



ADDRESSING THE ISSUES "The Way of Love" 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

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Paul's objective in writing this chapter was not to produce a literary masterpiece, which is what happened. His concern was to develop a loving, gifted church.

I. Gifts Are Important But Love Is Superior. vv. 1-8

- A. The decisiveness of love. vv. 1-3
 - 1. Gifts should be desired, but love must be demonstrated.
 - 2. Gifts should be used but without love they irritate (gongs, etc.).
 - 3. Gifts are significant but without love leave the user devalued.
 - 4. Gifts may be spectacular but without love lack effectiveness.
- B. The description of love. vv. 4-8
 - 1. What it is. v. 4a
 - a. Patient—"slow to anger."
 - b. Kind—"gentle, good."
 - 2. What it isn't. vv. 4b-6
 - a. Not envious—"zealous."
 - b. Not boastful—"arrogant."
 - c. Not rude.
 - d. Not self-centered.
 - e. Not short-fused.
 - f. Not keeping score.
 - g. Not relishing negatives but accentuating positives.
 - 3. What it does. vv. 7-8a
 - a. It protects—"covers."
 - b. It trusts—"believes the best."
 - c. It hopes—"is optimistic."
 - d. It preserves—"keeps on."
 - e. It doesn't collapse.

II. Graces Are Significant But Love Is Supreme. vv. 8b-13

- A. The time is coming when the most spectacular gifts will be irrelevant.
- B. The day is coming when the deepest insight will be inadequate.
- C. The age is coming when we shall "know fully" what is now partial.
- D. The days in which we live still require "faith, hope and love."
- E. The coming day will make faith and hope redundant.
- F. But love will still prevail—so love is supreme.

III. Goals Are Necessary But Love Is Superlative. 14:1f

- A. Establish a goal of love towards believers in the exercise of your gifts.
- B. Establish a goal of love towards unbelievers in your discipline.
- C. Establish a goal of love in church relations.

Action to Take: No honest believer can be exposed to this passage without deep inner reflection. Let us all respond in the Spirit to what He is teaching us, eager to do whatever it takes to make our fellowship a more biblical, loving community.