

**The Greatest of
These is Love!**
(A study of 1 Corinthians 13)

2012 Northeast F.C. Camp

The Greatest is Love! (1 Corinthians 13)

Lesson 1 – Anything Without Love is Nothing (Verses 1-3)

Introduction

- A. Everyone likes to talk about love! However, what percentage of people do you think really know love, what it is and how to show it? Give a guess about which percentage would be closest: (A) 90% (B) 60% (C) 33 % (D) 10% (E) 1%. (I'm not asking for a scientific answer!)
 - 1. A great philosopher (Carlos Peralta) said, "It takes no time to fall in love but it takes you years to know what love is." How much do you agree? Completely?, Partially? Not at all?
- B. The situation at Corinth
 - 1. Before the early church had God's written revelation he gave them messages through prophesies and confirmed them with miraculous gifts.
 - 2. The Corinthians had these miraculous gifts.
 - 3. However, some were becoming jealous of others who had miraculous gifts that they were wanting, and were even beginning to fight and squabble about them.
 - a. It seems that the gift of tongues (speaking foreign languages without having to study them) was the most popular miraculous gift.
 - b. Those who could speak in tongues sometimes felt superior. Others were jealous
- C. The context (the texts before and after chapter 13)
 - 1. The main point of chapter 12 is that all the gifts were important. Paul compares them to parts of a body that are all important for the function of the body,
 - 2. Chapter 14 discusses how miraculous gifts should be used in the assembly of the church.
 - 3. The point of Chapter 13 is that love is so much more important than miraculous gifts!
- D. Love (*agape*) is genuine concern in the well being of others. It is giving priority to others
 - 1. It goes beyond mere affection (hugs and kisses).
- E. Three main points in Chapter 13
 - 1. (Verses 1-3) Any work without love is nothing. This will be today's lesson.
 - 2. (Verses 4-7) If you are loving, this is the way you will be! (15 qualities of love)
 - a. We will memorize these verses at camp! If you can, memorize the entire chapter!
 - 3. (Verses 8-13) Love is worth more because it is permanent. Miraculous gifts were temporary.
- F. Thought questions
 - 1. What are some responsibilities in local churches that some people think are more important than others? _____
 - 2. Do people ever get jealous about these responsibilities? Primarily, which ones?
 - 3. Why is that absurd?
 - 4. What are some responsibilities in school or other walks of life that people want to have and that sometimes provoke jealousy? _____

I. Analyzing the text (verses 1-3)

A. Verse one

- 1. What would Paul have been like if he had spoken the tongues of men and angels without love? _____
 - * A sounding brass or clanging symbol may have value, but it can't love.
An Ipod might let us hear recorded languages, but it can't love.
 - * Thought question – Can someone who can sing well be selfish and incapable of love? Give names of people (celebrities only, not brethren!) who are incredibly talented but have no love.
- 2. Question for mature students -- Those who claim to speak in tongues today without actually speaking languages sometimes use this text to say that though they don't speak human languages they speak "angelic" languages. Does Paul actually say that he spoke "angelic" languages? Isn't he just saying that if he even spoke such (if they really existed) without love it would be nothing?



B. Verse two

- 1. What three things did Paul said would be worth nothing to him without love?

- * Thought questions
 - Why do you think Paul uses these three examples?

- Do you know of any arrogant “know-it-alls” who are Christians? How does this verse show how absurd it is to be that way?
- When trying to talk with someone who is wrong about the truth, how can you avoid coming across as an unloving “know-it-all”?
- Read 1 Corinthians 8:1 and focus on the last phrase. What does knowledge often do? What does love do? Why do people who become “scholarly” have to be especially careful?

C. Verse 3

1. What two great acts does Paul mention would be of no help to him if he didn't love?

* Thought questions:

- Can you think of any greater works than these?
- Would it really be possible to make such great sacrifices without love?

