Charity, Or Love, The Sum of All Virtue

1. Introduction (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)
2. Definition of Charity: Judgment of charity vs. Acts of charity vs. *Agape*
3. Charity as the Essential Ingredient
    a. The Most Excellent Privileges (Matthew 7:21-23, Numbers 24:2)
    b. The Most Excellent Performances (1 John 3:16-18, Luke 9:26, Revelation 12:11)
4. The Nature of Charity: All true Christian love is one and the same in principle (1 John 3:1-3, 1 John 4:7-8)
    a. Charity loves God and man for the same motives
    b. Love to God is the foundation of gracious love to men
5. All Virtue Distinguishing of True Christians is Summed up in Charity
    a. Charity will lead to true and right acts of respect to God and man (Westminster Larger Catechism #104)
    b. Hypocrisy: seeming to have virtues, but without love (Westminster Larger Catechism #113)
    c. Love is the sum of all that is contained in the law of God (Matthew 22:37-40, Romans 13:8-10, Galatians 5:14, James 2:8)
    d. Faith works by love (Galatians 5:6)
        i. The duty of faith (Exodus 20:3, Isaiah 43:10-11)
        ii. The sin of unbelief (Hebrews 3:12, Westminster Larger Catechism #105)
        iii. All Christian exercises of the heart and works of the life are from love (Westminster Confession of Faith 19.7)
6. Conclusion

References

1. Jonathan Edwards – Charity and its Fruits, Lecture 1
2. Johannes Vos - The Westminster Larger Catechism: A Commentary

Q. 104. What are the duties required in the first commandment?
A. The duties required in the first commandment are, the knowing and acknowledging of God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly, by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, **honoring, adoring**, choosing, **loving**, desiring, fearing of him; believing him; **trusting**, hoping, delighting, rejoicing in him; being zealous for him; calling upon him; **giving all praise and thanks**, and **yielding all obedience and submission to him with the whole man**; being careful in all things to please him, and sorrowful when in anything he is offended; and walking humbly with him.

Q. 105. What are the sins forbidden in the first commandment?
A. The sins forbidden in the first commandment are **atheism**, in denying, or not having a God; idolatry, in having or worshiping more gods than one, or any with, or instead of the true God; the not having and avouching him for God, and our God; the omission or neglect of any thing due to him, required in this commandment; ignorance, forgetfulness, misapprehensions, false opinions, unworthy and wicked thoughts of him; bold and curious searching into his secrets; all profaneness, hatred of God; **self-love, self-seeking, and all other inordinate and immoderate setting of our mind, will, or affections upon other things**, and taking them off from him in whole or in part; vain credulity, **unbelief**, heresy, misbelief, distrust, despair, incorrigibleness, and insensibleness under judgments; hardness of heart; pride; presumption; carnal security; tempting of God; using unlawful means, and trusting in lawful means; carnal delights and joys; corrupt, blind, and indiscreet zeal; **lukewarmness, and deadness in the things of God**; estranging ourselves, and apostatizing from God; praying, or giving any religious worship, to saints, angels, or any other creatures; all compacts and consulting with the devil, and hearkening to his suggestions; making men the lords of our faith and conscience; slighting and despising God and his commands; resisting and grieving of his Spirit, discontent and impatience at his dispensations, charging him foolishly for the evils he inflicts on us; and ascribing the praise of any good we either are, have, or can do, to fortune, idols, ourselves, or any other creature.[1]

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[1] Joel R. Beeke, Michael P. V. Barrett, and Gerald M. Bilkes, eds., *The Reformation Heritage KJV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2014), 2075–2076.