

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankstonrp.org.au bit.ly/WTrpcaf

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. bit.ly/WkBbl or bit.ly/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on 1 Corinthians by John Calvin, Simon Kistemaker, and Bob Utley, and notes from the HCSB Study Bible, and the Reformation Study Bible

Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested a godly mother will lead her children






Reading 1 Corinthians 13:1 Love or noise?

Notes (See back page for authors)
In this famous chapter, Paul defines love. Kistemaker comments that with the opening statement, *Paul appears to be saying, "Suppose that I as the Lord's apostle have the highest possible gift of tongues, those that men use, and those even that angels use—how you Corinthians would admire, even envy me and desire to have an equal gift!"*

Then, Kistemaker notes that in the 2nd clause, *The point at issue is not the speaking of tongues, whether human or angelic, but the practice of love. Within the context of the Christian church, be it in Corinth or anywhere else, lack of love and its deplorable consequences are often painfully evident.*

He concludes commenting on this verse that, *No one can boast of having the gift of speech, whether human or heavenly, and at the same time show a lack of love. If this happens, says Paul, the noise you hear is comparable to that of echoing bronze or a clanging cymbal. The sounds of a gong and a cymbal are monotonous; when these sounds are prolonged, they eventually become annoying to the human ear. We have learned that when something is said without love, even if it is expressed most eloquently, the spoken words are empty and meaningless.*

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. What sort of speaking did Paul say he could have?
 2. If he had such speaking, but no love, what was it like?
 3. How should our speech and love be connected?

4.     

- Praise Pray** Psalm 99a²
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to love, by God's help
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord's Day you review the previous week's readings and/or the previous or current week's sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

Reading 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 Love never ends

Notes (See back page for authors)
"Love never fails." This clause supports the message of the preceding verse and forms a concise summary of the previous passage (vv. 4–7). At the same time the clause is introductory to the verses that ensue (vv. 9–13). Notice that the word love occurs at the beginning of this verse and reappears twice in verse 13. Between these two occurrences, Paul describes the temporary character of the spiritual gifts (vv. 8–10) and gives three illustrations to illustrate that which is immature and imperfect—a child, a reflection, and knowledge (vv. 11–12). In this segment, Paul stresses immaturity, imperfection, and temporality.

All notes today are from Kistemaker's commentary on 1 Cor 13.

Love, however, is endless and never loses its validity. As God's Word never "falls to the ground," so his love never fails. Love is eternal because it is one of God's attributes (1 John 4:8, 16). It emanates from God to all his people throughout time and eternity. While everything else in God's creation comes to an end, love continues to be an active and lasting influence.

Paul differentiates the triad of faith, hope, and love from the gifts of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge. These gifts are set aside and cease, but the three virtues remain. Hence it is apparent that Paul wrote a logical conclusion to this chapter and not merely a temporal description of the present age.

Why is love the greatest virtue in the triad? ...Paul singles out love...For him, love is basic because of God's eternal love for his Son and through him for his people

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. What things will come to an end?
 2. What things will not?
 3. Why is love the greatest of faith, hope, and love?

4.     

- Praise Pray** Psalm 99a
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to love, by God's help
 2. Pray for your family
 3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
 4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God's word tomorrow

Reading 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 Love does...

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Now we consider the final 5 positive characteristics of Biblical love. The first is contrasted with the last negative description – instead of rejoicing with sin, Biblical love rejoices with truth. Kistemaker notes that *one of the characteristics of love is the constant attempt to discover good and praiseworthy words, thoughts, and deeds in a person. Love searches out the truth and rejoices when that truth is triumphing over wrong.*





Next we have a quartet of active things that love does in relationships. Each of these is in the context of “all things.” We can’t be content if we do these things some of the time. As Utley notes, *Love is inclusive.*

Love bears or covers all things. Kistemaker comments that *Love is the virtue “that throws a cloak of silence over what is displeasing in another person.”* Love also believes all things. This doesn’t mean that a Christian abandons all discernment, but as Calvin notes, *a Christian will reckon it better to be imposed upon by his own kindness and easy temper, than to wrong his brother by an unfriendly suspicion.*

Love hopes all things. Utley says that *In this context love holds out hope of a fellow believer’s eventual development in the faith. It does not despair.* Finally, Love endures all things. Utley states that this term *speaks of voluntary, steadfast endurance. This phrase emphasizes no personal retaliation or rejection, but steadfast perseverance, especially with people.*

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What are these 5 positive characteristics of Biblical love?
2. What makes it hard to do these things all the time?
3. Which one(s) do you need to work on most in your church?

