

I Love

God

A More Excellent Way

The Necessity, Character,
and Permanence of Love
(1 Corinthians 13)

Corinthian Church Problems

- Division
- Sexual Immorality
- Lawsuits
- Confusion about Marriage and Singleness
- Abuse of the Lord's Supper
- **Competition among Spiritual Gifts**
- Confusion about the Resurrection



Biblical Idea

Paul confronted the Corinthian view of spirituality (tongues, wisdom, knowledge, and pride) with the gospel ethic of love.

*“Love is primary for [Paul] because it has already been given concrete expression in . . . Jesus Christ . . . Love is not an idea for Paul, not even a ‘motivating factor’ for behavior. It **is** behavior. To love is to act; anything short of action is not love at all.”*

*(Gordon Fee in *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 628)*

*“Love is not set over against the gifts, precisely because it belongs to a different category altogether . . . love is the way the gifts are to function. To desire earnestly expressions of the Spirit that will build up the community is **how** love acts in this context.”*

*(Gordon Fee in *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 628)*

Verse 1

Paul confronted the hollow use of spiritual gifts without love.



Verse 2

Paul confronted the lack of substance when using spiritual gifts without love.



*“As before, possession of **charismata** is not the sign of the Spirit; Christian love is.”*

*(Gordon Fee in **The First Epistle to the Corinthians**, 633)*

Verse 3

Paul confronted the bankruptcy of sacrifice without love.



*“We know that many among ourselves have **delivered themselves** to bondage, that they might ransom others. Many have **sold themselves** to slavery, and receiving the price paid for themselves have fed others.”*

(Clement of Rome in *1 Clement* 55:2)



Timeless Truth

The Holy Spirit empowers the Christian with a Christ-looking love of being and doing.



Today's Message

Surrender spiritual activities to the supreme significance of love.

Surrendering to Love

Hollow words need filled with loving action.

Knowledge gains substance with love.

Sacrifice from love benefits people.



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