

Being Loving
1 Corinthians 13

Introduction

This morning we are going to be examining 1 Corinthians 13, which has been referred to as the “love chapter” because of its description of love in verses 4-7. The words of these verses are often printed on cards with pretty graphics, used on plaques, wall hangings and paintings and even embossed on wedding invitations. This morning we are going to see that while love is a beautiful thing, the description of love in this chapter is actually a correction to a church that had become very unloving. They thought that they were spiritual, but were in fact very carnal and selfish. In this chapter Paul shows them how love is the superior mark of true spirituality rather than the spiritual gifts that they coveted.

Review

We have already spent three weeks in this series on true spirituality. We have presented the nature and ministry of the Holy Spirit (See: *The Ministry of the Holy Spirit* - 9/28/08), an introduction to 1 Corinthians 12-14 along with an overview of spiritual gifts (See: *Being Spiritual* - 10/12/08) as well as how they are to work in harmony in the body for the common good and unity of all (See: *Being Unified in the Body* - 10/19/08). If you have missed any of those sermons, I encourage you to get the sermon notes or the audio CD.

In order to understand 1 Corinthians 13 you must understand the context in which it was written. Corinth was one of the richest, most powerful and immoral cities of Greece at that time. Paul founded a church there at the end of his second missionary journey and then spent 1 ½ years there teaching, yet the church was still strongly influenced by the immorality of the city resulting in all sort of problems. Paul wrote 1 Corinthians as a strong rebuke and correction of their many errors which included their divisions and factions, their pride, their immaturity, their toleration of gross sin in their midst, their taking civil suits against one another, their continued involvement with the cult prostitutes, their confusion about marriage and singleness, their abuse of their liberty resulting in believers stumbling into sin, their preference for social styles and customs rather than God’s order, their severe abuse of the Lord’s Supper, their confusion about true spirituality, and their questioning of Jesus’ resurrection. The church at Corinth was a catastrophe and not a model to follow.

1 Corinthians 12-14 is all one section of Paul’s letter dealing with the overall subject of being spiritual. I have previously pointed out that 1 Corinthians 12:1 is better translated as in Young’s, “*And concerning the spiritual things, brethren, I do not wish you to be ignorant*” since the word here is πνευματικός / pneumatikos and not χάρισμα / charisma which does not appear until verse 4. They were not ignorant concerning spiritual gifts since they “*were not lacking in any gift*” (1 Cor. 1:7). Their ignorance was in the purpose of those gifts and how to use them in a proper spiritual manner.

Paul demonstrated their ignorance of true spirituality by bringing up their former pagan practices in verse 2 saying, “*You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the dumb idols, however you were led.*” Those practices included all sorts of things in an effort to reach the state of ecstasy which they thought was oneness with the god or goddess they were worshiping. This state would be manifested by such things as divination, revelatory dreams or visions, and Plato & Virgil both record scenes of people shaking and falling to the ground babbling in ecstatic speech. Such a person was considered to have reached the pinnacle of the experience of their religion.

They were bringing these pagan practices into the church as a false spirituality. *“Therefore I make known to you, that on one speaking by the Spirit of God says, 'Jesus is accursed'; and no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Spirit”* (vs. 3). Incredible, but someone was blaspheming Christ and they thought it was spiritual because it appeared to be similar to speaking in tongues. True spirituality cannot be assumed because something appears spiritual, it must be judged by whether the person is bringing glory to Christ or not.

Paul explained in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 that every spiritual gift, every ministry in which that gift is used and whatever power is given to use that gift in that ministry are all given by God to each one individually as God wills as a manifestation of His Spirit for the purpose of the common good of the whole body (1 Corinthians 12:7,11). Contrary to Pentecostal doctrine, any gift is a manifestation of the Spirit, and the fruit of the Spirit, (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness & self-control - Galatians 5:22,23), is the evidence of the Spirit's control of that person.

