

**“THOUGH I GIVE ALL MY GOODS  
TO FEED THE POOR...”**

**THE SECRET TO SUCCESS**

taken from

1 Corinthians 13



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## THE SECRET TO SUCCESS

**W**e have in the Word of God the secret to success in which most people spend the large majority of their lives in a frantic pursuit of happiness. The apostle Paul learned this and has committed it to writing in 1 Corinthians 13, so that we can have the original account of the secret to life. Now, in this study, we can divide it simply into three parts.

The one word so often mentioned, and yet so often misunderstood, is the word LOVE. We will see LOVE contrasted and then LOVE analyzed and then LOVE defined for us. **LOVE IS THE SECRET TO LIFE AND THE SUPREME GIFT.**

Paul begins by first contrasting LOVE with other things that most men in his day, and in our day, thought and concentrated on quite a bit. You will see that these things are very obviously inferior. He will contrast LOVE with eloquence. Eloquence is a noble gift and it has power to play upon the souls and the wills of men. It arouses many people to do lofty things, and fulfill lofty purposes and even holy deeds. Paul says, "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not LOVE, I am become a sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." We can all understand that because we have felt the brazenness of words without emotion, the hollowness, the unaccountable unpersuasiveness of eloquence behind which lies "no LOVE."

Then Paul goes on to contrast it with prophecy, and mysteries and even faith. He says that LOVE is greater. Why is LOVE greater than faith? Simply because the end is greater than the means. **LOVE is greater than faith because the end is greater than the means.**

What is the use of having faith? **Well, it is designed to connect the soul to the Lord.** And what is the object of connecting the soul to the Lord? That we may have a relationship with Him and become like the Lord. God is LOVE, and therefore, faith is the

means to LOVE, the end. So LOVE therefore, obviously is greater than faith. And it is greater than charity because the whole is greater than a part. Charity is only a little bit of LOVE, one of the many avenues of LOVE and there may even be, and there is, **A GREAT DEAL OF CHARITY WITHOUT LOVE.**

It is easy to throw a quarter to a beggar. It is generally easier to do that than not to do it. Yet LOVE is just as often in the withholding. We purchase relief from the sympathetic feeling roused by the spectacle of misery, at the toss of a quarter. It is not too cheap; too cheap for us, and too dear for the beggar. If we really loved him, we would do either more for him or less.

Then Paul contrasts LOVE with sacrifice and martyrdom. "To give your bodies to be burned, and have not LOVE, it profits nothing." You can take nothing greater to those who are lost than the impress and reflection of the LOVE of God upon your own character. That is the universal language of God the Holy Spirit. Now, it will take you years to speak in a foreign language like Russian, or even in the dialects of India. But from the day that you begin, that language of LOVE, understood by all, will be pouring forth its unconscious eloquence. It is the man who is the missionary or evangelist, and it is not his words. **But his character is the message!**

Some people in Africa could not understand what David Livingstone said, but they all remember him, and they spoke of him as that "kind doctor who passed there years ago." You may make every accomplishment, you may be braced by every sacrifice, but if you give your body to be burned and have not LOVE, it will profit you and the cause of Christ nothing.

Now that is the contrast that Paul makes of LOVE by means of God the Holy Spirit. **THE SECRET OF LIFE, THE UNFAILING LAW, THE GOVERNING PRINCIPLE,** is

found in outline form in 1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-13.

Verse 1, The strength of service.

Verse 2, The energy of equipment.

Verse 3, The dynamic of devotion.

Verses 4-7, Virtues. A double seven.

Verse 8-13, Victories.

Verse 8a, "LOVE never faileth."

Verse 8b-13, Demonstration by comparison.

Verse 8b-12, Things that pass away.

Verse 13, Things that always abide.

Now, from the standpoint of literature, this is one of the most remarkable passages that ever came from the pen of man. In the apostolic teaching, this whole chapter is a parenthesis, and of great importance and value in its relation to all of his teaching. We see the close connection between the last verse of chapter 12 and the first clause of chapter 14.

"Desire earnestly the greater gifts, and the most excellent way shew I unto you..."  
"Follow after LOVE..." The words "follow after LOVE" contain the declaration of what is the most excellent way. We can see that this chapter 13 is a parenthesis. Paul will now, in this chapter, explain how to "follow after LOVE." And he takes his time in chapter 13 to show what LOVE really is. What is this thing called LOVE? This chapter answers that question with poetic beauty and with a scientific analysis.

You almost hesitate to deal with it by way of analysis. It seems almost irreverent to analyze it. Someone once entitled this chapter "The Greatest Thing in the World." This chapter, IF READ OVER AND OVER, will show you the beauty and the marvelous technique included. It will be like taking up the study of botany. But, if and when you pick this chapter apart piece by piece, it will still be there when you are finished, as so with the study of botany.

There are three movements in this chapter on LOVE: the values of LOVE, the virtues of LOVE, and the victories of LOVE. In verses 1-3 we see that LOVE is the STRENGTH OF SERVICE, and LOVE is THE ENERGY OF EQUIPMENT and LOVE is the DYNAMIC OF DEVOTION. Here we have a slight suggestion of the Godhead, the Trinity.

Verse 1, Strength. Verse 2, Energy. Verse 3, Dynamic. The whole principle is to show the value of LOVE. And this passage goes on to show that all these wonderful things that are named are UTTERLY VALUELESS when LOVE is absent.

LOOK AT THE VALUE OF LOVE. Verse 1, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not LOVE, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." "Though I," is literally, if, EAN; which is maybe yes, maybe no. You have a choice. The word "charity," is LOVE, AGAPE. This is MENTAL ATTITUDE LOVE. "Have not LOVE." Mark the satire of it. You cannot read that without giving an emphasis that reminds us of the clatter of the cymbal and the sound of brass.

So, Paul learned that if I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and what does that mean? Well, it amounts to NOISE. That is all it is. I can make a sound if I am eloquent, but it is just a noise, like a clinking cymbal or sounding brass. If there is not LOVE behind the speech or the eloquence, then what am I? I am an instrument, an instrument like brass or a cymbal, without any personality. Nothing. Emptiness. Void of power or impact. LOVE, then, is the power of speech. And if LOVE is absent, though one have the eloquence of a man or an angel, we are only making a noise, nuisance and unanimated.

Now, there is a fine satire in the Holy Spirit's words here. So, here is the necessity for LOVE. And then we will see the characteristics of LOVE and the permanence and superiority of LOVE. The characteristics of LOVE are virtually a presentation of the es-

sence of the Lord Jesus Christ. So, "If" introduces a possibility connected with the future.

Now, tongues is the lowest and first of all the special gifts mentioned. It was the least valuable, and therefore, that which comes first here in contrast to the excellency of LOVE. "Of men and angels." This indicates the power of earthly and heavenly voices. This is brought out for us again in 2 Corinthians 12:4 and in Revelation 14:2.

The sounding brass is a sort of a gong, rather than a trumpet. This, along with the clanging cymbal and their continuous noise, has reference to pagan religious ceremonies and their accompanying rituals. The cymbal often consisted of two half globes which were banged together. WE ARE AS DEAD INSTRUMENTS WITHOUT LOVE, WHICH IS THE FILLING OF THE SPIRIT.

Verse 2, "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not LOVE, I am nothing." The gift of prophecy is the gift of forthtelling the things of the Lord. The gift of knowledge is investigation that deals with the mysteries. If we're able to do all that, and more even, like faith that can move mountains, "but have not LOVE, I am nothing."

These in verse 2 are superior gifts to that of verse 1. Mysteries are the great truths of Divine purposes and dealings which are made known by God the Holy Spirit to believers only. Faith here, is not saving faith, but the supernatural power of faith, so exercised as to remove mountains as described in Matthew 17:20, 21. Mountains are representing the great difficulties in life. Matthew 17:20, 21, "And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you. If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

And then the Holy Spirit's commentary: "I am nothing." This means that I am of no value at all. Paul doesn't say that he received all these gifts himself, but he simply states that if he would have them all, but would not have LOVE, he would be valueless. Here the contrast is stronger than in verse 1. In verse 1 Paul asserted that he would at least be something, even though he lacked LOVE. But after he lists the gifts which surpass the gift of tongues, he states that he would be nothing if he would be without LOVE. The highest charismatic gifts do not, in themselves, lend any dignity to a person. They are SOVEREIGNLY BESTOWED at the point of salvation.

Verse 3, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not LOVE, it profiteth me nothing." Here is the utterance of benevolence. The giving away of everything to feed the poor. It is a nice thing to do, if we do it. And if you are convicted even further so as to give your body to be burned, "and have not LOVE, it profiteth you nothing." You cannot add to that or further interpret that.