II. Further applications – Discussion of how easy it is to try to substitute good qualities for genuine love.

A. Parents –

1. What are some things that selfish parents sometimes do to substitute for the genuine love that God wants them to have for their children? _____
2. Why don't they just give their children the time and genuine love they need?
3. When you have children, what will you do to give them genuine love and not just substitutes for love? _____

B. Children –

1. What are things that show that you genuinely love your parents?

2. What are some ways you show that you are selfish regarding your parents? _____
3. What are some things you might try to substitute for genuine love for your parents? (be honest!)

4. According to Paul, what are these substitutes worth without love? _____



C. Brethren

1. What are some things that Christians feel that are important that are sometimes emphasized above genuine love? _____

* Important thought question – Are “affection” (Spanish “cariño”) and love the same thing? What might be some differences? Might it be possible to want to maintain affection (hugs, smiles, etc.) so much so that we avoid telling people that they need to repent or make corrections in their lives? In such a case, might we be substituting affection for love?

D. Our attitude towards God -

1. Read Matthew 22:37,38 – What is the greatest commandment? _____
 2. What are some things that distracted, worldly Christians can sometimes do to try to substitute for loving God with all our heart soul and mind? _____
 3. Read Matthew 23:23 – What religious people in Jesus' day tried to substitute carefulness with external acts of worship for genuine love for God? _____
 4. According to the last part of the verse, should they have been unconcerned about external religious acts like tithing mint, anise and cumin? Yes or no?
- * Thought question – Why is it important today to give priority to loving God, while still giving importance to being careful about how we worship God in a visible way? (It doesn't have to be one [giving priority to love] or the other [being careful with acts of worship] but it must be both!)

Conclusion – No work, no how matter how important is may seem, is really worth anything unless accompanied by a fervent, genuine love for others! Don't ever forget it!

Lesson 2: Characteristics of Love, Part 1, Verse 4

Introduction:

- A. Review of lesson 1
 - 1. What is love?
 - 2. Why is it important to avoid getting true love mixed up with the idea of mere “affection?”
 - 3. What are some important works that Paul mentioned as being worthless without love?
- B. Introduction to verses 4-7
 - 1. If we are loving, this is the way we will be!
 - 2. The context has to do with love between brethren in a congregation but the principles can be applied to love between husbands and wives, parents and children and even ourselves and God
 - 3. Repeat verse 4 about five times together as a class to help in memorization.
 - a. Take volunteers to repeat by themselves.

I. Love Suffers Long (Verse 4)

- A. Synonyms – Patient (NAS, NIV), longsuffering, “opposed to haste” (Barnes)
- B. Principle – The more you love someone, the more you will put up with their aggravations!
 - 1. It doesn’t mean that you won’t correct them in love, but rather that you’ll not give up on them.
- C. Bible example - Jesus and the apostles!
 - 1. List some ways that the apostles showed weaknesses:

 - 2. What were bad attitudes that Jesus avoided in responding to the apostles’ weaknesses?

 - 3. What are some good ways he dealt with their weaknesses?

- D. The more money and time you invest in others, the less inclined you’ll be to give up on them.
Thought questions -
 - * How much of himself did Jesus invest in the apostles? In us? Do you think that has something to do with why he is so longsuffering with us?
 - * How much time does a mother invest in her children? Do you think that has something to do with the fact that it will take a lot for a mother to give up on her children?
 - * Why is it important for those who want to be loving to invest a lot of their time and money to helping other individuals?
- E. Self analysis - Give yourself a grade on a scale of one to ten (1= awful, 5 = OK, 10 = Christ like)
 - 1. I still love my family and friends even when I disagree with them. Grade _____
 - 2. Even though others show weaknesses, I won’t give up on them. Grade _____

II. Love is Kind

- A. Synonyms – good-natured, gentle, tender
 - 1. A Spanish version (Reina Valera) uses the word for “benign.” (non-threatening)
** Thought -* What does a malignant tumor do that a benign tumor doesn’t?
- B. Principle – love is kind, not harsh or threatening, even when there are problems
- C. Modern day examples -
 - 1. Do you know of those who quickly become angry, sarcastic and even threatening when there are problems? Talk about the examples **without naming names**.
 - 2. Do you know of others who are very good at maintaining a kind disposition when there are problems? Talk about these examples and give names if you want.
- D. Self analysis - Give yourself a grade on a scale of one to ten (1= awful, 5 = OK, 10 = Christ like)
 - 1. I am always good-natured, gentle and tender with my parents. (1= awful, 5 = OK, 10 = Christ like) _____
 - 2. I am always good-natured, gentle and tender with my brothers and sisters.(1 – 10) _____
 - 3. I am always good-natured, gentle and tender with my friends. (1 – 10) _____
- E. How to do better?
 - 1. What are steps you can take to do better with your parents? Your siblings? Your friends?