In 1 Corinthians 12:12-17 Paul used the analogy of a physical body to explain the unity and diversity of the church, the body of Christ. Though it has many members with diverse gifts, ministries and abilities, it is still only one body. Paul also makes it clear that each individual became a member of that body through the baptism of the Spirit (vs. 13) and then God places that individual in the body just where He wants them. This contradicts Pentecostal doctrine about Spirit baptism. Every person, every gift, every ministry and every ability regardless of how great or small, how visible or behind the scene are needed and must work together for the body to be whole and healthy as God intended. There is no room for pride in the body. When a Christian withholds themselves from fulfilling their role within the body, they leave the rest of the body handicapped and place themselves in grave danger.

Paul concludes chapter 12 with a second list of spiritual gifts which is given in relative order of importance and in which tongues is listed last. This is a different list than the one in verses 8-10. Paul then emphasizes the fact that there is no gift that everyone has, and no one has every gift. This is another contradiction of Pentecostal doctrine.

The Transition - 1 Corinthians 12:31

1 Corinthians 12:31 is Paul's transition to 1 Corinthians 13 and is key to understanding the meaning of that chapter. 1 Corinthians 13 is too often isolated from its context so that its real meaning is missed. 1 Corinthians is a corrective book and 1 Corinthians 12 is correcting them on their false spirituality which was resulting in a handicapped body. They thought they were spiritual because they were not lacking in any gift (1:7) and seemed to have an abundance of those who had the gifts that were outwardly obvious as listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. The truth was that they were carnal and they lacked in the trait that demonstrates true spirituality - love.

1 Corinthians 12:31 can be translated in one of two ways because the main verb of the sentence, ζηλώω / zêloô, which can mean, “to have zeal for,” “to desire earnestly;” or “to be envious,” “jealous;” “to covet,” is a second plural which is exactly the same in form in both the indicative and imperative moods (ζηλοῦτε). This means that you cannot tell by the word itself whether this should be translated as a statement of fact or a command to do something. Context will have to determine the meaning.

Most translations assume this to be an imperative and translate it something like the NAS, *“Earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a more excellent way.”* If that is the correct translation, then the “greater gifts” would refer to the near antecedent - the gifts listed in relative order of importance in verses 28. It would not make sense to make this a collective desire to have the greater gifts since they did not lack in any of the gifts (1 Corinthians 1:7). This would mean that Paul is telling them that they are required to strongly want to have the gifts listed first in the list - apostles, prophets, teachers, etc. over having the gifts last in the list - helps, administrations, kinds of tongues. Yet even so, he will show them a better way to be spiritual than having these gifts.

Personally, I have a hard time understanding how a translation with that meaning would fit with all that Paul has just said throughout chapter 12 that seeks to diminish their striving for any particular gift, much less the “greater” ones. Paul said in verse 11 that the Spirit distributes *“to each one individually just as He wills.”* In verse 18 he says, *“But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.”* In verse 28 Paul says, *“And God has appointed in the church . . . “* and then he gives a list of gifts. The whole body analogy in verses 12-27 makes the point that every member is important with 23-24 even pointing out that the parts often deemed weaker, unseemly and less honorable are actually necessary. I don’t see how a command to “earnestly desire the greater gifts” can reconcile with Paul’s arguments and emphasis in the rest of the chapter that your gifts, ministry and effectiveness are all up to God and that you are to be humble and work in harmony with everyone else in the body regardless of your particular gifts.

The solution is in translating this as a present active indicative which is the other option. *“But you are coveting the greater gifts, and a still more excellent way I show you.”* They did not need to be told to desire the greater gifts. This is a statement that they were already coveting the gifts they thought to be the most important, and especially tongues since it was so similar to their pagan practices. Paul will be correcting them about their practice of tongues in both Chapter 13 & 14. That translation matches the context of Paul’s correction of them throughout chapter 12.

