

AND YOU THINK YOU'VE GOT PROBLEMS

A Study of First Corinthians

THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 Jeff Schreve

But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. 1 Timothy 1:5

The heart of the problem was the problem of the heart: no love

Agape - a deep, selfless concern for the well-being of another.

What does God want to teach us about agape love?

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

1. Love makes all the difference.

A. Without it, your eloquent speech is noise.

B. Without it, your spiritual gifts mean nothing.

C. Without it, your tremendous sacrifices don't count.

2. Love is more than just a nice word.

* The presence or absence of agape love is clearly evident.

Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

3. Love is the greatest "gift."

A. It will stand the test of eternity.

Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.

1 Corinthians 13:8-10

B. It is the test of spiritual maturity.

When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now

I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. 1 Corinthians 13:11-12

C. It is impossible apart from Christ.

... the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Romans 5:5

How well are you doing with this thing called love?