III. Love does not envy

- A. Other terms – “Not Jealous” (New American Standard)
- B. Principle – The more you love someone, the less envy you’ll have towards them.
- C. Examples
 - 1. My father and uncle both preach. I’ve heard people tell my father that his brother (my uncle) preaches better than he does. My dad smiles when he hears it. He likes to hear his brother praised and even hear others say that he is superior to him. Why?
 - 2. Do you have someone that you love so much that you really don’t mind if someone brags on them and even says that they are better than you? Who? _____
 - * Thought question – Why do some 14 and 15 year old girls get jealous when another gets a boyfriend or win some award? Why is this immature? Why does it show selfishness?
- D. Envy at camp!
 - 1. When are you most tempted to be jealous of others at camp? (be honest) Why is jealousy so unattractive? Why is it so immature spiritually?
- E. Envy at home
 - 1. Are you ever jealous of your brothers and/or sisters (sibling rivalry)? What can you do about it?
 - 2. Why is jealousy between a husband and wife so destructive? What can you do to think about avoiding it after you get married?
- F. Envy in the church
 - 1. What are some things that people (especially men!) get jealous about in a local church?

 - 2. Why is this so destructive?
- G. Self analysis - Give yourself a grade on a scale of one to ten (1= awful, 5 = OK, 10 = Christ like)
 - 1. I’m happy when others receive attention and honor and don’t have problems with jealousy.

IV. Love does not parade itself

- A. Other terms - Does not boast NIV, Doesn't brag NAS
- B. Self centered people have to talk constantly about themselves to build themselves up.
- C. Most of the time we’re too “suave” to brag openly, but we find ways to brag indirectly.
 - 1. What are some ways people “brag” and show off indirectly? Think of how people brag indirectly about academic achievements, in religion, in churches, etc.

V. Not arrogant

- A. What it means - literally inflated, full of air,
 - 1. “Puffed up” people have an exaggerated sense of self importance
 - 2. Some translations say “arrogant, proud,”
 - 3. Dominicans say of someone who is “puffed up.” “He’s a lot of foam (espuma) but not much chocolate!” (I love it!)
 - 4. It’s the attitude which produces bragging mentioned in point IV.
- B. Thought questions - All self-important people are ridiculous
 - 1. Why is it so absurd to have a sense of self-importance?
 - 2. When have you been most tempted to feel self-important? At school? At camp?
 - 3. Does anyone know the population of the world? _____
 - * You are very important to God! But, how important are you to those billions?
 - 4. Why is it important to always remember that there will always be someone smarter than you, prettier, more handsome, etc. There will always be someone who sings, preaches, teaches, etc. better than you,
 - 4. Tell some stories (funny if you like) of how you felt ridiculous (or someone else looked ridiculous) when trying to act like they were smarter or more important than they really were.

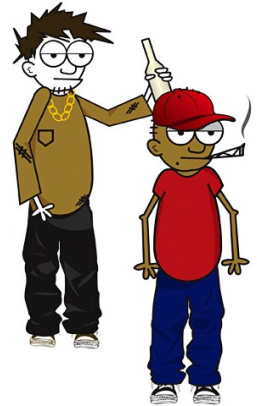


Conclusion – Let’s analyze ourselves and make needed changes!

Lesson 3: Characteristics of Love, Part 2, Verse 5

Intro. Review

- A. What does the main word for “love” mean in the Bible?
- B. Repeat verse 4 together twice. Then repeat verse 5 about five times.



