

Spiritual Gifts Operate in Love

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

Gifts without Love

1 Corinthians 13:1-8 (KJV) *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. [2] And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. [3] And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.*

- 1 Corinthians 12-14 speak about spiritual gifts in various ways
- In between these two chapters is Chapter 13 which speaks about the spirit, environment, attitude in which our spiritual gifts properly function; that's an attitude or atmosphere of love
- This is not romantic love, or friendship love, it is agape love
- The Corinthian church placed a high value on spiritual gifts, but at the same time had reached some improper conclusions regarding spiritual gifts
- Some Corinthians viewed spiritual gifts
 - As a sign of spiritual maturity
 - Making a person think they are "more important" or superior to other believers
 - As meaning they are loved more by God than others
 - As an opportunity to power, prestige, and money by exploiting their spiritual gifts
- Paul writes to put spiritual gifts in perspective
- Paul counters their attitude saying your gifts have no real or lasting value if they are not exercised in the spirit of love
- Love is greater than spiritual gifts
- Paul gives 3 specifics:
 1. Tongues without love has no meaning
 - i. You may be able to speak in every of mankind and even of angels, but without love, you just making noise
 2. Prophetic gifts without love are nothing
 - i. You have great spiritual insight, you understand all mysteries, and your knowledge is astounding, but if you don't have love, you're nothing
 3. Faith to move mountains without love is meaningless
 - i. Your faith is so strong you accomplish great things, but it means nothing without love
 4. Generosity without love profits nothing
 - You may be the most generous and beneficent person in the world, that you would even sacrifice your own life or others
- But if you do all this without love, it profits you nothing
- What kind of love Paul is talking about?
- Paul is talking about agape love
- Agape love is a self-sacrificing love ***John 3:16 (KJV) 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.***
- Agape love
 - is self-giving love
 - is love that continues to love when the other person becomes unlovable
 - Jesus' love, sacrificial love, unconditional love, eternal love

Spiritual Gifts Operate in Love

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

- Agape love is a love that gives and gives, even if it's never responded to, thanked, acknowledged or if nothing is ever received in return
- Agape love is not carnal or fleshly, but *divine*
- You will distinguish yourself not by how anointed you are, but by how loving you are to all people
John 13:35 (KJV) By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

The Conduct of Love

[4] Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, [5] Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; [6] Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

- Love has a code of conduct, a behavior pattern

Loves is Patient

- The God kind of love is patient with others
- We are to be patient with others as God has been patient with us
- As it relates to spiritual gifts, we are to be patient with others who may use a spiritual gift improperly, poorly, or in an embarrassing way; don't be quit to criticize them
- Instead of criticizing them, we should offer to help them
- God wants us to exhibit the same kind of patience with others as He has with us

Love is Kind

- The God kind of love is courteous, good, helpful useful and giving
- We are adaptable, flexible to meet the needs of others
- When it comes to spiritual gifts, you approach people with kindness instead of harshness, and words of affirmation and condemnation
- We are show our love by going out of our way to be kind to each other
 - ***Romans 12:10 (KJV) Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;***
 - ***Ephesians 4:32 (KJV) And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.***

Love is Not Envious

- If someone has a spiritual gift you don't have or is recognized for how they have blessed the church, don't respond with envy
- Genuine love rejoices at the success and good fortune of others

Love is not boastful

- Boasting is the opposite of envy; you have a spiritual gift and you want everyone to know about it
- Boasting and bragging is saying you have a gift that others don't have
- Love does not brag on itself
- Love does not seek the praise and applause of men

Love is not puffed up,

Spiritual Gifts Operate in Love

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

- Puffed up is being prideful and arrogant, conceited
- You're puffed up because the spiritual gifts God has given you are superior to others
- Believers with spiritual gifts should be modest and humble and grateful to God for the gift

[5] Love is not rude

- Spiritual gifts don't make us demanding, inconsiderate of others, or always wants to be out front
- Spiritual gifts are subject to authority, obedient and can accept being told "no"

Love is not selfish

- Love is not selfish
- Love is not focused on you, but is focused on others
- A believer with the God kind of love spends their time focusing on others instead of focusing on themselves

Love is not easily provoked,

- When we have the God-kind of love we are not easily offended
- We are quick tempered
- When you have love, you can control your emotions
- You don't get angry without a valid reason **Romans 12:18 (KJV) *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.***

Love thinks no evil

- Love keeps no *record* of wrong
- Love doesn't keep score
- Love knows how to let things go
- God chooses not to remember our past failures and mistakes **Psalm 103:12 (KJV) ¹² *As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.***
- Ask yourself a question: *Am I one who keeps a record, a tally sheet of all the unfair things that people have done to me or am I maturing and learning to let it go?*

6] Love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth

- We don't take pleasure in the suffering, misfortune, unrighteousness or sin of others
- We don't celebrate the issues others are experiencing
- The right response is to pray for their deliverance and restoration; not celebrate their downfall
- Love is excited about the truth
- Love rejoices when truth and right prevail
- Love is brave and willing to face the truth

The Labor of Love

7] Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. [8] Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

There is an effort on your part to consistently have the love of Christ

- **Love bears all things**

Spiritual Gifts Operate in Love

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

- The word bears mean *to cover* (like a roof covers a house), to hide conceal all things and to bear up under all things
- There are some things we know about people and what they've done should not be made public 1 ***Peter 4:8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.***
- Love protects, shields, and guards
- Love stands up under the weight and pressures of all things

- ***Love believes all things***
 - Love is completely trusting
 - It does mean we're gullible and will accept and believe anything or that we're not supposed to inquire, ask questions to determine what the truth is
 - Love helps us the best in others
 - Love works to see the best qualities in others

- ***Loves hopes all things***
 - Love never ceases to hope
 - Love never gives up hope
 - Love hopes all will turn out well
 - Love always expects and anticipates the best *in* others and the best *for* others
 - Love always expects that there will be a victory in every battle
 - Love refuses to accept failure

- ***Love endures all things***
 - Love perseveres
 - It means love is able to stand against an attack
 - Love actively fights and endures all attacks
 - No matter what attacks love, it endures
 - The love of God in you will help you withstand unloving actions by others
 - Your continual kindness will overcome their unkindness to you
 - Love refuses to quit or through in the towel

- ***Love never fails***
 - The love of God must be a permanent part of our lives
 - Love never fails, never ceases, never vanishes, love never fades away
 - The love of God never fails, disappoints, or lets anyone down
 - Spiritual gifts are temporary; love is eternal
 - Spiritual gifts are tools needed to reach and minister to lost and dying world
 - Love always succeeds
 - God wants to operate in our spiritual gifts, but all that we do must be motivated, activated, stirred by agape love