

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – November 07, 2021

Theme: Love: A More Excellent Way Topic: Love is not boastful and proud

Main Texts: James 4:13-17; Philippians 2:3-8.

Key verse: 1 Corinthians 13:4b – ‘Love is not jealous or boastful or proud’ (NLT)

INTRODUCTION: God’s word tells us that God is love. That means that God, through His written word, is the go-to place to learn about love. In the last few weeks, we have looked at what Christian love is. Today, we shall look at what love is not. 1 Corinthians 13 offers us tremendous insights regarding the Christian love. In verse 4, we read that “*Love ... does not boast, it is not proud*” (NIV). The word translated “*proud*” comes from a Greek word meaning to “*puff up*” or “*blow up*.” To be puffed up is to have an inflated or exaggerated view of oneself. To ‘boast’ is to heap praise on oneself or brag about one’s own gifts or achievements. It is to take delight in one’s accomplishments or attainments and flaunt the fact that others have not done them.

- 1. In Luke 18:9-14 Jesus told a story of a Pharisee, and a Tax Collector (a) Is it wrong to acknowledge one’s abilities or accomplishments? (b) What was Jesus’ point in that parable regarding boasting and pride? (c) How would you use this parable to help a young Christian differentiate between a healthy acknowledgement of one’s abilities/accomplishments and boasting and pride?**

That ‘*love is not boastful and proud*’ is not asking people to pretend they are something they are not. It is also not saying people should pretend they have not achieved what they have achieved. Rather, it is pointing to the tendency to flaunt our abilities and or accomplishments in the face of others who may not have accomplished as much and using that to regard them as inferior to us. The problem is not with the accomplishments. Rather it is about seeing those accomplishments as making one more important than everyone else. This was an issue with the Corinthian Church when they argued over which apostle they followed (chapters 1-3), spoke poorly of Paul (chapter 4), boasted of their tolerance of sinful behavior (chapter 5), and argued about which spiritual gifts were most important (chapter 12). No wonder there was so much strife in the Corinthian Church. The exhortation that “*love is not boastful and proud*” provided a proper corrective for their self-centered attitudes. And in Philippians 2:3-8, Apostle Paul profiles our Lord Jesus Christ as the model for us to follow in how to handle our abilities and accomplishments. And says, “*You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had*” (Philippians 2:5 NLT).

- 2. (a) In what ways have you seen this attitude of boasting and pride exhibited among Christians in our society nowadays? (b) According to Philippians 2:6-8, how did our Lord Jesus Christ model a proper disposition to our position and abilities? (c) What are some practical ways we demonstrate this disposition towards our accomplishments and positions, like Christ did, without falling into the trap of pride and boasting?**

The danger of boasting and pride is not only about one’s accomplishments and abilities. James 4:13-17 introduces another aspect of this boastings and pride. This relates to one’s plans – business, career, etc. The constant shifts in technological and economics, and security issues have combined to heighten the uncertainties of the future. This adds pressure to planning. In that passage, God says, ‘*Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit”*’ (James 4:13 NKJV). He goes on to describe our lives as “*a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away*” (James 4:14b NKJV). And warns of the danger of falling into pride and boasting should we lose sight of the fickleness of our lives. He concludes that chapter by telling us to know and do better than fall into the boasting and pride, which is sin (James 4:16-17).

- 3. (a) God encourages planning but says, our lives are like a vapor. What is He drawing our attention to in our planning? (b) How could planning possibly be contrary to Christian love as shown in James 4:13-17? (c) James 4:15 says “*Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.”*” What are some practical ways this can counteract the tendency to boasting and arrogance?**

Prayer: LORD, thank You for teaching us on what love is not today. Please help us to guard against pride and boastfulness in our lives as we strive to grow in our love for You and others in Jesus’ name, Amen.