Paul was now going to show them a more excellent way of being spiritual. Chapter 13 then becomes the heart of what Paul started in 12:1 of telling them what they needed to know so that they would not be ignorant about spiritual matters. Chapter 13 will explain how the gifts could be used one in conjunction with one another in a truly spiritual manner. It would require love for one another.

God does not give us gifts for our own use, our own prestige, our own glory. All gifts, ministries and abilities are given for His glory and the benefit of the whole body of Christ. For that to occur properly there must be love among the members of the body. *“But you are coveting the greater gifts, and a still more excellent way I show you.”*

The Necessity of Love - 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

The first thing Paul points out in verses 1-3 is the necessity of love in using a spiritual gift. Paul uses several gifts as examples to make the point that without love any spiritual gift will be worthless. Without love, there can be no true spirituality.

Paul first uses the gift of various tongues as the example since it was a prestigious gift sought after by the Corinthians as a sign of being spiritual. *“If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.”* Without love, the gift of tongues becomes a noisy irritant instead of a blessing. Some in the Charismatic movement claim that the tongue they speak in is that of the angels which is why a human cannot understand them unless someone that has the gift of interpretation. That contradicts the only specific example we have in Acts 2, but even if it was true, how would they know they were speaking in an angelic tongue. Would it not be proud to claim you were speaking in an angelic tongue? Can love exist alongside such pride? I think their very claim demonstrates their lack of love and therefore their angelic tongue is of no more value than a noisy gong or clanging cymbal. They are a noisy irritant instead of a blessing.

Paul’s next examples are prophecy, knowledge and faith. *“And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.”* Paul will contrast the superiority of prophecy over tongues in 1 Corinthians 14, but even such a valuable gift as it is, it becomes of little value if it is not accompanied by love. Prophecy includes the declaration of the word of the Lord, but without love we become judgmental hypocrites. We are to speak the truth in love for the purpose of building up others and giving grace to those who hear us so that we all can grow (Ephesians 4:15,29). We have all heard people that can accurately quote the Bible but use it with such harshness that it repels and drives away instead of giving hope. Knowledge without

love puffs up with pride, but love is humble and edifies (1 Corinthians 8:1). Who cares how much you know if what you know cannot be applied to the benefit of others. Faith without love is not only worthless, it could be dangerous. What good is it to have faith to move a mountain if you put it in the wrong place? In Matthew 7:22-23 Jesus said he will condemn some that will even cast out demons and perform miracles because they were lawless. Is not the whole law embodied in loving God and your neighbor? (Matthew 22:37-40; Romans 13:9,10; James 2:8).

Paul continues in verse 3, “*And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.*” These two acts would be considered self-sacrificial and outwardly might even seem loving, but motive also counts. Did not Jesus condemn the practice of the Pharisees who though they gave a lot did so for the prestige of appearing to be pious (Matthew 6:2)?

Love is the most important factor when it comes to spiritual gifts, for without it their usage is in vain, useless, an irritating noisy gong.

Defining Love - 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

A.W. Tozer wrote, “*We do not know, and we may never know, what love is, but we can know how it manifests itself, and that is enough . . .*”. What kind of love is Paul talking about here? It certainly is not the soft, sentimental feeling so often promoted in our society. It is not fond feelings of affection. This love is strong, bold, decisive and self-less, and it can only become a reality with God's assistance. This is ἀγάπη / agapê, the love that God has for us and the love that He wants to produce in us. Note the characteristics by which Paul describes love here and especially in light of how the Corinthians had been treating one another. Paul is not giving a comprehensive definition of love here, but rather it is a descriptive correction of their failure to love, a failure that showed that though they had all spiritual gifts, they were not spiritual in their use of them.

Patient: μακροθυμῆ / makrothumei - “*to be of a long spirit, not to lose heart; hence 1) to persevere patiently and bravely in enduring misfortunes and troubles, 2) to be patient in bearing the offenses and injuries of others; to be mild and slow in avenging; to be long suffering, slow to anger, slow to punish.*” (Cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:14; Matthew 18:26,29; 2 Peter 3:9). In context here it refers to patience with people, of enduring of injuries without seeking revenge. Even in the midst of provocation and injustice a patient person controls their anger and maintains a godly character.

