God. The sequence is reversed from how we naturally think. God loved first. Before we were lovable. We were not charming and grateful. Some of us were downright hostile to God for years of our lives. And still, Christ came. Still, He stayed on the cross, He absorbed what our sin deserved so that we would not have to. Love requires sacrifice. Whatever form. We cannot generate this kind of love out of our own willpower. Before loving others... we need to fully receive, absorb, and enjoy the love of God as God's beloved. And rest our soul in God's love by seeing yourself as God sees you. If you rest in God, there flows power to love others as written in the love chapter. Rest in God is power.

1 Love That Endures the Demanding

Paul begins his famous description of love this way: "Love is patient; love is kind... it is not rude, it is not irritable" (1 Corinthians 13:4-5, NRSV). Patience comes first. Then, a little further down, not rude, not irritable. He's writing about real relationships, and he knew exactly which we'd face every day battle.

Think about the demanding person in your life. Maybe it's a parent who is never satisfied no matter how much you do. Maybe it's a friend who calls every hour needing something and never once asks how you're doing. The demanding person has a way of making you feel like you are always behind, always insufficient. Does that mean I'm just supposed to let them run over me? Do I just let them push me around? Do I just act like a doormat?

No. Here's the key: **Be tender without surrender.** Jesus never succumbed to manipulation of the religious leaders, the Pharisees. They were extremely demanding. Jesus would not let other demanding people push Him into a corner. You are tender without surrender. That's what you call love in action.

Here is something I want to say clearly, because I think we sometimes misunderstand what "patient" and "not rude" mean: **patience is not the same thing as silence. Being "not rude" does not mean you never speak up. Let me put it plainly: rudeness is a sin. But saying no is not.**

This is the kind of patience 1 Corinthians 13 is the strength to say, calmly and clearly: "I hear what you're asking. But this isn't right, and I won't be able to do that." That is patient love. That is love that is not irritable, because it hasn't let resentment build up in silence, waiting to explode later. Practice the sentence, **"I can't do that, and here's why," delivered without an edge, without sarcasm.** Speak the truth. Hold the boundary with a soft heart. That is what it means to love the demanding person the way Christ loves us patiently, but never a pushover; honest, but never harsh.

2 Love That is Not Judgmental.

The next group we must confront is **disappointing people**. Has anyone ever failed to disappoint you? In fact, everyone in your life will disappoint you. Your friends, family, parents, brothers, sisters, husband, and wife will all disappoint you. Even as your pastor, I will disappoint you. Why? Because no one is perfect. No one is perfect! So, how do we deal with disappointing people? How does love respond when we are disappointed by others? The Bible teaches us that *"love is not irritable."* Therefore, I must be gentle and not judgmental.

3 Love That Deletes the Wrong

Now we come to a different kind of hard person. Not merely demanding, disappointing, but destructive. The person who has genuinely wronged you. Betrayed you. Lied about you. Broken something that mattered. Maybe it happened years ago, and you still feel the sting. Paul's words here are almost shockingly simple: love "keeps no record of wrongs" (1 Corinthians 13:5, NIV). Keeps no record. What is a record? It is something you file. Something you keep and can pull back out so you can refer to it later. No filing cabinet principle we should have.

There's a wisdom in Proverbs 19:11, "It is to one's glory to overlook an offense." I think it captures this idea beautifully: You don't repeat it. You delete it. Wipe it out of the memory bank. Let it go. Forgive it and get on with your life. Don't rehearse it. Don't let it live in your mind for the next ten years. Here's why this matters so much, and here's something psychology confirms just as much as Scripture does: when you hold a grudge, you become like the person who hurt you.

The destructive person did something unkind, maybe even cruel. And if you respond by clutching that wrong, replaying it, feeding it, letting bitterness take root and grow, what happens? You start becoming hard. Calculating. Suspicious. You start treating other people the way that person treated you, because **bitterness** doesn't stay contained to one relationship; it leaks into everything. The very behavior that wounded you starts, slowly, to reshape you in its image. It's a slow poison. It doesn't punish the other person; rather, it kills you eventually.



I want to be careful here, because forgiveness doesn't mean to pretend nothing happened, or to stay in a relationship with someone who continues to be destructive. Forgiveness doesn't always mean reconciliation. Sometimes love means forgiving someone from a distance, releasing the debt in your heart while still protecting yourself from further harm. But whether the relationship continues or not, the record must go. Delete it because you refuse to let someone else's cruelty determine the condition of your own heart for years to come.

This is only possible when we enjoy and rest in God's love, who doesn't keep a record of our sins, erased forever. Moving on from a relationship that keeps causing pain requires intentional work to shift your mindset, create distance, and heal. **Rituals can serve as powerful symbolic markers that help your brain and emotions process the end of a chapter.**



You can create one ritual. What I can think of is to go to a lake, pick up a stone. Take a moment to silently name what is inside it; specific years, pain, harsh words, or the grief of the relationship. And throw it as far as possible. And wash your hand in the water. Or you go to a flowing stream, take a leaf, and do the same, let it fall on the water, watch it disappear with the stream of water.

So, this week, I want to leave you with something simple. Think of one demanding person and one destructive person in your life right now. For the demanding one, practice patient honesty. Saying the truth while keeping the boundary with a gentle attitude. For the destructive one, practice deletion. Release the record. Not because it didn't matter, but because you need Heavenly healing inside you. This is the Will of God being done, right here, on this Earth, in this relationship, as it already is in Heaven.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done. Let it begin with me. Amen.