

A BIBLE STUDY SERIES ON I CORINTHIANS 13

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*A MORE
EXCELLENT
WAY*

A PUBLICATION OF RAY REYNOLDS RAP

BIBLE CLASS STUDY GUIDE

Prepared by Ray Reynolds, Ph.D.



THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY OF LOVE: SEEKING THE ELEMENTS OF CHRISTIAN LOVE

A Study of Christian Love From I Corinthians 13

Ray Reynolds Rap Publications

Series by Ray Reynolds, P.D.

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THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY OF LOVE: SEEKING THE ELEMENTS OF CHRISTIAN LOVE

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Lesson One : Without Love Miracles Are Nothing

Introduction : Jesus' words are clear throughout all of the New Testament, "*If you love Me, keep My commandments*" (**John 14:15**). Really this sentiment was echoed throughout the Old Testament as well, but it is made clearer in the New Testament. The disciples of Jesus tried to teach this to the church with the same zeal and enthusiasm. **I John 3:23** says, "*And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.*" To believe in Jesus Christ and to love one another is the Lord's commandment for us today. The Christian life must be a life of faith and love. Over the course of the next few weeks we are going to study about the style of Christian love that Paul taught about in **I Corinthians 13**

Today's Text : **I Corinthians 13:1-2** says, "*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 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, but have not love, I am nothing.*" (NKJV)

Discussion :

Paul spends a great deal of his time in this book talking about Christian love.

Q: Why did he spend so much time on this one subject?

A:

Q: Why is this subject a worthy study in the church today?

A:

If we always say the right words and speak with perfect language, and are not motivated by love, our words are meaningless.

Q: Why is it so important to speak using the right words and proper English?

A:

Q: If proper words are meaningless without love what can we do? Why?

A:

Q: How can love motivate us to speak better to one another?

A:

Q: Should we allow our hearts to determine what words to say? Why?

A:



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If we know all things and if we have a perfect understanding of all the Scriptures, but we do not have love, our knowledge and understanding is worthless.

Q: Why is it so important to have wisdom and knowledge of the Bible?

A:

Q: If proper knowledge is worthless without love what can we do? Why?

A:

Q: How can love motivate us to understand the Bible better?

A:

Q: What can the Bible teach us about love?

A:

If we have mountain moving faith, and do not have love, our faith is worthless.

Q: Why is it so important to have faith?

A:

Q: Why is faith without works and love a dead faith?

A:

Q: How can love develop and mature our faith?

A:

When a Christian is a gifted speaker, has great knowledge, has great understanding, and has great faith, we usually admire and respect him for his great abilities. We usually delight in such a person and think of him as being a very valuable and worthwhile Christian. However, the scriptures say that such a person is really nothing if he does not have love. Love must be the reason for all that we do with all our abilities. All Christian ministry must be carried out with love as the motive, if not, our ministry has no value and we are nothing.

Q: What can we do to prevent us from having a hardened heart?

A:

Q: Why does the Lord's church need to understand how love works?

A:

Conclusion : It's hard to believe that miracles are nothing without love, but that is exactly what Paul said in the first two verses of **I Corinthians 13**. It is my prayer that as we continue to study this wonderful chapter that we will learn how to love one another better. If that is accomplished our ministry will be very effective in our community. Remember God loves you!



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Lesson Two : Without Love Good Works Are Nothing

Introduction : In last week's lesson we noted how miracles are nothing without love. Over the course of the next few weeks we are going to study about the style of Christian love that Paul taught about in **I Corinthians 13**

Today's Text : **I Corinthians 13:3** *"And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing."* (NKJV)

Discussion :

If we give all that we have and even sell ourselves as indentured servants and give the wages of our service to others, and are not motivated by love, our actions are worthless.

Q: How important is giving financially to the work of the church? Why?

A:

Q: How important is benevolence to the work of the church? Why?

A:

Q: How important is Christian service to the work of the church? Why?

A:

Q: How important is good works to the work of the church? Why?

