



LOVE SO AMAZING

2022 THEME

1 Cor. 12:31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and **yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.**

1 Cor. 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.

12 For 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.

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but **the greatest of these is charity.**

This morning, we finish looking at *Love So Amazing* in what is commonly called the “Love Chapter,” I Cor. 13. We began with examining the usage of “charity” instead of “love” as the translation of the Greek work *agape*.

❖ The basic observation regarding the two words is that the translation of *agape* to *love* is focused upon the attribute of God while translating *agape* to *charity* focuses upon a believers interaction with others.

2 Thess. 1:3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and **the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;**

1 Pet. 4:8 And above all things **have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.**

❖ As we continue the “Love So Amazing” chapter, **remember that the focus of the word *charity* emphasizes God-like love of a believer toward others.**

❖ The chapter begins by expressing great things that are nullified without charity.

I. THE EXCLUSION OF CHARITY, 13:1-3

❖ In essence, the first three verses are expressing **THE VALUE OF LOVE.**

II. THE EXPLANATION OF CHARITY, 13:4-7

❖ The next few verses express **THE VIRTUE OF LOVE.**

❖ We now finish the conclusion of the “love chapter,” to see **THE VICTORY OF LOVE.**

III. THE EXCEPTIONALITY OF CHARITY

- A. That Which is Prevailing, 13:8a “Charity never faileth...”
- B. That Which is Passing, 13:8b – 10
 - 1. Paul’s Definite Expectation, 13:8b-d “...but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.”

2. Paul's Definitive Explanation, 13:9-10

a. A Word of Illumination, 13:9-10

(1) The Problem of Partial Knowledge, 13:9

(2) The Promise of Perfect Knowledge

13:10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

- ❖ The promise of the permanent was at hand, and some gifts that “shall be done away.”
- ❖ Such charity, a living example of God's love, will transition to permanency with the provision of the Word of God, and implementation in the life of a believer.

As long as eternity exists, God's love never ceases to exist! Other aspects of ministry will cease, but not the love of God. As we continue looking at the exceptionality of charity, we consider the illustration of 13:11-13.

b. A Word of Illustration, 13:11-12

(1) The Childish Stage of Things, 13:11

1 Cor. 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.

Original Word: νήπιος

Transliteration: népios;

Phonetic Spelling: (nay'-pee-os)

Definition: an infant, a simple-minded or immature person

Usage: unlearned, unenlightened; noun: an infant, **child. (babe)**

<https://biblehub.com/greek/3516.htm>

❖ The Corinthian members simply needed to grow up!

Heb. 5:12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

13 For **every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word** of righteousness: for he is a **babe**.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of **full age**, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

- ❖ Consider the three actions of a child and the relationship with the gifts that will cease:
 - I spake as a child → tongues
 - I understood as a child → knowledge
 - I thought as a child → prophecies

- ❖ Spiritual maturity, “...but when I became a man...” produces spiritual action, “...I put away childish things.”

❖ Just as physical development is a sign of a healthy body, so is spiritual growth a sign of spiritual development with a local body called a *church*.

❖ Consider the function of a church:

Eph. 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 **For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:**

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we *henceforth* **be no more children**, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, **may grow up into him in all things**, which is the head, *even* Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, **maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.**

❖ There is NO mention of “sign gifts” in this passage – they have become obsolete.

(2) The Changed Stage of Things, 13:12

1 Cor. 13:12 For 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.

- ❖ At that moment, “Now,” the New Testament was not completely finished, therefore truth was yet ambiguous, giving partial understanding, knowing “...in part...”
- ❖ When the New Testament was complete, a believer could be “face to face” with truth.
- ❖ The availability of truth will be the same for everyone, “...then shall I know even as also I am known.”

C. That Which is Permanent, 13:13

1. That Which is Enduring, 13:13a “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three...”

- ❖ Available in the present, “now,” are three other facets more important than “gifts:”
 - Faith – to keep existing by looking back to Calvary and abiding in Christ in the present;
 - Hope – to keep expecting the promises to culminate in the appearance of Christ;
 - Charity – to keep expressing the person of Christ, all the days of our lives.

2. That Which is Endless, 13:13b “...but the greatest of these *is* charity.”

- ❖ Temporary gifts will cease but God’s love within the believer will continue to be the greatest display of Christ among mankind.

Summary

❖ We began with **THE VALUE OF LOVE** and observed **THE VIRTUE OF LOVE:**

1 Cor. 13:4 “*The Humble Perspective*” → **Humility**

1 Cor. 13:5 “*The Unselfish Perspective*” → **Harmlessness**

1 Cor. 13:6 “*The Discerning Truth Perspective*” → **Honesty**

1 Cor. 13:7 “*The Benefit of the Doubt Perspective*” → **Hopefulness**

- ❖ All of these characteristics of charity are attributes of love and grace that are in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- ❖ Believers are to love like Him, live like Him, and be like Him.
- ❖ The conclusion of the “love chapter,” is to see **THE VICTORY OF LOVE.**

1 Cor. 13:8 **Charity 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.

Conclusion

Eph 5:1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

2 And **walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us**, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.