



16: What REAL LOVE Looks Like (1 Cor 13)

Our spiritual gifts are meant for the glory of God and the good of others. Today we turn our *attention* to our *intention*, to live out what **Real Love Looks Like**.

beourguest

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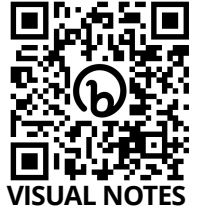
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teachingnotes

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VISUAL NOTES

John MacArthur writes: "This chapter is a breath of fresh air, an oasis in a desert of problems. It is a positive note in the midst of almost continual reproof and correction of wrong understandings, wrong attitudes, wrong behavior, and wrong use of God's ordinances and gifts."¹

CATCH THE CONTEXT

1 Corinthians 12:27-31 (CSB)

Now **you are the body of Christ**, and individual members of it. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, next miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, leading, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all do miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But **desire the greater gifts**. And I will show you an even better way.

Every disciple of Jesus is **gifted**, but not with the same gifts. God wants us to put those gifts into practice.

- Check our website (**FOM.life**) for our previous teachings, as well as pick up/download the Spiritual Gifts Discovery and SHAPE Profile in your notes.

Although every gift is important, distributed by the Holy Spirit as just was He wants (1 Cor 12:11, 18), Paul encourages his audience to **desire the greater gifts** (gifts that impact a greater amount of people).



GIFTS DISCOVERY



SHAPE Profile

- ✓ We aren't to use these gifts for the glory of self, but **for the glory of God & the good of others**.

Our culture has mutilated & disfigured what LOVE really is.

- Love in our culture is rarely sacrificial - *considering how to put others first*, but often selfish - *what's in it for me*. It's more often about *pleasure* than *purity*.
- We live in a messed up world, where people want to do whatever they want - even in blatant disobedience to our Creator - and just keep repeating the phrase "Love is love."
- Christians are just as likely to misuse and abuse what "love" really is. That's why we should be thankful that God gives us clarity to see **What Real Love Looks Like**, through this rhythmic poem often called "the love chapter."

WRITE YOUR OWN NOTES HERE

¹ John F. MacArthur Jr., 1 Corinthians, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 328.

The LOVE Chapter

1 Corinthians 13 (CSB) If I speak human or angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so that I can move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give away all my possessions, and if I give over my body in order to boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful, is not arrogant, is not rude, is not self-seeking, is not irritable, and does not keep a record of wrongs. Love finds no joy in unrighteousness but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will come to an end.

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put aside childish things. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, as I am fully known. Now these three remain: faith, hope, and love—but the greatest of these is love.

The Better Way of Putting Our Gifts Into Practice

1 Corinthians 13:1 (CSB)

If I speak human or angelic **tongues** but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

There is much debate over what **angelic tongues** means. Some think this is a heavenly **angelic** language.

Biblical tongues demonstrated in Acts 2 were human languages known to other people.

Even if we could speak all kinds of languages, if we **do not have love**, the language we are using is *irritating* instead of *encouraging* - like a **noisy gong or a clanging cymbal**. If you have the gift of **tongues**, but don't demonstrate love to others, what you have to say is just a bunch of NOISE.

1 Corinthians 13:2 (CSB) If I have the **gift of prophecy** and understand all mysteries and all **knowledge**, and if I have all **faith** so that I can move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing.

Imagine one person able to speak on behalf of God with the **gift of prophecy**, understanding the deep mysteries with the gift of **knowledge**, AND with extraordinary **faith** that believes God for big things, and seems to trust God during the midst of incredible difficulty. EXCEPT...all these great gifts are LACKING **LOVE**. Without LOVE, this person would likely become prideful, arrogant, and look down on those who can't match his/her prophecy, knowledge, or faith.

☛ **Warren Wiersbe**: "Spiritual gifts, no matter how exciting and wonderful, are useless and even destructive if they are not ministered in love."²

1 Corinthians 13:3 (CSB) And if I **give** away all my possessions, and if I **give** over my body in order to boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Some translations (i.e. King James, ESV, NAS) refer to giving one's body to be **burned**, but the Greek term in more important manuscripts contain **boast** while other manuscripts have **burn**, the difference of *ONLY ONE LETTER that a copyist got wrong at some point*. (*kauchēsōmai* = I might boast; *kauthēsomai* = "I will burn")³ This giving over of the body might even refer to the ancient practice of selling yourself into slavery to raise funds to give to the poor.⁴

- To **give away** material **possessions** and to **give over** your **body** are both HUGE sacrifices, to be applauded.
- **The problem is** that this person is living for the applause of people and these 'sacrificial acts of service' are really being done **to boast**.

This person would be doing great things, but for the wrong reasons - all those giftings - without love - are **nothing**.

BUT...those people with those gifts who LIVE out of LOVE for God and others, are giving a little glimpse into what life on the other side of eternity is going to be like - **showing what real love looks like!**

WRITE YOUR OWN NOTES HERE

² Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 610.

³ Biblical Studies Press, The NET Bible, Second Edition. (Denmark: Thomas Nelson, 2019).

⁴ Craig Blomberg, 1 Corinthians, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 259.

Love Is...Love Isn't...

1 Corinthians 13:4-5 (CSB) **Love** is patient, **love** is kind. **Love** does not envy, is not boastful, is not arrogant, is not rude, is not self-seeking, is not irritable, and does not keep a record of wrongs.

8 THINGS LOVE DOES

Since "God is love" (1 Jn 4:16), and since love is patient and kind, then **God is patient and kind**. How **patient** and **kind** has God been to YOU?

