

Where Love Is 4

Series part4

August 11, 2024

Scripture Text: 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 ESV **8** Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. **9** For we know in part, and we prophesy in part **10**, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. **11** When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. **12** For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

13 So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

VERSE 8 *Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.*

The Corinthians were so impressed by the gifts of the Holy Spirit that Paul had to remind them of their temporary nature. These gifts, bestowed upon us for the work of Christ, are for an imperfect people... in an imperfect time. Let us remember their **impermanence** and use them with the utmost humility and respect.

While we wait for the Lord's return, God is using every willing person with the gifts Christ gave to advance and edify the church. Every person has limits and times associated with their effectiveness as witnesses for Jesus Christ. Each gift we receive operates through the weakness of flesh under the anointing of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God.

Paul is saying that the time will come when the prophetic word will no longer be relevant. Speaking in other languages to communicate the gospel of grace will end because we will ultimately be with the Lord!

In the meantime, the prophetic word must be declared, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit must be exercised. We are responsible for using these gifts to edify and build the Body of Christ and strengthen our community and faith.

VERSE 9 *For we know in part, and we prophesy in part,*

We are imperfect people contending for the knowledge of the Holy One as we talk and live by faith. To prophesy is to share a message from God of an event that will happen. Equally, knowledge is given to speak, teach, or preach through the power of the Holy Spirit. This is just a tiny slice of all there is to know of God. Similarly, any revelation from God to the church through someone with the gift of prophecy only reveals a small window on the enormous picture of all there is to be told about God.

1 Corinthians 2:9 NKJV *“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*

1 John 3:2: *“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be... has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him as he is.”*

VERSE 10, *but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.*

The time will come when the most significant gift completes all other gifts to God's glory. Complete means perfect... when everything comes together in alignment with God's purpose. There are two views of... when the perfect comes together: **The perfect comes to completion when the Biblical prophecies are completed at the end of Revelations and the glorification of believers in heaven.**

Until then, the church is continually being edified today by Spirit-filled preachers and teachers who exercise these gifts. These gifts are limited in our understanding: “We know in part, and we prophesy in part,” as in **verse 9**. When we reach heaven, the *“partial”* things will give way to the *“perfect,”* and preaching and teaching will no longer be needed.

VERSE 11 *When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.*

You lived by your feelings, impressions, and fears as a child. When you were asked, “Why did you choose to say something bad about a person, you didn't have a valid reason.” You decided not to like someone because your friend didn't like them. As a child, you were willing to compromise the truth for fear of rejection from your peers. When you couldn't have your way... you pouted and criticized others.

Becoming a man or woman of God is about living out the truth and pleasing the Lord. You desire to live to witness God's grace as you extend forgiveness and acceptance to broken people.

VERSE 12 *For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.*

In Paul's day, Corinth was famous for producing polished bronze mirrors or other metals—unlike our mirrors today, which provide too much detail! Paul used the analogy of looking in a mirror: Using the gifts of the Spirit was like getting to know Christ by looking at Him through a mirror. When He returns, we will see Him in Person. Then, the mirror (spiritual gifts) will no longer be needed.

When Jesus ascended, He gave spiritual gifts to men in **Ephesians 4** so that people would know they had been with the Lord.

VERSE 13 *So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

“Faith without love is cold and hope without love is grim. Love is the fire that kindles faith and the light that turns hope into certainty.” Love is the greatest because God is Love, and we bear His image and likeness. When we sinned and became estranged from God, He sacrificed only His Son to restore our relationship.

Applications:

Understanding where love comes from enables you to overcome anything.

When you fully commit to loving others... you will never lack the grace to forgive.