

The Better Way 1 Corinthians 13.1-13 etw: 1Cr13.4-7

Recap: The Church: divided & quarreled over leaders & gifts: tongues, prophecy, healing, knowledge... Paul: all part of same body, so look at a better way: love. Our topic for this am. *Define love*: not eros – sensual love, or philia – familial, between siblings/friends, but Agape, self-sacrificing, unconditional. This love is what makes the witness for Christ great, validates our message, set us apart from the World. To develop such love, we must remember:

1. *Love is our motivation, not our proof (verses 1-3)*
 - a. Paul uses examples of most sought gifts, then works
 - b. People were using gifts as proof they loved God, He blessed.
 - c. Like going to church makes one Christian
 - d. As our motivation, changes focus from us to God.
2. *Love is difficult (verses 4-7)*
 - a. Paul's list seems easy to start, being patient... well ok, patient may be difficult to obtain
 - b. Walk thru: patient, kind, envy, boastful, conceited, improper act, selfish, keep record of wrong, does not rejoice with wrong, but with truth
 - c. Bears, believes, hopes, endures all things. Rose color glasses.
3. *Love is Eternal (verses 8-13)*
 - a. Love is a gift of eternity. Love is always needed, even today.
 - b. Paul addressing gifts, which were for limited time.
 - c. Church desired gifts as kids with toys, here today, tomorrow broken.
 - d. But Paul is encouraging them to grow up, start reasoning as adults, no longer as children fighting in the play room.
 - e. Love is greater than hope and faith. Hope shall be fulfilled and faith made sight at the second coming. Love continues.

HOW? How do we obtain and develop this gift of love?

1. Clothe ourselves in Christ Jesus.
2. Spend time with God, in Worship, in Word, in fellowship of believers.
3. Rely upon God to change us with His love.