A:

We can make the greatest of personal sacrifices, but it cannot profit us unless it is motivated by love. Everything we do should spring from our Christian love.

Q: Why is it so hard for us to make personal sacrifices?

A:

Q: How can we allow our love to motivate us more to do good works?

A:

Q: Is it possible to develop this love if we have never experienced it before?

A:

Q: What are some reasons why we do not let love motivate us more?

A:



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Love for self can often be the motive for our good works. We must be careful not to serve others for self-gain, if we do our service is worthless.

Q: Why do we let selfishness weigh us down and hinder our ministry?

A:

Q: Is there a solution for selfishness? Explain.

A:

Q: Should we even perform good works if our heart is not in it? Explain.

A:

Q: Should we do anything if our heart is not in it? Explain.

A:

God loved us so much that He offered His one and only Son on the cross for our sins. He made the greatest of all sacrifices. We often find it hard to give back to Him.

Q: Once we have learned to love, what can we do to show God we love Him?

A:

Q: Once we have learned to love, what can we do to show others we love God?

A:

Q: What are some scriptures that we can read that will teach us about love?

A:

Q: What are some practical ways we can show our love to the world?

A:

Conclusion : It's hard to believe that good works are nothing without love, but that is exactly what Paul said in the first few verses of **I Corinthians 13**. It is my prayer that as we continue to study this wonderful chapter that we will learn how to love one another better. If that is accomplished our ministry will be very effective in our community. Remember God loves you!



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Lesson Three : Love Suffers Long & Is Kind

Introduction : In last week's lesson we noted how good works are nothing without love. Over the course of the next few weeks we are going to study about the style of Christian love that Paul taught about in **I Corinthians 13**

Today's Text : **I Corinthians 13:4** says, "*Love suffers long and is kind.*" (NKJV) "*Charity suffereth long, and is kind.*" (KJV) "*Love is patient, love is kind.*" (NASB)

Discussion :

Love suffers long. This means that love is patient and love is tolerant toward others. Love endures trying circumstances with others and maintains self-control. Love does not have to worry about its temper. Love is patient with the failure of others.

Q: Why is patience such a virtue?

A:

Q: Why do we struggle with being patient and tolerant with others?

A:

Q: When we face trials and failure we often lack patience. Why?

A:

Q: Can we develop more patience with others? How?

A:

Love is kind. This means that love is compassionate towards others. Love is tender, caring, considerate, and helpful.

Q: How can kindness and compassion make us a better person?

A:

Q: Why is it so hard to love people? Why is it so hard to show that love?

A:

Q: What would happen if we were all considerate of one another?

A:

Q: Why is the church less servant oriented and more selfish oriented?

A:



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If we will suffer long with people and are kind to others we can be the church that God has dreamed of, and accomplish much more to the glory of God.

Q: What Bible stories can teach us about patience and kindness?

A:

Q: How does the Sermon on the Mount relate to **I Corinthians 13**?

A:

Q: How can God's love, in this respect, motivate us to love more?

A:

Q: In what areas are we lacking when it comes to patience and kindness?

A:

It is hard to imagine what the church would be like without love. Paul has given us a few elements that we need to apply to make us better servants of Jesus Christ. We can make personal application of these points today.

Q: How would the church benefit from us being more patient and kind?

A:

Q: How would our families benefit from us being more patient and kind?

A:

Q: How would our schools benefit from us being more patient and kind?

A:

Q: How would our community benefit from us being more patient and kind?

A:

Conclusion : In order to have the love that Paul speaks of in **I Corinthians 13** we need to suffer long and be kind to one another. It is my prayer that as we continue to study this wonderful chapter that we will learn how to love one another better. If that is accomplished our ministry will be very effective in our community. Remember God loves you!



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Lesson Four : Love Does Not Envy

Introduction : In last week's lesson we noted that in order to have Christian love we must be patient and kind. Over the course of the next few weeks we are going to study about the style of Christian love that Paul taught about in **I Corinthians 13**

Today's Text : **I Corinthians 13:4** says, "*Love does not envy.*" (NKJV) "*Charity envieth not.*" (KJV) "*Love is not jealous.*" (NASB)

Discussion :

Love does not envy. This means that love is not jealous. Love does not desire anything another person may have, but instead is even thankful for the advantages of the other person.