All things that seem to us to be fine, notice the list so far: the voice of eloquence, the gift of forth telling the will of God, the ability to peer into the mysteries and come to understand them, the ability to exercise faith so as to remove mountains, the act of giving everything in order to feed the poor, the conviction that carries you so far as self-martyrdom... IT IS ALL NOTHING AND OF NO PROFIT AND VALUELESS.

So, here are the gifts of administration; superior to the preceding ones of tongues and instruction. The word PSOMIZO, which is to give portions of food, is found in Romans 12:20 and it is used often in the Septuagint, like for manna in Deuteronomy 8:3, 16. Romans 12:20, "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

Deuteronomy 8:3, 16, "And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not,

neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.” “Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that He might humble thee, and that He might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end.”

There is no word here in our verse for “poor.” It should be read “If all my possession I dole away in giving food.” Now, that is one kind of sacrifice, and the other is voluntarily submitting to the most painful death of burning the body, as in the pagan devotees’ manifestation of the acme of religious heroism.

The phrase “That I may glory” and the phrase you have here, “to be burned” only differ in one letter. SO THERE ARE STATED HERE FOR US, THREE RESULTS OF THESE VARIOUS SUPPOSITIONS. Verse 1, “I give out nothing.” Verse 2, “I am nothing.” Verse 3, “I gain nothing.” The exercise of the gifts accomplishes something in each case, but without LOVE, he who exercises them is himself of no value.

So, Paul thought of the worst that could happen, both with regard to possessions and with regard to your own personal body. Possession and person. But all that sacrifice and suffering does not profit without LOVE. **There is value in LOVE.** Rewardable value is LOVE. So, CONSEQUENTLY FROM THAT NEGATIVE PARAGRAPH, WE DRAW A POSITIVE CONCLUSION.

What is the conclusion? When LOVE is the motive, in every case, all of this becomes a power and of value. If LOVE is the motive of speech, if LOVE is the motive for the forthtelling of the will of God, if LOVE is that which investigates the mysteries in order to understand them, is the power of faith, lies behind the act of giving, if LOVE carries me to the martyr’s death, then these things are of supreme value. But without LOVE, they are all noise, excitement, or no value at all. Strictly self, self, self.

Some people say faith is the greatest. But not so here. Paul, guided by God the Holy Spirit, listed faith here, and still said the greatest is LOVE. He said, “If I have all faith so that I can move mountains, and have not LOVE, I am nothing.” Then he contrasted them and said, “Now abideth faith, hope and LOVE,” and without a moment’s hesitation, the decision is made and he said, “The greatest of these is LOVE.”

You might think that this is Paul’s strong point and so he recommends it. But Peter said the same thing. “Above all things have fervent LOVE among yourselves.” “Above all things,” is “the greatest of these is LOVE.” John explains it further and says, “GOD IS LOVE.”

Remember the principle that Paul stated, “LOVE is the fulfilling of the Law.” Did you ever think of what Paul meant by that statement? In those days men were working their way to heaven by trying to keep the Ten Commandments, and 110 other commandments, which they personally manufactured out of the Ten Commandments. Jesus Christ said “I will show you a more workable way. If you do one thing, you will do these 110 things, even without ever thinking about them. If you LOVE, you will unconsciously fulfill the whole Law.”

You can see for yourselves how true that is. “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.” If a man LOVES the Lord, you will not be required to tell him to “have no other gods before Me.” LOVE is the fulfilling of the Law. “Take not His holy Name in vain.” Would you ever dream of taking His Name in vain if you LOVED Him? “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” Would you not be too glad to dedicate one day in seven more exclusively to the object of your affections? LOVE will fulfill all these laws regarding the Lord.

You would not have to be told to honor your parents if you LOVED them. You would not have to be told not to murder, if you LOVED them. You would insult a person if you told them not to steal, if LOVE was their motivation. How could you steal from those

you LOVE? Will a man rob God? How could you bear false witness against your neighbor if you LOVED them? If you LOVED them, it would be the last thing you would do. And you would never dream of coveting something that belonged to a beloved neighbor. You would rather that they possess it than you.

LOVE is the fulfilling of the Law. It is the rule for fulfilling all laws. This is the new commandment for keeping all the old commandments. This is the Christian's secret to the Christian way of life.

So much for the value of LOVE. Now we come to the virtue of LOVE. Or, we can change the word and say that what Paul is describing for us is THE FRUITFULNESS OF LOVE. Now, this is the CENTRAL PASSAGE. Notice that here Paul gives us a double seven.

There are 14 things that he states here. But unquestionably there is a differentiation. So, let's look at them in this way. IN THE FIRST SEVEN WE HAVE A DESCRIPTION OF THE EFFECT OF LOVE UPON THE INDIVIDUAL UNDER THE MASTERY OF LOVE, THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE. IN THE SECOND SEVEN, THE VALUE OF LOVE IS SEEN IN ITS RELATIONSHIPS. The first seven are personal, and the last seven are relative. Let us bear in mind as we study these passages that the individual is always seen, and LOVE is acting in the individual in relation to others. And when we look at the relative declarations, we see the outcome of the LOVE mastered personally.

WHAT DOES LOVE DO FOR ME PERSONALLY, THE INDIVIDUAL? In every case we see the individual who is LOVE-mastered acting towards other people. Verse 4, "LOVE suffereth long, and is kind." Now don't hurry over this one. That is the distinguishing quality of LOVE. Not merely that it suffereth long, but, it is being kind. LOVE never says, "Well, that is the third time that you have done that, so you are out." LOVE does not say, "I gave you two chances now, and the third time you have had it." LOVE DOES NOT END WITH THE THIRD. You remember once Peter

thought that he had reached a great height when he said, "How often shall I forgive my brother, until seven times?" And the Lord laughed at him and said, "I do not say seven, but 490 times, seventy times seven."

"LOVE SUFFERETH LONG AND IS KIND." That is the over-plusage which is the characteristic of LOVE. There is a great illustration in the Old Testament, that which Jacob said about one of his sons, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a fountain. His branches run over the wall." "His branches run over the wall," that's something for the person next door, something for those on the outside. So this statement in our text is a great poetic declaration. "LOVE suffereth long and is kind."

This section begins with a striking contrast to the preceding. Here we have an enumeration of the character and the value of the indispensable virtue of LOVE. And the apostle Paul personifies LOVE in verses 4-8.

LONGSUFFERING. It is that quality of self-restraint in face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish. It is the antithesis of anger. It is specifically of the Lord in Exodus 34:6, "And the Lord passed before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and GRACIOUS, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and Truth." In Romans 2:4, "Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering: not knowing the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

1 Peter 3:20, "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." Longsuffering is the PASSIVE QUALITY that exercises patience and forbearance. Whereas, kindness, or GRACE, is the ACTIVE QUALITY that does good and bestows benefits. GRACE in action. Paul, in the first three verses, used the first person singular, but he no longer uses the first person singular, but enumerates the works that LOVE performs. Verse 4, "LOVE

suffereth long, and is kind; Love envieth not; Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."

Next on the list is "LOVE envieth not." That is to say, the ear is never undervaluing itself because it is not an eye. The ear rejoices in the brilliance of the eye. It is not envying anything anyone else possesses. "Envieth" takes in both envy and jealousy and is translated both ways in the Hebrew language and in the Greek language. The distinction lies in this: that envy desires to deprive another of what he has, and jealousy desires to have the same sort of thing for itself. Not LOVE, it does the very opposite of this.

"LOVE vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." **To vaunt oneself is to parade one's imagined superiority over others. To puff oneself up is to manifest pride and self-esteem.** This word is used in 1 Corinthians 4:6, 18, 19, 5:2, 8:1. Envy strives for that which is incompatible with LOVE. Envy and LOVE are MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE. LOVE implies contentment, and IT CAUSES ONE TO ESTEEM SOMEONE ELSE BETTER THAN HIMSELF. Philippians 2:3, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." Vaunt and puff up. These two were rampant in Corinth. They were always boasting in their own pride. That is in chapter 4. LOVE cannot do such a thing, and consequently the Corinthians' boasting is not in harmony with LOVE and they are out of fellowship.

It is interesting to note that Paul, instead of speaking of human beings and of their LOVE, he speaks actually of LOVE ITSELF. Perfect LOVE is the subject and its qualities he depicts. This is LOVE personified. Christian LOVE is witnessed in the Christian way of life. And the Corinthians should examine themselves to see if they are ruled by the Christian life, the filling of the Holy Spirit. In this part of this chapter, LOVE is especially listed as LOVE to one another.

