

Where Love Is 2

Series part2

July 21, 2024

Scripture Text: 1 Corinthians 13:1-4 ESV **1** *If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2* *And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3* *If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. 4* Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant

We can enjoy the other three biblical forms of love, such as **Philia** (brotherly), **Eros** (sexual), and **Storge** (family), but my focus is on the Love that satisfies the soul, **Agape!** Agape is demonstrated through sacrifice... concerned with the good of someone else. It is more than a feeling, even though feelings are a part of it. **1 John 4:8** says, *“He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”*

Jesus said in John 15:13, *“Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”*

In God, we see what true love looks like (Jesus Christ) ... **Romans 5:8:** *“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us!”*

VERSE 1 *If I speak in the tongues of men and angels but have no love, I am a noisy gong or clanging cymbal.*

This verse reminds us that love is not about what we can gain but what we can give.

Before accepting Christ, all Corinthians were deeply associated with the pagan temple worship of idols. They participated in heathen feasts to celebrate their idols. After their conversion, some continued participating in those customs and temple worship.

Paul addresses the believers in Corinth about the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the gifts given to build and edify the Church. **Ephesians 4:7-8 ESV** *But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore, it says, “When He ascended on high, He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men.”* These gifts of the Holy Spirit were to continue until Jesus Christ returns to receive His bride. The gifts include

the word of wisdom and knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning between spirits, speaking in tongues, and interpreting tongues.

These gifts were likely on display in Corinth. Paul emphasizes that the **Spirit decides who to give each gift to**. Some people were ignorant of how God had given men these supernatural gifts to advance the work of Jesus Christ on earth. Through his preaching, God bears witness to Paul's ministry with signs of healing and deliverance.

As some men have, Paul does not exalt the gifts over the **Gift Giver**. No matter how eloquent, articulate, knowledgeable, commanding, or fluent in the gift of tongues... without love, it's empty noise! This understanding is crucial in our spiritual journey.

VERSE 2 *And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*

Paul elevates a person's ability to demonstrate how worthless spiritual gifts are when attempted without love for others. The Corinthians highly valued these gifts and elevated those among them with the gifts of tongues and prophecy. Even today, some people value others with those gifts as being the most spiritual. Paul has declared that this is not true. All the gifts are needed in the church.

A person with all the prophetic insights and revelation of God's mysterious abilities is worthless without love. He says possessing all the faith to muster the ability to remove mountains that may confront your life would be misplaced and meaningless without love. Others may consider you a powerful individual, but in God's view, your abilities are nothing.

VERSE 3 *If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.*

The Corinthians thought that some were more "spiritual" than others, and some were less spiritual because they had less prestigious spiritual gifts. The gifts were desired because of the notoriety that could be gained. Paul clearly states that exercising even the most potent and impressive spiritual gifts without love makes those gifts meaningless and the one using them "nothing."

Jesus told a rich young ruler to sell all he had and give the money to the poor (**Mark 10:17-22 NKJV**). *17 Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"*

18 So, Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. **19** You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’”

20 And he answered and said to Him, “Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth.”

21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.”

22 But he was sad at this word and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

If he could have accomplished those instructions, he would have reached the height of his spiritual relationship with Christ. Yet, Paul insists that doing so without love for others gives the giver nothing. None of this, even allowing your body to be burned for a worthy cause, gains nothing without love.

VERSE 4 *Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant*

This is the love (Agape) that every soul seeks. It is the love that Adam and Eve experienced when they shared an intimate relationship with God. There was no break in their daily communion with God, for they were Holy unto the Lord without sin.

Lucifer, the fallen angel, was the only living creature with the spirit of cruelty, envy, arrogance, and boasting of his worth when he turned from God. He was subtle and convinced them to believe that they were incomplete and needed more than what God had provided for their eternal welfare.

None of us can deny that God hasn't been patient and kind with us in our sins, which are against His will for our lives. His love in our hearts does not cause us to envy our gifts but enables us to build each other up in glorifying Father God!

We are humbled and honored to serve God and others by the power of the Holy Spirit as we deny self-importance.

Applications:

Our most profound quest in life as human beings is to be loved.

Finding and maintaining love is our greatest challenge in life.

