

## The Corinthian Letters, Lesson 55, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13, "Love is the Answer, Part 8"

- ✎ It would be quite difficult to overemphasize the subject of love, by far the broadest subject in all of in Scripture. How will the world know that we belong to Christ? All the Law and the prophets hang on that one thing. Paul also prayed for spiritual growth in Ephesians 3:14-19.
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### **1. Paul concludes his description of love with 4 summative statements, "Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance," 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13:7.**

- ✓ Paul uses the Greek word "panta" for "all things," we keep this word in various forms in English. Pantheism is the belief that all things are God; Pantry is the place to keep all things; Panacea is something that is said to be a cure all. Similarly, love is all protecting, all believing, all hoping, all enduring therefore, LOVE NEVER FAILS. It "Endures" is a military term referring to an army that holds a vital position.

### **2. Love in the world fails all the time.**

- ✓ Love seems to be enduring very little these days, the divorce rate and child abuse are in themselves enough for us to call love into question. In fact, according to the scriptures love fails 3 out of 4 times! If you'll recall, Greek gives us 4 different words describing 4 different kinds of love: "Phileo" is brotherly love, "Storge" is the affection kind of love and "Eros" is sexual or physical love. Scripture never says that these will endure and never fail. By the way, all these types of love require no presence of God and no indwelling Spirit to accomplish them. All these types of love can be produced by sinful people, sinful people cannot produce anything that doesn't fail. "Agape" love, God's love, doesn't fail, which is the only chance we or our relationships have is submitting to God and the love He can produce in us.

### **3. Let's not forget that Paul is speaking to a church that lacked love but was enamored with spiritual gifts.**

- ✓ Notice the comparison between gifts and the more excellent way of love. In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13:8 prophecy (gift not words) will fail or is done away. The word 'cease' is something that after being wound up, then winds down. These three were representative of the whole of the gifts that God gives His children and will all wind down someday and be done away with. Even as important as are spiritual gifts, they are the conversation of children compared to what we'll be doing and how we'll be living in eternity, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13:9-11. At their very best, they are a poor reflection of heaven, even with the best mirror (Paul is referring to a polished bronze mirror) you get a reverse image!, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13:12.

### **4. Love is not the domain of children and there is no reverse image in it.**

- ✓ It's the domain of the mature and the image of God Himself who is love. It out-positions even wonderful attributes like faith and hope. Faith pleases God, but when we are face to face, faith will have its curtain call, "the substance of things not seen." "Hope that is seen is no hope at all," Romans 8. Love will be the very atmosphere in Heaven. Love endures and never fails; therefore, we must live a life of love, or we are nothing; everything else fails and fades. There is so much that matters now that won't matter then.

**Love and things done in love will be the only things we take with us, the only things that cross the line from time into eternity.**

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