4.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 99a
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to love, by God’s help
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 Love or nothing?

Notes
(See back page for authors)

After saying superlative speaking without love is just noise, Paul addresses superlative faith. Kistemaker notes that *Paul exalts the gift of prophecy, because a prophet, in contrast with the tongue-speaker, strengthens and edifies the church (14:1–5). The prophet can be effective in his ministry as long as his prophecies are true. But, says Paul, a prophecy spoken outside the context of love amounts to nothing.*

Also, Kistemaker comments that *Whenever a person is able in faith to do the impossible, he or she is highly respected and greatly admired within the Christian community. But faith ought to be exerted in harmony with love. Otherwise it is useless. The brevity of Paul’s conclusion, “I am nothing,” is forthright and to the point, for indeed, faith without love is ineffectual.*

Further, Kistemaker says that *Paul adds that if he would perform deeds of charity without love for the recipients of his gifts, those deeds would not mean anything at all.* And finally, Calvin comments that *even [martyrdom], God regards as nothing, if the mind is destitute of love... The main truth in the passage is this— that as love is the only rule of our actions, and the only means of regulating the right use of the gifts of God, nothing, in the absence of it, is approved of by God, however magnificent it may be in the estimation of men.*

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What are some of the evidences of superlative faith given?
2. What are those evidences worth without love?
3. What other ways might we try to show superlative faith or speaking? What good are those ways without love?

4.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 99a
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to love, by God’s help
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading 1 Corinthians 13:1-4 Love is...

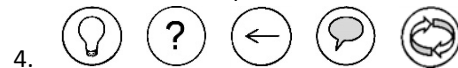
Notes (See back page for authors)
After telling us that great faith or great speaking is useless without love, Paul begins to define this Biblical love. He presents it in 2 positive descriptions (Love is...), 8 negative descriptions (Love is/does not...), and 5 positive characteristics (love does...)

It is critical to note here that all these descriptions are of actions and interactions between people. So much of the world's view of love is how you feel toward other people. Instead, God teaches us here, love is seen in how you act toward other people and interact with other people – in the church.

For today we will consider the 2 positives. Love, he says, is patient. That is, it puts up with a lot. If your only interaction with the Christians in your church is a brief nod or comment on the way in or out of the worship assembly then you are not even attempting to love them biblically. But, when we get close and interact, we sometimes say and do the wrong thing, hurt and get hurt by each other. That's when love must take over. Love puts up with a lot. As Kistemaker notes, *it demonstrates a willingness to take someone's unpleasant character traits in stride and to exhibit enduring patience.*

Also, love is kind. Utley notes that *this is also a people-focused term. It implies "be gentle to all."...It is also one of the gifts of the Spirit in Gal. 5:22. It is used in the sense of the best for the person loved, not sweet sentimentality.*

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. How is love to be expressed between people in the church?
 2. How can you show patient and kind love?
 3. How do we see patience and kindness in God toward us?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 99a
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to love, by God's help
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 Love is not...

Notes (See back page for authors)
Here in these 8 negative descriptions we learn what to avoid if we are practicing Christian love. We're not to boil over in anger in wanting what others have. Instead we rejoice in their rejoicing.

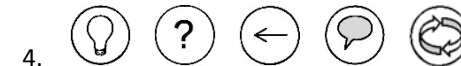
Nor are we to boast or brag about ourselves and our accomplishments. Closely related to that is to be puffed up with pride about ourselves. That too, is not love. Kistemaker notes that *Arrogance is inflated selfishness, while love is genuine humility.*

Nor does love behave improperly. It cares about others and treats them rightly. Love can do this because it is not self-centred, but is instead other-centred. And only unselfish love can keep from becoming irritated or provoked by others.

Because it is not easily provoked, Biblical love does not keep a record of provocations. Kistemaker comments that *Here is a verbal portrait of a bookkeeper who flips the pages of his ledger to reveal what has been received and spent. He is able to give an exact account and provide an itemized list. Some people are keeping a similar list of wrongs that they have experienced. But love is extremely forgetful when it comes to remembering injury and injustice.*

Finally, love grieves over sin. It does not delight when others fall into sin. I wonder, can we read this list, honestly before God, substituting "I" for "love"? I, by God's grace, am not...

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. What are the 8 negative characteristics that love is not?
 2. Why are they so easy to do at times?
 3. Which one(s) do you need to work on most in your church?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 99a
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to love, by God's help
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member