Q: Why is envy such a terrible sin?

A:

Q: Is it possible to desire nothing more than what you have been given?

A:

Q: How can we be more content and less jealous?

A:

Q: Can we rejoice in the advantages of others? How? Explain.

A:

It seems that in order to have true Christian love we cannot covet the belongings, talents, or blessings of anyone else. This seems to be a serious problem today.

Q: Why is covetousness such a problem in the church?

A:

Q: How can we defeat materialism?

A:

Q: What are some of the damaging results of envy, jealousy, and covetousness?

A:

Q: What are some reasons why people become envious of others?

A:



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If we will simply be content we can be the church that God has dreamed of, and accomplish much more to the glory of God.

Q: What Bible stories can teach us about envy and contentment?

A:

Q: How does the Sermon on the Mount relate to these verses?

A:

Q: How can God's love, in this respect, motivate us to love more?

A:

Q: In what areas are we lacking when it comes to contentment?

A:

It is hard to imagine what the church would be like without love. Paul has given us a few elements that we need to apply to make us better servants of Jesus Christ. We can make personal application of these points today.

Q: How would the church benefit from us being more content?

A:

Q: How would our families benefit from us being more content?

A:

Q: How would our schools benefit from us being more content?

A:

Q: How would our community benefit from us being more content?

A:

Conclusion : In order to have the love that Paul speaks of in **I Corinthians 13** we need to be content and not be envious of one another. It is my prayer that as we continue to study this wonderful chapter that we will learn how to love one another better. If that is accomplished our ministry will be very effective in our community. Remember God loves you!



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Lesson Five : Love Does Not Parade Itself & Is Not Puffed Up

Introduction : In last week's lesson we noted that in order to have Christian love we must be content. Over the course of the next few weeks we are going to study about the style of Christian love that Paul taught about in **I Corinthians 13**

Today's Text : **I Corinthians 13:4** says, "*Love does not parade itself, is not puffed up.*" (NKJV) "*Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.*" (KJV) "*Love does not brag {and} is not arrogant.*" (NASB)

Discussion :

Love does not parade itself. This means that it does not brag. Love does not boast about itself. When we boast about ourselves, we put other people down by elevating ourselves above them. Boasting can make other people feel inferior to us. We should not try to bring attention to ourselves. God sees in secret and He will reward us openly.

Q: Why is it such a problem to parade ourselves and brag?

A:

Q: Shouldn't we be proud and boast of our accomplishments? Explain.

A:

Q: What will happen when we elevate ourselves above others in the church?

A:

Q: Who is the greatest in the kingdom? Explain.

A:

Love is not puffed up. Love is not conceited or arrogant with pride. Love does not elevate itself above others, does not lord it over others. God should do the elevating, not man, and certainly not ourselves. Nothing can be gained from arrogance and pride, remember how Satan fell.

Q: Why do people become arrogant and prideful?

A:

Q: Why was this included in the qualifications of an elder?

A:

Q: How can we be more humble in the church today?

A:



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If we will not parade ourselves or be puffed up we can be the church that God has dreamed of, and accomplish much more to the glory of God.

Q: What Bible stories can teach us about the dangers of boasting and pride?

A:

Q: How does the Sermon on the Mount relate to these passages?

A:

Q: How can God's love, in this respect, motivate us to love more?

A:

Q: In what areas are we lacking when it comes to humbleness?

A:

It is hard to imagine what the church would be like without love. Paul has given us a few elements that we need to apply to make us better servants of Jesus Christ. We can make personal application of these points today.

Q: How would the church benefit from us being more humble and gentle?

A:

Q: How would our families benefit from us being more humble and gentle?

A:

Q: How would our schools benefit from us being more humble and gentle?

A:

Q: How would our community benefit from us being more humble and gentle?

