

LOVE  
Text: 1 Corinthians 13

INTRO: This chapter is often called the “love” chapter. The Greek word for love in this chapter is AGAPE. It is used to designate a love which seeks the good of one’s neighbor whether or not that love is returned. The church in Corinth was plagued with many problems, most of which could be solved by an application of the truths of this chapter. The same is true in many congregations of God’s people today.

I. LOVE, THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY, IS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN, vs. 1-3.

- A. More excellent than tongue speaking, vs. 1.
- B. More excellent than prophesying, super-natural knowledge, or miraculous faith, vs. 2.
- C. More excellent than benevolence & hollow sacrifice, vs. 3

II. A WORD-PICTURE OF THE KIND OF LOVE THE APOSTLE IS SPEAKING ABOUT, vs. 4-7.

- A. longsuffering -- patiently enduring things that are unpleasant while there is still hope that they can be improved, vs. 4a.
- B. kind -- not vindictive; willing to return good, even for evil, vs. 4b.
- C. does not envy -- This was a problem in Corinth, ch. 12.
- D. does not parade itself (vaunteth not itself, KJV) -- does not boast, (NIV).

As it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the Lord” (1 Cor. 1:31).

- E. is not puffed up (proud) -- The Corinthian church had this problem with some individual who had taken his father’s wife in fornication -- & some in the church were proud to have him in their number, 5:2.

F. does not behave rudely (unseemly, KJV) -- does not behave in such a way as to be unbecoming to a Christian. In a congregation plagued with division, immorality, brethren taking their problems to outsiders to be settled, arguing over spiritual gifts, etc., they desperately needed to be shown the more excellent way!

G. does not seek its own.

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem another better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 2:3-5).

H. is not provoked (not easily angered, NIV)

I. thinks no evil (keeps no record of wrongs, NIV) -- The concept of keeping in memory of every slight with intent to get even.

J. does not rejoice in iniquity.

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, & such sexual immorality as is not even named among the [heathen] --that a man has his father's wife! And you are puffed up, & have not rather mourned that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. (1 Cor. 5:1-2).

K. bears all things.

Bear one another's burdens, & so fulfill the law of Christ... From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. (Gal. 6:2, 17).

L. believes all things, (always trusts, NIV) -- looks for the silver lining, the good. Give all the credit you can. If a person means well, chalk it up to their good.

M. hopes all things, (always hopes, NIV) -- don't give up.

N. endures all things, (always perseveres, NIV). Love is like a good soldier who withstands every attack of the enemy. No power on earth can destroy you without

first destroying your love. See that you manifest a love that endures all things, & there is no way Satan can bring you down to defeat.

### III. THE GREAT SUPREMACY OF LOVE, vs. 8-13.

#### A. Love never fails, vs. 8.

Prophecies, tongues, knowledge, etc., were temporary. They were never meant to be permanent.

1. Like the schoolmaster, Gal. 3:24-25.
2. Like childhood, vs. 11
3. Like a blurred image in a poor mirror, vs. 12

#### B. Faith, hope & love are enduring throughout the gospel age -- but the greatest of these is love, vs. 13.

1. Hope will become reality, Rom. 8:24
2. Faith will give way to sight, Heb 11:1; 2 Cor 5:7
3. But love will endure throughout eternity.

Jonestown, TX, November 19, 1967

Springhill, LA, April 8, 1973

La Porte, TX, January 8, 1978

La Porte, TX, February 1, 1981

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, January 7, 2001

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, November 30, 2003