

# THE TRUE PHILOSOPHY OF LOVE



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In 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 we have the analysis of LOVE, or the analysis of the filling of the Holy Spirit. In the first three verses, after contrasting LOVE with different things, all in three verses, very short, it gives us an amazing analysis of what this thing LOVE is all about. In these few words, we have what we might call the spectrum of LOVE and the analysis of LOVE. I'd like for you to notice the elements of LOVE in these verses. They are all common names. They are all virtues which we hear about every day. They are things which could be practiced by everyone in every facet of life. And how, by a multitude of small things, in ordinary virtues, that is what the supreme thing LOVE is made up of.

The spectrum of LOVE has varying ingredients. It says in verse 4, "Charity," which is the word LOVE, "suffereth long, is kind; LOVE envieth not; LOVE vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." 5) Does not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil. 6) Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth; 7) Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8) LOVE never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fall, whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."

First of all, "LOVE suffereth long," means one of the ingredients is patience. And then the second one "LOVE is kind," that's really kindness. "LOVE envieth not," the third one, is generosity. "LOVE vaunteth not itself up, is not puffed up," is true humility, or GRACE orientation. "Does not behave itself unseemly," is courtesy. "Seeketh not her own," is unselfishness. "Not easily provoked," which means good temper. "Thinketh no evil," is guilelessness. "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth," is genuine sincerity.

And then in contrast there are seven things which are unprofitable without the filling of the Spirit, without LOVE. "Speaking with tongues of men and angels," ... "the gift

of prophecy," ... "understanding all mysteries," ... "understanding all knowledge," ... "all faith," ... "bestowing all our goods to feed the poor," and martyrdom. Knowledge alone puffs up. LOVE alone buildeth up. Beware of envy. Remember Cain's envy hatched Abel's murder. Faith hopes in sight. Hope ends in presence. LOVE never ends. Faith gets the most. GRACE keeps the most. LOVE works the most.

Notice the words "patience," "kindness," "generosity," "humility," "courtesy," "unselfishness," "good temper," "guilelessness," "sincerity." These make up the supreme gift, the statue of the mature believer in fellowship. You will observe that they are all in relationship to men, in relationship to life, in relationship to the known today, the near tomorrow, and not to the unknown in eternity. We hear about LOVE towards God. Christ Himself spoke about LOVE towards mankind. We make a great deal about peace with Heaven. Christ made much of peace on Earth. Christianity is then not a strange or added thing, but the inspiration of the secular life, the breathing of the Spirit through this temporal world. The supreme thing, in short, is not a thing at all, but the giving of a further finish to the multitudinous words and acts which make up the sum of every common day.

First of all, "LOVE suffereth long," which means LOVE is patient. This is the normal attitude of the filling of the Holy Spirit. This is LOVE passive, LOVE actually waiting to begin, not in a hurry, calm, ready to do its work when the summons comes, and in the mean time, 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. It's not pushy.

The next word, "kindness," is to be kind and serviceable. Good, pleasant, gracious. This is LOVE active. Have you ever noticed in Scripture how much of the Lord's life was spent in doing gracious things? This is spoken of in Luke 6:35 and Ephesians 4:32. This is enjoined

upon all believers. If you run over the life of the Lord Jesus Christ with this in view, kindness, you will find that He spent a great proportion of His time simply making people happy and doing good turns for people.

There is only one thing greater than happiness in the world and that is separation, sanctification. That's 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 being gracious to them, treating people in GRACE.

The greatest thing that a man can do for his heavenly Father is to be kind, to be gracious, to some of His other children, the body of Christ. I wonder why we are not, as a group of believers, kinder than we are. How much the world needs that GRACE orientation. How easily it's done, how instantaneously it acts when you're controlled by God the Holy Spirit, how infallibly it is remembered, how super abundantly 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 life. And again, we're talking about this word "charity," which is AGAPE LOVE, which is the filling of the Spirit. In other words, **what God is, love is and what love is, God is.** He that dwelleth in LOVE, dwelleth in God. "God is LOVE." Therefore, without distinction, without calculation, without procrastination, we just have to use the word LOVE.

