

## 1 CORINTHIANS 13 - LOVE

The main point of this digression is that love is greater than all the spiritual gifts combined. They had a lot of things going for them, and they were lacking in a lot of others – but the thing they needed the most of was love for one another. Col. 3:14

*chedes* refers to covenant love (lovingkindness/steadfast love - faithfulness, goodness, kindness, devotion, loyalty).

*ahavah*, can be used of human love towards oneself, another person of the opposite sex, or another person in general.

Greek. *Phileō* which is a companionable love; *Storge* which describes a devoted affection and obligational type of love, such as for one's family; and *Agapē* or *Agapaō* which is best described as an unconditional type of love.

The greatest expressions of God's love that the universe has ever known were expressed through the incarnation, the cross, and the resurrection.

1 John 4:7-11, 16; Ephesians 2:1-9; 1 John 3:16

13:1-3 – Without love...

- V1 – I am a Noisy gong, or clanging symbol. The word for *Gong* is actually *bronze*. "Bronze vases were often used for amplifiers in the outdoor theaters of this period."<sup>17</sup>

- V2 – I am nothing
- V3 – I gain nothing

13:4-8a – Love is...

- How close does your own life match up to this list?

13:8b-12

- v8b – prophecies, tongues, knowledge will pass away and cease. He's shorthand recalling his list from verses 1-3, doubling down on the main point.
- Spiritual gifts will pass away, but the supplier and power behind them won't. Gifts will end, God is love, both he and his love is eternal.

- v9-10 – We don't have the full picture
  - The *perfect* refers to the second coming of Jesus. The word translated as *perfect* means, "*having reached its end, i.e. complete, by extension perfect*."<sup>17</sup>
  - The *partial* refers to the old heaven and earth (of which we are still a part of), all of which will be destroyed and made new. **Rev 21:1-7**
- v11 – Paul's calling them out. They think of themselves as mature people, Paul says if that's the case, then it's time to act like it.
  - The word implies a toddler, and figuratively someone who is immature or simple-minded. 1 Corinthians 3:1
- V12 – We see in a mirror dimly...
  - "In the Graeco-Roman world, a mirror consisted of a polished metal disc with a handle. The reflection visible in the polished silver or bronze was a much more imperfect and indirect representation than modern mirrors."<sup>17</sup>
  - Two things being said: 1) "Now I know in part". Deut. 29:29, "29 "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." 2) "then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known." Romans 5:8, "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Rev 21:9-11, 22-27; 22:1-5

### There are three aspects to Love: acceptance, reciprocation, replication

- **Acceptance.** We are accepted by God through the work of Jesus Christ – we need to realize this and accept God's acceptance of us. Christ took our sin and bore it on himself. Col. 2:13-15; Zeph. 3:17; Eph 3:17-18
- **Reciprocation – the return of something given. Obeying God** John 14:21-24; Repentance Romans 2:4; Delight in worship and in God's house; Love for God's word
- **Replication.** Self-sacrifice, giving, serving others, loving others
- Luke 7:36-50, John 13:1-20, 34-35