THERE ARE SEVEN THINGS THAT ARE UNPROFITABLE WITHOUT LOVE:

1. Speaking with the tongues of men and angels.
2. The gift of prophecy.
3. Understanding all mystery.
4. Understanding all knowledge.
5. Having all faith.
6. Bestowing all our goods to feed the poor.
7. Martyrdom.

**All of these good deeds done in the energy of the flesh, apart from the filling of the Holy Spirit, are DEAD WORKS, HUMAN GOOD, and NO GOOD!** Knowledge puffs up. And LOVE alone builds up.

We have to be aware of envy. It was Cain's envy that hatched Abel's murder. **Faith ends up in sight. Hope ends up in patience. LOVE NEVER ENDS.** Faith gets the most. GRACE keeps the most. And LOVE works the most.

Verse 5, "Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, and is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." This statement really pairs with the preceding one. The expression "not behave itself unseemly" includes all kinds of good manners. The word "unseemly" would include bad manners and therefore, include being puffed up.

"Seeketh not its own." THIS MEANS THAT LOVE'S PURPOSE IS NOT ITS OWN INTERESTS. That is what they were doing in chapter 4, where they were taking each other to law. **Self-seeking leads to division.**

"Is not easily provoked" There is no word for "easily" in here in the original, so it says, "Is not provoked." This means it DOES NOT YIELD TO PROVOCATION. LOVE is not aroused to a spirit of anger or bitterness by injuries, either actual or imagined.

"Thinketh no evil." Literally, "taketh not account of evil." The word "account" is LOGIZOMAI, which signifies to reckon, either by calculation or imputation. LOVE, when he has received an injury, does not put it down to the account of him who inflicts it, so as to pay back, like, "I'll get you for that." LOVE

harbors no resentment and bears no malice. LOVE acts as children, when it comes to malice.

"LOVE doth not behave itself unseemly." means that LOVE is always polite, and that LOVE is always courteous. LOVE is not rough and brutal. LOVE never goes about saying ugly things, and excuses them by saying, "Well, I call a spade a spade." LOVE never does that kind of thing.

"Seeketh not its own." LOVE has a capacity for GRACE. "LOVE is not provoked." LOVE is never exasperated.

These are the things which LOVE does to the individual. All the way through this passage it shows us as individuals in our relationship with other people, but it is the individual, the person, that is emphasized.

Then Paul turns and shows us the relative effect of LOVE. "Taketh not account of evil." LOVE does not keep a ledger in which it enters the wrongs to be dealt with some day later on. And that is what this principle says. LOVE does not book them, taketh account of evil.

Verse 6, "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth." **LOVE does not find joy in or over the wrongs of others.** This is the literal meaning. Rather than not rejoicing when others suffer wrong, instead of feeling any satisfaction concerning evil, LOVE finds in Truth a happy companion in its rejoicing. Truth here is the Word personified. And LOVE here is personified.

Therefore, they are set in contrast to evil and unrighteousness, as in Romans 2:3, "And thinkest thou this. O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" And 2 Thessalonians 2:12, "That they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

All unrighteousness is the negation of the Truth. LOVE always expresses itself in the Truth. "Truthing in LOVE." And all the conduct that satisfies LOVE, satisfies Truth. Truth and righteousness are associated in

Ephesians 5:9, "For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and Truth."

So, here then is the joy of LOVE. LOVE does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but with the Truth. **LOVE and Truth belong together.** It is a marriage. Jesus Christ is our Witness to the Truth. John 8:40 ff, "But now ye seek to kill Me, a man that hath told you the Truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham..." John 18:37, "Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth. Every one that is of the Truth heareth My voice." 2 Thessalonians 2:12. LOVE CANNOT BE NEUTRAL. IT TAKES SIDES.

So if you don't keep a ledger in which you enter up things of wrong, you rejoice not in unrighteousness. That is the other side of the coin, that is where you do not enter things up. "Rejoiceth in Truth." That is the reason for the inability to be happy in the presence of evil, but to be happy in the presence of God's Truth.

Verse 7, "Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." "Beareth" is the word STEGO, which means to support what is placed upon it or covers what is placed underneath it. LOVE acts in both ways, bearing ALL things. That which covers both protects what is covered by keeping off all that is hostile, and in doing so, endures the hostility. 9:12.

"Believes all things." It doesn't mean that it accepts as true all that is stated. LOVE is never taken in by that which is false. "Believes all things" means that LOVE is ready to impute the best motives even to the one whose act is unkind or detrimental. The principle of "all things working together for good to them who LOVE the Lord and are the called according to His purpose." LOVE, in bearing evil conduct, seeks to avoid undue suspicion. Where there is an element of doubt as to the real intention, LOVE decides to regard it as good and honest, until it has all the facts.



"Hopeth all things." LOVE always delights in entertaining the best expectations. If there is an absence of anything to prompt them, then hope is there, with hope being joyful anticipation, expectation. If conditions are adverse, LOVE still hopes for the best. Even if hope meets with repeated disappointments, LOVE waits on patiently, expectantly. This is the part of LOVE that endureth all things. 4:12.

**So, LOVE covers with silence and suppresses.** "Believeth" means to trust. **So then hope and faith arise from LOVE. When we LOVE someone, we trust them fully and expect good things.**

"LOVE enduring" is in an active sense, meaning to overcome all difficulties. LOVE is inventive, the scope of "all things" is naturally limited to that which LOVE can and may suffer as is clear from verse 6. "LOVE beareth all things," means that which excludes things. It is the idea of an umbrella that you put up and invite someone to shelter under it from the rain. It is the roof over your head. The banner of LOVE. **Love acts as a roof over other people, shielding them from the storms as it sweeps.**

"Believeth all things," this is the absence of suspicion in the nature. What a great thing this is. Some people are always suspicious, but LOVE-mastered, controlled people are never suspicious. "Hopeth all things." This is the optimism of LOVE in spite of all appearances. We hope for the best, expect the best. Joyfully expect the best. "Endureth all things" means remains strong through all the processes of life. So the double seven and the virtues of LOVE are revealed to us here.

AND PAUL NOW COMES TO THE VICTORIES OF LOVE. Everything is contained in the first sentence. "LOVE never faileth." LOVE never fades, never withers. There is no such thing as a yellow lead in LOVE. LOVE is eternally young. LOVE is eternally fresh. "LOVE never faileth."

Verse 8, "LOVE never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease;

whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." Now we have listed for us the temporal things, things which pass. Notice them, they are high things. They are not low things. PROPHECIES, TONGUES, KNOWLEDGE. "LOVE never faileth, but prophecies shall be done away, tongues shall cease." It is good to remember that. Knowledge shall be done away. As the larger knowledge becomes, the former knowledge and lesser knowledge is superseded. And Paul, through the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit, is careful to show what he means.

"LOVE never faileth," This is not only a great declaration, it is also one of the most searching ones of the soul. If that is true, then how much that we have thought was LOVE, should be called by some other name.

LOVE's final proof is in the Lord, and there is where we are secure. God's LOVE never fails. And the measure and strength of it can only be expressed by the expression "that God so LOVED the world." We can only begin to appreciate the real significance of that phrase, "so LOVED the world." as we complete the verse, "that He gave His only begotten Son."

Now, that is "LOVE that never faileth." In the presence of that LOVE we are sometimes almost afraid to call anything of ours LOVE at all. **There is so much selfishness lurking in all of us.** We often LOVE them that LOVE us, and then, because they LOVE us. Well, such LOVE has its place, but there is neither merit nor praiseworthiness in it.

Jesus Christ spoke about that type of LOVE when He said, "What thanks have you which LOVE those who LOVE you?" The true LOVE, the LOVE with which God LOVES, the LOVE which is shed abroad in our hearts by means of the Holy Spirit, LOVES in spite of unworthiness, in spite of failure. Now, that is the LOVE which inspires and compels our service for the Lord. All the attitudes and the habits of such LOVE are set forth in this thirteenth chapter of Corinthians. The more we look at it, the more we feel how far we have come short, that we are helpless. And we can only LOVE like that as the very

LOVE of God Himself possesses us and masters us when we are in fellowship with Him. Galatians 5:22, "The fruit of the Spirit is LOVE..."

This is the third section of the chapter. The first section showed the valuelessness of spiritual gifts and charitable deeds where LOVE is lacking. The second section enumerated the excellent qualities of LOVE in its character and in its practice. Now, the apostle Paul predicates the permanency of LOVE in contrast to the temporary and inferior gifts. LOVE abides for time and eternity. LOVE IS PERMANENT.

