

Gleanings of Grace

1 Corinthians 13

Lesson 7

The church in Corinth was fluent in its use of the gifts of the Spirit. Yet Paul was forced to address them as carnal. One reason for this is that they lacked the essential ingredient of Christianity – *love*. “People of little religion are always noisy; he who has not the love of God and man filling his heart is like an empty wagon coming violently down a hill: it makes a great noise, because there is nothing in it.” (Josiah Gregory, cited in Clarke). May the sound of our actions be pleasing to the Lord and those we interact with.

OBSERVATION: Read 1 Corinthians 13

1. Read through this week’s verses using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text.

Key Words: *love, though, and not*

3. The contrasting word *but* is used 10 times in 1 Corinthians 13. Mark the word. Choose one instance of its use and record what is being contrasted.
4. Make a list of what love is/does:

5. Make a list of what love is not/ does not:

Background:

1. Paul wrote to the church in Corinth to address several matters. Using the following verses from 1 Corinthians, list the topics covered, many confronting the condition of the church at the time of his writing.

1:11

3:1

4:6

5:1

6:1

7:1

8:9

10:(1), 6-10

11: 20,21

12:1

15:12

15:33

15:35

16:1

2. How would walking in love, correct each of the errors above?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 – Though I...

1. Paul has extolled the gifts and actions mentioned in these verses. Yet, what does he say they are, if they are not done in love?
 - a. Describe the sound of *sounding brass or a clanging cymbal*.
 - b. Why is this a good choice to describe actions without *love*?
2. Consider each of these gifts/actions committed with *love*. How might you receive them if they were shown to you by another believer?
3. Reflect upon Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 3:12-15. How might these verses apply to doing good things without *love*?
4. How do you know you have done something with *love*?
 - a. How do you know you have done something good yet, without *love*?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 – Love Is And Is Not...

1. Using your own words, define the following:

suffers long

kind

envy

parade itself

puffed up

behave rudely

seek its own

provoked

think evil

rejoice in iniquity

rejoices in the truth

2. Which one of the above behaviors do you struggle most with?
 - a. Why do you think you choose that action (or do not choose a good action) when you know *love* is the *greatest*?
3. Ponder the *things love* does according to 1 Corinthians 13:7. This is not calling people to live the “doormat” life. What is it calling us to do?
 - a. Read the words of 1 Peter 4:8 and practically apply them to 1 Corinthians 13:7.

Read 1 Corinthians 13:8,9 – These Will Cease

1. Carefully write the first three words of 1 Corinthians 13:8.
 - a. In what ways does *love never* fail?
2. Paul proceeds to list three gifts of the Spirit that he values. What are they?
 - a. Using 1 Corinthians 14:39, verify Paul’s value of *prophesy* and *tongues*.
 - b. What will one day happen to the use of these gifts?

Challenge: Contrast the Greek word translated *fail* as it relates to *love*, and *fail* as it relates to *prophesies*.

3. Why are these three gifts important now?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:10-12 – That Which Is Perfect

1. What will happen when *that which is perfect has* come?
 - a. There is much controversy determining what/who is referred to here as *perfect*. Define the word *perfect*.
 - 1.) Who fits that description?
2. Another option of defining *that which is perfect* is based on 1 Corinthians 13:11. What does it say?
 - a. How might the following verses help our understanding of 1 Corinthians 13:10?

Matthew 5:48

Ephesians 4:13

Colossians 1:28
 - b. What is the promise of 1 John 3:2?
3. Why will we not need the gifts of *prophecy, tongues, or knowledge* after Jesus comes?
 - a. Why do we still need them until Jesus comes?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:13 – The Greatest Is Love

1. Paul closed this glorious chapter reminding us of three blessings we can experience because we are Christians. What are they?
 - a. Share how having each of these has affected your life.

faith

hope

love

2. Why will we not need *faith* in heaven?

a. Why will we not need *hope* in heaven?

b. Why will *love* always abide whether in earth or heaven?

3. Why is *love* greater than *faith* and *hope*?

REVIEW: Read 1 Corinthians 13

1. In what ways has this lesson challenged you?

2. Share one thing about *love* that has stirred your understanding of *love*.

3. Complete your study of 1 Corinthians 13 by basking in the words of 1 John 4:7-18. What are your thoughts?

*And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding,
with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself,
is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.*
- Mark 12:33

Observation Worksheet

1 Corinthians 13

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging 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, but have not love, I am nothing. 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. ⁴ Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ 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. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part. ¹⁰ But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. ¹¹ 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. ¹² 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. ¹³ And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.