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**1 Corinthians 13**  
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By Dan Maines

**1 Corinthians 13**

**1 Corinthians 13:1**

If I speak with the tongues of mankind and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

† Paul elevates love above the most spectacular gifts.

† Tongues without love are meaningless noise.

† Chrysostom (Homilies on 1 Corinthians 32) said gifts without love are useless for salvation.

## **1 Corinthians 13:2**

If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

† Even prophecy, knowledge, and faith are worthless without love.

† The greatest gifts are hollow without the greatest virtue.

## **1 Corinthians 13:3**

And if I give away all my possessions to charity, and if I surrender my body so that I may glory, but do not have love, it does me no good.

† Sacrifice without love gains nothing.

† Love alone gives value to outward deeds.

## **1 Corinthians 13:4-7**

Love is patient, love is kind, it is not jealous, love does not brag, it is not arrogant. It does not act disgracefully, it does not seek its own benefit, it is not provoked, it does not keep an account of a wrong suffered. It does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth. It keeps every confidence, it believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

† Paul describes love by action, not emotion.

† Love is selfless, enduring, and aligned with truth.

† Tertullian (On Patience 12) linked patience to love, calling it the root of Christian virtue.

## **1 Corinthians 13:8-10**

Love never fails, but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away with, if there are tongues, they will cease, if there is knowledge, it will be done away with. For we know in part and prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away with.

† Spiritual gifts were temporary, but love abides forever.

† The perfect refers to the maturity of the new covenant, when the old order passed.

### **1 Corinthians 13:11**

When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child, when I became a man, I did away with childish things.

† Paul compares temporary gifts to childhood, and maturity to love.

† The church was moving toward maturity in Christ.

### **1 Corinthians 13:12**

For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face, now I know in part, but then I will know fully, just as I also have been fully known.

† Paul contrasts the partial with the full.

† Fulfillment would bring clarity and maturity.

† Origen (On First Principles 2.11) saw this as the movement from shadow to reality in Christ.

### **1 Corinthians 13:13**

But now faith, hope, and love remain, these three, but the greatest of these is love.

† Faith and hope belong to the present life, but love endures eternally.

† Love is the greatest commandment and the eternal bond of God's people.

### **How it applies to us today**

† 1 Corinthians 13 teaches that love is supreme above gifts, knowledge, or sacrifice.

† Without love, even the greatest works are nothing.

† Love is the defining mark of maturity and the eternal

foundation of the church.

## † This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

### Source Index

† Chrysostom, Homilies on 1 Corinthians 32 - gifts without love are useless

† Tertullian, On Patience 12 - patience as the root of love

† Origen, On First Principles 2.11 - from shadow to reality in Christ

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