Verse 8, "LOVE never faileth." This is an extension of the idea in the last part of verse 7. The verb PIPTO usually denotes "to fall." That which falls ceases its activity. That is what LOVE NEVER does. "Prophecies, they shall be done away." Shall fail misses the distinction between the former verb and this

word, which is KATARGEO, which is rendered done away. This verb means literally to reduce to inactivity. KATA means "down." ARGOS is "idle." So, this means there would be a time when prophecies would be put out of action, would cease to function. It would be worthwhile to look up each time this verb appears, i.e., 1:28.

"Tongues, they shall cease." The gift of tongues was about the first gift to be DISCONTINUED. All attempts to reintroduce it are either FRAUDULENT or the outcome of DECEPTION. **They are contrary to Scripture, and are void of the actual operation of the Holy Spirit.**

"Knowledge done away." Knowledge does not seem to be a sign gift like tongues and prophecy. This enabled the possessor to be a teacher. The words "done away" are the same verb that we have associated with prophecies.

# THE SECRET OF CHRISTIANITY

## The Scriptural Analysis of LOVE

**A**fter contrasting LOVE with all these things, Paul, in three verses, which are very short, gives us an amazing analysis of what this supreme thing is. When you look at it, it is a compound thing. If you have ever seen a scientist take a beam of light and pass it through a crystal prism which breaks the light up its component of colors; like red, blue, yellow, violet and orange, and all the colors of the rainbow. Well, in like manner, Paul passes LOVE through the magnificent prism of His inspiration of the Word of God, and it comes out the other side broken up into its elements.

When you put all these words together, we have what you might call the Spectrum of LOVE, and/or the analysis of LOVE. Notice the elements of the word AGAPE, which is LOVE here. They all have common names with which we are familiar. There are virtues that we hear about every day. These are things which can be practiced by every man, in every facet of life. It also shows that by a multitude of small things, and ordinary virtues, that is what this supreme thing of LOVE is made up of. The spectrum of LOVE has nine ingredients:

**Patience:** "LOVE suffereth long."

**GRACE:** "And is kind."

**Generosity:** "LOVE envieth not."

**Humility:** "LOVE vaunteth not itself and is not puffed up."

**Courtesy:** "Doth not behave itself unseemly."

**Unselfishness:** "Seeketh not her own."

**Good temper:** "Is not easily provoked."

**Guilelessness:** "Thinketh no evil."

**Sincerity:** "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth."

Now, in contrast, THERE ARE SEVEN THINGS WHICH ARE UNPROFITABLE WITHOUT LOVE:

1. Speaking with tongues of men and angels.
2. The gift of prophecy.
3. Understanding all mysteries.
4. Understanding all knowledge.
5. Having all faith.
6. Bestowing all our goods to feed the poor.
7. Martyrdom, giving my body to be burned.

Patience, kindness, generosity, humility, courtesy, unselfishness, good temper, guilelessness, sincerity: **these all make up the stature of the ideal in man.**

You will notice that they are all related to men, and in relation to life, in relation to the known today, and to the near tomorrow, and not to the unknown eternity. So it is for time. We have all heard about LOVE to God. But Jesus Christ spoke about LOVE to man. We make a great deal of peace with Heaven. Christ made much of peace on this Earth.

Christianity is not a strange or an added thing. But it is the inspiration of the secular life, the breathing of an eternal Holy Spirit through this temporal world.

"LOVE is PATIENCE." This is the normal attitude of LOVE. This is LOVE passive. This is LOVE waiting to begin, not in a hurry, calm, ready to do its work when the summons comes. But in the meantime, wearing the ornament of a GRACIOUS and quiet Spirit. "LOVE suffereth long, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things." LOVE understands and therefore WAITS.

KINDNESS. This means to be serviceable. The word is CHRESTOS, which means

good, pleasant, GRACIOUSNESS. This is LOVE active. Have you ever noticed how much of Christ's life was spent in doing kind things? Now, this is spoken of by the Lord in Luke 6:35 "But LOVE ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil", and in Ephesians 4:32 "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you". This is enjoined upon all believers.

If you run over the life of Jesus Christ with this principle in view, the principle of kindness, you will find that He spent a great proportion of His time simply in making people happy, in doing good turns for people. There is only one thing greater than happiness in this world, and THAT IS HOLINESS; that is not in our keeping; but what God has put in our power is the happiness of those about us, and that is largely to be secured by our being GRACIOUS to them, and treating them in GRACE.

THE GREATEST THING A BELIEVER CAN DO FOR HIS HEAVENLY FATHER IS TO BE KIND, TO BE GRACIOUS TO SOME OF GOD'S OTHER CHILDREN. I wonder why Christians are not kinder than they are? How much the world needs to see it. And how easily it is done. **How instantaneously it acts just simply by the believer being controlled by God the Holy Spirit.** How infallibly it is remembered. How superabundantly it pays itself back—for there is no debtor in the world so honorable as LOVE. "LOVE never faileth." **LOVE is success. LOVE is happiness. LOVE is life. LOVE is the energy of this life.**

Where LOVE is, God is. "He that dwelleth in LOVE, dwelleth in God. God is LOVE." **Therefore LOVE.** Without distinction, without calculation, without procrastination, LOVE. Lavish it upon the poor, where it is very easy. Especially upon the rich, who often need it most. Most of all, upon our equals, where it is very difficult, and for whom, perhaps we each do least of all.

There is a difference between TRYING TO PLEASE, and GIVING PLEASURE. GIVE PLEASURE! Don't lose an opportunity of giving pleasure, for that is the ceaseless and anonymous triumph of a truly LOVING spirit.

GENEROSITY. "LOVE envieth not. LOVE is not jealous." This is LOVE in competition with others. Whenever you attempt a good work, you will find other men doing the same kind of work and probably doing it better. ENVY THEM NOT. "Jealousy is as cruel as the grave." Envy is a feeling of ill will to those who are in the same line as ourselves. This is a spirit of covetousness and detraction.

How little Christian work even is a protection against unChristian feeling. The unworthy moods which cloud a Christian's soul assuredly waits for us on the threshold of every work, unless we are fortified with this GRACE orientation. There is only one thing a Christian needs to envy, and that is the LARGE, GENEROUS SOUL which "ENVIETH NOT."

Having learned all that, we have HUMILITY. THIS IS TO PUT A SEAL ON YOUR LIPS AND FORGET WHAT YOU HAVE DONE. After you have been kind, after LOVE has stolen forth into the world and done its beautiful work, go back into the same shade again and say nothing about it. LOVE hides even from itself. LOVE waives even self-satisfaction. "LOVE vaunteth not itself, and is not puffed up." **Pride, therefore, would be the opposite of LOVE.**

Now, the fifth one is somewhat strange to find here among this list. COURTESY. This is LOVE in society, LOVE in relation to etiquette. "LOVE doth not behave itself unseemly." LOVE doesn't act unbecomingly. **This is politeness.** LOVE is said to be LOVE in the little things. And so the one secret to politeness is LOVE. LOVE cannot behave itself unseemly. You can put the most uneducated person into the highest of society, and if they have a reservoir of LOVE IN THEIR MINDS, they will not behave themselves unseemly. They cannot do it when they are controlled by God the Holy Spirit.

Carlyle said of Robert Burns that there was no truer gentleman in Europe than the ploughman-poet. It was because he LOVED everything; the mouse, the daisy, all things, great and small, that God had made.

So, with this simple passport of LOVE we can mingle in any society, and enter the courts and palaces of our own little cottages. The meaning of the word "gentleman" is a gentle man, a man who does things gently, who does things with LOVE, and that is the whole art and the mystery of it. The gentleman cannot in the nature of things do an ungentle, and ungentlemanly thing. The ungentle soul, the inconsiderate, unsympathetic nature cannot do anything else. "LOVE doth not behave itself unseemly."

UNSELFISHNESS. "LOVE seekth not her own." Notice, "seeketh not her own." **not EVEN that which IS HER OWN.** In England the Englishmen are devoted, and rightly, to their rights. But, there comes a time when a man may exercise even the higher right of giving up HIS rights. **Yet Paul does not summon us to give up our rights. Because LOVE strikes deeper than that.** It would not have us seek them at all, ignore them, eliminate the personal element altogether from our calculations.

It is not hard to give up one's rights. **LOVE does not seek the things of itself.** Simple because most of the time they are simply external. **The difficult thing is to give up OURSELVES. And the more difficult thing still is not to seek things for ourselves at all.** After we have sought them, bought them, won them, deserved them, then we have taken the cream off them for ourselves already.