Lavish it upon the poor, where it is very easy to do. Especially upon the rich, who often need it most. Most of all lavish it upon our equals where it is very difficult and for whom perhaps we each do least of all. There's a difference between trying to please and giving pleasure. **Give pleasure.** Don't lose a chance of giving pleasure, for that is a ceaseless and anonymous triumph of a truly loving spirit.

Next, generosity. "LOVE envieth not." which means 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 than you are. But don't

envy them. Envy is a feeling of ill-will to those in the same line as ourselves, a spirit of covetous and detraction. Only one thing truly need a Christian envy: a large rich, generous soul which envieth not.

The next word is humility. Humility means to build a seal on your lips and forget about what you've accomplished. After you've been kind, gracious, after LOVE has stolen forth into the world and done its beautiful work, go back to the beginning and say nothing about it. LOVE hides even from itself. LOVE waives even self-satisfaction. It says "LOVE vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." Pride, then, would be the opposite of LOVE. So, then again, LOVE would be the filling of the Spirit. "LOVE envieth not, is not puffed up." Pride, then, would be the believer out of fellowship, not controlled by the Holy Spirit.

The fifth ingredient is a somewhat strange one to find in this particular gift, courtesy. "LOVE doth not behave itself unseemly." This is LOVE actually in society, LOVE in relation to etiquette, as it were. It doesn't act unbecomingly. This is politeness. Courtesy is said to be LOVE in little things. One's secret as far as politeness is to LOVE. LOVE cannot behave itself unseemly. It can put the most uneducated person into the highest type of society. If they have a reservoir of LOVE, they will not behave themselves unseemly. They simply cannot do it. If you're controlled by God the Holy Spirit and in fellowship, you could not possibly behave yourself unseemly.

Carlisle, one of the poets, said of Robert Burns, another poet, that there was no truer gentleman in Europe than Burns, who was called the "Plow Man Poet." The explanation was because he LOVED everything. He LOVED the mice. He LOVED the daisies. He LOVED all things great and small. So, with this simple passport, he could possibly mingle with any society and enter courts and palaces from his little college on the banks of the Air.

Now, originally the meaning of the word "gentleman," means a gentle man. The man who does things gently with LOVE. And that's the whole art and mystery of it. The gentleman in the nature of things cannot do an

ungentle thing, an ungentlemanly thing. The ungentle fall, the inconsiderate, unsympathetic nature cannot do anything else. "LOVE doth not behave itself unseemly."

Then, the next phrase, which is unselfishness. "LOVE seeketh not her own." Observe: **seeketh not even that which is her own.** Paul does not summon us to give up our rights in this particular expression. LOVE strikes much deeper. He would have us not seek them at all. Ignore them. Eliminate the personal element all together from our calculations. It's not hard for someone to give up his rights. But this does not seek the things of itself. They're often external.

The difficult thing is to give up ourselves, and the more difficult thing still is not to seek the things for ourselves at all. After we've fought them, and bought them, and won them, and preserved them, then we've taken the cream off of them for ourselves already. So, it's a little cross, then perhaps, to give it up, but not to seek them to look after every man not on his own things, but on the things of others. The prophet said, "Seeketh thou the things for thyself?" Then he says "Seek them not."

Why? Because **there's no greatness in things** and things cannot be great. The only greatness is in this unselfish LOVE, or the filling of the Spirit. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you." Even self-denial in itself is nothing. It's almost a mistake. Only a great purpose or mightier LOVE can justify that particular waste. It's more difficult, this verse declares, not to seek our own at all, and having sought it, to give it up. And this is true of a partly selfish heart.

Nothing is a hardship to LOVE and nothing is hard. Christ's yoke is easy and Christ's yoke is just, His way of taking life. It's an easier way than others. It's always 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.** Not in having, not in getting, but in giving. **And that's GRACE and that's God.** Half the world actually is on the wrong scent in the pursuit of happiness because they think

that it consists in having and getting and being served by others. Yet 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 but one way, "it's more blessed." it's more happy, "to give than to receive." The whole expression is of GRACE orientation.

