

The Prominence of Love - 1 Corinthians 13 1-3

Introduction:

1. The More Excellent Way
2. Prominence of Love
3. Application

The More Excellent Way - Love

1. Different meanings of Love
 - Philo – Brotherly / Friendship Love
 - Eros – Love between man and woman / Emotional Love
 - Agape – Divine Love / Sacrificial Love
2. Personification of Love (God is Love - 1 Jn 4:7-8)
3. Definition of Love (1 Jn 4:9-10, Jn 3:16, Jn 15:13)
4. New Commandment (Jn 13:34)
5. Pattern of Love (Jn 15:12)
6. Fruit of Spirit (Gala 5:22)

Prominence of Love

1. Languages without Love is Nothing
2. Prophecy without Love is Nothing
3. Knowledge without Love is Nothing
4. Understanding all mysteries without Love is Nothing
5. Faith without Love is Nothing
6. Charity without Love is Nothing
7. Martyrdom without Love is Nothing

1. Languages

1. Languages of Angels and Human a Hypothetical expression of Paul
2. Languages at Pentecost Day– Acts 2:7-11, 1Cor 14:10)
 1. Known languages
 2. Spoke the wonderful works of God (Acts 2:11)
3. Languages as a Sign: (Acts 2 -Jews, Acts 10-Gentiles, Acts 19-John's disciples)

2. Prophecy

It is the proclamation of God's truth in the language of the people

- the aspect of revelation in the Bible when the prophet spoke the revelation of God
- When we re-spoke the revelation of God (reiteration)

3. All Knowledge

1. Knowledge of God
2. Knowledge of sin
3. Knowledge of the glory of God
4. Knowledge of Jesus Christ
5. Knowledge in the mystery of Christ
6. Knowledge of the Son of God
7. Knowledge of the truth
8. Knowledge of salvation

4. Understanding all the Mysteries

1. Mystery of the kingdom of God (Mr 4:11, Mat 13:11, Luke 8:10)
2. Mystery of God (Colo 2:2)
3. Mystery of God's will (Ephe 1:9)
4. Mystery of Christ (Ephe 3:4, Colo 4:3)
5. Mystery of Christ in you (Colo 1:27)
6. Mystery of the gospel (Ephe 6:19)
7. Mystery of the faith (1 Tim 3:9)
8. Mystery of the wisdom of God (1 Cor 2:7)
9. Mystery of Resurrection (1 Cor 15:51)
10. A great mystery, concerning Christ and the church.(Ephe 5:32)

5. Faith:

- Faith as a mustard seed (Mat 17:20)
- Faith without doubt (Mat 21:21)
- Faith of Four people (Mark 2:5)

6. Charity

1. Give all my possessions to feed the poor
 - Young Ruler (Mathew 19:21)

7. Martyrdom

1. Give my body to be burned without Love is nothing

Summary:

1. Life minus Love equals ZERO:

Verse 1: The loveless person produces nothing of value, just noise.

Verse 2: The loveless person is himself of no value, I am nothing.

Verse 3: The loveless person receives nothing of value, it profits me nothing.

Just a big ZERO.

2. Greatest is Love: - Why does chapter 13 come between Ch 12 and 14?

Chapter 12 Paul discussed the endowments of the gifts → the receiving of the gifts and the way God has put them together in the church so that it can function.

Chapter 14 is the proper exercise of the gifts → how to do it and how not to do it.

Chapter 13 is in the middle of a section on spiritual gifts.

And right in the middle is the proper energy...the proper motive...the proper power...the proper atmosphere...the proper environment in which the Spiritual gifts operate.

3. Love - Is it the Fruit or Gift (Gala 5:22-23)

The true spiritual life is the only life in which spiritual gifts can truly operate. And the true spiritual life is not controlled by the gifts of the Spirit, but it is controlled by the fruit of the Spirit, which is LOVE.

If we don't have the fruit of the Spirit, then, the gifts of the Spirit are functioning in the flesh. When the believer walks in the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit is produced.

Out of the fruit of the Spirit come the gifts of the Spirit.

Graham Stuart Staines – Burnt Alive

Filled with sorrow and compassion for those suffering from leprosy and because of his profound love for God, he decided to dedicate his life to serve God by serving leprosy patients.

Dr. Graham Stuart Staines spent 34 years of his life serving the people with love, extending the grace of our Christ and had been working in Orissa among the tribal poor and especially with leprosy patients since 1965.

George Muller:

Mueller's faith that his prayers for money would be answered was rooted in the sovereignty of God. When faced with a crisis in having the means to pay a bill he would say, "How the means are to come, I know not; but I know that God is almighty, that the hearts of all are in His hands, and that, if He pleaseth to influence persons, they will send help."⁶¹ That is the root of his confidence: *God is almighty, the hearts of all men are in his hands,*⁶² and when God chooses to influence their hearts they will give.

He had come to know and love this absolute sovereignty of God in the context of the doctrines of *grace*, and therefore he cherished it mainly as sovereign *goodness*.⁶³ This gave him a way to maintain a personal peace beyond human understanding in the midst of tremendous stress and occasional tragedy

There are preachers with no love. There are preachers who have one objective as Albert Barnes said in his old commentary, "They have one objective, not to feed the flock but to fleece it." They don't love the people, they're in there for fame or power or prestige or personal gain or to make money or to be somebody and they're up for the highest bidder. That's true, sad but true.

Balaam:

Jos 13:22 The children of Israel also killed with the sword Balaam the son of Beor, **the soothsayer**, among those who were killed by them.

