

## 1 Corinthians 13

### Introduction:

1. (John 13:34-35) Jesus taught His followers to love one another.
2. It is important for us to practice this command because our response to the Lord's commands is a reflection of our love for Him (John 14:15).
3. To help us understand what the Lord requires of us, we are studying the great love chapter of the Bible -- 1 Corinthians 13.
4. Let us begin by examining . . .

### Discussion:

- I. THE CONTEXT OF 1 CORINTHIANS 13
  - A. (ch.12-14) Paul was writing to the Christians in Corinth about their use of spiritual gifts.
  - B. The 9 gifts are listed in 12:8-10.
  - C. These gifts were designed to help in spreading the Gospel and edifying the church.
  - D. Unfortunately, the Christians in Corinth were using their gifts in an unloving way. 1. Some flaunted their gifts while other became jealous, and division resulted.
    2. This was not the Lord's will (12:25).
  - E. (12:31) Paul said he would show them "*a more excellent way*" of using their gifts.
    1. This more excellent way involved using spiritual gifts with love.
    2. Spiritual gifts no longer exist; however, we must still practice the teachings of this chapter because everything we do is to be done with love (16:14).
  - F. With this information before us, let us turn our attention to ch.13 which gives . . .
- II. 3 REASONS WHY THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY INCLUDES LOVE
  - A. The more excellent way includes love because without love we are nothing (vs.1-3).
    1. (vs.1) This principle applied to speaking in tongues.
    2. (vs.2) This principle applied to other spiritual gifts.
    3. (vs.3) This principle applies to all acts of benevolence and sacrifice.
    4. To help the Corinthians know whether they were using their gifts with love, Paul continued by showing that . . .
  - B. The more excellent way includes love because of the way it behaves (vs.4-7).
    1. (-) Love:
      - a. does not envy [is not jealous]
      - b. does not vaunt itself [does not brag or boast]
      - c. is not puffed up [arrogant]
      - d. does not behave itself unseemly [in a way unbecoming of a child of God]
      - e. does not seek its own [have to have its own way]
      - f. is not easily provoked
      - g. does not think evil [take into account a wrong suffered, hold a grudge]
      - h. does not rejoice in iniquity [unrighteousness].
    2. (+) Love:
      - a. suffers long [is patient]
      - b. is kind
      - c. rejoices in the truth
      - d. bears all things
      - e. believes all things
      - f. hopes all things
      - g. endures all things.
    3. After examining their love, the last point should have motivated the Corinthians to make any necessary corrections.
  - C. The more excellent way includes love because it is everlasting.
    1. Love never fails.
    2. However, spiritual gifts would "*fail*," "*cease*," and "*vanish away*."

3. This would occur when "*that which is perfect*" [complete] came (the new covenant of Christ -- James 1:25).
4. Let us see the point being made.
  - a. Were the Corinthians using their gifts with love? (No)
  - b. The gifts would eventually come to an end.
  - c. If the Corinthians continued using their gifts without love, when the gifts no longer existed, what would remain? (jealousy, pride, arrogance, etc.)
  - d. If the Corinthians repented and used their gifts with love, when the gifts disappeared, love would continue to reign supreme.
5. See vs.13.
  - a. One day, faith will become sight, and hope will become reality.
  - b. Love is the greatest because it will continue on and on.

Conclusion:

1. In John 13:34-35 Christ authorized His followers to love each other.
2. 1 Corinthians helps us understand what the Lord requires of us.
3. May the Lord help us to always walk in the "*more excellent way.*"