The next phrase in 1 Corinthians 13 about the analysis of LOVE is the fact that "LOVE is not easily provoked." This means good temper. If you're in fellowship you'll not lose your temper. People have practiced how not to lose their temper. Some people have a short fuse. Some people have a long fuse. But here the filling of the Spirit says "LOVE is not easily provoked." Nothing can be more striking than to find this particular phrase right here.

We're inclined to look at bad temper as a very harmless sort of weakness and we speak of it as a mere infirmity of nature, a family failing, a matter of temperament, not a thing to take into very serious action in estimating a man's character. Yet here, right in the heart of this analysis of LOVE, here it finds a place. The Bible again and again returns to condemn it as one of the most destructive elements in the human nature. The peculiarity of ill temper is that it is the vice of the virtuous. It's also the one blot on the otherwise noble character. You know men who are all but perfect, but for an easily ruffled, quick-tempered, or touchy disposition. This compatibility of ill-temper with high moral character is one of the strangest and saddest problems of ethics.

The truth is that there are two classes of sins, actually. There are sins of the body, and naturally, 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 whatsoever as to which of these is the worst. Its brand falls without a challenge upon the prodigal. Everyone seems to think that the prodigal son is the worse between him and the elder son. But we don't have a balance, as it were, to weigh one another's sins. Coarser and finer are but just human words. But faults in the higher nature may be less venial than those of the lower. And

to the eye of him who has sinned against LOVE, it may seem a hundred times more base.

No form of vice, nor worldliness, nor greed of good, nor drunkenness of self does more for the unchristian society than evil temper. For embittering life, for breaking up communities, for destroying the most sacred relationships, for devastation of homes, for withering up men and women, for taking the boom and bloom off of childhood, for sheer misery producing power, this influence stands alone.

“LOVE is not easily provoked” really overcomes a great problem. When you look at the older brother in regard to the prodigal son, the older brother was a moral person. He was working hard. He was patient, he was dutiful, and let him get credit for all his virtues. Look at this man, this baby, sulking outside of his father’s door. He was angry, as you remember, and he wouldn’t go in. And look at the effect it had on the father, and the servants, and upon the happiness of the guests that were celebrating on the inside. Then you judge the effect upon the prodigal son.

How many “prodigals” are kept out of the kingdom of God by the unlovely character of those who profess to be on the inside. The thunder cloud itself, as it gathers upon the elder brother’s brow, what is it made of? Jealousy, anger, pride, unloving, cruelty, self-righteousness, touchiness, sullenness. These are the ingredients of this dark and loveless soul of the older brother. You judge for yourself if such things of the disposition are not worse to live in and for others to live, than with 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’s really no place in Christianity for a disposition like this. A man with such a mood can only make Heaven miserable for all the people that would abide in it.

That’s why a man must be born again. He simply cannot see the kingdom of Heaven apart from that. Temper is significant, not in what it is alone, but of what it reveals. It’s a test for LOVE, a symptom, a revelation, of an unloving nature hidden down at the bottom

of the soul. It’s the fever which bespeaks disease within.

So, it’s not enough to deal with temper. We must go to the source and change the innermost nature and the angry humors will die away of themselves. Souls are made sweet, not by taking the acid-fluids out, but by putting something in. In other words, a great LOVE, a new Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus Christ sweetens, purifies, and transforms all this easily provoking nature. Will power does not change man. Time does not change man. Jesus Christ is the one who changes man. Therefore, “Let that mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” Some of us don’t have much time to lose in order to see this transformation.

Remember once more, this is a matter of life or death. It’s the deliberate verdict of the Lord Jesus Christ that it’s “better not to live than not to LOVE.”

“Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believeth in Me, it were better for him that a mill stone were hanging about his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea.” “It is better not to live than not to LOVE.”

