

THE LOVE-DRIVEN LIFE

OCTOBER 29, 2023

WORSHIP

Today, Your Love Awakens Me, You Alone, At the Cross, Hosanna

WELCOME

What keeps you going in life during the most challenging moments in relationships and circumstances?

WORD

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-13

¹³ 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. ² 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. ³ 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. ⁴ Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, ⁵ does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, ⁶ does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ 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. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part; ¹⁰ but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. ¹¹ 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. ¹² 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. ¹³ But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.

A life that counts can only come about by the power of the Holy Spirit. Can people make a difference without the Spirit? To some extent, yes, but is it the difference that God wants? **1 Corinthians 12:31** tells us to desire the “greater gifts” of the Holy Spirit. Paul also says that there is a “still more excellent” way he wanted us to learn; what will compel us to use our gifts (including our time, treasure, energy) to build others up. What ought to drive us to do so is LOVE. If that is not the “driver” of our lives, our lives will not count. The Holy Spirit has to be the One behind the “wheel”, we are to be filled with the Holy Spirit (**Ephesians 5:18**). This love (agape) comes from the Spirit (**Galatians 5:22-23**). Some distinctions between the gifts of the Holy Spirit (**1 Corinthians 12**) and the fruit of the Holy Spirit (**1 Corinthians 13**) are:

GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT	FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT
Result of being indwelt by the Holy Spirit	Result of being filled by the Holy Spirit
Purpose is to serve and build up others	Purpose is service but also Christ-like character
Different for each believer	Same for all believers

There are three things we need to know about the Love-Driven Life:

1. AWARE: Without love, I am ZERO! (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

The Lord will complete His good work in you, so be patient with yourself and other people and trust the Lord as you learn to live a Love-Driven Life. Paul starts by saying that no matter how gifted we may be in languages of even angels, without love we are nothing (**v.1**). People can use words to manipulate others; words can also be very deceitful (**John 12:4-6**). Even if we are more gifted than the prophet Daniel, or wiser than Solomon yet use our gift to impress people rather than to express what God wants them to hear, it’s “zero” (**v.2**). Dwight L. Moody aptly said, “The world does not understand theology or dogma, but it understands love...”. People will know that we are Jesus’ disciples if we love one another (**John 13:34-35**). We deprive the world of seeing what Jesus looks like “with skin on” when we don’t love one another. “Though we may not think alike, may we not love alike?” (John Wesley). Yes, we should!

The Bible tells us to be generous, but even if we give all that we have to the poor, without love, we are nothing (**v.3**). People can give not to show God’s love, but to make them feel good about themselves. Instead, we are to be cheerful givers, giving wholeheartedly to the Lord (**2 Corinthians 9:6-7**).

2. ASKING: Is my love the real thing? (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

We need to be asking ourselves if our love is the real thing based on God’s Word (**vv. 4-7**). Just two aspects of the fruit of the Spirit, being

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patient and kind are already so difficult to practice, that's why without the Holy Spirit, we can't show real love (**Ephesians 4:2, 32**). We are not to be jealous over other people's blessings or success, as King Saul was of David (**1 Samuel 18:8-9**). Do you know people whose favorite topic is themselves? Love does not brag! It is not arrogant, it does not "inflate" itself to make yourself look more important. Love does not act unbecomingly; **Mark 5:25-28** shows us how gently Jesus responds to the vulnerable like the woman who touched His robe (**Mark 5:32-34**). May we become more like Jesus in how we treat people (**Isaiah 42:3**)! Do you always have to have your own way? Or are you easily provoked? Perhaps the reason why your loved ones avoid talking to you is because you are or have a temper problem (**Proverbs 22:24-25**). Do you keep grudges? Love does not keep accounts of wrong things done to you. You and I have no business of keeping a record of wrongs of others when Jesus has canceled our own record of sins (**Colossians 2:13-14**). Love does not delight in evil; when you sleep with your boyfriend/girlfriend, that is not love because it violates what God wants. Instead, love rejoices in the truth even if the truth from those who know us best can be painful (**1 Peter 4:8**). Love believes all things and hopes all things! It thinks the best of others, and has confidence in God's love, grace, promises, sovereignty especially in a very challenging world in this generation. Love endures (hupomeno) all things; it keeps going on despite failure, disappointment, opposition.

3. ASSURED: God's love will complete me. (1 Corinthians 13:8-13)
Someday, all the gifts of the Spirit will disappear when the "perfect" comes! This perfection is Jesus Himself (**1 John 3:2**)! Love is the greatest because even faith and hope will no longer be needed when we see Jesus face to face, love will always be there. Let us always be reminded and share about God's love for people through Jesus (**John 3:16**)!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

What "good things" do you do which you now realize you do not always do out of love?

2. Setting It Right.

In which aspects of biblical love do you most need to improve? What will you do about these?

3. Living It Out.

To whom can you show God's love this week? When and how will you do it?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for family and loved ones who are not yet living a Love-Driven life, to come to know the love of the Father through Jesus. Show them what it's like to do all things motivated by Christ's love as you relate to them, in word and deed. Share the gospel, the greatest proof of God's love for us.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort, salvation for Israel, wisdom for their leaders in government, military and their soldiers as they defend themselves against terrorists' attacks. Rescue of the Israelites taken as hostages.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; conflict in African, East Asian and Middle East countries to stop.

III. Church

- CCFers would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, dleaders, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

MEMORY VERSE

1 CORINTHIANS 13:13

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