

Study of 1 Corinthians 13 – Feb. 23, 2022 – Week 4

Written by Apostle Paul to the church. Contemporary English Version.

13:8-13 – “8 Love never fails! Everyone who prophesies will stop, and unknown languages will no longer be spoken. All that we know will be forgotten. 9 We don’t know everything, and our prophecies are not complete. 10 But what is perfect will someday appear, and what isn’t perfect will then disappear. 11 When we were children, we thought and reasoned as children do. But when we grew up, we quit our childish ways. 12 Now all we can see of God is like a cloudy picture in a mirror. Later we will see him face to face. We don’t know everything, but then we will, just as God completely understands us. 13 For now there are faith, hope, and love. But of these three, the greatest is love.”

1 – When we grew up, we quit our childish ways.

- **Vs. 11** – Time to grow up! **We must mature.**
 - God won’t let us stay children... we’ll deal w/same issues over...
 - **Spiritual Maturity is required, not optional, for Christians.**
 - Eph. 4:11 – “So Christ himself gave the gift of the apostles to the church. He gave the prophets and those who preach the good news. And he also gave the pastors and teachers as a gift to the church. 12 He gave all these people so that they might prepare God’s people to serve. Then the body of Christ will be built up. 13 That will continue until we all become one in the faith. We will also become one in the knowledge of God’s Son. Then we will be grown up in the faith. **We will receive everything** that Christ has for us.
 - 14 We will no longer be babies in the faith. We won’t be like ships tossed around by the waves. We won’t be blown here and there by every new teaching. We won’t be blown around by cleverness and tricks. Certain people use them to hide their evil plans. 15 Instead, we will speak the truth in love. So we will grow up in every way to become the body of Christ. Christ is the head of the body. 16 He makes the whole body grow and **build itself up in love.** Under the control of Christ, each part of the body does its work. **It supports the other parts.** In that way, the body is **joined and held together.**”

- **Mature love supports others. Joins together. Unity.**
 - Peace in relationships depends on mature, agape love.
- You can't love w/God's love until you spiritually mature.
 - You can't receive all God has for you until you mature.
 - Blessings abound in maturity!
 - Maturity isn't about age. It's responding, reacting, understanding.
 - Maturity is wisdom, "all wisdom comes from God" – **Prov. 2:6**
 - Immature – reacts, judges, condemns, gets angry.
 - Mature – compassion, understanding; empathy.
 - Maturity isn't instantaneous. Gradual process.
 - Only Mature Love lives out the elements of Agape Love: patient, kind, no envy, no pride, not self-seeking, not easily angered, keeps no record of wrongs... rejoices w/ truth; encourages, perseveres...
 - Mature love apologizes, moves forward, gets over it, snap out!
 - Love never ends... leads to **vs. 8**

2 – Love Never Ends... Never Fails

- **Vs. 8** – "love never fails." Greek word translated "fails" is related to a verb meaning "to fall."
- "Love never fails" means: God's kind of love won't fall away, diminish. It is constant, unchanging; forever.
 - **Jeremiah 31:3** - "I have loved you with an everlasting love."
- This everlasting love pursues us...
 - Jesus "came to seek and to save the lost." **Luke 19:10**
 - **Love looks for those who need love.** Do we?
 - Agape Love is a choice/decision to love no matter what.
 - God doesn't make us earn His love. Do we?
 - God's love makes us better; **Builds us up.** We can do the same.

3 – Life is temporary ... perfection comes later.

- **Vs. 8** – "Everyone who prophesies will stop, and unknown languages will no longer be spoken. All that we know will be forgotten. "
 - This life is **temporary** . . . jobs, knowledge, even people.
 - Stop expecting things to stay the same. Expectations!

- **Vs. 9-10** – “We don’t know everything, and our prophecies are not complete. 10 But what is perfect will someday appear, and what isn’t perfect will then disappear.
 - This life is **imperfect & incomplete**.
 - We don’t know it all... here. Can see the what... not the why.
 - We’ll never have all the answers. Don’t waste time on WHY.
 - Know this: All we go thru is for a purpose.
 - God is maturing us, equipping us, preparing us.
 - **Assured: a time for perfection is coming** – in Heaven.
 - We’ll have complete knowledge then, not now. All answers.
 - Quit being upset w/imperfection; Give yourself a break!
 - None of us are perfect. Forgive, Love anyway!
 - Strive to be the best you can be. Best love, patient, kind.
- **Vs 12** – “Now all we can see of God is like a cloudy picture in a mirror. Later we will see him face to face. We don’t know everything, but then we will, just as God completely understands us.”
 - Mirrors were made from polished copper and bronze. Glass mirrors weren’t produced until 3rd century A.D. Image poor.
 - We’re not going to completely understand God. His ways aren’t...
 - We’re not going to know why He allows some things . . .
 - But – we can learn His nature & character, and trust!
 - God completely knows us & understands us . . . and loves us.
 - You don’t earn it - you won’t lose it.
 - You can’t hide anything from Him. **Completely. He knows!**
 - May not voice it, but He knows.
- **Vs. 13** - “For now there are faith, hope, and love. But of these three, the greatest is love.”
 - End where we started - a faith that can move mountains w/o love, “I am nothing.” Life w/o love is nothing. No credit in God’s bank.
 - God’s love changes us. Gives purpose to life.
 - Faith produces work, love prompts labor, & hope gives endurance.

Song / week – “O the Deep Love of Jesus” by Audrey Assad & Fernando Ortega
 Stay positive. Test negative. Get Vaccinated. Love better. 4 U in 22.