So it is a cross, as it were, to give them up. **But not to seek them, to look every man not on his own things, but on things of others,** "Seekest thou great things for yourself?" said the prophet; "Seek them not." Why? BECAUSE THERE IS NO GREATNESS IN THINGS. Things cannot be great. The only greatness is LOVE, unselfish LOVE. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God,

and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

**Even self-denial is in itself nothing. It is almost a mistake.** Only a great purpose or a mightier LOVE can justify the waste. It is more difficult NOT TO SEEK OUR OWN AT ALL, THAN HAVING SOUGHT IT, TO GIVE IT UP. This is true of a partly selfish mind. NOTHING IS A HARSHIP TO LOVE, and nothing is hard. Christ's yoke is easy and His burden is light. **Christ's yoke is just His way of taking life. And it is easier that way than any other. It is also a happier way than any other.**

THE MOST OBVIOUS LESSON IN CHRIST'S TEACHINGS IS THAT THERE IS NO HAPPINESS IN HAVING AND GETTING ANYTHING, BUT ONLY IN GIVING. IT'S NOT IN HAVING, BUT IN GIVING. **Not in getting, but in giving.** THAT IS GRACE AND THAT IS GOD.

Half of the world is on the wrong scent in its pursuit of happiness. **They think it consists in having and getting, and in being served by others.** BUT IT CONSISTS IN GIVING AND SERVING OTHERS. "He that would be great among you, let him serve." He that would be happy, let him remember that there is only one way, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

The next ingredient is a really very remarkable one. GOOD TEMPER. "LOVE is not easily provoked." Nothing could be more striking than to find this here. We are inclined to look at bad temper as a very harmless weakness. We speak of it as a mere infirmity of our nature, a family failing, a matter of temperament, really not a thing to take into very serious account in estimating a man's character. And yet, here, right in the middle of this analysis of LOVE, it finds its place.

**The Bible time after time returns again and again to condemn it as one of the most destructive elements in our human nature.** The peculiarity of ill temper is that it is the vice of the virtuous. It is often the one blot on an otherwise noble character. You know men and women who are all but per-

fect, but they are easily ruffled, and are of a quick temper, or they have a touchy disposition. This compatibility of ill temper and high moral character is one of the strangest and saddest problems in ethics.

There are sins of the body and there are sins of the disposition. The Prodigal Son may be taken as a type of the first. And the Elder Brother a type of the second. Now, society has no doubt whatever as to which of these is the worst. Its brand falls, without a challenge, upon the Prodigal. But are they right? **We have no balance to weigh one another's sins.** The words "coarser" and "finer" are merely human words. But faults in the higher nature may be less venial than those in the lower. **And to the eye of Him who is LOVE, a sin against LOVE may seem a hundred times more base.** No form of vice, not worldliness, not greed of good, not drunkenness itself, does more to un-Christianize society than an evil temper.

For embittering life, for breaking up communities, for destroying the most sacred relationship, for devastating homes, for withering up men and women, for taking the bloom out of childhood, for sheer misery-producing power, this influence stands alone. Just look at the Elder Brother, moral, hard-working, patient, dutiful—let him get all the credit for these virtues. Look at this man, this baby, sulking outside his own father's door. He was angry, and "would not go in." Look at the effect upon his father, the servants, and upon the happiness of all the guests.

And judge the effect of the Prodigal. How many prodigals are kept out from being accepted by the unlovely character of those who profess to be accepted? Just analyze, as a study, the word "temper," which, like a thunder-cloud itself gathers upon the Elder Brother's brow. What is it made of? Well, jealousy, anger, pride, cruelty, self-righteousness, sullenness, uncharity. These are the ingredients of the Elder Brother's dark and LOVELESS soul. And in varying proportions, these are also the ingredients of all who have this kind of ill temper. You can judge for yourself, the sins of disposition, are they not

worse to live in and for others, than the sins of the body? Didn't Christ Himself answer the question when He said, "I say unto you that the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of Heaven before you?"

There is really no place in Christianity for a disposition like this. A man with such a mood would only make Christianity miserable for all the people in it. **And that is why it is necessary to be born again and to be constantly filled with the Spirit.**

So, temper is significant. It is not in what it is alone, but of what it reveals. **It is then a test for LOVE, a symptom, a revelation, of an unloving old sin nature at the bottom.** It is the intermittent fever which speaks of disease within. It is the subtle escaping to the surface of that which betrays some rottenness underneath; a sample of the most hidden products of the soul dropped involuntarily when one is caught off guard. In a word, it is like lightning forming a hundred hideous and un-Christian-like sins. **For a want of patience, a want of kindness, a want of generosity, a want of courtesy, a want of unselfishness, are all instantaneously symbolized in one flash of temper.**

So, it is not enough to deal with temper. We must go to the source, and control the old sin nature. **Souls are not made sweet by taking the acid fluids out, but by putting something in, a great LOVE, a new Spirit, the Holy Spirit, Christ, the Spirit of Christ, the mind of Christ, which sweetens and purifies and transforms all of us.** This only can control that which is wrong. This can work a chemical change, renovate and regenerate, and rehabilitate the old sin nature, the old man.

WILL POWER DOES NOT CHANGE MAN. TIME DOES NOT CHANGE MAN. CHRIST CHANGES MAN, CHRIST FORMED IN MAN BY MEANS OF GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT. Therefore, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Some of us don't have much time to lose. Remember, once more, this is a matter of life or death. It is the deliberate verdict of the Lord Jesus Christ that it is better not to live, than

not to LOVE. “Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” IT IS BETTER NOT TO LIVE THAN NOT TO LOVE.

Next on our list is GUILLESSNESS or SINCERITY. This could possibly be covered with one expression. Guilelessness and sincerity are THE GRACE FOR SUSPICIOUS PEOPLE. The great possession of it is the great secret of personal influence. You will find, if you think for a moment, that **the people who influence you the most are the people who believe in you.** It is an atmosphere of suspicion that causes men to shrivel up. But in the atmosphere of belief people expand. And they find in that kind of an atmosphere encouragement, education and fellowship. It is a wonderful thing that here and there in this hard world, and uncharitable world, there are still a few souls who “think no evil.” This is great unworldliness.

“LOVE thinketh no evil.” This means that LOVE imputes no motive, sees the bright side, puts the best construction on every action. What a delightful state of mind that is to live in! What a stimulus and benediction even to meet with it for a day. To be trusted, to be saved.

And if we are to try to influence or elevate others, we will soon see that success is in proportion to their belief of our belief in them. For the respect of another is the first restoration of the self-respect a man has lost; our ideal of what he is becomes to him the hope and pattern of what he may become.

“LOVE rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth.” This is true sincerity, from rejoicing in the Truth. He who LOVES, will LOVE Truth. “Truthing in LOVE.” **He will rejoice in Truth, not in what he has been taught to believe,** not in this church’s doctrine or in that; not in this “ism” or in that “ism;” but in the Truth. **He will accept only what is real. He will strive to get at the facts. He will search for the Truth with a GRACIOUS and unbiased mind, and will cherish whatever he finds at any sacrifice.**

The literal translation of this verse calls for such a sacrifice for Truth’s sake.

For what Paul really means here is this: “Rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth in the Truth,” a quality which probably not one single English word, and not even the word “sincerity” adequately defines. It includes the self-restraint, which refuses to make capital out of others faults, the LOVE which delights not in exposing the weakness of others, but “covereth all things;” the sincerity of purpose which endeavors to see things as they really are and rejoices to find them better than suspicion feared or denounced. That is the analysis of LOVE.

Now the issue before us is to fit these things into our character in this life. That is the supreme work to which we need to address ourselves in this world, to learn LOVE. Life is full of opportunities for learning LOVE. **Every man and every woman every day has thousands of them.** The world, as some think, is not a play ground. IT IS A SCHOOLROOM. **Life is not a holiday. It is an education,** and the one eternal lesson for us all is HOW BETTER WE CAN LOVE.

What makes a man a good ball player? **Practice.** What makes a man a good artist? Sculptor? Musician? **Practice.** A good stenographer? A good linguist? **Practice.** What makes a man a good man? **Practice.** Nothing else but practice. If a man does not exercise his arm, he develops no biceps, no muscles. **If a man does not exercise his soul, he acquires no muscle in his soul, no strength of soul, or no strength of character, no vigor or moral fibre, nor beauty of spiritual growth.**

LOVE IS NOT A THING OF ENTHUSIASTIC EMOTION. **It is a rich, strong, manly, vigorous expression of the mature Christian character, the Christ-like nature in its fullest development.** And the constituents of this great character are only to be built up by ceaseless practice.