The next one that we have is guilelessness and sincerity. This possibly could be covered with one expression. Guilelessness and sincerity is the GRACE for suspicious people. Have you ever met a suspicious person who is easily provoked? That is dynamite. In other words, all this is saying is that when a believer is controlled by the Spirit, it corrects all these maladies. Guilelessness and sincerity. 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 are the people who believe in you. If a person doesn’t believe in you, they can’t influence you. In an atmosphere of suspicion, men shrivel up. But in the atmosphere of belief, trust, and confidence they expand and they find encouragement, and educated fellowship. It’s a wonderful thing that here and there in this hard world, uncharitable world, there are still a few souls who think no evil. This is the greatness of unworldliness. **Think no evil.**

It says here "LOVE thinketh no evil," which means that it imputes no motives. It sees the bright side, puts the best construction on every action. What a delightful state of mind for a person to live in. What a stimulus, a benediction, even to meet with it for a day. To be trusted. We are to try to influence, or try to elevate others. We shall 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 that a man has lost. Our ideal of what he is becomes to him the hope and pattern of what he may become.

The next one: "LOVE rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth," This is true sincerity which comes from rejoicing in the Truth. For he who LOVES will LOVE Truth, not less than men. This is truthing in LOVE. He will rejoice in Truth, not in what he's seen, not in what he's been taught to believe, not in the a church's doctrine, not in the "isms" but in the Truth. He will accept that only which is real. He will strive all the time to get to the facts. He will search for the Truth with a gracious and unbiased mind and will cherish what he finds at any sacrifice. Once more. This is an attitude which is positive towards the Word of God because the Word is Truth. A person who is rejoicing in Truth will accept only that which is real. He or she will strive to get to the facts. He or she will search for the Truth with a gracious and unbiased mind. You'll look at a passage of Scripture and you'll look to find some GRACE in it and you have an unbiased mind. When you find it, you will cherish whatever you find at whatever particular sacrifice it took.

The literal translation of this verse calls for such a sacrifice for Truth's sake here, for what Paul really meant is, as we read, "rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth WITH the Truth." The quality which probably no one English word, and not even sincerity, adequately defines, because it includes perhaps more strictly the self-restraint which refuses to make capital gain out of other's faults, the LOVE which delights not in exposing the weakness of others, but, it says, "covereth all things." The sincerity of purpose which endeavors to see things as they are and rejoices

to find them better than suspicious, feared, or denunciation, that is the analysis of LOVE.

Now, the issue is to fit these things into our character in this life. That's the supreme work to which we need to address ourselves in this world, and that's the filling of the Holy Spirit. Life is filled with opportunities for learning LOVE. Every man and every woman everyday has a thousand opportunities. The world, some people say, is a playground. But the world is not a playground. The world is a schoolroom. Every day you run across some situation, or person, or circumstance which is a challenge to the filling of the Spirit, or LOVE. Some people say that life is a holiday. But life is not a holiday. Life is an education. The one eternal lesson for all of us is how better we can LOVE.

What makes a man a good ball player? Practice. What makes a man a good artist or sculptor or musician? Practice. A good stenographer, 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 or muscles. If a man does not exercise his soul he acquires no muscle in his soul, no strength of character, no vigor of moral fiber, nor beauty of spiritual growth.

**Love is not a thing of enthusiastic emotions!** It's a rich, strong, manly, vigorous expression of the whole realm of 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 because we read that **He learned obedience**. He increased in wisdom and in favor with God and man. We can't quarrel with our lot in this life. So, don't complain of its never ceasing cares, its petty environment, the vexations you have to stand, the small and sorrowful souls that you have to live and work with. Don't resent temptation. Don't be perplexed because it seems to be thickening around you more and more, and ceases neither for effort, nor for agony, nor prayer. That's the practice for which the Lord appoints you. It's having its work and making you patient and gracious and generous and unselfish and kind and courteous. Don't guide the Hand that's molding you, the

still too shapeless image that's in you. It's growing in GRACE more beautifully through you. And every bit of temptation may add to its perfection. Therefore, keep in the midst of life. Do not isolate yourself. Be among men and women and among things and among troubles, difficulties, and obstacles.