A:

Conclusion : In order to have the love that Paul speaks of in **I Corinthians 13** we need to be humble, meek, and gentle. It is my prayer that as we continue to study this wonderful chapter that we will learn how to love one another better. If that is accomplished our ministry will be very effective in our community. Remember God loves you!



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Lesson Six : Love Does Not Behave Rudely & Does Not Seek Its Own

Introduction : In last week's lesson we noted that in order to have Christian love we must be humble. Over the course of the next few weeks we are going to study about the style of Christian love that Paul taught about in **I Corinthians 13**

Today's Text : **I Corinthians 13:5** says, "*Does not behave rudely, does not seek its own.*" (NKJV) "*Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own.*" (KJV) "*Does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own.*" (NASB)

Discussion :

Love does not behave rudely. Love does not act unbecomingly. Love does not behave improperly towards others, does not take advantage of others in any circumstance. Love is well-mannered toward others in speech, in behavior, and in dress. We must not embarrass others.

Q: Why are some people rude and obnoxious?

A:

Q: Should we worry about these embarrassing moments with others?

A:

Q: Why is it wrong to take advantage of others?

A:

Q: Why is it wrong to embarrass others and be rude to them?

A:

Love does not seek its own. Love is not selfish. Love seeks the benefit of others before itself.

Q: Why are people so selfish?

A:

Q: Why is it against a Christian's nature to be selfish?

A:

Q: What has Jesus taught us, words and example, and about selfishness?

A:

Q: What are the benefits of putting others interests before our own?

A:



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If we will not be rude and inconsiderate toward others we can be the church that God has dreamed of, and accomplish much more to the glory of God.

Q: What Bible stories can teach us about the dangers of selfishness?

A:

Q: How does the Sermon on the Mount relate to this section of Scripture?

A:

Q: How can God's love, in this respect, motivate us to love more?

A:

Q: In what areas are we lacking when it comes to self-control and selflessness?

A:

It is hard to imagine what the church would be like without love. Paul has given us a few elements that we need to apply to make us better servants of Jesus Christ. We can make personal application of these points today.

Q: How would the church benefit from us being more selfless?

A:

Q: How would our families benefit from us being more selfless?

A:

Q: How would our schools benefit from us being more selfless?

A:

Q: How would our community benefit from us being more selfless?

A:

Conclusion : In order to have the love that Paul speaks of in **I Corinthians 13** we need to be selfless. It is my prayer that as we continue to study this wonderful chapter that we will learn how to love one another better. If that is accomplished our ministry will be very effective in our community. Remember God loves you!



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Lesson Seven : Love Is Not Provoked & Thinks No Evil

Introduction : In last week's lesson we noted that in order to have Christian love we must be selfless. Over the course of the next few weeks we are going to study about the style of Christian love that Paul taught about in **I Corinthians 13**

Today's Text : **I Corinthians 13:5** says, "*Love is not provoked, thinks no evil.*" (NKJV) "*Charity is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.*" (KJV) "*Love is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong {suffered}.*" (NASB)

Discussion :

Love is not provoked. Love is not easily angered. Love does not respond to ill treatment from others. The insults of others should not anger us.

Q: Why are we so easily provoked to anger?

A:

Q: How can we become more calm and patient with others?

A:

Q: Should we keep track of all the wrongs people commit against us?

A:

Q: What should we do when people insult us or make us angry?

A:

Love thinks no evil. Love does not take into account a wrong. Love does not keep a record of injuries inflicted by others. The Bible teaches us that true love is unconditional.

Q: Should we always think about the sin and evil in the world? Explain.

A:

Q: Should we always think about the worst case scenario? Explain.

A:

Q: How can we learn more about unconditional love?

A:

Q: What are some examples of unconditional love?

A:



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If we will not be easily provoked and not think evil of people we can be the church that God has dreamed of, and accomplish much more to the glory of God.

Q: What Bible stories can teach us about the dangers of provocation and evil thinking?

A:

Q: How does the Sermon on the Mount relate to these Scriptures?

A:

Q: How can God's love, in this respect, motivate us to love more?