VI. Does not behave rudely (act unbecomingly NKJV) Careful with actions make sure they don't hurt others

- A. Others are watching and will be affected by our behavior:
 - 1. Younger kids are always watching you. Write down a list of some older kids that you looked up to when you were smaller. Which influenced you for good and which influenced you “the other way?” _____
 - 2. Who are some younger kids who may be watching you now? _____

* If you behave yourself and do what is right, you can be a good example. Or, if you behave like an immature idiot, you will influence them the other way!

- B. Sometimes in frustration we say, "I don't care what anybody thinks, I'm going to do what I want to do!" When are you most tempted to say something like that? – to just unload all your frustrations on others, unnecessarily humiliate others?

Circle one – (a) with my parents, (b) with my brothers and/or sisters (c) With companions at school.

* Thought question – Why is that selfish?

- C. How to do better
 - 1. Make a list of things you can do to better control your anger and frustration so that you will not behave rudely, but rather take into consideration how your actions affect others.

VII. Does not seek its own (definition of love!) NRSV (Does not insist on it's own way)

- A. Selfish has to have its way, interprets everything in light of how it affects him. “It's all about me!”
 - 1. Words often heard: “me,” “my,” For example – They're not letting **me** preach, lead singing, “I think I can do better than ____.” “Nobody calls **me**.” “Nobody gives **me** attention.”

* **Thought question** - How many of you do Facebook? If not, that's fine! Perhaps even great! If you do Facebook, do you realize that some people's pages are “all about them”: their achievements and awards, etc. (It may not be wrong to mention those things occasionally, but when that's all there is!)

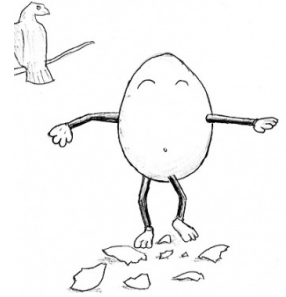
- B. When are you most tempted to focus on yourself? Circle one
 - 1. In school
 - 2. At church
 - 3. When around other young people
 - 4. In athletic competition
 - 5. When depressed
 - 6. On Facebook
- C. Think about depression and “seeking our own.”
 - 1. When we are depressed, who are we thinking about primarily? Ourselves or others?
 - 2. Who was Elijah worried about most when he was depressed? (How often do “I” and “me” appear in 1 Kings 19:4 and 14)
 - 3. How was “action to serve others” a help for Elijah's depression? (1 Kings 19:15, 16)
 - 4. How can being concerned for serving others help us when we are depressed?
- D. Two kinds of people in every congregation: the loving and the selfish (Yes: givers and takers!)
 - 1. Those always thinking of others, serving others, taking food, driving elderly, visiting others, sending cards, help with the building: loving Christians
 - 2. Selfish: Those want to receive, constantly complaining "You Didn't visit **me**, didn't shake **my** hand, didn't send **me** a card, forgot **my** birthday. "
 - a. They don't usually visit others, send cards, etc. They're selfish takers
 - 3. When people stop attending services, are they thinking about themselves and their needs? Or, are they thinking about how to serve others? Think about that if you're ever tempted to stop attending. Takers stop attending. Givers try to find ways to improve their ability to serve others.

4. On a scale of 1-10, How good are you at...
 - ___ a. Greeting others, especially older people at church
 - ___ b. Contacting those who need encouragement (phone, text, email, etc.)
 - ___ c. Visiting sick or at least calling them or sending them a card.
 - ___ d. Praying with others
 5. What are some things you can do to improve your score? (Write some down)
-
-

VIII. Not irritated Not easily offended

A. Illustrations:

1. Have you ever been sunburned or burned in any other way?
 2. How do you react when burned and see someone about to touch you?
 3. Have you ever heard the expression, "with that person you have to walk on eggs." (Or eggshells!)?
 - a. What does it mean?
 4. Some people are easily offended! Are loving people easily offended?
- B. All of us are offended occasionally. Some are offended most of the time.
- C. What's the problem? Thinking of self.
1. "What do others think of **me**?" "Do they give **me** enough respect?" "I don't think so. **I'm** offended."
 2. Think of people you know who are constantly giving to others (Give names if you want.)
-
-



* Does it seem like they are often offended with others?