Kind: χρηστεύεται / chrêsteuetai - “*to show one's self mild, to be kind, use kindness.*” It takes patience to the next step of not just controlling anger, but even extending oneself at the service of others. It is often used alongside patience (2 Corinthians 6:6; Galatians 5:22; Colossians 3:12). Patience is how we should receive injuries and kindness is how we should bestow blessings on others. Kindness is the opposite of being hard, harsh, sharp, bitter.

Not Jealous: οὐ ζήλοῖ / ou zêloi - Not to “*be heated or to boil with envy, hatred, anger.*” 1 Corinthians 12 has clearly shown that there is no room in the body of Christ for one Christian to envy the spiritual gift of another. There are many warnings against and examples of the dangers of jealousy (Proverbs 27:4; Acts 7:9; 17:5; Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:19,20; James 4:2). Love is content, not jealous

Not Bragging: οὐ περπερεύεται / ou perpereuetai - “*to boast one's self*” - “*to be vain-glorious, braggart.*” This word encompasses all forms of action that desire to gain the recognition and approval of others. There is no room in the body of Christ to boast about the gift, ministry or ability you have. You did not gain those things for yourself, God gave them to you - and He can just as easily take them away. Love is modest, not bragging

Not Arrogant: οὐ φυσιοῦται / ou phusioutai - “*to be puffed up, to bear one's self loftily, be proud, conceited.*” It is a presumptuous self satisfaction. It is the opposite of humility and it was a big problem among the Corinthians. (cf. 1 Corinthians 4:6,18; 5:2; 8:1). There is no room in the body to look down on others as spiritually inferior because they do not have the same spiritual gift, power, ministry you have.

If you do, you might find out that you, like a full head of hair, are the one that is not necessary to the body, while the person you thought yourself to be superior to, like the kidney, is the one that actually is necessary to the body. Love is humble, not arrogant.

Does Not Act Unbecomingly: οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ / ouk aschêmonēi - “to act unbecomingly,” “indecent, unseemly.” Simply put, love does not have poor manners and behavior, yet that is how the Corinthians were acting and Paul had to correct them for it (cf. 1 Cor. 7:36; 11:2-16; 12:23; 14:40). There is no room in the body for bad manners and out of control behavior. Keep that in mind when considering the things that occur in modern charismatic services. Love is proper, not ill mannered or indecent.

Does Not Seek its Own: οὐ ζητεῖ τὰς ἑαυτῆς / ou zêtei ta heautês - “does not seek, pursue, strive, desire, endeavor” for one's self. This was the problem Paul had to correct in 1 Corinthians 8-10 and their abuse of their liberties to the detriment of other believers. This was also their problem with spiritual gifts because they wanted certain gifts for themselves, but all gifts are for the common good of the body. There is not a proper “private use” of any gift. Love is unselfish, not self-centered.

Is Not Provoked: οὐ παροξύνεται / ou paroxunetai - “provoke, irritate, rouse to anger, exasperate.” Love does not allow itself to yield to provocation. Their failure to love in this area was resulting in the lawsuits between them that Paul rebuked them for in 1 Cor. 6. Love is good tempered, not irritable.

Does Not Take into Account a Wrong: οὐ λογίζεται τὸς κακόν / ou logizetai to kakon - “reckon, count, compute, impute.” This is an accounting term. Love will not turn bitter because it will not keep a record book of all the evils others have inflicted upon it. Their lawsuits against one another show they were lacking in this area of love. Love is forgiving, not petty or bitter.

Does Not Rejoice in Unrighteousness: οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ / ou kairei epi tē adikia - “rejoice, be glad” in “injustice, unrighteousness.” Love is not glad when an injustice is done or any act of unrighteousness takes place. The wicked do that (Romans 1:32). Proverbs 24:17-18 even warns about rejoicing when an enemy fails and Job considered it wrong to do this or curse an enemy (Job 31:29-30). The Corinthians seem to have been guilty of this.

