

## SERMON OUTLINE

**SERMON TITLE:** Learning to Love

**SERMON REFERENCE:** 1 Corinthians 13

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #2202

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## 1) INTRODUCTION

- a) 1 Corinthians 13 is an epic chapter in the Word of God.
  - i) It is a pen of praise to love.
- b) What the world needs is love.
- c) 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 are about spiritual gifts.
  - i) In the middle of these, the Apostle Paul gave us an entire chapter on love.
- d) The Corinthian church placed a lot of emphasis upon spiritual gifts, especially on the more showy gifts like prophecy, tongues, miracles, and healings.
  - i) But they had a deficit in the matter of love.
    - (1) They thought that they were super saints and better than others because they were exhibiting what they considered to be some of the showier gifts.
    - (a) In the middle of this, Paul teaches them about love.
- e) The mark of a Spirit-filled person is not a spiritual gift.
  - i) A person can be a baby Christian and have a spiritual gift.
    - (1) Every baby Christian has spiritual gifts.
    - (2) We may not have discovered our gift yet, but we have one.
  - ii) Spiritual gifts, whether it is a showy gift like performing miracles or a humble gift like service, are not signs that someone is a spiritual person.
- f) The mark of a spiritual person is not the gifts of the Spirit, but the fruit of the Spirit.
  - i) Galatians 5:22-23
    - (1) As God describes the fruit of the Spirit, He begins with the first quality which is "love."
    - (a) And the rest flow out of that.
- g) If we are going to be in this world, then we have to have love in order to have any sense of joy, victory, and service that counts.
- h) Love is a commodity that is rare today because we live in a wicked world.
  - i) Matthew 24:12
    - (1) Sometimes we find ourselves hesitating to help others because there is so much iniquity in the world.
    - (2) The word "iniquity" in this passage literally means "lawlessness."
    - (3) We have abounding lawlessness and abating love.
- i) John 13:34
- j) Love is the attracting element in a church.
  - i) Love is not true because we advertise it; it is only true if we demonstrate it.
- k) In the King James Version of the Scriptures, the word "charity" is used for the word "love."
  - i) It is not used in the sense that we use it today, such as helping those who are needy.
    - (1) Here it means "love."
- l) 1 Corinthians 13:1-4

- i) In these verses, the Apostle Paul is speaking of spiritual gifts.
      - (1) The gifts of prophecy, knowledge, and faith.
    - ii) The Corinthians were envying one another's gifts, and those who had the showier gifts were flaunting them.
  - m) 1 Corinthians 13:4-8
    - i) "Unseemly things."
      - (1) They were getting carried away and doing ridiculous things in the name of the Holy Spirit.
    - ii) Verse 8 tells us that tongues will cease in and of themselves.
  - n) 1 Corinthians 13:8-11
    - i) The Corinthians were childish Christians.
      - (1) The Apostle Paul said that he could not speak to them as unto spiritual but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.
        - (a) 1 Corinthians 3:1
        - (2) They were bickering and acting like children.
    - ii) In verse 11, Paul uses an analogy when he says, "When I was a child..."
      - (1) That's the way he was in the natural world.
      - (2) He is telling the Corinthians to stop acting like big babies.
  - o) 1 Corinthians 13:12-13
    - i) The word "glass" here means "mirror."
      - (1) The mirrors of that day were not like our highly polished mirrors of today.
        - (a) A person could see, but could not see clearly.
  - p) In today's message, we will look at three characteristics of love as we consider learning to love.
  - q) Today's message will present three things we should consider as we learn to love.
- 2) THE EXCELLING VALUES OF LOVE (1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3)
- a) Love is more valuable than oratory.
    - i) 1 Corinthians 13:1
    - ii) The world has heard enough loveless sermons.
    - iii) The world has heard enough of showy gifts.
    - iv) The mark of a Spirit-filled life is not speaking in a foreign tongue, but controlling the one tongue that we have and letting the law of love be in that tongue.
  - b) Love is more valuable than prophecy.
    - i) 1 Corinthians 13:2
    - ii) A person may have the gift of prophecy; but without love, what good is it?
      - (1) There are people who have Heaven on their mind but Hell in their heart.
  - c) Love is more valuable than knowledge.
    - i) 1 Corinthians 13:2
    - ii) What good is it to have a bright head if you don't have a right heart?

