

## THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 8TH, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

### NOISE (1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3)

#### SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Chapter 13 continues the disciplinary order of the spiritual gifts. It is meant to exemplify the true characteristics of love, but also meant to correct the misuse of the spiritual gifts.

- It is the importance of these gifts that is the driving force behind making sure the Corinthians knew that: **Without love, the gifts are empty and could even be harmful.**

#### "HUMAN, OR ANGELIC TONGUES"

Paul was one who had the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 14:18), so he is obviously not saying this gift, along with the others, is of little importance.

- As for Angelic tongues, this is understood as hypothetical to exaggerate his point. Even if he did have the ability to speak in Angelic tongues the importance of love must set precedence before the gifts.

#### NOISY GONGS

The subject of pointless gifts without love is brought up with the imagery of a noisy gong or clanging cymbal. Yes, it is loud, but the distraction alone could be **eternally damaging**.

- The Corinthians missed the motive of the gifts. They had focused too much on the gift and forgotten the **purpose of the gift**.

#### "...I HAVE THE GIFT OF PROPHECY..."

Even when it came to knowing all mysteries and understanding everything around him, Paul knew that elevating this in a way that worshipped the gift was in complete contrast to worshipping the Giver.

- To use a gift in love means to use this gift in a way that is only God-honoring and bringing no glory upon self.

#### FAITH THAT CAN MOVE MOUNTAINS

Matthew 17:20 shares this idea of faith to do impossible tasks, but nothing that Christ authorizes His followers to do will be impossible.

- If we as believers move mountains with some gigantic display of faith **without love**, we are prone to set them in someone's way or even on top of someone else.

#### SELF-SACRIFICE

Paul says: "...if I give my body in order to boast." Paul already lived a life filled with persecution to the point of being close to death.

- Paul never went through this oppression because of boastfulness, pride, or to make himself known. He knew that being persecuted or even giving your life for anything other than love was meaningless!

#### PROPER USE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

After presenting all these scenarios, Paul responded that without Christian love, these gifts amount to nothing. **"All gifts are a string of zeros; without love, the value placed before them, they are useless"** (Dr. Vernon Mcgee).

- The use of spiritual gifts without love is misleading, and service without love is obligation.**

#### AGAPE LOVE (1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7)

##### AGAPE LOVE

There are 4 terms in the Greek language for love in the Bible: Eros (sexual love), Storge (between family members), Philia (deep relationships), and Agape (unchanging self-giving love).

- In this passage, the agape form of love is the form being used. We get the English word "agony" from the word, "agape."

This kind of love is completely sacrificial and absolutely rooted in action instead of emotion. Just as chapter 12 aimed at giving order to the gifts of the Spirit, as chapter 13 does, Paul wanted to make sure the Corinthians understood that the foundation and use of the gifts were fixed in love.

- The fundamentals of true love demand action!**

##### FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Patience: In order to edify the body, we cannot let indifference get the better of us. We exhibit patience by bearing burdens and supporting other believers **regardless of their struggles**.

- Kindness: This kindness is soft and gentle to those around us, but it is also used to carefully rebuke, **utilizing truth**, in order to bring about a good result.

##### ENVY, BOASTING, ARROGANCE

Ephesians 2:8-9 and 1 Corinthians 4:7 are two passages that address boasting about multiple subject matters. We are never going to show the love of God through boasting in self and magnifying our name instead of the name of Jesus.

- Boasting is also something in which the church in Corinth was experienced. In chapter 5, Paul even addresses their arrogance in their sin.

#### "...NO JOY IN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS..."

1 John 3:18 says that "we love in action along with truth." It is also preceded by stating that is how we, as believers, know that God's love resides in us and others. We are also called to, "love without hypocrisy" (Romans 12:8).

- As Christians, we must model God's righteousness by sharing that truth and love through action!**

#### ALL THINGS

The phrase, "His love endures forever" appears 26 times in total in the Bible, mostly in Psalms. John goes as far to say that "God is love" in 1 John 4:8.

- If the epitome of God is love and that love is said to endure forever, we must take the correction to use the gifts of the Spirit in love!

Notice this verse doesn't say "some" things, but ALL things. Even if showcasing agape love to bear, believe, and hope all things, that love must also endure.

- Paul ultimately wanted the Corinthian Christians to know that their spiritual giftedness is not an adequate measure of maturity, the display of love is.

#### FOREVER (1 CORINTHIANS 13:8-13)

##### CEASING OF GIFTS

The exemplification of these gifts have not yet ceased. Verses 8-13 is looking forward and starting to understand what will be in the eternal.

- We must not take these verses out of context and share false truths with others about these gifts no longer being needed, but we should instead be joyful that once we see Jesus, face to face, they will not be necessary.

##### PROPHECIES, TONGUES, AND KNOWLEDGE

Paul mentions these 3 gifts because this is typically how a prophet would come and profess. They would be imparted knowledge from God, share that message with the people, and, at times, share it in a foreign tongue with either an interpreter, or interpreted utilizing the Spirit through someone else.

- These gifts are important and necessary, but once the perfect comes, will be obsolete.**

#### "...I REASONED LIKE A CHILD..."

A child is limited by earthly wisdom! We do not know what we do not know, and what we do know, **we become infatuated with**.

- This is exactly why Paul is saying these things. Do not become enthralled, or worship, the temporary when the eternal awaits, **especially when those gifts are from the eternal God in the first place!**

#### A REFLECTION IN A MIRROR

Corinth was well known for its mirrors. Something that would be relatable in our culture today would be that of a great, crisp, photograph.

- Even though photographs are wonderful to look at, or even spark clear and wonderful memories, they are nothing like the real thing. **When we see Jesus, face to face, we will begin to understand Him in His perfect glory!**

#### "KNOW FULLY, AS I AM FULLY KNOWN"

Let us not get this twisted: this is not to say that when we reach perfection in Heaven that we will fully know God (Revelation 4:8-9). Even so, we will know God intimately and personally.

- Finally, Paul mentions the things that **remain**: faith, hope, and love. **Since faith and hope will be fulfilled in eternity, love is the greatest now and for eternity (verse 8)!**

#### EVALUATION OF SELF

- If love is superior to all gifts, why have we elevated the gifts as the Corinthians did?**
- Matthew 5:43 and Matthew 22:37-39 use this form of agape love when Jesus gives us examples of how to love others. **How have we done as a Christian culture by exemplifying this to those around us?**

#### LOVE AND DISCIPLINE

- Are we willing to go through agony while we love through struggle or difficult times?**
- Enduring love destroys enemies by turning them into friends.
- All of the examples of love are action verbs. Every "choice" should be made from a service towards others, not some foolish attempt for selfish glory.**

#### ETERNITY

- Are we so enamored with the photograph that we are anxious about the real thing?**
- Our focus should be on unity through the Spirit, diversity in the Spirit, and maturity in the Spirit; maturity only comes through love.**