By contrast, Love Rejoices in Truth: συγχαίρει δεσ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ / sugxairēi de tē alētheia - “to rejoice with, take part in another's joy, congratulate” in the “truth.” Truth is that which is in conformity to reality and God defines reality. This encompasses both divine revelation and the practical application of it to daily life. Love and truth go together.

Bears All Things: πάντα στέγει / panta stēgei - “to cover” i.e. “by covering to keep off something which threatens, to bear up against, hold out against, and so to endure, bear, forbear.” Paul bore many hardships for the sake of bringing the gospel to others. That is an act of love (1 Cor 9:12; cf. 2 Cor. 11).

Believes All Things: πάντα πιστεύει / panta pisteuei - “believe, to think true, place confidence in, to trust.” This does not mean that love is gullible or blindly trusting, but that love is not suspicious and distrustful. It gives the benefit of the doubt. The Corinthians lacked in this area.

Hopes All Things: πάντα ἐλπίζει / panta elpizei “to hope, hopefully to trust in . . . have expectations of good.” This is not unreasoned optimism, but a confidence that the grace of God is greater than man's failure. God is able to work all things together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His promise (Romans 8:28).

Endures All Things πάντα ὑπομένει / panta hupomenei - “to remain, tarry, abide, persevere, endure.” This is a stronger word than bear all things. This is more than just absorbing the wrongs done against you and has an aggressive component that presses forward even when strongly opposed. Paul pressed on in the face of opposition for the sake of the gospel and called his co-workers to do the same (2 Thess. 1:4; 2 Timothy 2:1-10; James 1:12).

As good as a definition of love this may be, it is not a complete definition for it is one whose components are specifically chosen as a contrast and correction of the Corinthians. Here are some additional characteristics of this love that give a fuller definition.

1) It is self-sacrificial. It seeks out what is best for others even at its own expense. *“Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends”* (John 15:13). That is what Jesus did for us.

2) The basis of the love is the individual’s character and not the object of love. God demonstrated His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). That is why Jesus can command us to love our enemies and pray for those that persecute us (Matthew 5:44).

3) This is a love of choice and action irregardless of the emotions and feelings that may or may not be present. That is why God can command husbands to love their wives (Ephesians 5:25-33) and Christians to love one another (John 15:12).

4) This is a love that reflects God living through us and demonstrates that we belong to Him and are His followers - *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another”* (John 13:34-35).

These are the characteristics of love. The Corinthians were failing. There are many people today that think themselves to be spiritually superior, but they are not because they are failing in love. How are you doing in love of God and others?

The Superiority of Love - 1 Corinthians 13:8-13

Paul’s opening statement in verse 8 that “love never fails” is not an additional description of love’s definition, but rather the characteristic that makes love superior to spiritual gifts. The idea of “fail” here (πίπτει / pipte) is not in reference to it being successful or not, but that it will not *“perish,” “come to an end,” “disappear,” “cease.”* Love by nature is permanent as compared to the gifts which will come to an end. Paul uses three gifts as examples of this. *“Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease if there is knowledge, it will be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.”* The usefulness of the gifts will come to an end whereas the usefulness of love will never cease so it will never end.

There is a lot of theological arguing about the timing of the end of the various gifts which too often distracts from Paul’s actual point concerning the superiority of love over the gifts as the true mark of spirituality. However, timing is an issue so let me quickly comment about it.

Prophecy and knowledge are both transitive and used with the verb καταργεῶ / katargeô, which means “to be done away” in the passive tense. Something or someone will cause both prophecy and knowledge to be reduced to inactivity or be abolished.

