–Save This Page as a PDF–

Love is Not Selfish
13: 5b



The proper **bearing** of **love** (**to see link click Df – Love Covers All Things**) is due to **its** genuine **unselfishness**, for **love is not selfish.** True **love** is always **unselfish**. How easily said, how hard to attain! **Selfishness** lies at the root of a thousand evils and sins in the world and in the Church; between rich and poor, capital and labor, nation and nation, man and man, woman and woman, believers and believers. Cure **selfishness**, and you create the Garden of Eden. As when one draws a beautiful face and makes one feature after another stand out until the eyes at last light up the whole and give it complete expression, so in this portrait of **love**, the inspired artist paints the eyes full of **unselfishness**, seeking in every glance not their own but that which is another's. Yes, this is **love**: no envy, no boasting, no pride, no rudeness because **it** is altogether **unselfish**.[411]

Loving people do not attempt to advance their own interests, especially at the expense of other people. This **love** (Greek: *agage*) differs from *eros*, which always seeks its own interests, and from *philia*, which points to devotion to one's own, whether self, family, or friend. Again, the **Corinthian believers** were models of what **loving** believers should *not* be. **Paul's** urging in **10:24, "No one should seek their own good, but the good of others,"** indicated that **self-seeking** was another major problem within the church at **Corinth**.

They were **selfish** to the extreme. **The**y didn't share **their** food at the **love** feasts

(see **Bz – The Problem: The Abuse of the Poor**), they protected **their** rights to the point of suing fellow believers in pagan courts of law (see **Bb – Failure to Resolve Personal Disputes**), and they wanted what they thought were the "best" spiritual gifts for **themselves**. Instead of using spiritual gifts for the benefit of **others**, **they** tried to use them to **their** own advantage. Therefore, **Paul** told **them, "Since you eagerly seek the things of the Spirit, seek especially what will help in edifying the congregation" (14:12). They** did not use **their** gifts to build up the church, but to try to build up **themselves**. At the end of **his** discourse on freedom in **Messiah** (see **Bj – Concerning Our Freedom in Messiah**), **Paul** invites **the Corinthians** to imitate **him** as **he** does **Messiah, "Just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not looking out for my own interests but for those of the many, so that they may be saved" (10:33).**[412]

The story is told of a chauffeur who drove up to a cemetery and asked the minister who served as caretaker to come to the car, because his employer was too ill to walk. Waiting in the car was a frail old lady with sunken eyes that showed years of hurt and anguish. She introduced herself and said she had been sending five dollars to the cemetery for the past several years to be used for flowers for her husband's grave. "I have come in person today," she said, "because the doctors have given me only a few weeks to live and I wanted to see the grave for one last time." The minister replied, "You know, I am sorry you have been sending money for those flowers." Taken aback, she said, "What do you mean?" "Well, I happen to be a part of a visiting society that visits patients in hospitals and mental institutions. They really love the flowers. They can see them and smell them. Flowers are therapy for them, because they are living people." Saying nothing, she motioned for the chauffeur to leave. Some months later the minister was surprised to see the same car drive up, but with the woman herself at the wheel. She said, "At first I resented what you said to me that day when I came here for a last visit. But as I thought about it, I decided you were right. Now I personally take flowers to the hospitals. It does make the patients happy . . . and it makes *me* happy, too. The doctors can't figure out what made me well, but I know I now have someone else to live for."

As always, **Yeshua** is our perfect model. **He For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve – and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28). The Son of God** lived **His** life for **others**. **God** incarnate was *agape* **love** incarnate. **He** was the perfect incarnation of self-giving **love**. **He** never sought **His** own welfare, but always the welfare of **others**.[413]

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** for being such a joy to live for! **You** are always both totally holy and completely **loving**. **You** never make a mistake or forget anything. As your child, I can totally trust **You** to guide every detail of my life and I choose to make choices that honor **You**. Never will **You** give **Your** child second best. Though a path may seem so hard, the trials will be over soon. **For I consider the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed to us (Romans 8:18).***

*Heaven will be a time of great joy for all eternity. The trials are not mistakes in **Your** plan, but you use even the trials in my life to bring **You** glory for all eternity now. **for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith – more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire – may be** found to **result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Yeshua Messiah (1 Peter 1:6c-7).** Thank **You** for being so totally **unselfish**. **You** are greatly **loved**! In **Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*