A:

Q: In what areas are we lacking when it comes to not holding grudges?

A:

It is hard to imagine what the church would be like without love. Paul has given us a few elements that we need to apply to make us better servants of Jesus Christ. We can make personal application of these points today.

Q: How would the church benefit from us being more calm and positive?

A:

Q: How would our families benefit from us being more calm and positive?

A:

Q: How would our schools benefit from us being more calm and positive?

A:

Q: How would our community benefit from us being more calm and positive?

A:

Conclusion : In order to have the love that Paul speaks of in **I Corinthians 13** we need to have self-control and be calm and positive. It is my prayer that as we continue to study this wonderful chapter that we will learn how to love one another better. If that is accomplished our ministry will be very effective in our community. Remember God loves you!



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Lesson Eight : Love Does Not Rejoice In Iniquity But Rejoices In The Truth

Introduction : In last week's lesson we noted that in order to have Christian love we must be calm and positive. Over the course of the next few weeks we are going to study about the style of Christian love that Paul taught about in **I Corinthians 13**

Today's Text : **I Corinthians 13:6** says, "*Love does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth.*" (NKJV) "*Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.*" (KJV) "*Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth.*" (NASB)

Discussion :

Love does not rejoice in iniquity. Love is not happy about unrighteousness. Love does not rejoice when others do evil, but it rejoices when others do good. Love does not delight to see anyone involved in any form of evil. We should not enjoy the appearance of evil and sin. We should not be proud when people fall into sin or are harmed by Satan.

Q: Why do people enjoy watching other people suffer?

A:

Q: Why did Jesus instruct us to pray for our enemies?

A:

Q: What is promoted when we rejoice in iniquity and unrighteousness?

A:

Q: What are we to do around any appearance of evil and sin?

A:

Love rejoices in the truth. Love rejoices when the truth is made known. Love never rejoices when someone is unjustly accused. Remember that truth sets us free and brings forth the fruit that can heal hearts and make lives holy.

Q: Why is the truth so powerful?

A:

Q: Who controls the truth? Why is that encouraging to a Christian?

A:

Q: How can we allow the truth to set us free and bless us today?

A:



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If we will rejoice in the truth we can be the church that God has dreamed of, and accomplish much more to the glory of God.

Q: What Bible stories can teach us about rejoicing in the truth?

A:

Q: How does the Sermon on the Mount relate to this section of **I Corinthians 13**?

A:

Q: How can God's love, in this respect, motivate us to love more?

A:

Q: In what areas are we lacking when it comes to rejoicing in the truth?

A:

It is hard to imagine what the church would be like without love. Paul has given us a few elements that we need to apply to make us better servants of Jesus Christ. We can make personal application of these points today.

Q: How would the church benefit from us rejoicing in the truth?

A:

Q: How would our families benefit from us rejoicing in the truth?

A:

Q: How would our schools benefit from us rejoicing in the truth?

A:

Q: How would our community benefit from us rejoicing in the truth?

A:

Conclusion : In order to have the love that Paul speaks of in **I Corinthians 13** we need to rejoice in the truth. It is my prayer that as we continue to study this wonderful chapter that we will learn how to love one another better. If that is accomplished our ministry will be very effective in our community. Remember God loves you!



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Lesson Nine : Love Bears All Things & Believes All Things

Introduction : In last week's lesson we noted that in order to have Christian love we must rejoice in the truth. In the remaining lessons we will continue to study about the style of Christian love that Paul taught about in **I Corinthians 13**

Today's Text : **I Corinthians 13:7** says, "*Love bears all things, believes all things.*" (NKJV) "*Charity beareth all things, believeth all things.*" (KJV) "*Love bears all things, believes all things.*" (NASB)

Discussion :

Love bears all things. Love puts up with others when they are unpleasant, even when they continue to be unpleasant, unkind, and unloving. We must put up with all kinds of difficulties.

Q: Why is it so hard to bear all things?

A:

Q: How can we put up with others when they are unpleasant?

A:

Q: What can we say to people that are unpleasant, unkind, and unloving?