Tongues is intransitive and used with the verb παύω / pauô which means *“to stop, come to an end.”* In addition the verb is in the Greek middle tense in which the object acts on the subject, but the subject is also involved in the action. When the middle tense is used of an inanimate object it indicates reflexive, self-causing action. The cause of the action comes from within. Here we find that *“tongues will cease.”* It is a gift that will stop by itself, sort of like a battery that is self limited by the energy stored in it. Once that energy is gone the activity stops. God has placed a self-limiting factor on tongues, and they will cease of themselves.

When will prophecy and knowledge be done away with and when will tongues cease of themselves? Paul answers the question regarding the prophecy and knowledge in 1 Corinthians 13:9-12, but he will not give a statement regarding the ceasing of tongues until 1 Corinthians 14:21,22.

Paul links prophecy and knowledge together in verse 8 by using the same passive verb and then again in verse 9 by saying, *“For we know in part, and we prophesy in part . . .”* Tongues is separated out in verse 8 by using an intransitive with a different verb in the middle tense, and then it is not included at all in verse 9. The result of all this is that tongues ceases at a different time than knowledge and prophesy. It ceases of itself prior to knowledge and prophesy being done away.

1 Corinthians 13:10 tells us when prophesy and knowledge will be done away. *“But when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.”* In the context of verse 9 it is knowledge and prophecy that are the partial. Tongues is included in that verse. Paul then goes on in verse 11 saying, *“When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known. But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”*

Just as a child grows in maturity, so the church will also grow in maturity. Paul told the Ephesians the same thing. The gifts were for the *“building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love”* (Ephesians 4:12-16).

The Corinthians had shown great immaturity in the use of their spiritual gifts and in their dealings with one another. It was time to put away their childish ways. They did not understand everything for they could not see clearly. It was like looking into the shadowy reflection of the mirrors of that time which were polished pieces of metal of some sort. They, and we, are looking forward to seeing the Lord face to face when the partial will be done away with for then we will fully know and be fully known. So when is it that knowledge and prophesy will be done away with? When they are no longer useful for the building up of the body of Christ. When will that be? When Jesus Himself returns. Jesus is the perfect and until He returns we shall only know the partial. The question of identification of the perfect and when the perfect comes is irrelevant to the question of when tongues will cease. Tongues will cease when their purpose has been fulfilled, and we will see next week in our study of 1 Corinthians 14 that its purpose will have already been fulfilled.

1 Corinthians 13:13 contrasts the transitory gifts with the three intransitory characteristics which will remain. *“But now abide faith, hope and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”*

Faith, hope and love will all continue on and abide, but the greatest even among them is love. Love is superior to all gifts for it remains, and without it the gifts become useless. Does that mean we neglect using our gifts? Not at all. But it does mean that having and using a spiritual gift does not make you spiritual unless it is done with love. True spirituality is marked by love. If you want to be a genuinely spiritual person, then you must love.

Sermon Notes - 10/19/2008
Being Loving - 1 Corinthians 12:31- 13:13

Review

1 Corinthians is a strong _____ and correction of their many errors

1 Corinthians 12-14 is all one section and it deals with the overall subject of being _____

They were not ignorant of spiritual ____, but they were ignorant of using them in a proper spiritual manner

In their pagan practices they tried to reach the state of ecstasy which could include babbling _____

Someone was _____ Christ, but it was thought spiritual because it mimicked speaking in tongues

Every spiritual gift, ministry & ability is given by _____ as He wills for the common good of the Body

The body has many diverse members with various abilities, but it is all still _____ body

There is no _____ that everyone has, and no one has every _____

The Transition - 1 Corinthians 12:31

They thought themselves to be spiritual, but they were really _____ as demonstrated by their lack of love

ζηλοῶ / zêloô can mean to “have zeal for,” “desire earnestly,” or “to be envious,” “jealous;” “to

_____”

If an imperative, it is a _____ to earnestly desire the greater gifts as listed in relative order in vs. 28

Many statements in 1 Corinthians 12 seem to _____ the idea of striving for any particular gift

If an indicative, it is a statement of what they were doing in _____ the gifts they thought to be greater

Paul wants to show them a more excellent way of being _____

The proper purpose of all gifts, ministries & abilities can be fulfilled on if there is _____ one for another

The Necessity of Love - 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Without _____ any spiritual gift will be worthless

Without _____, the gift of tongues becomes a noisy irritant instead of a blessing.

