

Sermon: Together We Can Make a Difference

Delivered by: **Dr. Josh Moody**, senior pastor; Date: **June 12, 2016**

Bible text explored: 1 Corinthians 13

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

⁴Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. ¹¹When 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. ¹²For 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.

¹³So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

^(a) *Some manuscripts: deliver up my body [to death] that I may boast* [ESV]

Review and application:

1. Here is a common assumption: the people most used by God are the ones who are most gifted. Is it valid?
Why may a preoccupation with spiritual gifts damage the cohesion of a local church body? (See 1 Corinthians 12:24b-26.)
How can we tell that Paul wrote the Chapter 13 section of this epistle to counteract that tendency? (See 1 Corinthians 12:31b).
2. Why do the following exploits lack merit if done without consideration of, and love for, others? . . .
. . . eloquence (v. 1)
. . . superior intelligence / extraordinary faith (v. 2)
. . . self-sacrificing piety (v. 3)
3. What (v. 4a) are qualities that reveal love?
What (vv.4b-6) are actions that betray a deficiency of love?
4. What does verse 7 tell us about . . .
. . . assuming the best in others?
. . . forgiving the worst in others?
. . . taking risks in reaching out to others?
. . . making room for the coming generation?
5. Love not only outlasts the spiritual gifts so prized by the Corinthian church (vv. 8-9), but, Pastor Moody said, it is the only one in the well-known triad of verse 13 that doesn't end. What will make the others no longer necessary?
6. How is Paul's illustration (vv. 10-11) of progressing from self-centered infancy to other-focused maturity at odds with common assumptions today?
7. How (v. 12) can giving up "childish ways" help prepare us for a "face to face" encounter with our Lord and Savior?