

## Love – Part 1

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Amazingly we have never spent time on 1 Cor. 13. Today we will begin a series on the chapter, with application to our marriages and modeling for our children.

### Background Passage:

<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>And 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. <sup>3</sup>And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. <sup>4</sup>Love is patient, love is kind, *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, <sup>5</sup>does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*, <sup>6</sup>does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; <sup>7</sup>bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. <sup>8</sup>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. <sup>9</sup>For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; <sup>10</sup>but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. <sup>11</sup>When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. <sup>12</sup>For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known. <sup>13</sup>But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

What is the context of chapter? Chapter 12 and 14 are talking about spiritual gifts. After discussing conflict and division caused by misuse and misunderstanding of spiritual gifts, he ends chapter 12 saying, "And I show you a still more excellent way."

What is that more excellent way? Love

### Definition: What is Love?

A very famous person was once asked, "Are you in love?", to which he replied, "Yes, whatever love is."

What is love? In Greek, there were four different words that translate to our word "love." Three are used in Scripture.

They are:

*Éros* (έρως *érōs*)

*Philia* (φιλία *philía*)

*Storge* (στοργή *storgē*)

*Agápe* (αγάπη *agápē*)

From <http://www.theologue.org/Love-KSWuest.html>:

"THERE ARE four words in the Greek language for "love." **Stergein** is a love that has its basis in one's own nature. It speaks of the constitutional efflux of natural affection. **Eran** is a love that has its basis in passion, and its expression takes the form of a blind impulse produced by passion. **philein** is a love that has its basis in pleasurable, and is the glow of the heart kindled the perception of that in the object loved which affords one pleasure. **agapan** is a love that has its basis in preciousness, a love called out of one's heart by an awakened sense of value in the object loved that causes one to prize it.

**Eran** is a word that is not found in the New Testament. The word "passion" describes it. **It is passion seeking satisfaction.** It is not intrinsically a base word. In its use it is found at the two extremes of low and high. It was used in pagan Greek writings of sex love. It was used in Christian writings of divine love. It was used of the love of children to their mother. This love is "an overmastering passion seizing upon and absorbing into itself the whole mind."

**philein** is used forty-five times in its various forms of verb and noun. This is an unimpassioned love, a friendly love. It is a love that is called out of one's heart as a response to the pleasure one takes in a person or object. It is based upon an inner community between the person loving and the person or object loved. That is, both have things in common with one another. The one loving finds a reflection of his own nature in the person or thing loved. It is a love of liking, an affection for someone or something that is the outgoing of one's heart in delight to that which affords pleasure. The Greeks made much of friendship, and this word was used by them to designate this form of mutual attraction. "Whatever in an object that is adapted to give pleasure, tends to call out this affection." It is connected with the sense of the agreeable in the object loved. The words which best express this kind of love are "**fondness, affection, liking.**" "It shows the inclination which springs out of commerce with a person or is called out by qualities in an object which are agreeable to us."

As an outgrowth of its meaning of fondness, it sometimes carries that sentiment over into an outward expression of the same, that of kissing.

**agapan** is used in its verb, noun, and adjective forms about three hundred and twenty times in the New Testament. It is a love called out of a person's heart by "an awakened sense of value in an object which causes one to prize it." It expresses a love of approbation and esteem. Its impulse comes from the idea of prizing. It is a love that recognizes the worthiness of the object loved. Thus, this love consists of the soul's sense of the value and preciousness of its object, and its response to its recognized worth in admiring affection."

In contrasting philein and agapan, we might say that the former is a love of pleasure, the latter a love of preciousness; the former a love of delight, the latter a love of esteem; the former a love called out of the heart by the apprehension of pleasurable qualities in the object loved, the latter a love called out of the heart by the apprehension of valuable qualities in the object loved; the former takes pleasure in, the latter ascribes value to; the former is a love of liking, the latter a love of prizing."

Agape is definitely the kind of love that we are to have for each other, both in the fellowship of the church and in family / marriage relationships.

### **Scripture Study: vss 1-3**

Read the three verses.

Given the context of this chapter, how do verses 1-3 fit the context and what do they mean to us?

How can we sometimes put a greater emphasis on spiritual activities than on love?

In marriage?

With our children?

In the church?

With the lost?

### **Conclusion:**

What would you say is the core message of today's passage (13:1-3)?

Is there any practical lesson you can walk away with from today's passage?