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[Current Issue »](#) [Features »](#) [News »](#) [Teaching »](#) [Viewpoint »](#) [Resources »](#) [Feedback »](#)

[Home](#) > [Charisma Columns](#) > [Gloria Copeland](#)

You are reading from the **August 2006** issue of Charisma

**Cover Story:**  
[El Predicador Bilingue \(The Bilingual Preacher\)](#)

**Features:**  
[What If Jesus Doesn't Come Back This Year?](#)  
[The Muslim who Heard God's Voice Enjoy Gifts from Heaven](#)  
[One Year After the Storm](#)  
[Take Up Your Cross](#)  
[Tell Yourself the Truth](#)  
[A Voice in the Wilderness](#)

[Read all articles from this issue](#)

## Enemies of Love

By Gloria Copeland

When we learn to recognize the enemies of love, we become aware of the devil's strategies.

Love is the source of power for our successful Christian life. Galatians 5:6 even tells us that our faith works through love.

Satan is continuously sending situations our way to tempt us to yield to the opposite of love, which is selfishness.

As we study God's Word, we learn what authentic love is and what it is not. First Corinthians 13 reveals its attributes: "Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;

does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails" (vv. 4-8, NKJV).

When we learn to recognize the enemies of love, we become aware of the devil's strategies. When he tempts us with them, we can quickly respond: "No, devil! I refuse to do that. It's unloving, and I choose to walk in love!"

Some people don't realize that resisting temptation is that simple. Notice, I didn't say easy. I said simple. But it is.

Any attitudes or actions opposed to the character of love would be an enemy of love. Let's look at some of the perpetrators found in 1 Corinthians 13.

There are envy, jealousy, and feelings of discontent because of other people's advantages, success, possessions, or positions. Then there is pride, an inflated opinion of one's self evident through haughty or arrogant behavior. Bitterness, resentment and unforgiveness are enemies that can literally ruin us if we allow



them to fester.

The foremost enemy of love, I believe, is strife.

"Strife" means "vigorous or bitter conflict, discord and antagonism; to quarrel, struggle or clash; competition; rivalry."

James 3:14-16 tells us clearly, "If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work" (KJV).

Strife is devilish. It opens the door for the enemy to bring confusion and evil into our lives. When you were born again, the Bible says you were delivered out of the devil's control, out of darkness and into the kingdom of God's Son (see Col. 1:13). The devil lost his lordship over you and you received salvation.

Salvation includes all the blessings of God. Peace, healing, well-being and prosperity belong to you the moment you become a child of God.

But Satan doesn't want you to enjoy those blessings. He doesn't want you to be healed, happy, and prosperous because if you are, other people will notice and want the same quality of life you have. They'll give their hearts to God because of the goodness of God they see in your life. That's the purpose of the flow of God's love.

The devil can stop the flow only by tricking you into opening the door to strife. He brings you an opportunity to have a conflict with someone because he knows that the moment you step into strife, the moment love is compromised, he has prevented not only you but also someone else from walking in the blessings of God.

In every relationship—at home, work, school and church—make the commitment to keep strife out. Commit to walk in love. If at any moment you slip up and get into strife, simply make it right.

Say to the other person: "Please forgive me. I love you. I don't want to be in strife with you."

Then say to the Lord: "Father, I repent of that attitude. I refuse to yield to strife or to any enemy of love. I choose to walk in love."

Keep acting on what you know about love from God's Word. Keep identifying the enemies of love, and you'll continue to mature.

Walk in love. When you do, you will keep your faith strong and the blessings of God will be continually evident to everyone ... for love never fails!

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