

"The Labor of Love" 1 Corinthians 13

1. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul speaks of the various spiritual gifts that God has assigned to men and women. These gifts are all important but in chapter 13, Paul directs the believers in Corinth to the superiority of love to all other gifts.

If one has an exalted eloquence of words but is void of love, then the person may be momentarily and powerfully electrifying like a sudden gong or cymbal but this vanishes just as quickly.

How does love produce eternal effects (v.13)?

2. What other gifts does Paul say were nothing compared to love?

Paul is not casting aside these gifts but elevating and appreciating love by showing it to be incomparable.

3. Starting in verse 4, Paul uses 14 phrases (half negative, half positive) to define a Christ-like love. What are they?

Love is _____

Love is not _____

Love is _____

Love does not _____

Love is not _____

Love rejoices in the _____

Love does not _____

Love _____ all things

Love is not _____

Love _____ all things

Love does not _____

Love _____ all things

Love does not _____

Love _____ all things

Which of these aspects of love has been most meaningfully displayed to you in your life?

Which of these areas do you need to grow and mature in as you love others in a more Christ-like way?

4. Following this elaboration of the *preeminence* and perfections of love in verses 1-7, what do we read in verse 8 about its *permanence*. Love never _____.

The spiritual gifts will one day cease to exist, but love will endure forever.

5. Out of all the things Paul says about love in 1 Corinthians 13, he lands on a truth in verse twelve that defines the reason love is so important in relationships. What is that reason, and how would you describe love's role in it?

6. Pray about 3 people in your life that you can encourage this week by telling them:
"You are so special and valued in God's eyes. He loves you very much and I love you too!"