

The Greatest Gift of All

1 Corinthians 13; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 10-29-2023

A Christian Worldview

- God is the Supreme Good** who created us to be holy and happy in His love.
- Man is an idol worshiper** who looks to creation for help and happiness instead of the Creator.
- Jesus is the double cure** who lived the life we could never live and died the death we deserve to die, then rose from the dead as the only Lord and Savior.
- Faith is trust in the promises** that rests in Jesus for pardon and perfection and hopes in God for help and happiness.
- Love is the obedience of faith** that gladly submits to God's sufficient Word and God's sovereign will.

1 Corinthians 13

- The Priority and Essential of Love:* Love is not only the highest priority but absolutely essential to all of life before God. (1-3)
- The Picture and Excellence of Love:* We need to see the excellence of love pictured before our eyes, perfectly fulfilled in Christ, and make it our goal. (4-7)
- The Permanence and Endurance of Love:* Love is the permanent nature of a life to the glory of God and will endure long after all the temporal gifts of God have ended. (8-13)

The Priority and Essential of Love (1-3)

The Context of Spiritual Gifts

- The spiritual gifts are important because they are gifts of the Spirit who always exalts Jesus. (12:1-3)
- The spiritual gifts are all from God, by His Spirit, and are meant to be a means of unity not division. (12:4-11)
- The spiritual gifts are like the members of the human body so that every member and every gift are important. (12:12-26)
- The 'Word-oriented' gifts have priority because they give guidance for the use of all the other gifts. (12:27-31)
- So, the greater 'Word-oriented' gifts should be valued the most, but there is something that is infinitely more important. (12:31)

The Reason for Its Discussion

Did Paul just insert a 'love poem' in the middle of this discussion? This is not a 'love poem' but a loving rebuke to the lovelessness of the Corinthians, especially in light of how they are relating to one another in regard to spiritual gifts! The response of the Corinthians should not have been:

‘Wow, what a sublime exaltation of love!’ But rather, their response should have been, ‘Ouch! That hits close to home!’

The ‘Love’ Spoken Of

Kinds of love that are ‘drawn out of the lover’:

- The attraction of romantic love
- The enjoyment of friendly love
- The connection of family love
- The benefit of material love

The one kind of love that is not ‘drawn out of the lover’ by someone or something else but rather is simply and profoundly given:

- The gift of divine love

What is the greatest and most important gift of all? Love! - Romans 5:5

The Truth of the Priority and Essential of Love

Love is the most important gift because it is essential to what matters:

- It is essential to delivering us from an empty show (13:1)
- It is essential to being what God created us to be and do (13:2; Mark 11:13)
- It is essential to gaining God’s approval and being rewarded by Him (13:3; Matthew 16:26)

God is Love – 1 John 4:8

The love of God is not mere words or empty actions, but words and actions filled with the deepest and most profound love in the universe!

Bottom Line

Love is not only the highest priority but absolutely essential to all of life before God.

Conclusion

Is God’s love, true Christian love, the real goal of your life in all your relationships?

If we do not ‘have love’ (at all), it is because we do not have God (at all) because God is love!

How do we ‘have love’ and ‘have God’ so to speak? – John 4:10