Talent develops itself in solitude. Character develops itself in the stream of life. Talent develops itself in solitude, the talent of prayer, faith of meditation, seeing the unseen. Character grows in the stream of the world's life. That chiefly is where men are to learn LOVE. LOVE itself can never be defined. It's almost 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 lightness. 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 frenzied, living whole conveyed into our souls? We brace our world to secure it. We try to copy those who have it. We lay down rules about it. We watch. We pray. But these things alone will not bring LOVE into our nature. LOVE is an effect. Only as we fulfill the right condition can we have the effect produced.

How do we know what the cause is? 1 John tells us the cause. "We LOVE because He first LOVED us." We LOVE, not we LOVE Him, but we LOVE because He first LOVED us. When you look at the word "because," that's the cause of which we speak. Because He first LOVED us, the effect follows that we LOVE Him and we LOVE all. We can't help it. Because He LOVED us, we LOVE. We LOVE everybody and our heart is actually changed. If you contemplate the LOVE of Christ you will LOVE. Stand before the mirror, reflect on Christ's character, and you'll be changed in the same image, from GRACE to GRACE, and there's **no other way**.

You cannot order LOVE. You cannot LOVE to order. You can only look at the LOVELY objects, fall in LOVE with them, and grow into a likeness. "The LOVE of God which is shed abroad in our hearts by means of the Holy Spirit." is what he's talking about in Romans 5:5. It's a look at the perfect character of

Christ. LOVE, then, is a look at the perfect life. LOVE, then, is a look at the great sacrifice He made all through His life. LOVE is a look at the cross. You must LOVE Him and in LOVING Him you become like Him because LOVE begets LOVE.

Put a piece of iron in the presence of a magnetized body and that piece of iron for a time becomes magnetized. It's changed with an attractive force in the mere presence of the original force. And as long as you leave the two 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 for power, a permanently attractive force. And like Him, you will draw all men unto you and you'll be drawn unto all men. That is the inevitable effect of the filling of the Holy Spirit. Any man who fulfills that cause must have the effect produced in him.

Christianity does not come to us by chance or mystery. Christianity comes to us by natural law, by supernatural law, for all law is Divine. The sense that God LOVES you overpowers you and it'll melt you down and begin to create a new heart inside of you. And that's how the LOVE of God melts down the unlovely heart of man and begets in him a new creature, who is patient, gentle, gracious, and unselfish. There's no other way to get it but **by the GRACE of God**. There's no mystery about it. We LOVE others. We LOVE everybody. We LOVE our enemies, because He first LOVED us.

Why did Paul single out LOVE as the single possession here? There's a remarkable reason. It's a single word. It's the next phrase: "LOVE never faileth." In other words **it lasts**. Then he begins once again one of his marvelous lists of the great things of the day, and then exposes them one by one. He runs over the things that men thought were going to last and were very important and shows that they are fleeting things, temporary, and passing away. "Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail."

In those days, many mothers' ambitions were that their sons would become prophets.

Hanna, for example. For hundreds of years God had not spoken by means of any prophet. At that time the prophet was greater than the king. Men waited for another messenger to come, another prophet, and hung upon his lips when he appeared as upon the very voice of God. Paul says "whether there be prophecies, they shall fail." The Bible is full of prophecies. But one by one prophecies have failed. That is, having been fulfilled, their work is finished.

You have a prophecy, for example, in the Old Testament, of Jesus Christ coming through a virgin. Once He comes and fulfills that prophecy, then the work of that prophecy is finished. They have nothing more to do in the world now except to feed a man faith.

