

## The Greatest of These . . .

### Gifts without love are “nothing,” 13:1-3

#### ***What the Corinthians thought***

The church of Corinth thought that those who had more excellent gifts were more spiritual than those who had lesser gifts.

The people in Corinth only cared that they used their gifts to bring attention to themselves and accomplish their agenda. They used their God given gifts to draw attention to their personal agenda.

#### ***What Paul taught***

The gift of tongues without love is only empty noise, 13:1

The gift of prophecy without love gives the user a zero on his/her final exam.

*Only love can understand the wisdom of the cross*

The gift of faith without love gets a failing grade.

The gift of giving without love gains nothing.

*Feeding the poor is nothing if not driven by love for them and Christ.*

The gift of sacrificing one's life without love is meaningless.

*One might give his life in order to leave a personal legacy.*

*Martyrdom for any other reason than love is meaningless.*

The recipients of such expressed gifts might gain profit, but the possessor of the gifts gets a zero on his/her report card.

### What love does, 13:4-7

***I don't know what is in it, but it works.***

***Love is patient, it performs the positive act of waiting***

It bears long with the faults, failures and foibles of other people. This, as several others, is an attribute of God

***Love is kind***

It responds to others with the same tender heart and forgiveness that God has shown us in Christ, Eph 4:32

### ***Love does not envy***

It does not have negative feelings over another's achievement or success

### ***Love does not boast***

It does not say things that elevates self and wounds others

### ***It is not proud***

Arrogance is the particular fault of the Corinthians (4:6, 18, 19; 5:2; 8:1). It is a sense of superiority that causes one to treat others with disdain.

### ***It is not rude***

It does not behave indecently or cause others shame or embarrassment.

### ***It is not self-seeking***

This love does not seek what interests it, but what interests others, see 10:24, Philippians 2:2-4

### ***It is not easily angered***

Love does not go into fits of anger.

### ***It keeps no record of wrongs***

Love does not let the sun go down upon hurts. Love absorbs evil without calculating how to retaliate. It deletes the wrong from the computer.

### ***Love does not delight in evil***

This may well have to do with Christians taking others to court. It also may reference an attitude to the misfortunes of others.

### ***It rejoices with truth***

When the truth is told, it delights in it. The truth can indeed set people free. Love is always happy for the truth, whatever that may be.

### ***It always protects***

It never tires of support

***It always trusts***

It never loses faith, it believes the best will surface

***It always hopes***

It believes difficult situations will be resolved

***It always perseveres***

Love has the tenacity to hold on in trouble and affliction.

***This is kinda sappy. Nobody does that. I know what the Bible says pastor, but you've got to be kidding. This attitude simply shows how little of the love displayed on the cross you really understand.***

**The superiority of love, 13:8-13**

***Gifts will reach a dead end.***

***Love never will.***

***Love is the greatest thing.***

It is God's love that is revealed in Christ that creates the possibility of faith and hope.

**So what?**

***Do you love?***

***Who do you love?***

***How do you love?***