3. Think of people you know who seem to be constantly offended at others (Don't name names!) Are they good "servants?"

IX. "Not resentful"

A. Other Translations

1. NKJV - "Thinks no evil,"
 2. NAS - "Does not take into account a wrong suffered") Overlooks little things.
 3. I like the NIV here "It doesn't keep a record of wrongs."
- B. Thinking of the NIV translation ("doesn't keep a record of wrongs"), Do you know of people who seem to remember every bad thing that has ever happened to them? It's almost like they've kept records! Are they loving?
1. What are some practical things we can do to try to forget bad things that people have done to us? It's not easy! _____
-

B. Loving people try to overlooking little slights, put best possible construction on actions of others.

- * An unloving person immediately jumps up and says, "Hey, don't 'dis' **me**. I deserve respect!"
- * A loving person just lets the "dis" go.

Conclusion – If you have time, practice your memorization of verses 4 and 5. Any who are learning the rest of the chapter can share how far they've gotten.

The Greatest of These is Love

Lesson 4: Characteristics of Love, Part 3, Verses 6,7

Intro.

- A. Practice quoting verses 4 -6
- B. Thought question - From what we've studied so far, in what ways do you think God's concept of love differs from the world's?

X. Does not rejoice at wrongdoing.

- A. Or, perhaps in the context the idea is – does not rejoice when seeing someone with whom we've had disagreements do wrong or suffer wrong.
 - 1. Read Proverbs 24:17 – What should we not do according to this verse? _____
 - 2. Be honest - Have you ever been happy to see your brother or sister (if you have one) punished? (If you want to "confess" tell about it.)
 - 3. Have you ever been happy to see anyone else with whom you've had problems suffer? (Be honest!)
- B. Read Ezekiel 18:23
 - 1. Does God rejoice when evil people suffer death? _____ Should we? _____
 - 2. For advanced students - Here's a tricky thought question - Read 2 Thess. 1:7-9
 - a. How should Christians feel when thinking of the coming judgment of God against evil?
 - b. Is there a difference between "rejoicing at wrongdoing" and feeling satisfaction upon seeing God's righteous judgment? Discuss

XI. But rejoices with truth ("in truth" NKJV)

- A. Perhaps in light of the context, the idea is "rejoices when seeing someone with whom we've had a disagreement come to truth, or have blessings."
 - 1. Be honest, When you've had a strong disagreement with someone, do you feel a twinge of anger or disgust when seeing them come to truth or enjoy some blessing? (If you want to "confess" give some examples.)
- B. Can you think of a Bible example of someone who became depressed when seeing a group of people come to repentance and truth? (Teachers can give hints if needed.). Discuss this example
 - 1. Can you think of positive examples of those who rejoice in truth or in blessings for those with whom that have had problems in the past? Discuss.

XII Bears all things (orig. word means to cover, conceal) perhaps the idea is that love keeps secrets.

- A. Conceals what? Perhaps things that hurt our brother.
- B. All us have things we don't like about ourselves, maybe things we've done in the past, some physical attribute (we imagine we're too skinny, too fat, not enough hair [oops!], etc.)
 - 1. You don't have to write them, especially if they are painful, but what are some things perhaps about your past life, your looks or whatever that you prefer people not "blab" about?
 - 2. Have you ever had someone who was angry at you or jealous try to make a big deal about these things? How did you feel when they did?
 - a. Thought question - Can "teasing" actually be a sign of unloving jealousy or anger?
 - b. Why do we need to be especially careful about teasing others about physical attributes they don't like? ("Skinny," "fatty," etc.)
 - c. How can we enjoy healthy "teasing" without violating this passage and hurting others by teasing them about things they would rather keep covered?
 - d. Does this principle apply to brothers and sisters?
- C. Sometimes when we have problems with others we are tempted to reveal unflattering things about them.
 - 1. A church had problems among the elders. One said of the elder he was having problems with, "His daughter had a nasty divorce two years ago." He didn't mention the problem when things were going well. But when there were problems, he brought it up.
 - a. Have you seen anything like this? **Without mentioning names**, talk about it if you like.