- iii) People are not that interested in us unloading theological facts on them.
      - (1) Are we just giving them information, or is the love of Jesus Christ coming through our hearts?
    - iv) The Bible says that we are to study, and we should thank God if we have the spiritual gift of knowledge.
      - (1) 2 Timothy 2:15
  - d) Love is more valuable than faith.
    - i) 1 Corinthians 13:2
    - ii) Faith is important.
      - (1) We cannot get to Heaven without trusting the Lord.
    - iii) What good is it to have faith to remove mountains if we cannot remove malice?
      - (1) If our hearts are filled with hate, then we are nothing.
  - e) Love is more valuable than giving to the poor; what we call charity.
    - i) 1 Corinthians 13:3
    - ii) We often hear that we can give without loving, but we cannot love without giving.
    - iii) A lot of giving is giving instead of ourselves, rather than giving ourselves.
      - (1) If we give from loveless hearts, then it amounts to nothing.
  - f) Love is greater than martyrdom.
    - i) 1 Corinthians 13:3
    - ii) A person can die for their religion and still not have love.
      - (1) There are terrorists who are on suicide missions in the name of religion.
        - (a) They do not love other people because they do not love themselves.
    - iii) Many false cults are based on zeal, but not on love.
    - iv) A person may not fear dying because he really does not know what living is.
      - (1) He doesn't know living if he does not know love.
  - g) The excelling values of love are greater than any spiritual gift.
- 3) THE VIRTUES OF LOVE (1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-6)
  - a) Love enables us to be patient.
    - i) 1 Corinthians 13:4
    - ii) Love is not blind.
      - (1) Love does not see people as having no faults.
      - (2) Love sees more, but love forgives.
        - (a) Love forgives seventy times seven.
          - (i) Matthew 18:21-22
    - iii) Real love is not giving people what they deserve, but giving people what they need.
    - iv) Love endures.
  - b) Love enables us to be kind.

- i) 1 Corinthians 13:4
- ii) Kindness is reacting to people with love.
- iii) Love is kind.
- iv) A lot of people are religious, but they are not necessarily kind.
  - (1) We need to be nice.
- c) Love enables us not to envy.
  - i) 1 Corinthians 13:4
  - ii) Envy and love do not dwell in the same heart.
  - iii) We can tell whether or not we have love by being able to rejoice when someone else is blessed.
    - (1) If we cringe when others are being praised, then there is no love in our hearts.
  - iv) If we think that somebody else's gain is somehow our loss, then we do not have love.
  - v) Proverbs 14:30
- d) Love enables us to be humble.
  - i) A big head and a big heart are never in the same person.
  - ii) 1 Corinthians 13:4
  - iii) Love and pride do not dwell in the same heart.
  - iv) Why do churches fuss sometimes, and why do husbands and wives squabble?
    - (1) Proverbs 13:10
      - (a) Only by pride.
    - (2) There has never been a war, fuss, or division that was not caused by pride.
  - v) Pride and love are in opposition one to another.
  - vi) There are no problems too big to solve, just people too small to solve them.
    - (1) Problems can be solved if we attack the problem rather than one another.
  - vii) Jonathan Edwards, a great preacher in the Great Awakening, said that there is nothing that puts a man so much out of the devil's reach as genuine humility.
    - (1) It is love that enables us to be humble.
      - (a) Love is not puffed up.
        - (i) 1 Corinthians 13:4
- e) Love is courteous.
  - i) 1 Corinthians 13:5
    - (1) Love does not behave unseemly.
      - (a) It doesn't do weird or strange things.
  - ii) Manners are just love in little things, even in marriage.
    - (1) Such as a husband opening the car door for his wife.
    - (2) Love can say please and thank you.
  - iii) Love is unselfish.

