

Perfect Love
2017-05-28

1 Cor 13:1-7

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And 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 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

SiriusXM all Beatles radio channel on May 18...One favorite of mine is "All Need Is Love"

- Love a dominant theme in much of society: music, movies, especially poetry.
- 1 Corinthians 13 – the most eloquent, concise & profound words ever written on love.
 - Typically read at weddings & anniversaries.
- In context: not really about marital love, or even loving Lord but includes.
 - 1 Cor 13 more about loving behavior among Christians.

Paul interrupted teaching on practice of spiritual gifts (Chapters 12 & 14) to rebuke dysfunctional Corinthian church for abuse of spiritual gifts. 1 Cor 13:1-3

- Temporal spiritual gifts have minimal value, unless exercised in love.
 - Greatest expression of spirituality is love, not exercising spiritual gifts.

After talking about prominence/importance of love, Paul defines perfect love. 4-7

- Contemporary definition: an emotion or inner feeling—love movie, football, pizza.
- Here Paul doesn't define love (agape) as feeling/emotion but in actions that reveal underlying feelings.
 - Fundamentally: love is a dynamic & active volition, not an emotion.
- Love like obedience: conveyed by words but confirmed by attitudes/actions.
 - Expressed everyday through 15 supernatural, selfless responses.

Christians/church should be best known by type love described here. John 13:35

- Problem: In our own strength, nobody can love like that. We are the opposite.
 - Part of the reason for this series is because of my own failure loving others.
 - This lifestyle is beyond human reach unless we abide in Jesus Christ

To not discourage, this series MAIN focus is not "how to _____" but by increasing our understanding of nature of God's love for us we're better able to biblically love others.....principle found in Ephesians 4:32, 1 John 4:7-11

- Lord doesn't merely love; He is love...part of His very nature.
 - Agapē: to set your affections on something or someone based on your own decision & character. Seeks highest good of one loved.

- Greatest demonstration of God's initiating & sacrificial love is the cross. John 15:13
 - The cross is the basis of everything we call Christian love.
- Perfect example/picture of love is Jesus Christ Himself.
 - Put "Jesus Christ" instead of "love" & you have a beautiful description of Him.

Because God is love, He alone is the source of love.

- That's why the search/need for love is really a search/need for God.
 - You cannot fully express unconditional, selfless love until you first experience it.
 - Share Gospel
- Christians are able to supernaturally love others the way God intended because the Lord first loved us & equipped us with the Holy Spirit to love. 1 John 4:13 & 19, Romans 8:9, 1 Thessalonians 4:9
 - Indwelling, empowering Holy Spirit is the God who is love.
 - Ask the Lord to increase your understanding of the nature of His love for you and enable you to supernaturally love others.