



STUDY GUIDE

“LOVE: LOVING IS BASIC TO CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR”
“HOPE: HOPING IS BASIC TO THE CHRISTIAN OUTLOOK”
(pg. 181-184)

What is the Main Takeaway?

Love is the foundation of all Christian virtue; hope is the fruit of Christian faith.

What are the Potholes, the problems, the alternate views?

The modern notion of love has been thoroughly corrupted and is patently unbiblical. Many unbelievers (and some professing believers) conflate love with affirmation. You must agree with what is most central to a person’s desires and identity or risk being labelled a “hater.”

A sad reality of the Christian life is that many believers have lost hope to some extent – they become embittered due to suffering they have endured.

What are some of the Gracious Answers for those who may push back?

Of the various descriptions of love found in 1 Corinthians 13, one of the most pressing for us in this moment in which we find ourselves is that “[love] does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.” (1 Cor. 13:6) The implication of this description of love is that any affirmation of wrongdoing, no matter how sentimental the feeling behind it, is not true love. Even those who promote a “love as affirmation” definition, cannot consistently live it out. To do so would mean agreeing with anything that another person finds central to their identity (drug use and other self-destructive tendencies), not just those things that our culture currently accepts but which were previously rejected as aberrant and destructive. Sexual identities and impulses tend to be some of the most commonly touted as exempt from criticism in our day. To criticize a person’s sexual preferences and choices is viewed as hatred, despite the presence of a true spirit of compassion and care with which such disagreement and criticism might be communicated. Tragically, this has emboldened more and more perverse displays of sexual disorder and impulse, resulting in ever-increasing societal decay.

God commands his children to wait patiently for His coming, with hope (Romans 8:25), and to live victoriously in the face of suffering as we endure the light and momentary troubles (2 Cor. 4:17) through which we must pass to enter the Kingdom of God (Acts 14:22). We can have confidence and hope that God will see us through any difficulties we face and that in the end we will see Him and be with Him forever.

What Applications arise from this study?

We must love according to God’s standard and not that of the world. Any notion of love that does not conform to the true love which God describes and commands is evil and an offense to Him. Are you loving by God’s standard? (1 John 4:8)

Have you become jaded, embittered, joyless, spiritually fatigued? Do not despair, Christian. Set your hope fully on the future God has promised and move forward in hope and joy.

What are some Additional Resources?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Bible-love.html>

<https://carm.org/to-the-christian-church/loving-sinners-the-way-jesus-loves/>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/hope-Bible.html>