- (1) 1 Corinthians 13:5
    - (a) Love seeks not her own.
  - (2) A loving person doesn't proclaim that they know their rights.
    - (a) Someone wisely said, "Teach a man his rights, and you have a revolution; teach him his responsibilities, and you have a revival."
    - (b) What can cause us to forego our rights and take up our responsibilities except genuine love?
  - (3) There needs to be more unselfishness in the average church.
  - f) Love is not irritable.
    - i) 1 Corinthians 13:5
    - ii) Do you have a hair trigger?
    - iii) Are you easily irritated?
    - iv) What spills out of us is what we are full of.
    - v) We need to learn to drown insults in a river of love.
    - vi) Bad tempers are something that we never lose by losing our temper.
  - g) Love enables us to forgive.
    - i) 1 Corinthians 13:5
      - (1) Love does not keep a record.
      - (2) The word "thinketh" in this passage is a bookkeeping term.
        - (a) It does not keep a record.
    - ii) Don't become a collector of grudges.
      - (1) Let those things go.
      - (2) Don't harbor a grudge.
    - iii) Love enables us to forgive and forget.
  - h) Love is sympathetic.
    - i) 1 Corinthians 13:6
    - ii) Gossips are people who rejoice in iniquity.
      - (1) They love to tell something, and it is not an honor if somebody gossips to us.
      - (2) Gossips seem to be glad about injustices.
      - (3) They seem to delight in saying bad things about other people.
      - (4) A wise man once said that before you listen to anything about another member of the church or before you say anything, make it pass through these three gates:
        - (a) Is it true?
        - (b) Is it kind?
        - (c) Is it necessary?
- 4) THE VICTORIES OF LOVE (1 CORINTHIANS 13:7-13)
- a) Love conquers.
    - i) 1 Corinthians 13:7-8
    - ii) Love never fails.
    - iii) The way to get rid of our enemies is to love them.

- iv) If we love Jesus enough, then we are not going to harm Him, hurt Him, or cause Him shame by the way we live.
- b) Love completes.
  - i) 1 Corinthians 13:8-11
    - (1) When the Apostle Paul talks about “that which is perfect,” he is talking about love.
    - (2) Apart from love, all the gifts they had been using were toys.
      - (a) They were just kid’s stuff.
    - (3) Prophecy, tongues, and knowledge will pass away.
  - ii) One day we will stand before the Lord, and He will ask us why He should let us into His Heaven.
    - (1) We may say that we prophesied in His name.
      - (a) He says, “Prophecy shall cease. Depart from Me, you that work iniquity.”
        - (i) 1 Corinthians 13:8
        - (ii) Luke 13:27
    - (2) We may say that we had knowledge and was filled with religious philosophy and understanding.
      - (a) He says, “Knowledge shall pass away. Depart from Me, you that work iniquity.”
        - (i) 1 Corinthians 13:8
        - (ii) Luke 13:27
    - (3) We may say that we had the gifts of tongues and said many wonderful things.
      - (a) He says, “Tongues shall cease. Depart from Me, you that work iniquity.”
        - (i) 1 Corinthians 13:8
        - (ii) Luke 13:27
    - (4) Again, the question is asked, “Why should I let you into My Heaven?”
      - (a) Our answer should be that we have been saved by grace.
      - (b) We have been born again.
      - (c) Our hearts should be filled with love for God and our fellow man.
        - (i) The Lord says, “Enter into the joys of the Lord.”
- c) Love continues.
  - i) 1 Corinthians 13:12-13
  - ii) One of these days, faith will be unnecessary when we stand before Jesus and see Him face to face.
    - (1) Faith will turn to sight.
    - (2) Hope will turn to reality.
      - (a) Hope is assurance based on the Word of God.
  - iii) But love will go on and on throughout eternity.
  - iv) There was a martyr who said as he was dying, “Farewell all the world. Goodbye faith. Farewell hope. Welcome love.”
    - (1) Then, he stepped over into Heaven.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) You cannot exercise your spiritual gift as you should unless you are filled with love.
- b) You are not going to be filled with love until you have evaluated, appreciated, and appropriated the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.
  - i) Only Jesus can put this kind of love in your heart.
- c) The mark of a born-again Christian is a genuine love for Jesus and a love for people.
- d) 1 John 4:20
- e) Romans 5:5
  - i) The only way that you can have true love in your heart is to have the Holy Spirit in your heart.
    - (1) The only way that you can have the Holy Spirit in your heart is to be saved.
      - (a) And the only way you can be saved is to receive Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior.
- f) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- g) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16