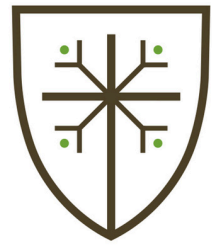


# Lacking Nothing

A Sermon Series on 1 Corinthians

## SERMON NOTES



July 27, 2025

### SERMON INFO

#### TITLE

"The End All Along"

#### PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

#### TEXTS

Song of Solomon 2:2-6  
1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13  
John 15:1-5, 9-10, 12-13

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is it just as important for Paul to address what love is NOT as it is to describe what love is?
2. How does living in community with those in the church who are different from ourselves help to form us into people of love?

### SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, Tim led us in looking at Paul's most famous chapter in Corinthians on the topic of love. But the oft-quoted passage may not be saying what so many seem to think it says.

#### Centrality of Love

1 Corinthians 13 is not, as many assume, simply Paul waxing poetic about romantic love. Romantic love does have a part in it, but that isn't why Paul brings it up here in his letter to the church in Corinth. It is the climax of the book, the place to which the preceding chapters have been pointing. In the first few verses of this section, Paul speaks of all the gifts that the Corinthian church possesses—beautiful speech, prophetic powers, riches, knowledge, even faith and martyrdom—but he does not speak of these things as a compliment. Everything he says to them, he puts in the negative. Without love, all of these things are worthless; they mean nothing at all.

There is no gift or ability that can be central to the life of any church. It must be love, or it will crumble. All too often we see churches built on a person or a personality, seemingly using spiritual gifts to gather followers. But what appear as spiritual gifts, without the centrality of love, are really just natural gifts. The difference between the two is the reason and the goal for which they are being employed.

#### Description of Love

So, what is love? And how can we tell when something is simply masquerading as love? Paul's description in our passage is that of agape love. In the time that Paul was writing, there was nothing explicitly religious about agape love; it was simply affection, esteem, self-sacrifice. Unlike our modern view of love that insists on never trying to change another person, agape love assumes change. It is the kind of love that seeks the change that it alone can create as it is experienced.

This kind of love, as Paul describes it - love that is long-suffering through offense, never envious or arrogant or proud, or rude (meaning uninformed, shameful behavior you wouldn't be comfortable with other people seeing) - this kind of love leads us to ask the question, "Who loves like this?"

#### Embodiment of Love

In his description of love, Paul switches back to positive language and then, in verse 8, repeats the word "all" four times to get his point across. We know we can bear "some" things, but not "all" things. At some point, we realize the weight of love is too much for any mortal person - but that is what Christianity gives us: one God and one man who perfectly embodies this love. This passage is really a description of Jesus.

The cost of love, of bearing all things, did not stop Jesus from fulfilling his mission on earth, because God is love. It isn't just what He does or what He has, but what He is. We too can become people of love. Because we are in Christ and His life flows through us, we already have access to a life lived with love at its very center.