Then Paul talks about tongues. That was another thing that was greatly coveted, and still is today. And he says next, "whether there be tongues, they shall cease." As we all know, many centuries have passed since tongues have been known in this world. They have ceased Biblically. Take it in any sense that you like. Take it for illustration of language in general, a sense which is not in Paul's mind at all. Consider the words in which these chapters are written, Greek, which is gone. The Koine Greek language has gone. It no longer exists. No one speaks it any more. Take Latin, the other great language in those days. Latin ceased long ago. Look at the Indian language. It is ceasing. The language of Wales or Ireland, of the Scottish highlands, is dying out right before our eyes. The most popular book in the English tongue, with the exception of the Bible, some think is the work of Dickens, his *Pick Wick Papers*. It is largely written in the language of the London street life. They tell us that it will be unintelligible in about 10 years to the average English reader.

But Paul goes further with great boldness and says, "whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." The wisdom of the ancients. Where is it? Wholly gone. The school boy today knows more than Sir Issac Newton knew. So, his knowledge has vanished away. You put yesterday's newspaper in the fire, in the trash. Its knowledge has vanished away. You buy the old great editions of the encyclopedias and their knowledge is away.

The horse, for example, has been replaced by steam and electricity. See knowledge is passing away. You see junk sometimes at the front of someone's house, or at the back of some houses. And yet possibly some 10-15 years ago that junk was their pride. Did you ever go down the street and see someone have something outside that they threw away, and a few years ago that was the pride of that house? Now it's junk. You can probably take any text book on science that's more than 10 years old and put it in the cellar.

It says, "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** here. He didn't mention **fortune or fame**. But he picked out the great things of time, the things that best men thought had something in them, and brushed them permanently aside. Paul had no charge against these things in themselves. All that he said about them is that they would not last. They were great things but they were not supreme things. There were things beyond them. But what are we stretching past? What are we to do beyond what we possess?

Many things people denounce as sin are not sins, but are **temporary**. And that's a favorite argument in the New Testament. John says of the world, not that it is wrong, but it simply is passing away. He said, "the world is passing away." There's a great deal in the world that people find delightful and beautiful. There's a great deal in it that is great and engrossing, but it's not going to last. All that's in the world, the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, are but for a little while. And so that's why Jesus Christ said, "LOVE not the world, therefore."

**Nothing that the world contains is worth the life and relationship of the soul.** The immortal soul must give itself to something that is immortal. The only immortal things are these: "Now abideth faith, hope, and LOVE. But the greatest of these is LOVE." LOVE lasts. Now, you can take that a couple ways. We're talking about the word "charity" here in 1 Corinthians 13. It's a commentary on LOVE. It's a commentary on AGAPE LOVE. It's a commentary on the filling of the Holy

Spirit when a person's in fellowship. If you think about it for a minute, when you're in fellowship, the "fruit of the Spirit is LOVE." LOVE lasts. **Everything that you do in fellowship lasts for all eternity. Everything that you do out of fellowship is cut off.** LOVE lasts. The eternal God is LOVE.

Covet, therefore, that everlasting gift, that one thing which is certain that it 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'll give yourself to many things, but give yourself first to LOVE. Hold things in their proportion. Let at least the first great object of our lives be to achieve the character defended in these words, the character that is the character of Christ, which is built around this principle of LOVE.

We have said that this thing called LOVE is eternal. Did you ever notice how continually John associated LOVE, faith, with eternal life? We have been told that "God so LOVED the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Notice those three words in there: LOVE, faith, and eternal life. And we remember that God so LOVED the world that if I trusted in Him, I was to have a thing called peace, or rest, or joy, or to be saved. But you have to find that out for yourself. See, "whosoever trusteth in Him," that is whosoever LOVETH Him, since trust is the ONLY avenue of LOVE, "will have everlasting life." In other words, the Gospel then offers a new life.

