

Importance of Love

Lesson 2

1 Corinthians 13

December 3, 2023

Love the Superior Way

INTRODUCTION

How many times have we heard sermons on this chapter or been to weddings where all or part of it is read? Why is that? Almost everyone wants to hear about love; however, do we really know about this sort of love? The New Bible Dictionary notes that while “agape” is the most common Greek word for love in the New Testament (and the word in this reading), it is one of the least common words in classical Greek where it is reserved for *“that highest and noblest form of love which sees something infinitely precious in its object.”*

“Infinitely precious” is a high bar, yet we are to aspire to that in our love for God and others. Since 1 Corinthians 13 mentions “love” nine times, let’s learn how we can reach higher aspirations in our agape love!*

While this passage’s context and some of its content is about spiritual gifts, including the gifts of faith, hope, and love; guess which is greatest—AGAPE LOVE! Let’s find out why!

Memory verse: “And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”—1 Corinthians 13:13

Pray, and read 1 Corinthians 13. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

*Readers of KJV et al. will see “charity” in lieu of “love.” While related to today’s definition of charity, historically it meant “Christian love.” Oregon history trivia: the Three Sisters Mtns., before their North, Middle, and South monikers, were called Faith, Hope, and Charity after 1 Corinthians 13:13.

OBSERVATION: What do the passages say?

1. What six gifts and positive characteristics are mentioned? (1 Corinthians 13:8, 13)
2. What does love do, and what does it not do? (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)
3. What is a surefire way for gifts and skills to fail? (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)
4. This is deep stuff with “infinite love” and relation to other gifts! What hope does Paul hold for us to better understand? (1 Corinthians 13:9-12)

3. Is this sort of love humanly possible on a continuous basis? How can people love like this? (Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 3:16-20)

4. Faith and hope seem very important. Why is love the greatest? (Romans 8:25; 1 Corinthians 13:8-13; Hebrews 11:1)