A:

Q: How can we put up with all kinds of difficulties and still keep our sanity?

A:

Love believes all things. Love believes the best about others. Love continues to have confidence in others even when no one else does. We must believe the best in everyone.

Q: Why is it so hard to believe all things?

A:

Q: Why do we always tend to believe the negative things above the positive?

A:

Q: What are the dangers in being pessimistic and negative?

A:

Q: How can we develop our confidence concerning other people?

A:



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If we will bear with one another and believe in one another we can be the church that God has dreamed of, and accomplish much more to the glory of God.

Q: Jesus taught this concept throughout His ministry. What did He teach?

A:

Q: What actions in Jesus' life relate to this section of **I Corinthians 13**?

A:

Q: How can the love of God, in this respect, motivate us to love more?

A:

Q: In what areas are we lacking when it comes to bearing with one another?

A:

Q: In what areas are we lacking when it comes to believing in one another?

A:

It is hard to imagine what the church would be like without love. Paul has given us a few elements that we need to apply to make us better servants of Jesus Christ. We can make personal application of these points today.

Q: How would the church benefit from us being bearing and believing?

A:

Q: How would our families benefit from us being more bearing and believing?

A:

Q: How would our schools benefit from us being more bearing and believing?

A:

Q: How would our community benefit from us being more bearing and believing?

A:

Conclusion : In order to have the love that Paul speaks of in **I Corinthians 13** we need to bear with one another and believe in one another. It is my prayer that as we continue to study this wonderful chapter that we will learn how to love one another better. If that is accomplished our ministry will be very effective in our community. Remember God loves you!



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Lesson Ten : Love Hopes All Things & Endures All Things

Introduction : In last week's lesson we noted that in order to have Christian love we must bear with one another and believe in one another. In the remaining lessons we will continue to study about the style of Christian love that Paul taught about in **I Corinthians 13**

Today's Text : **I Corinthians 13:7** says, "*Love hopes all things, endures all things.*" (NKJV) "*Charity hopeth all things, endureth all things.*" (KJV) "*Love hopes all things, endures all things.*" (NASB)

Discussion :

Love hopes all things. Love continues to hope for the best for others, even when they may not deserve the best. Love always hopes for people to return to God.

Q: Why is it so hard to hope all things?

A:

Q: What can we do for people that are without hope?

A:

Q: How can we have hope and patience in the ones we love?

A:

Q: How can we hope for the best in others when they disappoint us?

A:

Love endures all things. Love continues to love, no matter how much it costs. Love does not give up on the person loved. Love prevails, both in good times and bad times.

Q: Why is it so hard to endure all things?

A:

Q: Why do we have so much trouble enduring the trials of life?

A:

Q: What does endurance really have to do with Christian love?

A:

Q: How can we have patience for those that are so hard to love?

A:



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If we will have hope for one another and endure with one another we can be the church that God has dreamed of, and accomplish much more to the glory of God.

Q: Jesus taught this concept throughout His ministry. What did He teach?

A:

Q: What actions throughout Jesus' life relate to this section of **I Corinthians 13**?

A:

Q: How can the love of God, in this respect, motivate us to love more?

A:

Q: In what areas are we lacking when it comes to having hope in one another?

A:

Q: In what areas are we lacking when it comes to enduring with one another?

A:

It is hard to imagine what the church would be like without love. Paul has given us a few elements that we need to apply to make us better servants of Jesus Christ. We can make personal application of these points today.

Q: How would the church benefit from us being hopeful and enduring?

A:

Q: How would our families benefit from us being more hopeful and enduring?

A:

Q: How would our schools benefit from us being more hopeful and enduring?

A:

Q: How would our community benefit from us being more hopeful and enduring?

A:

Conclusion : In order to have the love that Paul speaks of in **I Corinthians 13** we need to have hope for one another and endure with one another. It is my prayer that as we continue to study this wonderful chapter that we will learn how to love one another better. If that is accomplished our ministry will be very effective in our community. Remember God loves you!



