

Cause and Effect

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I. Introduction.

- A. Love is interesting - particularly the kind the Bible talks about.
- B. Text: 1 Corinthians 13.

II. Context.

- A. 1 Corinthians 12 teaches that we are all different and all part of the body.
- B. We need each other.
- C. Some of the parts of the body that seem the weakest are really the most important.

III. Love is better than all the gifts.

A. What love is. (1 Peter 4:9, Proverbs 4:10)

- 1. You can feel love but it is not necessarily a feeling
- 2. Love is something that you perform. (John 14:34-35)
- 3. Love is the universal language that the Christian will be known by. (John 13:33-34)

B. Love's characteristics.

- 1. It is patient - longsuffering.
 - a. You can never relax spiritually.
 - b. Impatience is being quick-tempered. (1 Peter 2:21)
- 2. It is kindness. Kindness comes from the change and revolution of Jesus Christ.
- 3. It is not jealous, envious, boastful or proud. (John 5:41)
- 4. It encourages.
- 5. It is not selfish or rude.
- 6. It is not reluctant to say sorry. (Ephesians 5, Proverbs 16:2, Isaiah 53:6)

a. Pride is the opposite of love.

b. Love gives in. (Philippians 2:21)

7. It is not irritable or touchy.

8. It does not hold grudges. (Matthew 5:23)

a. The spiritual one must make restitution.

b. The believer is to go the second extra mile. (Matthew 5:41)

9. It is never glad of injustice but looks for truth to win out. (Proverbs 12:19, James 1:8)

C. Examples of love: Joseph, and God's giving of His Son. Love gives. (Matthew 1:19, John 3:16)

Application questions

1. What is love and what are some of the outstanding examples of it?

2. Which characteristics of love stand out to you? Why?

3. Which characteristics of love do you find most convicting? What will you do this week in light of this?

I Corinthians 13

Living Bible

If I had the gift of being able to speak in other languages without learning them, and could speak in every language there is in all of heaven and earth, but didn't love others, I would only be making noise.

If I had the gift of prophecy and knew all about what is going to happen in the future, knew everything about everything, but didn't love others, what good would it do? Even if I had the gift of faith so that I could speak to a mountain and make it move, I would still be worth nothing at all without love.

If I gave everything I have to poor people, and if I were burned alive for preaching the Gospel but didn't love others, it would be of no value whatever.

Love is very patient and kind, never jealous or envious, never boastful or proud, never haughty or selfish or rude. Love does not demand its own way. It is not irritable or touchy. It does not hold grudges and will hardly even notice when others do it wrong.

It is never glad about injustice, but rejoices whenever truth wins out.

If you love someone you will be loyal to him no matter what the cost. You will always believe in him, always expect the best of him, and always stand your ground in defending him.

All the special gifts and powers from God will some day come to an end, but love goes on forever. Some day prophecy, and speaking in unknown languages, and special knowledge - these gifts will disappear.

Now we know so little, even with our special gifts, and the preaching of those most gifted is still so poor.

But when we have been made perfect and complete, then the need for these inadequate special gifts will come to an end, and they will disappear.

It's like this: when I was a child I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child does. But when I became a man my thoughts grew far beyond those of my childhood, and now I have put away the childish things.

In the same way, we can see and understand only a little about God now, as if we were peering at his reflection in a poor mirror; but someday we are going to see him in his completeness, face to face. Now all that I know is hazy and blurred, but then I will see everything clearly, just as clearly as God sees into my heart right now.

There are three things that remain - faith, hope, and love - and the greatest of these is love.