
THE PRACTICE OF LOVE

1 Corinthians 13:4-13

Central Idea: Love is a sacrificial choice to seek the well-being of another. Are you choosing sacrificial love?

Introduction:

Though this is one of the best known and most-quoted passages in the New Testament, few understand how it fits into the discussion of spiritual gifts. As we will see, Paul encourages the Corinthians to see love as the greatest goal. He gives three reasons why love is supreme over all spiritual gifts. 1) Without love, nothing else matters. 2) Love embodies the fruit of the Spirit. 3) Love is eternal.

- I. The Practical Effects of Love, 13:4-7
 1. In relationship to others, v. 4a
 2. In relationship to self, vv. 4b-5a
 3. In relationship to sin, vv. 5b-6
 4. In relationship to circumstances, v. 7
 5. In relationship to everything, v. 8a

- II. The Permanence of Love, 13:8-13
 1. Gifts are temporary, v. 8
 2. Gifts are partial, v. 9
 3. Gifts will end, v. 10
 4. Gifts are infantile, v. 11
 5. Knowledge is progressive, v. 12
 6. Love is eternal, v. 13

Conclusion:

We find many of these same problems in the modern church in America. We see churches split and fractured over spiritual gifts—which ones are still valid; which ones are necessary and/or important; and even whether any are necessary for salvation.

Gifts were given to help the body of Christ mature. They are tools for that growth, not evidence of growth.