Never ever offer the human race a thimble full of the Gospel. Don't offer merely joy. Don't offer merely peace, or merely rest, or merely safety. Tell them how Christ came to give them a more abundant life than they have, a life abundant in LOVE, and abundant in salvation for themselves, and then a price for the redemption of the whole world. Then, when you present the Gospel that way, the Gospel can take hold of a man's body, soul, and spirit, and give each part of his nature its exercise and reward. Many of the current Gospels are addressed to only a **part** of man's nature. In presenting the Gospel some people

present only peace and not life. Justification but not regeneration. And because of that, men slip back into religion because it has not really helped them, because their nature was not in it at all. It didn't offer a deeper and gladder life current than what the life was lived before.

Surely it stands to reason that only a fuller LOVE can compete with the LOVE of the world. To LOVE abundantly is to live abundantly. To LOVE forever is to live forever. LOVE and eternal life are bound together. We want to live forever for the same reason that we want to live tomorrow. Why do we want to live tomorrow? Because there's someone who LOVES you, and whom you want to see tomorrow and be with, and to actually LOVE back. There's no other reason. Why we should LOVE on our Beloved, is when a man has no one to LOVE, then usually what he does is commit suicide. But so long as he has friends, those who LOVE him, and whom he LOVES, he will live because to live is to LOVE. Be it that it is a LOVE of a dog, it will keep him in life. But let that dog go, then he has no contact with life and he has no reason to live. The energy of life then is this principle of LOVE.

Eternal life is to know God and "God is LOVE." This is Christ's own definition. He said that "this is life eternal, that they may 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's the philosophy of what Paul is showing us. The reason why in the nature of things LOVE should be the supreme thing because **it is going to last.** Because it's the nature of things, it's an eternal thing, and it's eternal life.

Life is a thing that we are living now, not that we get when we die, or that we should have a poor chance of getting when we die unless we are living now. No worse fate can befall a man in this world than to live and grow old alone unloving and unloved. To be lost is to live in an unregenerate condition, loveless, unloved. To be saved is to be LOVED. He that

dwelleth in LOVE dwelleth already in God, for God is LOVE. So, this describes the perfect character.

LOVE suffers long and is kind. LOVE envieth not. LOVE vaunteth not itself. Get these ingredients into your life and everything you do will be eternal. It's worth doing. It's worth giving time to. No man can become a saint in his sleep. To fulfill the condition required demands a certain amount of prayer, meditation, time, just as improvement in any direction bodily and mentally requires preparation and care. Our subject here is the filling of the Spirit. Address yourself to that one thing. Have this character of Christ unchanged for yours. When you look back upon your life, you'll find that the moments that stand out, the moments when you have really lived, are the moments when you've done these things in the filling of the Holy Spirit. Everything else in our life is **transitory**. Everything that you do is transitory except that which is done in the filling of the Holy Spirit.

The acts of LOVE never fail. In Matthew, where judgment day is depicted, and the dividing of the sheep from the goats, the test of a man then, is not how I believe, but how I have LOVED. The final test is not religiousness, but LOVE. Not what I've done. Not what I've believed. Not what I've achieved, but how I have discharged the common charities of life. Sins of commission are not even referred to. But what we have not done by sins of omission are judged. It could not be otherwise.

So, the withholding of LOVE is the negation of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. The proof that we never knew Him, that for us He lived in vain. It means that He suggested nothing in all our thoughts, that He inspired nothing in all of our lives, that we're not even once near enough to Him to be seized by the spell of His GRACE for the whole world. It is the Son of man before Whom the nations of the world shall be gathered. It's in the presence of His humanity that we should be changed. No other change than LOVELINESS should be preferred.

The words which all of us should one day hear will not be theology but life, not of churches and saints, but of hunger and poor,

not of creeds and doctrines, but of shelter and clothing, not of Bibles and prayer books, but of cups of cold water in the Name of the Lord. So, everyone that LOVETH, as we shall see, is born of God.

