

**Thriving in Relationships:  
Wk. 1 – The Family Relationship  
I Cor. 13:4-7**

**INTRODUCTION:**

- A. “You don't choose your family. They are God's gift to you, as you are to them.” (Desmond Tutu)
- B. There are times when being in a family is one of the greatest blessings you can have, but then there are times when being in a family is difficult and doesn't feel much like a gift.
- C. All of us here are a part of a family no matter how different those families may look. Despite the challenges those families face, God intended for the family and home to be for our good.

**QUESTION:** What can we do to help our family relationships thrive? Perhaps the answer Paul gave the Corinthians in our text is the answer we need today in our homes. We need to put love into practice.

**PRACTICE PATIENCE – Love is patient (v. 4)**

- A. Patience is one of the nine expressions of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).
- B. Being patient is tough when you get hurt. However, a loving and patient person would not respond with resentment, anger or even revenge.
- C. As Christians, we are called to walk in a manner worthy of our calling. Part of that worthy walk is being patient and bearing with one another in love (Eph. 4:1-2).

**GUARD WHAT YOU SAY – Love is kind (v. 4), love is not rude (v. 5), love endures all things (v. 7).**

- A. Our patience should lead us to think before we speak (Eph. 4:29-32).
- B. We may feel like we have to say something, but quick responses usually never end well (Jam. 1:19).
- C. The ill-chosen words we speak, can and often do, cause great harm (Prov. 18:21; Prov. 21:23).

**CONCERN YOURSELF WITH OTHERS - Love is not arrogant (v. 4) or self-seeking (v. 5)**

- A. We spend a lot of our lives concerned about ourselves. As disciples of Jesus, we are supposed to count others as more significant than ourselves (Phil. 2:3-4).
- B. We can become arrogant/proud and never consider how our words or actions have affected someone else.
- C. Some love themselves more than other members of their own household (2 Tim. 3:1-2; Jam. 3:16).

**TAKE CONTROL OF YOURSELF FIRST**

- A. We want to control others and their reactions and responses, but we can't control them.
- B. Do not ignore your own shortcomings and failures while pointing out others (Matt. 7:1-5).
- C. We are responsible for our own words and actions (Rom. 2:5-6; 14:12).

**CONCLUSION:**

- A. “You don't choose your family. They are God's gift to you, as you are to them.” (Desmond Tutu)
- B. Families are a gift when each member of the family is willing to do their part to help the family thrive.
- C. Our families will never truly thrive until we each surrender our lives completely to Jesus.