8 THINGS LOVE DOESN'T DO

- **Love does not envy** when good things happen to others.
- Love is **not boastful, arrogant**. What's the opposite of that? Love is humble.
- Love is **not rude** - Greek term referring to "disgrace, embarrassment, and shame"⁵ *The NIV translates this as "It does not dishonor others."*
- Love is **not self-seeking**, not demanding it's own way (ESV, NLT) but puts others first.
✿ **R. C. H. Lenski** "Cure selfishness and you have just replanted the garden of Eden."⁶
- Love is **not irritable** or easily angered (NET, NIV), because love focuses on the PERSON instead of the PROBLEM.
- **Love does not keep a record of wrongs**. This is a bookkeeping phrase related to keeping a record of those who owe money to the business. That's okay in business relationships, but it's NOT okay in the people business.

2 Corinthians 5:19 (CSB) That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, **not counting their trespasses against them**, and he has committed the message of reconciliation to us.

1 Corinthians 13:6-7 (CSB) **Love** finds no joy in unrighteousness but **rejoices in the truth**. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Christians should **find no joy in** what is not right - **unrighteousness**. Christians must not celebrate what God hates (e.g. sexual impurity, drunkenness, evil talk, dirty jokes). Instead, Christians should **rejoice in the truth**.

For the sake of truth...

- love **bears all things** - it supports others - providing for, protecting, and being patient with them.⁷
- love **believes all things** - we believe what is true & what is good, and we believe all that God says.
- love **hopes all things** - Love hopes the best for others.
- love **endures all things** - the good times and the bad things.

1 Corinthians 13:8-10 (CSB) **Love never ends**. But as for **prophecies**, they will come to an end; as for **tongues**, they will cease; as for **knowledge**, it will come to an end. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when **the perfect comes**, the partial will come to an end.

This poem points to the final return of Jesus and the resurrection of the dead (read 1 Cor 15). **When the perfect comes** and Jesus is standing before us, there will be no need for anyone else to tell us what God is saying or meaning through **prophecy, tongues, nor knowledge**. Those things **will come to an end**.

1 Corinthians 13:11-12 (CSB) When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put aside childish things. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror, but then face to face. Now I know in part, **but then I will know fully**, as I am fully known.

Corinth was well known in the ancient world for producing some of the finest bronze mirrors available, but it was still far from the crystal clarity of our mirrors. So too, what we can currently see of God is limited on this side of eternity, but we will soon experience the high definition of being **face to face** with our Creator & Redeemer, to **know fully** His Presence, power, & character. Oh what a day that will be!

WRITE YOUR OWN NOTES HERE

⁵ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 758.

⁶ MacArthur, *1 Corinthians*, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 344-345.

⁷ David Platt, "The Cross and Christian Love," in *David Platt Sermon Archive* (Birmingham, AL: David Platt, 2013), 4064.

1 Corinthians 13:13-14:1a (CSB) Now these three remain: faith, hope, and love—but the greatest of these is love. Pursue love and desire spiritual gifts...

How is love **the greatest** of these 3 incredible traits?

☀ **Ben Witherington:** “**Faith** will become sight and **hope** will be fulfilled, but **love** will simply carry on, presumably amplified and purified into a perfect condition. It is the one attribute that is to bridge this [current earthly] age and the...[coming eternal] reality.”⁸

Until then, we are to continue to **pursue love** like God has shown us, and to **desire spiritual gifts** to glorify God and for the good of others. (Read 1 Cor 14 for next week’s study.)

☀ **NT Wright** “The point of 1 Corinthians 13 is that love is not our duty; it is our *destiny*. It is the language Jesus spoke, and we are called to speak it so that we can converse with him. It is the food they eat in God’s new world, and we must acquire the taste for it here and now. It is the music God has written for all his creatures to sing, and we are called to learn it and practice it now so as to be ready when the conductor brings down his baton. It is the resurrection life, and the resurrected Jesus calls us to begin living it with him and for him right now.”⁹ “If we are to be true to our risen Lord we will need, again and again, to retune our instruments and practice once more alongside our fellow musicians.”¹⁰

heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), or another follower of Jesus soon!

* Or call our **deacons & wives:** Alan & Christy Androski (850-464-1428), Freddy & Joyce Howard (850-973-0047), Tim & Joni Hughey (850-464-1156), Mark & Dot Mancil (850-253-5405), Boss & Amelia Mulkey (850-464-6717), Jim & Derita Pinkard (850-464-6188), or Tom & Martha Waddail (850-973-0011).

discussionquestions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. What challenged or encouraged you most from today’s teaching? You might need to look back in your notes to help explain your answer.
2. You’ve probably heard “The Love Chapter” (1 Cor 13) quoted at a wedding, but how has studying the context (tied to spiritual gifts) helped you to understand it better?
3. **Read all of 1 Cor 12:31-13:7** and share with one another what stands out to you the most.
4. **Read 1 Cor 13:8-12.** While some use this passage to say some of these gifts have already ceased, when and why can we expect this gifts to no longer be necessary? What **ULTIMATE** day is this pointing to and why should it be a day we look forward to?
5. **Read 1 Cor 13:13-14:1.** Share some practical ways **WE** can pursue love this week in our homes, at our jobs, in our community, and with our church.
6. What other questions has this teaching or discussion prompted for us to talk about?
7. **Share prayer needs and pray for one another.**

⁸ Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), 272.

⁹ Tom Wright, *Surprised by Hope* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2007), 301.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 298