Christ practiced. We read that “He learned obedience.” We learn that “He increased in wisdom and in GRACE with God

and man.” So, we can’t quarrel with our lot in life. Never complain of its never ceasing cares, its petty environment, the vexations you have to stand, the small and sorry souls you have to live and work with. And don’t resent temptation. Do not be perplexed because it seems to thicken around you more and more, and ceases neither for effort nor for agony nor for prayer.

Now, that is the practice which the Lord appoints you, and it is having its work in making you patient and GRACIOUS and generous and unselfish and kind and courteous. **Do not grudge the Hand that is molding you, that still too shapeless image within you.** It is “growing in GRACE” which is more beautiful even though you see it not, and every touch of temptation may add to its perfection.

Therefore, keep in the midst of life. Do not isolate yourselves. Be among men and women, and things, and troubles, and difficulties, and obstacles. TALENT DEVELOPS ITSELF IN SOLITUDE, BUT CHARACTER IN THE STREAM OF LIFE. Talent develops in solitude—the talent of prayer, faith, meditation, seeing the unseen. Character grows in the stream of this world’s life. That is where chiefly we learn LOVE.

LOVE itself can never be defined. It is like light, which is something more than what you see. **LOVE is also something more than all of its elements.** By synthesis of all the colors, men can make whiteness, but they cannot make light. By synthesis of all the virtues, men can make virtue, but they cannot make LOVE.

How then are we to have this transcendent living whole conveyed into our souls? We brace our wills to secure it. We try to copy others who have it. We lay down rules about it. We watch, we pray, but these things ALONE WILL NOT bring LOVE into our souls. LOVE is an effect, and only as we fulfill the right condition can we have the effect produced.

Do we know what the cause is? Well, 1 John tells us the cause. “We LOVE be-

cause He first LOVED us.” “We LOVE,” not “we LOVE Him,” but “we LOVE because He first LOVED us.” Look at the word “because.” That is the cause which we are speaking of. “Because He first LOVED us.”

The effect follows that we LOVE. We LOVE Him, we LOVE all. We cannot help it. Because He LOVED us, we LOVE. We LOVE everyone. Our minds are changed. If we contemplate the LOVE of Christ, we will LOVE. Stand before the mirror and reflect Christ’s character and you will be changed into the same image from GRACE to GRACE. There is no other way. You cannot order LOVE. You cannot LOVE to order. You can only look at the lovely object, and fall in LOVE with it, and grow into the likeness of it.

“The LOVE of God which is shed abroad in our minds by the Holy Spirit.” Look at the perfect character of Christ. Look at His perfect life. Look at the great sacrifice He made all through His life. Look at the cross, and when you do, you will LOVE Him. **And LOVING Him, you become like Him, because LOVE begets LOVE.**

If you put a piece of iron in the presence of a magnetized body, then that piece of iron, for a time, becomes magnetized. It is charged with an attractive force in the mere presence of the original. And as long as you leave the two of them side by side, they are both magnets alike. **Remain side by side with the Lord Jesus Christ, who LOVED us and gave Himself for us, and you, too, will become a center of power, a permanently attractive force, and like Him, you will draw all men unto you. And like Him, you will be drawn unto all men. That is the inevitable effect of LOVE.**

Anyone who fulfills that cause must have that effect produced in him. Christianity does not come to us by chance, or by mystery. It comes to us by natural law, or by supernatural law, for all law is Divine. The sense that God LOVES you OVERPOWERS you. **And His LOVE will melt you down and begin to create a new mind in you, the mind of Christ.** And that is how the LOVE of God melts down the unlovely heart in man and



makes him a new creature, who becomes patient and GRACIOUS and gentle and unselfish. THERE IS NO OTHER WAY TO GET IT BUT BY GRACE.

There is no mystery about it. We LOVE others. We LOVE everybody. We LOVE our enemies because He first LOVED us. Why did Paul, in our passage, single out LOVE as the supreme possession? There is a remarkable reason, and it is a single word like LOVE and it is the fact that "it lasts." "LOVE," urged Paul, "never faileth."

And from there he begins again one of his marvelous lists of the great things of the day and then exposes them one by one. He runs over things that men think are going to last, and he shows that they are all fleeting, temporary and are in the process of passing away.

"Whether there be prophecies they shall fail." In those days, more than today, it was a mother's ambition that her son be a prophet. For hundreds of years God has never spoken by means of any prophet. At that time the prophet was greater than the king. Men waited wistfully for another messenger to come. And they hung upon his lips when he appeared as the very voice of God.

And Paul says, "Whether there be prophecies they shall fail." Now, the Bible is full of prophecies. But one by one they have "failed." That is, they have been fulfilled, their work is finished. **They have nothing more to do, except now to feed a man's faith.**

Then Paul talked about tongues. That was another thing that was greatly coveted. And he said about tongues, "Whether there be tongues, they shall cease." As we have known, many centuries have passed since tongues have been known in this world.

They have ceased, literally, been hissed off the stage as a minor actor. Take it in any sense that you like. Take it, for illustration merely as languages in general, a sense which is not in Paul's mind at all.

Consider the words in which these chapters were written, Koine Greek. It has gone. Take the Latin, the other great tongue in

those days. It ceased long ago. Look at the Indian language. It is ceasing. The language of Wales of Scotland, of the Scottish Highlands, well, it is dying before our eyes. The most popular book in the English language, with the exception of the Bible, some think is the work of Dickens, his Pickwick Papers. It is largely written in the language of London street life, and they tell us that in just a few years, if not already, it will be unintelligible to the average English reader.

But Paul goes further and says, with even greater boldness, "Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." The wisdom of the ancients, where is it? It is wholly gone. A schoolboy today knows more than Sir Isaac Newton knew. His knowledge has vanished away. You put yesterday's newspaper in the trash. Its knowledge has vanished away. You can buy the old great editions of the encyclopedias, and their knowledge is gone. The horse was replaced by steam and then electricity. Knowledge is passing away. You see junk at the back of some houses and yet 20 years ago, that junk was their pride and used to sit up front. You can probably take any text book on science that is more than 10 years old and put it in the attic.

"Now we know in part, we see through a glass darkly." Can you tell me anything that is going to last? Paul didn't mention money, fortune, fame, but he picked out the great things of time, the things the best men thought had something in them, and brushed them peremptorily aside. Paul had no charge against these things in themselves. All that he said about them was that they would not last. Now, they were great things, but they were not the supreme thing. There were things behind them. What we are stretches past what we do, beyond what we possess. Many things that people denounce as sins, are not sins, but they are only temporary. And that is a favorite principle in the New Testament.

John says of the world, not that it is wrong, but simply, that it is passing away. There is a great deal in the world that is delightful and really is beautiful. There is a

great deal in it that is great and engrossing, BUT IT WILL NOT LAST. “All that is in the world, the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life are but for a little while.” LOVE not the world therefore. NOTHING THAT THE WORLD CONTAINS IS WORTH THE LOVE AND THE LIFE AND THE RELATIONSHIP OF YOUR SOUL. The immortal soul must give itself to something that is immortal. And the only immortal things are these: “Now abideth faith, hope and LOVE, but the greatest of these is LOVE.”

So, LOVE lasts. God, the eternal God, is LOVE. Covet therefore that everlasting gift, that one thing which is certain is going to stand, that one coinage which will be current in the universe when all the other coinages of all the nations of the world shall be useless and unhonored. You give yourselves to many things, but GIVE YOURSELVES FIRST TO LOVE. Hold things in their proportion. Let at least the first great object of our lives be to achieve the character defined in these words, the character, the essence—and it is the character of Christ—which is built around LOVE.

We have stated that this thing LOVE is eternal. Have you ever noticed how continually John associated LOVE and faith with eternal life? We are told “GOD SO LOVED the world that He gave His only begotten Son, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM, should not perish, but have EVER-LASTING LIFE.” **And we are told that God so LOVED the world that if I trusted in Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour, I was to have a thing which He called peace and rest and joy and safety.**

The Gospel offers us a new life. Never ever offer men a thimbleful of the Gospel. Don't offer merely joy, or merely peace, or merely rest, or merely safety. **Tell that Jesus Christ came and died to give them a more abundant life than they already have.**

A life abundant is LOVE. And it is abundant in salvation for everyone. It is an enterprise for the alleviation and the redemption of the world. Then the Gospel can take hold of

a man, his body, soul and his spirit, and give to each part of him its exercise and reward.