XIII. Believes all things: Accepts explanations whenever possible

- A. Unloving people don't want to accept explanations
 - 1. Have you ever been accused in school (or somewhere else) of doing something you didn't do, and then have the teacher (or other individual) refuse to listen to your explanation?
 - a. How did that feel?
 - b. (Careful. If you're always being mischievous or causing problems, it's more likely that you'll be accused of doing something you didn't do because you're a troublemaker!)

2. Have you ever not wanted to hear explanations from others? Why?

B. Thought questions

1. No one wants to be naïve (not being able to realize what is really going on) or “gullible” (believe what is unbelievable). However, we are supposed to try to “believe all things. What is the difference between being “gullible” and trying to do what God says and “believe all things”?
2. Is it better to be overly suspicious or over gullible? Explain your answer.

XIV. Hopes all things Not seeking vengeance but hoping for good things, even for those with whom we’ve had problems.

A. What are some Bible examples of those who suffered wrong from others but still hoped the best for them? _____

1. What is the best example of hope for those who have been rebellious?

B. A.T. Robertson says this phrase can mean “Sees the bright side of things.”

1. Have you ever known someone who could never “see the bright side of things” but was always pessimistic? Are such people generally loving or selfish?
2. What are some things that should help us overcome negativity and do better at “seeing the bright side of things”?

XV. Endures all things (the ultimate test) God's love is infinite

A. God’s enduring love for us - Thought questions

1. Can we even imagine how God’s love has endured so much from man in general?
2. Read 2 Peter 3:9. According to this verse, Why does God delay the second coming of Christ?

B. Trying to imitate God’s enduring love.

1. Give some examples of people you know who have been hurt by others and yet still have shown love and concern for those who have hurt them.

2. Read 2 Thess. 3:6; 14,15 Can you love someone even as you tell them they’re wrong?
3. Why can telling someone they’re wrong or even withdrawing from someone show more love in some cases than being silent and maintaining communication?

* The key is to keep on loving, keep on caring, keep on seeking the best in spite of hurts.

Conclusion: Thought questions

A. Look over all the 15 qualities of love we’ve analyzed in the last three days:

1. Where do you have the most difficult time applying these?
 - a. Your parents _____
 - b. Your siblings _____
 - c. Friends at school _____
 - d. Brethren who aren’t what they ought to be? _____
2. Which of the 15 areas do you think you’re strongest in? _____
3. Which of the 15 areas do you think you’re weakest in? _____
4. What do you think you can do to be better?

B. Have a prayer asking for God’s help in being more loving.

Lesson 5: Love is eternal! (verses 8-13)

Intro.

- A. Everyone quote verses 4-7
- B. See how many can quote the whole chapter! Give them a hug if they do!
- C. The main idea of verses 8-13
 - 1. Love is eternal!
 - 2. The miraculous gifts they were squabbling about were important but temporary.
 - 3. Therefore, they needed to give more attention to love and not squabble over temporary gifts.
- D. This section teaches that miraculous spiritual gifts (speaking in tongues, etc.) were to pass away.
 - 1. That's not its primary purpose – The primary purpose is to teach the importance of love.
 - 2. However, it's useful to show those who are confused about miraculous spiritual gifts today.

I. Verses 8 – 10

- A. Verse 8 - Short answers
 - 1. What will never end? _____
 - 2. What will happen to prophecies? _____
 - 3. What will happen to miraculous tongues ? _____
 - 4. What will happen to miraculous knowledge? _____
- B. Verse 8 - Thought questions
 - 1. Prophecies, tongues and miraculous knowledge represent all the miraculous gifts. What are they being contrasted with here as far as their durability was concerned? _____
 - 2. What are some temporary things in churches that people argue about and in doing so lose their love?

 - 3. What are some temporary things that families argue about and in doing so lose their love?