Without _____, prophecy becomes judgmental hypocrisy; knowledge becomes pride; faith is worthless

Without _____, sacrificial giving profits you nothing.

Defining Love - 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

ἀγαπᾶ / agapê, the love that _____ has for us and the love that He wants to produce in us

Patient - enduring of injuries by people without seeking _____

Kind - extending oneself at the service of _____

Not Jealous - there is no room in the body of Christ for _____ (content)

Not Bragging - contrary to the desire to gain recognition and approval of others (_____)

Not Arrogant - contrary to presumptuous self satisfaction (_____)

Does Not Act Unbecomingly - contrary to poor mannered, _____ (proper)

Does Not Seek its Own - contrary to _____ (unselfish)

Is Not Provoked - not _____ to aggression or aggravation (good tempered)

Does Not Take into Account a Wrong - not petty, _____, bitter (forgiving, magnanimous)

Does Not Rejoice in Unrighteousness -

Rejoices in Truth -

Bears All Things - able to _____ wrongs done against you

Believes All Things - not gullible or blindly trusting, but not _____ and distrustful

Hopes All Things - a confidence that the grace of God is _____ than man's failure

Endures All Things - able to press on in the face of _____

1) It is _____ - John 15:13

2) The basis of the love is the individual's _____ and not the object of love - Romans 5:8, Matthew 5:44

3) Love is _____ and acts irregardless of the emotions and feelings that may or may not be present

4) Love reflects _____ and demonstrates we are His followers (John 13:34-35)

The Superiority of Love - 1 Corinthians 13:8-13

Love never fails - does not _____, come to an end, disappear (not related to success)

The usefulness of gifts will _____, but the usefulness of love is unending

Prophecy and knowledge used with the _____ tense of *καταργεῖω* / *katargeô*, - "to be done away"

Tongues is used with the _____ tense of *παύω* / *pauô* - "to stop, come to an end."

Tongues will cease by themselves _____ to when knowledge and prophecy will be done away.

Prophecy and knowledge are both _____ (vs.9) and will be done away with the perfect comes

Prophecy & knowledge will be done away when they have no more _____ in building up the body.

Tongues will cease when their _____ is fulfilled - see 1 Corinthians 14:21-22

Love is _____ to all gifts for it remains, and without it the gifts become useless

True spirituality is marked by _____

KIDS CORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help. **Young Children** - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Do one or more of the following: 1) Count how many times the word "love" is mentioned. 2) Discuss with your parents what love means and how it is shown to others.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. What is the purpose of 1 Corinthians? What is the common subject of 1 Corinthians 12-14? How were the Corinthians led when they were pagans? Can a person under the control of the Holy Spirit blaspheme Jesus? What is the source and purpose of all spiritual gifts, ministries and abilities? Is there any gift every Christian has or can have? Explain. What are the two possible ways of translating 1 Corinthians 12:31? If it is a command, how would it coincide with the rest of 1 Corinthians 12? If it is a statement of the current condition, how would it coincide with the rest of 1 Corinthians 12? How is the subject of 1 Corinthians 13 a more excellent way than what was discussed in chapter 12? Describe the value of spiritual gifts used apart from love? Of used with love? What kind of love is Paul talking about in 1 Corinthians 13? Define love according to what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Is this a complete definition? Why or why not? What does Paul mean in verse 8 that "Love never fails?" What is the contrast in verses 8-13? What is the difference or similarity in verb and verb tense concerning prophecy, tongues and knowledge in verse 8? Why does this matter? What two gifts are listed as being partial at present? What is their purpose at present? When will their purpose be fulfilled? When will they be "done away?" What is the "perfect?" When will tongues cease? How is love the greatest?