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Lesson Eleven : Love Will Not Fail & Is Perfect

Introduction : In last week's lesson we noted that in order to have Christian love we must have hope for one another and endure with one another. In the remaining lessons we will continue to study about the style of Christian love that Paul taught about in **I Corinthians 13**

Today's Text : **I Corinthians 13:8-10** says, *"Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away."* (NKJV)

Discussion :

We place great value on the temporary gifts of the Holy Spirit, and they are valuable; but, if the early Christians did not exercise those gifts in love, they had no true value. We know that those gifts were essential in teaching people of the first century that the church was real.

Q: Why was it so dangerous to forget that the gifts of the Holy Spirit were temporary?

A:

Q: What made the gifts of the Holy Spirit so valuable and essential?

A:

Q: What does love have to do with the Holy Spirit and His gifts?

A:

Paul says that the spiritual gifts of prophecies, tongues, and knowledge will fail. He also says that they will be done away with in the near future (2nd century). However, he reminds the Corinthians that they will no longer be needed, because the "perfect" thing will come. With maturity we will know all things because we will see Christ and His love.

Q: Why were the miraculous spiritual gifts going to cease?

A:

Q: What do you think the term "perfect" means? Explain.

A:

Q: What does the context have to do with the "perfect" thing?

A:



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When we see Jesus we will be made perfect, just as He is perfect (**I John 3:2**). Because His love is perfect, we will truly love Him and one another with a perfect love. Our love will continue for all eternity. Our love will never fail just as sure as His love will never fail.

Q: How can Jesus and His love make us perfect?

A:

Q: Is perfection attainable? Explain.

A:

Q: How will our Christian love continue for all eternity?

A:

Q: Is it possible to fail if we have love? Explain.

A:

Q: What can the love of God teach us about perfection and maturity?

A:

Q: How is the Bible perfect? How can it lead us to maturity?

A:

The gifts that the Corinthians had valued so highly (**I Corinthians 12**) were only temporary (**I Corinthians 13**), and they were worthless without love.

Q: We often boast about our good works, but what are they without love?

A:

Q: How can we allow love to motivate us to more good works?

A:

Q: How can we take our talents and God's Holy Spirit for granted?

A:

Q: What will happen if we put our hope in temporary things?

A:

Q: Where does our hope lie and what can we gain from it?

A:

Conclusion : In order to have the love that Paul speaks of in **I Corinthians 13** we need to seek the perfection that love provides. It is my prayer that as we continue to study this wonderful chapter that we will learn how to love one another better. If that is accomplished our ministry will be very effective in our community. Remember God loves you!



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Lesson Twelve : Love Will Make Us Mature & Give Us Knowledge

Introduction : In last week's lesson we noted that in order to have Christian love we need to seek the perfection that love provides. In the remaining lessons we will continue to study about the style of Christian love that Paul taught about in **I Corinthians 13**

Today's Text : **I Corinthians 13:11-12** says, "*When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.*" (NKJV)

Discussion :

Paul has already noted that the miraculous spiritual gifts were only temporary and not completely necessary to build up the body of Christ after its early stages. He mentions that the lesser virtues will be put away. As long as we are in this flesh, we are like little children with limited knowledge, when we finally see Jesus face to face, and experience His love, we will finally become mature. When we are mature we will know all things that God has for us to know.

Q: Why should we be spiritual and not of the flesh?

A:

Q: What hinders us from reaching spiritual maturity in Christ?

A:

Q: Why was Paul so worried about making sure the church in Corinth was mature?

A:

Spiritual maturity is the entire point of Paul's argument in these two chapters. The Corinthian church had not grown up. We all need to grow up and become mature Christians. The church will never amount to anything in this world if we are not mature in our faith. However, the only way to become mature is to learn to love.

Q: Why is it so important to put away childish things?

A:

Q: How can we truly see Jesus face to face?

A:

Q: How can seeing Jesus face to face lead us to love and maturity?

