



### Love Is . . .

(based on 1 Corinthians 13)

The followers of Jesus traveled to many places to teach about Jesus. Wherever they went, people believed their message, and the church grew. Many new leaders began to help the disciples.

One of these new church leaders was named Paul. Paul traveled to many faraway cities and countries. One of the new churches he helped was in Corinth (KAWR-ihnth).

Even when he could not travel, Paul wrote letters to his friends in Corinth, teaching them about Jesus and helping them to know how to live as Christ's followers.

Once when the people in the church in Corinth were having disagreements, Paul wrote to tell his friends about love. This is what he wrote:

Even if I speak like an angel, with the most beautiful words, if I do not speak in love, I sound like a banging gong or a clanging cymbal.

If I can tell the future and understand all the mysteries of the world, or have so much faith that I can make a mountain move, without love, I am nothing.

Even if I give away all my possessions, if I have no love, it means nothing.

Love means being patient.

Love means being kind.

Love does not get jealous or brag or act rudely.

Love doesn't insist on its own way, get irritable, or keep score.

Love isn't happy with injustice but is happy with what's right.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.

Love never ends.

As for everything else—words and knowledge—they will end. They are all bits and pieces, but love is everything.

When I was a child, I did childish things. But now that I am an adult, I do different things.

In the same way, we are like God's children: We only know a little of what God knows. Later God will show us everything!

For now, though, God has given us three gifts to help us: faith, hope, and love.

And the greatest of these three is love.

Wow! The people in the church in Corinth were so happy to hear about love. They wanted to try and live as God's followers, loving God and loving one another.



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(based on 1 Corinthians 13)

Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

#### Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Wonder together which attributes of love are easier to show and which ones are harder. Are they the same or different for members of your family? Ask God to help strengthen your actions of love for one another, particularly the hard ones!
- Make connections between Paul's description of love and other activities you are involved in. Wonder together where examples of patience, kindness, not bragging, not being irritable, and so forth are found in a book you are reading or a favorite television show. Share examples you see at school or work, during extracurricular activities, at the grocery store or post office, and so forth.



#### Responding to God's Grace

- Read 1 Corinthians 13:4–8a ("Love never ends.") replacing "God" for the word "love." Wonder what this tells us about God and God's love for us. Then read the passage aloud each evening as a family, replacing a family member's name for the word "love." Wonder how each person can show love by becoming the different characteristics of love. How does hearing that "(Name) is patient" or "(Name) is kind" change your day-to-day actions?
- Focus on different characteristics of love each day. Write each description of love on a craft stick. Place the sticks in a cup. Each day, each person in the family pulls one of the sticks out of the cup and aims to practice that attribute. Share results and thoughts together at the end of the day.

#### Celebrating in Gratitude

- Make a poster or collage using 1 Corinthians 13:4–8a and hang it in a place where everyone will see it each day to remind them to be loving. Or do an image search for "1 Corinthians 13 coloring page." Let each person choose a picture to color, print them, and have a family coloring time.
- Make a beanbag tossing game. On a sheet of posterboard, draw a large heart in the center and write "Love never ends. 10 points." Around the outside of the heart, draw four smaller hearts and four squares. In each of the hearts, write one of the following words or phrases: *Patient, Kind, Rejoices in Truth, Hopes*, and 5 points in each heart. In each of the squares, write one of the following words: *Envious, Boastful, Rude, Irritable*, and -5 points in each square. Take turns tossing a beanbag or small object.
- Pray this prayer each day this week.

*Dear God, help make me more loving today than I was yesterday. Amen.*