



Sermon Series: Confusion in Corinth, Part 2

Sermon Title: The Power of Love

Speaker/ Date: Reuben Scheeringa, February 14, 2021

1 Corinthians 12: 31b-13:1-13

Paul ended with 1 Corinthians chapter 12:31 with “**And I will show you a still more excellent way.**” So, what is this more excellent way?

BIG IDEA: GIFTS ARE GOOD, BUT THE GREATEST GIFT IS TO LOVE LIKE JESUS.

The Greeks had many words to describe the type of love they were talking about.

- **Philia**, friendship, family love, is concerned with those closest to us.
- **Storge**, love (which does not appear in the New Testament) is often used in classical Greek for the love and affection between parents and children.
- **Erōs**, or erotic love, is the wonderful, sensual love to be enjoyed between a husband and wife.
- **Agapē**, is used to designate a love that is sacrificial, unselfish, caring about the concerns of another person.

Agapē is the word that is used here in 1 Corinthians 13.

Now that we have a working definition, let's go back to the passage, because it gives us everything we need.

1. USING GIFTS WITHOUT LOVE.

1 Corinthians 13:1 -3 Paul is addressing the use of Spiritual Gifts here. He is not denying them, he is making a huge point to the church at Corinth, that was struggling with how to use these gifts. He says - You can speak every known language, even Angelic languages, he says, but if it is not done in Agape love, it is, like this BIG GONG!

2. USING GIFTS WITH LOVE.

What is love? Patience, humility, kindness. **1 Corinthians 13:4-11**

This is referring to the use of spiritual gifts. When you use them are you patient? Are you humble? Are you kind? It is not that the gifts are wrong, it is how they are utilized. Prophecy is great, but is it done with this kind of love? Teaching is great, but is it done with this kind of love? Tongues are great, but are they done with this type of love. Then Paul boils this love down to something interesting... Maturity. **1 Corinthians 13:11**

Paul is saying, when you are a child, certain actions are acceptable, reasonable, and expected. Now, it is time to grow up, it is time to mature.

3. LOVE PERSONIFIED.

This is a hard thing, a difficult thing. Think about the passage here, and recognize the hyperbole that is being used. **1 Corinthians 13:1-8**

Jesus loves like this, and shows us every step of the way. He is Love Personified.

In Matthew chapter 12, we find Jesus trying to get alone. He had just heard the news that his cousin and friend John the Baptist was executed. He was looking for solitude, for rest, but the crowds followed. Matthew tells us in .. Matthew 12:14 Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

Jesus had compassion – We should love with our gifts like Jesus does.

Discussion Questions:

- What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?
- Why is it important to understand the different types of Greek words for love in the bible?
- Can you tell if someone is loving others solely by his or her actions?
- Is it possible to not like people but still love them? Explain
- What advice would you give to someone who is struggling to love other people – especially people who are difficult to love?
- Describe a time when you were the recipient of someone's love for you. How was your life impacted by that person?

BIBLE VERSES

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not Agape, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 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. 3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:4-11 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. 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 gave up childish ways.

1 Corinthians 13:1-8 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 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. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.