

## What's Better than Having Great Talents? Walking in Christ's Love 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

1. What is true love, the biblical love of Christ?

a. **John 13:35 – By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. Romans 13:8-10 – <sup>8</sup> Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup> For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>10</sup> Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.**

b. A story about learning to love.

c. 1 Corinthians 13 tells us that true love is defined by the God of love in His love letter – not by notions of our day.

1) There was *eros* love [selfish lust].

2) Then there was *storge* love [compassionate pity].

3) Then there was *philos* love [affection].

4) The word reserved most for the practice of God's love for us and our love for one another – *agape* love [sacrificial commitment].

d. Definition of *Agape*: Christ's love does all it can to help others, building them up in their walk with Christ. The heart of *agape* is sacrificing oneself, not expecting anything in return or even when one doesn't feel like it [even when we are tired or inconvenienced].

➤ 1 John 3:16 – By this we know love, that He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

e. If you can catch on to Christ's teaching on love, it will change your life.

➤ Greek writer named Lucian (A.D. 120-200): “It is incredible to see the fervor with which the people of that religion help each other in their needs. They spare nothing. Their first legislator [Jesus] has put it into their head that they are brethren.”

f. When we talk about Christ's love, we should speak about the practice of Christ's love, because the opposite of love is not just hate – that's a misunderstanding. The Bible never actually gives a dictionary definition of love, but it ties love to sacrificial actions.

g. Since it is in a section on spiritual gifts, why spend so long on love? It reveals to us something of the sad state of that troubled church in Corinth, Greece.

2. Christ's love in practice is absolutely essential while serving His body (13:1-3).

a. No amount of spiritual gifts, natural talents, or material giving will make up for our lack of Christ's love (13:1-2).

1) Example # 1 in 13:1.

**<sup>1</sup> If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.**

2) Example # 2 in 13:2.

**<sup>2</sup> And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.**

b. No amount of material sacrifice will make-up for our lack of love for others (13:3).

➤ Example # 3 in 13:3.

**<sup>3</sup> If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.**