Verse 9, "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part." The full revelation of God was not revealed at the time of writing of 1 Corinthians. Verse 10, "But when that which is Perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." There's a stress upon the words "in part" in this phrase, 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 the partial scope of the supernatural gifts of verse 8. When the completion of the apostolic testimony and the completion of the Scriptures of Truth, the faith once and for all delivered to the saints, Jude 3, then that which is perfect is come, had come, the **temporary gifts were done away.**

So, the Scriptures provided by the Spirit of God were perfect. Nothing was to be added to them. Nothing was to be taken from them. In other words, verse 9 states the reason for what verse 8 contended. The reason is that all our knowledge and all our prophesying, including the gift of tongues, are in part. They 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.

Since this section deals with the affairs of the Kingdom of God, with the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, we go one step beyond this. We assume that Paul has in view the fact that the Kingdom and the Church have not yet come to the acme of their development. This is the principle of progressive revelation. "We know in part" means all human knowledge, even if it is given by way of gift, it's still incomplete and unfinished. The words do not imply that we only know a part of that which is to be known, but rather that the knowing itself is imperfect.

"We prophesy in part." Implied in this is "for we know" that when the zenith is reached, those gifts will no longer operate like the Law being a school master to bring us to Christ. "When that which is perfect is come,"

that's the completed Canon of Scripture. When the zenith has been reached. Then by the fact that all which is in part shall be done away.

We have a positive side here explaining the negative side. The world does not stand still, nor does time. All things hasten towards the end, as Paul has declared more than once. Once the acme has been reached, the completed Canon of Scripture, the dispensation has come to an end, then all that belong to this dispensation, including the gifts, terminate. James 1:25 is a commentary on this verse. "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty ..." "Perfect law of liberty" is again a reference to the Bible, and a reference to that which is perfect is come. James 2:8, "If you fulfill the royal law," the "royal law" again is talking about the Scriptures. James 2:12, "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." "Law of liberty", the "royal law," the "perfect law of liberty," and "that which is perfect" all refer to the completed Canon of Scripture.

Verse 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." You know, the Holy Spirit is talking about tongues as a childish thing. Right here. That's in context here. Because the former and lesser knowledge was superseded.

Now Paul illustrates from the growth and development of personality and he does so very beautifully. "When I was a child," Not "childlike," but "children," which means quite another thing. "I put away childish things." He still watched the passing away of those high and wonderful things that they are superseded. Knowledge, prophesy, and tongues. The Word of God is **perfect**. Child, child, child. Man put away childish things. The mirror is dark, but then face-to-face. "Now I know in part, but then I shall know, even as I have been known."

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child." The three which are perhaps an inversion of the natural process, because speech is the effect of understanding and thought, they are mentioned as an illustration of the partial and

temporary of verse 8. "But now that I have become a man, I have put away childish things." This illustrates the bringing in of "that which is perfect." The tenses signify abiding results. The verb in "I have put away" is the same verb that we have in verses 8 and 10, where it should be translated "I have reduced to inactivity."

So, here a figure of speech serves to illustrate a truth. A child becomes a man. That's tongues to the completed Canon of Scripture. But that child also has a desire to become a man, whereas a man does not wish to become a child again. Using the first person singular again, the apostle says "when he was a child, he acted as a child." NEPHOS, a little child. Both his speaking and disposition were that of a child. Youth makes the beginning in every respect. But as Paul's life developed, as he became a man and remained one, which means to become something and to remain in that condition, he wiped out everything childish, he canceled it out, because now it had become powerless.

Next time we'll take it up at verse 12. I wanted to get through verse 11 because that ties in with tongues for us also. So, people who are involved with tongues are dealing in darkness and they're dealing in things that are powerless. It was just like the Law which brought us to Jesus Christ. We're now no longer under the Law because Christ has come and the Law was a school master to bring us to Christ. It's like taking some ritual in the Old Testament, which illustrates Jesus Christ as Saviour, and now you accept Christ as Saviour, there's no need to go back to the ritual. Tongues were to bring people to know Christ as Saviour, to the unbeliever. Now the Canon of Scripture is completed so you don't need that gift any longer. So, in context, you can see the difficulties that we're having in the 20th century.

This pamphlet was taken from a class taught by Buddy Dano on October 17, 1984 from his series on 1 Corinthians.

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