A:



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I have heard it said that there is no need for teachers in heaven, because we will all be equally knowledgeable, but what about while we are on the earth? There won't be any "haves and have-nots" in heaven and everyone will have full knowledge. However, until then, and until we will never be outside of the presence of love, we must experience this love in the church. Both heaven and the church are God's kingdoms.

Q: Can we have a portion of the knowledge of God? Explain.

A:

Q: Can we experience heaven on this side of eternity? Explain.

A:

Q: How can love help us to accomplish these tasks previously mentioned?

A:

Q: What role does Bible study and prayer have in reaching this stage of maturity?

A:

Q: What role does good works have in reaching this stage of maturity?

A:

Q: What role does worship and service have in reaching this stage of maturity?

A:

The more we are filled with Christ's love, the better we know Him. Yet our knowledge of God here is like seeing ourselves in a poor mirror, in a dimly lit room. We need to find ways to gain more knowledge of God and His word. Of course, a personal relationship with Christ, through prayer and Bible study are essential, but there is more to developing this maturity.

Q: What kind of lessons do we need to hear from the pulpit?

A:

Q: What kind of Bible classes do we need to have? What should we study?

A:

Q: What kind of a spirit should we have when we assemble with the saints?

A:

Conclusion : In order to have the love that Paul speaks of in **I Corinthians 13** we need to develop maturity. It is my prayer that as we continue to study this wonderful chapter that we will learn how to love one another better. If that is accomplished our ministry will be very effective in our community. Remember God loves you!



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Lesson Thirteen : Love Is The Greatest of All Things

Introduction : In last week's lesson we noted that in order to have Christian love we need to develop maturity. In this final lesson we will conclude our study about the style of Christian love that Paul taught about in **I Corinthians 13**

Today's Text : **I Corinthians 13:13** says, "*And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*" (NKJV)

Discussion :

Spiritual gifts are of no value in this life if they do not help to build up the church in faith, hope, and love. These greater realities have an eternal significance. Eventually faith will become sight (**II Corinthians 5:7**), hope will be fulfilled (**Romans 15:4-6**), but love will remain unchanged forever (**I Corinthians 13:13**). Love is God's purpose for all of His people (**John 13:34-35**).

Q: Paul has made his case about spiritual gifts, but what do we know about love?

A:

Q: What is so wonderful about faith? How does it help us to mature?

A:

Q: What is so wonderful about hope? How does it help us to mature?

A:

Q: What is so wonderful about love? How does it help us to mature?

A:

Love is said to be greater than faith and hope because love must be the motive for all that we do, and it is a result of our faith and hope. Furthermore, love will continue forever without end, while faith and hope will end, when all that we hope for as a result of our faith becomes a reality.

Q: Why is love so much more powerful than faith and hope?

A:

Q: Why does our faith and hope fade away?

A:

Q: What does love and maturity have to do with our eternal reward?

A:



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The Bible says, “*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*” (**Hebrews 11:1**). Because we have faith, we hope for that which we have not seen. We have a hope of rewards in heaven because we have faith. Nevertheless, we will not be rewarded for all that we do, as a result of our faith and hope, unless love is the motive for all that we do. This is why Paul has stressed love more than good works or spiritual gifts.

Q: How can we have faith and hope in something we cannot see?

A:

Q: At what stage in Christian maturity do we begin walking by faith and not sight?

A:

Q: How can our reward of heaven motivate us to love and good works?

A:

Q: If you could ask Paul any question, on the subject of love or maturity, what would it be?

A:

This lesson, of course, is the final lesson in this series on Christian love. We have covered thirteen of the richest and most influential verses on love in the entire Bible.

Q: What have you learned from this series of lessons?

A:

Q: What more should we discuss on the subject of love?

A:

Q: How can you apply the lessons we have studied from **I Corinthians 13**?

A:

Q: How can series' of lessons like this change the church today?

A:

Conclusion : In order to have the love that Paul speaks of in **I Corinthians 13** we need to have faith, hope, and love, but especially love. It is my prayer that as we study the Bible and develop spiritual maturity that we will learn how to love one another better. If that is accomplished our ministry will be very effective in our community. Remember God loves you!