

Monday, June 11 - Read 1 Corinthians 13:7. The Greek word that is translated “bear” is related to the word roof. The term literally means “put a roof on.” Figuratively, it has the idea of covering or keeping something confidential; it can also mean to put up with something. Paul was telling the first readers of this letter (and us!) that love is a roof and a cover. Love protects, shields, and conceals the weaknesses of others. 1 Peter 4:8 says, “Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.” This doesn’t mean we ignore sin; it means we don’t use people’s faults and failures to expose or shame them. We publicly cover them and privately restore them with the goal of bringing about health in their lives. We are talking about shield those who confide in us from the kind of public scrutiny and ridicule that will only harm them. We are talking about believing in people so much that we help them bear their failures and cover their weaknesses so they can be healed. All of us our works in progress. All of us have faults and failures. All of us have needed people in our lives who are solid roofs. We can be that person for someone else in our lives. That is what love does.

Tuesday, June 12 – Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. 1 Corinthians 13:7. Love believes all things – in other words, love looks for the best. It doesn’t mean you don’t see the worst; it just means that even in the middle of the worst time of someone’s life, you remember the best, celebrate the best, remind that person of the best, and believe the best. We might want to think of it this way, “He (or she) didn’t mean it.” No matter what happened or what was said, we believe “they didn’t mean it.” This thought process could be too simplistic, or too naïve. But who is primarily affected if you spend your days assuming the worst? Think about it and believe all things, because that’s what love does.

Wednesday, June 13 – Read 1 Corinthians 13:7. What does it mean that love always hopes? It means that love holds on to eventual development. Love recognizes that where we are is not where we will always be. We are on a journey. We are works in progress. For love to be love, it can’t work only when people are polished and proper and generally pleasant. Love has to work with people in the rough, with people who are anything but lovable, at least on the surface. Love needs to hope because we all have along way to go. Ask yourself: Aren’t you glad someone believed in you back in the day? Love hopes all things. This could save your marriage, your family, and your friendships. Just keep hoping and believing and bearing. Sooner or later love will win.

Thursday, June 14 – Read Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. 1 Corinthians 13:7. To endure means you don’t retaliate or reject. Paul was saying that love write people off. It doesn’t give people the silent treatment. It doesn’t passively aggressively dig at other people. It doesn’t keep a mental list of grievances until eventually it erupts. Love is bigger than that. The Bible isn’t saying that we ignore sin or hurt or pain. It isn’t saying that we never confront. There is room here for communication, confrontation, and restoration. But even when we confront, we do so from an attitude and an expectation that our love is not going to be withdrawn no matter what happens. Love will be tested. People will let us down. How will we respond? How did Jesus? He asked God to forgive them with his dying breath. Grace has no gaps and love knows no limits. Love endures.

Friday, June 15 –At the end of the week, perhaps you have noticed how busy this week has been. Perhaps you have been surrounded by a lot of noise. Maybe your house is just loud. **Read Psalm 131:1-3.** Notice that David was intentional about having a calm, quiet soul. He values it, he seeks it, and he finds it – And he is the King and hero of Israel! He was the most influential and affluent person around. He had more, fame, fortune, and responsibility than we can imagine. He had a loud, fast-paced life. Yet, he found a way to quiet his soul. If King David could develop a calm soul in the middle of the craziness and chaos of ruling a kingdom, maybe there is hope for us. Simply realize one thing today – “I can’t control everything.” Say to yourself, “There is a God, and it’s not me.” Please know that to have a quiet calm soul, recognize you are not in control. Pray this: *I am not in control. I am not in charge. Ultimately, I am not dictating my days. God, you have numbered my days. You have ordered my ways. I make my plans, but you direct my steps. Lord, I trust you have my best interests in mind, Amen.*