Many of the current “gospels” that are presented today are addressed to only part of man's nature. They may offer peace and not life; faith and not LOVE; justification, not regeneration. And then men slip back into religion because it hasn't really helped them. It didn't offer a deeper and happier life than the life that was lived before. Surely it stands to reason that only a fuller LOVE can compete with the LOVE of the world.

Now, TO LOVE ABUNDANTLY IS TO LIVE ABUNDANTLY. And to LOVE forever is to life forever. So, LOVE and eternal life are bound together. We want to live forever for the same reason we want to live tomorrow. Why do we want to live tomorrow? It is because there is someone who LOVES you, and you want to wake up and see them tomorrow, and be with them, and LOVE them back. There is no other reason why we should live on and on, only that we LOVE and are BELOVED. It is when a man has no one to LOVE him that he commits suicide. But, as long as he has friends, those who LOVE him, and whom he LOVES, he will live. BECAUSE TO LIVE IS TO LOVE. Be it but the LOVE of a dog. It will keep him in life, but let that go and he has no contact with life, and no reason therefore to live.

THE ENERGY OF LIFE IS LOVE. Eternal life is to know God, and “God is LOVE.” This is Christ's own definition. “This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent.” LOVE MUST BE ETERNAL, because it is what God is.

So, in the last analysis, LOVE is life, LOVE never faileth and life never faileth, so long as there is LOVE. That is the philosophy that is shown us here. This is why, in the nature of things, LOVE should be the supreme thing, simply because IT IS GOING TO LAST. Because in the nature of things, it is an eternal life. That life is a thing which we live now, not something we get when we die. No worse fate can befall any man in this world than to live and grow old alone, UN-

LOVING and UNLOVED. To be lost is to live in an unregenerate condition, LOVELESS and UNLOVED. And to be saved is to LOVE, for “He that dwelleth in LOVE dwelleth already in God, for God is LOVE.”

This then describes the perfect character. LOVE suffereth long. LOVE is kind. LOVE envieth not. LOVE vaunteth not itself. Get these ingredients into your life, THEN EVERYTHING YOU DO WILL BE ETERNAL. And then it will be worth doing. And it will be worth giving time to. No one can become a saint in his sleep. To fulfill the conditions required demands a certain amount of prayer and meditation and time, just as improvement in any direction, bodily or mentally, requires preparation and care. This is accomplished by maintaining fellowship with God through the constant control of God the Holy Spirit.

Address yourselves to that one thing. **Have this character of Christ exchanged for yours.** Galatians 5:22, 23, “The fruit of the Spirit is LOVE, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, self-control, against such there is no law.” **When you look back on your life, you will find that the moments that stand out, the moments when you have really lived, are the moments when you have done things in the Spirit of LOVE. Everything else in our lives is transitory. But the acts of LOVE, the filling of the Holy Spirit producing the character of Christ, NEVER FAIL.** The withholding of the Spirit-filled life, the withholding of LOVE, is the negation of the Spirit of Christ. This is proof that for us He lived in vain. It means that Jesus Christ suggested nothing to any of our thoughts, that He inspired nothing in all of our lives. It is the principle of “the cup of cold water in My Name.” What then is Christianity? Well, in the first century the thing that stuck out the most was “how they LOVED one another.” Who, then, is Christ's? Well, “everyone that LOVETH is born of God.”

1 Corinthians 13:9, “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.” This means that the full revelation, the full Word of God, is not

revealed at that time. “Know in part, prophesy in part.”

Verse 10, “But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away with.” There is a stress here in verses 9 and 10 on the words “in part” in each clause. The statement in verse 10 holds good in whatever respect it may be applied. It is applicable to the temporary nature and partial scope of the supernatural gifts, with the completion of the apostolic testimony and the completion of the Scriptures in 96 A.D., and the faith once and for all delivered to the saints, Jude 3. “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

When that which is “perfect” is come, had come, the temporary gifts were done away with, for the Scriptures provided by the Spirit of God were “perfect.” Nothing was to be added to them. Nothing was to be taken from them. The word “perfect” is a neuter, referring to the completion of the Canon of Scripture. In other words, verse 9 states the reason for what verse 8 contended. That reason is that all our knowledge, and all our prophesying, including the gift of tongues, are in part, a minor actor on the stage, not the leading actor, therefore, being hissed off. In other words, these minor actors (the temporary gifts) do not reach their highest attainment. They do not become what they could be. So, “in part” is reference to the nature of this dispensation.

“We know in part” means that all human knowledge, even if it be given by way of a gift, is incomplete, unfinished. This does not imply that we know only a part of that which is to be known, but rather that the knowing itself is imperfect, we prophesy in part.

“We know in part” means that when the zenith is reached, those gifts will no longer operate. They are only temporary, like the Law being a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, but after Christ is come, we are no longer under the schoolmaster.

"When that which is perfect is come." When the zenith has been reached, then, by that fact, "all which is in part will be done away." The protasis and the apodosis refer to the same thing, the positive side explaining the negative side. The world does not stand still, nor does time. All things hasten toward the end, as Paul has declared more than once. Once the acme has been reached and this which is perfect is come, then all the charismatic gifts will terminate. The word "perfect" is neuter, referring to the completed Canon of Scripture, which occurred in 96 A.D., when the book of Revelation was completed.

The word "perfect" refers to the Word of God when completed. It is also stated in James 1:25, "But whoso looketh into THE PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY..." and James 2:8, "If ye fulfill THE ROYAL LAW..." and James 2:12, "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by THE LAW OF LIBERTY."

1 Corinthians 13:11, "When I was a child, I spake as a child. I understood as a child. I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Notice the repetition: child, child, child, childish. The former and lesser knowledge and gifts are superseded.

Now Paul illustrates from the growth and development of personality. And he does it beautifully. "When I was a child," not child-like, but childish, which means quite another thing. "I put away childish things." We still watch the passing away of these high and wonderful things such as prophesy, and tongues and knowledge, as they are and have been superseded.

Knowledge, prophecy, tongues, childish, because the Word of God, that which is perfect, is come. Child, child, child, childish. Man put away childish things. "...Mirror dark, then face to face." "Now I know in part, but then I shall know, even as I have been known." A child speaks as a child, understands as a child. "I thought as a child." The three suggested here are probably an inversion of the natural process, because speech is the effect

of understanding and thought, involving words, and are mentioned here as an illustration of the partial and the temporary gifts in verse 8.

"But now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things." This illustrates the bringing in of "that which is perfect is come." The tenses signify abiding results. The words rendered "I have put away," are KATARGEIO, the same verb used in verses 8 and 10, where it can be translated as "I have reduced to inactivity."

So, here a figure of speech serves to illustrate a great Truth. A child becomes a man, but that child also has the desire to become a man, whereas the man does not wish to become a child again, second childhood. Using the first person singular again the apostle Paul states that "when he was a child," he acted like a child, NEPHOS, a little child. Both of his speaking and his disposition were that of a child. Youth marks the beginning in every respect. But as Paul's life developed, as he became a man, and remained a man, GINOMAI, which means to become something and to remain in that condition, well then he wiped out everything childish. He cancelled it out because it was powerless in his life. In other words, this is Paul's testimony about tongues.

Verse 12, "But now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part: but then shall I know even as also I am known." This applies to the principle in verse 10, to the future state of perfection to be brought in at the completion of the Scripture. It applies to the distinction between the period in which the gifts of tongues and prophecy were in exercise, as being one of partial vision, and the subsequent period of clear vision through possession of the completed Canon of Scripture, and a face to face condition, a knowledge that the believer has a capacity, even now, of knowing, not in part, but fully.

We have the completed Canon of Scripture in the Bible, the mind of Christ, in our language, and so THE TEMPORARY GIFTS ARE GONE.

“For now we see.” The adverb ANTI means and signifies up to the immediate present. The word “see” is BLEPO, which differs from the other word for “see” of HORAO. The former, used here, indicates the manner of seeing, like blips on a screen, whereas the latter points more specially to the object seen, the overall picture.

The word “through” is DIA, which is literally “by means of.” To see a friend by means of a mirror is very imperfect compared with seeing them face to face. The phrase rendered “darkly” is literally “in an enigma.” It is a sort of pun, a riddle. We have the same principle in Numbers 12:8, “With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches: and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?”

“Now I know in part, but then I shall know even as also I have been known.” This provides a fuller and a further illustration of the principle of verse 10. There is a distinction here in the verbs “to know.” The first one is the simple verb, GINOSKO. The two following are the compound verb, EPIGINOSKO, which signifies full. EPI + GINOSKO = full knowledge. So, we could translate this this way: “At present I am in a process of knowing in part, but then I shall fully know, even as I was fully known by the Lord in the past.”