 - 4. Why is it so absurd to lose our love over such things?
- C. Verse 9 – Short answers
 - 1. What two things did Paul and other Christians of the first century have in part?
_____ and _____
 - * This verse is very important to help us understand verse 10. When he talks in verse 10 about what is complete (perfect), he's talking about the same thing that was in part in verse 9 (knowledge, prophesy or in other words, revelation.)
 - * First century Christians didn't have the complete revelation that we have in the New Testament. They received partial revelation from God according to their needs through the inspired apostles and prophets. They didn't have the complete a picture as we have today.
- D. Verse 10 – Short answer
 - 1. What was going to happen to "the partial" when the perfect comes? _____
- E. What is "the partial" ("that which is in part") and what is the perfect? - For advanced students
 - 1. Those who claim that there are still miraculous tongues today believe that "the perfect" is heaven (or Christ's second coming) and that miracles will continue until heaven.
 - a. Is Paul talking about heaven or the second coming in verse 9? Yes or no _____
* As we say sometimes, "It's not in the context!"
 - b. Is he talking about knowledge of God's revelation in verse 9? Yes or no _____
 - c. If Paul is talking about partial knowledge and prophesy (revelation) in verse 9, Is it logical to believe that he's talking about completed knowledge and prophesy (revelation) in verse 10? Yes or no _____
 - 2. Some believe that "the perfect" in verse 10 is love. Love is definitely in the context!
 - a. I wonder, however, What would complete love have to do with the end of spiritual gifts?
 - * The best interpretation – When God's revelation came together in a completed form, there would be no more need for miraculous gifts like tongue speaking to confirm or back up that new revelation.
 - * This explains why no one today really speaks foreign languages without studying them, why there are no real resurrections of people who have been dead for hours or days, no walking on the water, etc..

II. Verses 11 and 12

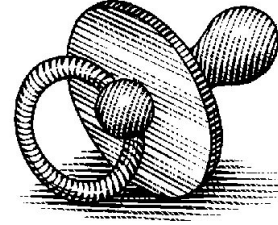
A. Verse 11 - Short answers

1. What three things did Paul do when he was a child?

2. But what did he do with childish things when he became an adult?

B. Illustration

1. How many of you have baby brother or sister? Do they like pacifiers? How important are pacifiers when a little baby is squalling his head off?
* I remember trying to find a store open at midnight to try to find a pacifier!



2. But, how would I look with a pacifier in my mouth now?
Don't try to picture it!

3. Application

- a. Miraculous spiritual gifts were very important during the infancy of the church when the inspired writings of the apostles weren't generally available and disciples had to rely primarily on oral prophesies.
- b. However, as inspired scriptures became more available, the need for miraculous gifts passed.

C. Verse 12 - Short answers

1. How did Paul see with the "imperfect"? _____

- * Mirrors in the first century didn't have glass like modern mirrors, but were rather polished metal, like the one in the illustration. You could see yourself in them much like we can see ourselves by looking at a shiny car today.



2. How would Paul see with the coming of "the perfect"? _____

3. How would he know? _____

- * For advanced students - Some feel that the language in verse 12 "face to face" and "as I am fully known" indicates that Paul is talking of heaven when talking of "the perfect." While this would be understandable if it weren't for the context, I believe the context still indicates a contrast between partial revelation and the completed version of "the big picture."

III. The Greatest (vs. 13)

A. Short answers

1. What three things were going to abide ("remain" NIV)? _____

For advanced students -

- * Think - Will faith and hope abide after the second coming of Christ when we are in heaven? Yes or no? _____
- * Then is it logical to say that "the perfect" is heaven and that faith and hope will "abide" after we're in heaven? Yes or no? _____
- * It makes much more sense to conclude that "the perfect" refers to revelation.

2. Of the three essential qualities, which is the greatest? _____

- ### B. Therefore, What needs to be our primary spiritual goal in life? _____!

Summary

A. There are two ways to live:

1. The way of self centeredness, "I'm number one."
2. The way of love

B. Thought questions

1. What happens to love and compassion in a society the further it goes away from God?
2. Can an individual really be governed by true love without knowing God?
3. Do you think you can really be governed by love if you reject God?

- ### C. You choose! (a) The way of true love as revealed by God. (b) The way of self-centeredness

1 Corinthians 13 - ESV

1If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

2And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

4 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant

5or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;

6it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.

9For we know in part and we prophesy in part,

10but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.

11When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.

12For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

13So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

