

Famous Chapters in the Bible, Part 4: 1 Corinthians 13, Page 1 of 2

Notes from the class taught by Pastor Doug Livingston, May 30, 2012

Background: Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians from Ephesus (16:8) around 55 A.D. At the time, the city of Corinth was known for its immorality which was encouraged by the temple of Aphrodite with its 1,000 prostitutes.

Context: The Corinthian Church was filled with carnality. As a result, the believers there were following different leaders. They had become prideful & tolerant of immoral behavior in the church. They were taking each other to court. They were confused about subjects like marriage, celibacy & divorce. They were eating meat which had been sacrificed to idols & causing weaker members to stumble. Their worship, including the Lord's Supper, had become indecent & disorderly. And, they were abusing the "gifts of the Spirit."

I Corinthians 12:28-31. WM: "The best gifts are those that are most useful rather than those that are spectacular." Satan has used the gift of "tongues" to divide the church then & now.

1. The Greek word here for "love" is agape which refers to the sacrificial love of the God the Father for His Son (John 3:16), a love which we are to have for each other in the church. Jesus prayed, in John 17:25-26, "O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, Yet I have known You; & these (His disciples) have known that You sent me; & I have made Your name known to them, & will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, & I in them."

CR: "A noisy gong, along w a clanging symbol, was associated with pagan worship."

2. God's gifts used without God's love amount to nothing.

3. Feeding the poor & dying a martyr's death are of no value without God's love.

4. God's love is patient ("suffereth long," KJV), kind (benevolent, gracious), not jealous, boastful or proud. Believers need to be reminded that their "gifts" come from God. They should be used within the church to bless others & glorify God.

5. NIV: "It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs."

6. The Greek word for "rejoice" is chairo which comes from the word charis ("grace"). God's love does not rejoice over sin, but over truth.

7. WM: "The expression 'bears all things' may mean that love patiently endures all things or that it hides or conceals the faults of others. The word 'bears' may also be translated 'covers.' Love 'believes all things,' that is, it tries to put the best possible construction on actions & events. Love 'hopes all things' in the sense that it earnestly desires that all things work out for the best. Love 'endures all things' in the way of persecution or ill-treatment."

8. God's love never fails; it is everlasting. The gifts of prophecy, tongues & knowledge will one day cease. There are two views on this: The eternal state & the completed canon.

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9. Prophecy & knowledge, in this life, are only partial. 10. When the perfect, Jesus Christ, comes, we will then be able to see God's perfect plan!

11. We are somewhat like children on earth with lots of questions. In heaven, all of our questions will be answered!

12. WM: "Now our knowledge is partial, but then we shall know just as we also are known – which means more fully. We will never have perfect knowledge, even in heaven. Only God is omniscient."

13. In heaven, faith will no longer be needed (Hebrews 11:1); our "blessed hope" (Jesus' coming) will have been realized. And yet, God's love will reign for eternity!

CR: Charles Ryrie

WM: William MacDonald