

Love Is Not Abusive

Scripture declares that "*There is no fear in love*" (1 John 4:18, NKJV). God's love is perfect. It "*casts out fear, because fear involves torment*" (NKJV). **There is no greater torment than being abused by someone who claims to love you.** 1 Cor 13, often referred to as "the love chapter" in the Bible, provides necessary clarity on what Love is and what Love is *not*.

Love is:	Love is NOT:
Patient and kind	Jealous or boastful
Always hopeful	Irritable, proud or rude
Love does:	Love does NOT:
Endure through every circumstance	Demands its own way
Rejoices when the truth wins out	Keep a list of wrongs
Love will:	Love will never:
Last forever	Give up
	Lose faith

In this section of scripture, we see, from God's perspective, what love really is—as opposed to what some people think or expect it to be. Love is not some warm, gushy emotion. Nor is it emotional neediness or dependency. Love is not an obligation, but a choice.

In abusive relationships, love is often misperceived. An abuser is selfish, easily irritated, expects his own way, and demands forgiveness. Abusers are often irrationally jealous, prideful, and arrogant. To an abuser, love is not about what he can give, but upon what he can get: and he feels entitled to it based upon his definition of what "love" is. Abuse is *not* love; it is possession, control, dominance—anything but what love truly is.

A victim, on the other hand, is often long-suffering, enduring far more than most others' patience would bear. She often makes allowances for the rude behavior inflicted upon her and others by the abuser. The victim often willingly forgets the abuser's harsh behaviors, words, and motivations. She holds on to hope that the abuser will change, even when there is overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

When one looks at the behaviors of both parties in the abusive relationship, the abuser's behavior clearly matches the description in I Cor. 13 of what love is *not*, while the victim's behavior follows the scriptural definition of what love *is*. **So while an abuser may claim to "love" his partner, scripture declares something completely opposite his assertions.**

Romans 12:9 says: "*Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good*" (NKJV). **Abusing someone you say you love is the ultimate in hypocrisy.** Later in the same epistle, the Apostle Paul writes: "*Love does no harm to his neighbor[or our marriage partner]: therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.*" Rom. 13:10 (NKJV) This scripture is equally applicable both to those in romantic relationships and those who are not (our neighbor). However, in a romantic relationship, we are still to do no harm, yet that is precisely what is being done when one partner is abusing another.

God shows us what real love is: love is giving, serving, sacrificing. I John 4:10 tells us: "*In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins*" (NKJV). God so loved that He gave: He did not control; He did not demean; He did not debase: He gave.

Abuse is the opposite of love.