This does not mean that our knowledge will be of the same measure as that of the Lord Himself. What is meant is that our knowledge will, in its measure, be complete even as His is in its infinite measure. We will have His completed Word, mind, thoughts, in writing. In our present state, the more we know of the Lord, the more we share the apostle’s desire, “that I may know Him.”

Then the present, partial condition will have been replaced by full enjoyment. There is a contrast between “now” and “then,” the latter being the time of perfection, the Word completed. The Word perfect is the Word complete, “When that which is complete is come,” the Word.

The seeing of the Lord, Paul said, was like looking into a mirror daily. The mirrors used in antiquity gave a very poor image. They were usually made of tarnished copper. Seeing something through a mirror then was not only not seeing the reality, it is like considering a riddle, which makes you wonder when you look at it, what you really see. The vision before the completed Canon of Scripture was hampered by darkness and therefore, it was “in part.” They were unable to determine what in their vision was precisely lacking, because if they could, they would have freed themselves of the imperfection of the mirror.

Now we have the completed Canon of the Scripture, and our vision is not untrue, but it is imperfect as to its degree, minor. “When that which is perfect is come, then we see face to face.” We shall, with our own eyes, look into the Word and see the face of all things.

Paul speaks here, if you notice, of knowing. Knowledge. He does not speak of prophecy or of tongues. Now, every Christian knows in a sense. Knowing here implies the activity of the subject, more than the prophecy or of tongues. Knowledge also implies both the action and its results.

In verse 9 Paul wrote that the reason why knowledge must be done away is the fact that it is “in part.” In this verse, the thought is rather that knowledge may be used to characterize the completed Canon of Scripture as having come. When the Bible was completed, there would not just be knowing, but a full knowledge, intense knowledge. And this full knowledge will be superior, because it will no longer be in part. Knowledge as a gift before the Bible was completed, was acquired with some difficulty, but knowing fully is of a more immediate and personal nature.

Now, how that will be demonstrated by Paul is pointed out by the manner in which we are known, in an absolute sense, known by God. “Even as also,” does not imply a full equality. But our knowledge is determined by God’s knowledge, which is of the first order.

But this much we are sure of, we shall see things as they really are.

Then the great climax. Verse 13, "AND NOW ABIDETH FAITH. HOPE AND LOVE. THESE THREE; BUT THE GREATEST OF THESE IS CHARITY." The word "charity" is not charity, but the word LOVE, AGAPE. **These three things operate when you are in fellowship in time and you are filled by God the Holy Spirit.** "Now abideth faith, hope and LOVE." They abide, they abide all the time, they abide for all eternity.

Faith will never end, because the finite mind will have always something of infinite meaning which only faith can appropriate. Hope will certainly abide, wider horizons flung out before our astonished vision, which we may not be able to understand, but the fact still remains, hope is future.

"And LOVE." "The greatest of these is LOVE." Because LOVE is at once the strength of faith, the filling of the Spirit. And LOVE, the filling of the Spirit, is the inspiration of hope. So, while these things will abide, LOVE will abide, and will always be forevermore preeminent. **Because LOVE is what makes faith and hope operative.**

The word "now," NUNTI, is not here a temporal expression, but a logical one. Thus bringing the whole principle to a conclusion. Meaning then, literally, "as you see," or "considering everything."

The word "abideth" is singular even though there is a plural subject. This is strict Greek grammar; abide in the singular because faith, hope and LOVE are one group, a triplet indissoluble in their permanency.

Now, since this is a triplet, then LOVE and faith and hope are not limited to this present life. The future ages have boundless possibilities, and faith in God will not be a thing of the past in the future state of the believers. Hope will always look forward with joyful anticipation, expectancy, to the certain fulfillment of God's plan and purposes. **There will be no testing of faith hereafter, but that which does not involve the cessation of the faith that rests in all that God is**

**and all that He will accomplish.** It is not true that "faith will vanish into sight." Both qualities will be exercised by the dominant energy of the greatest quality of all, namely, LOVE.

This must be the experience for the believer now. LOVE IS THE ROOT OF IT. "LOVE BELIEVES ALL THINGS AND HOPES ALL THINGS." But it will do so hereafter in a manner that supremely excels all the present exercise of faith and hope.

Verse 13 contains the conclusion, the final statement concerning LOVE, which in connection with the preceding verses, shows that LOVE, the filling of the Holy Spirit, surpasses the gift of tongues. **Faith, hope and LOVE, which abide at this moment, will not later on be succeeded by something else, but they will remain forever.** Not just up to the time we depart from this life, but even for all eternity.

As far as LOVE is concerned, that conclusion can be made from verse 8, "LOVE never faileth." As to faith and hope, the conclusion is indirect inasmuch as verse 7 predicated that faith and hope, to that LOVE which never fails.

Faith is used in many ways in the Bible. In verse 13 faith is not used here as saving faith in Christ as Saviour, nor of that faith which worked miracles. Adam in Paradise had faith. Christ is the Author and Finisher of our faith. Faith, in the general sense of the word, refers to a means of perception, therefore basically a relationship between man and God.

"We believe that God is, and that He is a Rewarder of them who diligently seek Him." The same thing holds true of hope. Our hope is attended by uncertainty, our expectations are accompanied by the knowledge of the apprehension that the result may be quite different from what we expect it to be. But that uncertainty does not belong to the nature of hope. Hebrews 6:19, "Which HOPE we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." 1 Peter 1:13, "Wherefore gird up the

loins of your mind, be sober, and HOPE to the end for the GRACE that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Hope's real character is drawn by Paul in Romans 8:24, "For we are saved by HOPE: but HOPE that is seen is not HOPE: for what man seeth, why doth he yet HOPE for?" "HOPE that is seen is not HOPE." Hope is joyful anticipation of the future. Just as faith indicates the relation between God and man at any given moment, so Hope implies that His relation will remain what it is. We hope that all will remain as it is, not because we doubt, but because we are certain. The fear inspired by the thought of the future is definitely removed by Christian hope. Christ is our Blessed Hope. Our hoping is more than knowing, but it involves the whole person and is akin to faith. This hope remains together with faith.

Now LOVE has a somewhat different nature from faith and hope. LOVE is basic, for it does not just refer to a certain relation, **but it governs and sustains all relations, because it indicates a direction of life.** LOVE will enable a person to do many things, such as to believe and hope. **But it will make him impossible to hate anything but sin.** LOVE is the root of all good actions; gold, silver, precious stones. Where it manifests itself, and it must be manifested, it displays a certain quality. It operates in a certain area. And there it adds color to things. It determines the nature and the direction of every action. **LOVE does not seek its own, but is directed toward somebody else. For that reason it is superior to faith and hope.**

Now, this shed some light on the climax of this chapter. "The greatest of these is LOVE." These three, faith, hope and LOVE, are the subject of the word "abideth." Only these three remain. This is a part of the apostle's conclusion since he has written before that even the most excellent gifts will then no longer operate. 1 Corinthians 13 occupies a most important place in the discourse of the spiritual gifts. It furnishes the foundation both for a warning against over-

estimating the gift of tongues and for a summons to use that gift rightly in the past, before the Word was completed. Now, LOVE to God and neighbor is to cover this use today. There are two commandments for the Church Age: 1 John 3:23, "And this is His commandment, That we should believe on the Name of His Son Jesus Christ, AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER, as He gave us commandment."

Secondly, we learn from this chapter the significance given to the descriptions and the strength and energy of LOVE. Because Paul is writing to the Corinthians, who were really mainly carnal, this treatment of LOVE for the greater part is negative. The gift of tongues was bonafide and operative until 96 A.D., when John completed the book of Revelation. If we, as a church in the Church Age, as believers in the Church Age, possess LOVE, we must there fore strive for LOVE'S highest attainments.

1 Thessalonians 1:3, "Remembering without ceasing YOUR WORK OF FAITH, AND LABOUR OF LOVE, AND PATIENCE OF HOPE in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father."

1 Thessalonians 5:8, "But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breast-plate of faith and LOVE; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." Colossians 1:4, 5, "Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the LOVE which ye have to all the saints. For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the Word of the Truth of the Gospel."

"THOUGH I GIVE ALL MY GOODS TO FEED THE POOR, AND HAVE NOT LOVE, IT PROFITETH ME NOTHING."

"THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE."  
LOVE IS THE GREATEST!!

Buddy Dano, Pastor

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