

Love: The Essential Ingredient

Series: Spiritual Gifts

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:1-13



The Corinthians did not have a problem with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They had a problem with love, selflessness and spiritual maturity.

1. Love Authenticates Spiritual Gifts (1-3)

1 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 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.

- a. Speaking in tongues is meaningless if it is exercised apart from love
- b. Prophecy has no value if it is not spoken in love.
- c. Spiritual wisdom and knowledge, and the gifts to communicate wisdom and knowledge are worthless apart from love.
- d. Mountain moving faith adds nothing to a person if that person has no love.
- e. Generosity with material possessions is void if that giving is not done in love.
- f. Costly personal sacrifice brings no reward unless it is motivated in love.

2. Love Motivates Spiritual Gifts (4-8a)

“4 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never ends.”

- a. Love for others breeds patience & humility in exercising spiritual gifts (4-5) - “Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful.”
- b. Love for others results in submission in exercising spiritual gifts (6) - “Love... does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.”

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- c. Love for others generates commitment in the context of exercising spiritual gifts (7-8a) - "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never ends..."

3. Love Outlasts Spiritual Gifts (8b-13)

- a. The fact about spiritual gifts (8b-10) - "As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away."
- b. The trajectory of spiritual gifts (11-12) - "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. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known."
- c. The submission of spiritual gifts (13) - "So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

One day there will be no faith because all will be known.

One day there will be no need for hope because all will be fulfilled.

One day there will be no rival to love because sin will be extinguished.

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