2Pe 2:15 They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, **who loved the wages of unrighteousness;**

Jude 1:11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, **have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit**, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

Re 2:14 "But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, **who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.**

1John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

1John 4:8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love

1John 4:9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

1John 4:10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1John 3:16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Joh 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

Joh 13:34 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

Joh 15:12 "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Ga 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Acts 2: 7-11

7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?

8 "And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?

9 "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

10 "Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,

11 "Cretans and Arabs--we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."

1 Cor14:10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance.

Col 3:14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

The Prominence of Love -1 Corinthians 13 1-3

1. If I speak in the tongues^[a] of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.
2. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and
3. if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.
4. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast,^[b] but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Introduction: (commentary from JM Davis and Leon Morris and John McArthur)

Paul's More excellent way is the way of Love which he proceeds to expound in a passage of singular beauty and power. This chapter is not as some have thought, a digression from the argument. Paul has not finished with the gifts and he has much to say about them in the following chapter. But here he is concerned to insist that the central thing is not the exercise of any of the gifts. It is the practice of Christian Love. It has got such a vitally important link between chapter 12 and 14. In this chapter Paul insists upon the supreme importance of Love as being absolutely essential prerequisite for the exercise of gift. It takes pre-eminence above any and all gifts. The Love considered here is the Love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. It is a Love lavished upon others without a thought of whether they are worthy to receive it or not.

The Christian who has experienced God's Love to him while he was yet a sinner has been transformed by the experience. Now he sees men in a measure as God sees them. He sees them as the objects of God's Love, as those for whom Christ died. Accordingly his attitude towards them is one of Love, of self-giving agape. He comes to practice the love which seeks nothing for itself but only the good of the loved one. It is this love which Paul unfolds.

<http://chrismlegg.com/2009/10/01/5-greek-words-for-love-agape/>

Agapeo – Agape love is the final of the five loves we look at here. Agape love is entirely about the lover, and has nothing whatsoever to do with the one loved. Agape love, in its purest form, requires no payment or favor in response. The most common word for God's love for us is Agape (1 John, John 3:16) and the love we are commanded to have for one another (Matt. 5:44, 1 Cor. 13). This lack of input from the recipient makes it possible for us to love our enemies even though we may not like them or the situation they have put us in – because Agape love is not in any way dependent on circumstances; it says "I love you because I choose/commit to." Unlike eros or philos, Agape creates a straight line that neither fades or grows (!) in its perfect form (which of course only exists from God outward) Oddly enough, even though many people marry out of eros love alone, they make vows that speak of commitment despite any circumstance: richer/poorer, better/worse, sickness/health. This kind of love is about a commitment to the very best for another, no matter what emotions or feelings exist! You can see why in the King James Version of the Bible, Agape was usually translated as "charity." It is a love freely given, and freely committed to. For a more in depth look at its aspects, look at 1 Corinthians chapter 13.

<http://christianity.about.com/od/topicaldevotions/qt/greatestislove.htm>

The Greatest of These is Love

What makes love so amazing? For starters, it is what motivated the Father to send His only Son to die for us. Without love, there would have been no [redemption](#) for mankind. Not only would we be without love, but without the redemption that was precipitated by love, there would also be no faith, and no hope. You see, nothing else matters, without love. It is foundational for every other good thing in our lives.

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The error of Balaam for profit

Let me show you one. This is about Balaam the son of Beor, Numbers 24:15:

"Balaam the son of Beor has said and the man whose eyes are open has said: He has said who heard the words of God and knew the knowledge of the Most High, who saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance but having his eyes open." Now, there's a description of Balaam. I mean, he really got a good thing.

And he says in verse 17: "Here's the prophecy, God I shall see Him but not now."

Something coming but not yet. "I shall behold Him but not near," it's going to be a

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while. ... and there shall come a star out of Jacob and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel," who is it? Well, no doubt, the ultimate end of that prophecy is the Messiah. The Sceptre is connected with Genesis 49:10 and it's the Messiah. Listen, here is a man, who was given the marvelous unequalled privilege of predicting the Messiah. Man, you say, fantastic. That Balaam must have been something.

Verse 1 of chapter 25, it says in the second line there: "...the people began to commit harlotry, whoredom, with the daughters of Moab." Now, the prophet had told them about the Messiah and now the next thing we find out, the people are committing whoredom with the daughters of Moab. You say, "Well, you can't sure blame that on Balaam, poor fella, probably just didn't listen to him."

Look at Numbers 31 and I'll show you something. This is the commentary on Balaam. All this harlotry was bad news. And verse 16 of Numbers 31: "Behold, these caused the children of Israel," these women, Moabite women, "to commit trespass," notice, "through the counsel of ... whom? ... Balaam." Now wait a minute. Balaam, the prophet of God, who knew the truth and spoke the truth? Same guy, but he didn't love the people. The Moabites came and said, "Hey, Balaam, how much you want to corrupt the people of Israel?" And they bought him off and he enticed the children of Israel to commit whoredom with the Moabites.

Look at verse 8, the end of the verse, 31: "...and Balaam also the son of Beor, they ... what?... slew with a sword." You want to know something? Throughout history we recognize Balaam's ass as more acceptable in the ministry than Balaam. Is that right? You know why? Because he was a prophet who spoke the truth but didn't love the people, right? You see, there has to be that. There's got to be that genuine love, that genuine concern for the people. It wasn't there, Balaam prostituted it, turned it into hate, they sinned and it cost him his life.

Matthew 7:21 would draw your attention to another element of the same idea. Matthew 7:21 says: "Not everyone that said to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven but he that doeth the will of My Father in heaven." Then verse 22, Matthew 7:22 says: "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name?" Hey, remember us? And He'll say to them in 23: "I never knew you, depart from Me you workers of iniquity." Counterfeit prophets. To speak the truth without love is nothing, it's counterfeit, it's empty.