
INTRODUCTION

The band Foreigner asked – “*I Want to Know What Love Is?*” (1985)
Percy Sledge, a rhythm and blues singer answered, “I’m not sure but, I can tell you what it’s like
When a Man Loves a Woman” (1991).

When a man loves a woman, he can't keep his mind on nothing else
He'll trade the world for the good thing he's found
If she is bad, he can't see it, she can do no wrong
Turn his back on his best friend if he put her down

When a man loves
a woman, he'll spend his very last dime
Tryin' to hold on to what he needs
He'd give up all his comforts, sleep out in the pourin' rain
If she said that's the way it ought to be

Rock legend Meat Loaf said, “*I'd Do Anything for Love (But I Won't Do That)*” (1993)
Steve Winwood said, what Foreigner is asking about is a *Higher Love* (1986)
Whitney Houston said she heard about the demonstration of the *Greatest Love of All* (1986), and
that was Jesus dying on the cross for your sins and for mine.
Huey Lewis and The News said, “That’s right, but He couldn’t have submitted to the Cross without
The Power of Love” (1985)

While what was said about love fits the lives of those attempting to describe what love is, the
Holy Spirit tells us what love really is and what love isn’t.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (NKJV)

- ⁴ Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;
⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;
⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;
⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
⁸ Love never fails. But whether *there are* prophecies, they will fail; whether *there are* tongues, they
will cease; whether *there is* knowledge, it will vanish away.

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Saying that love suffers long doesn't mean where there's love there is suffering and it's for a long time! Thank you Jesus! It means where there is love there is a patient, hopeful waiting for things or persons to change for the better. Love is also kind. This is not just being nice but also useful. To envy is to covet which is a sin unto itself, but to try to use love to cover for envying someone else's success is deceitful. Love doesn't have a need to have us verbally detail what we've done for others or to get a pat on the back. If our motive for being kind was to get praise from others, there was no love in it. Let our actions give God the glory and not act to glorify ourselves.

Love does not behave rudely or in other words, love doesn't compel us to do something we'll be ashamed of or sorry for later. Neither will love allow us to do something for personal gain. With love we should be slow to anger and doesn't think the worst of others despite what the situation looks like. Love never delights in anyone's fall due to sinful behavior, but at the same time makes us happy to see others succeed in their walk with the Lord.

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The first four qualities of love summarize how love responds to others. The multiple uses of "all things" emphasizes that we are to act this way despite anything others may do to us. This doesn't mean we are to be naive about the actions of others. (Matthew 10:16 (NKJV) says: ¹⁶ "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.)

Love bears up under the pressure of hate, greed, selfishness, and other sorts of evil. Jesus showed us that love can bear all the things we've ever done, doing and will do. Love never fails. When tongues are no longer useful, when knowledge takes a back seat to wisdom and in fact goes away, love will still be there and will always be needed.