

1 CORINTHIANS 13

the necessity, character, and permanency of love

Review / Preview

In **chapter 12**, Paul re-teaches the Corinthians about spiritual gifts. They are gracious GIFTS of God given in varying degree and form to every Christian for the purpose of serving the common good. Once at the beginning and again at the end of the chapter Paul provides illustrative lists of different kinds of spiritual gifts.

In **chapter 13**, Paul emphasizes the necessity of love in the exercise of spiritual gifts. Without love, everything a person might do is worthless.

Outline

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|---------|-------------------------------|
| 13:1-3 | the necessity of love |
| 13:4-7 | the character of love |
| 13:8-13 | the permanency of love |

Verses 1-3. The necessity of love

Speak in the tongues of men and of angels without love...

Prophecy, faith, wisdom, and knowledge without love...

Generosity and martyrdom without love...

WHY is it all nothing without love?

Verses 4-7. The character of love

English Bibles have to resort to adjectives when translating these characteristics of love. In the original Greek, however, they are all verbs. How does that enrich our understanding of love's character?

Is there anything else striking about this list?

Evaluate. *Lovelessness (selfishness) is the result of fear.*

Verses 8-13. The permanence of love

Follow Paul's logic: Why do spiritual gifts such as prophecy, tongue-speaking, knowledge have only temporary value?

How does the child-man analogy illustrate that point?

How does the mirror analogy illustrate it?

Faith, hope, and love have greater value than the spiritual gifts that infatuated the Corinthians. What makes love even greater than faith and hope?