

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 RLG

# Motivated By Love




*A Wonderful Way to Live!*

Sunday, January 31 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, February 1 at 7 PM

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: Why? The answer to that question can get at the **core**, the **root**, the **reason**, the **motivation** for words and actions. God the Father, moved by love, gave His Son to buy our eternal life. Now, *having first been loved by God*, may His love for us motivate us to live in love toward *our great God and all the people in the world!*

## 1. **Wonderful Realities and Actions, BUT No True Love:**

- a. <sup>1</sup> **If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but I have not love** [*ἀγάπην – true love, unconditional love, the kind of love that God has for us*], **I have become** [an unpleasant sound, such as] **a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.** // So, wonderful words, *apart from true love*, might sound like: 
- b. <sup>2</sup> **And if I have prophecy** [*the God-given knowledge of things to come*], **and understand all mysteries** [*teachings that God must reveal*] **and all knowledge** [*an incredible knowing of all things*], **and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but I have not love**, **I am nothing.** // So, amazing blessings, *if they are not used in true love*, do nothing for us!
- c. <sup>3</sup> **And If I give away all I have** [to those in need, *thus to those who are poor*], **and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but I have not love**, **I gain** [*profit, benefit*]

**nothing.** // So, exceedingly great sacrifices, *apart from true love*, are worthless to us! Therefore, it is **not** how we speak, **not** what we know, **not** what we do, and **not** what we give up that really matters. **Instead, the key is our motivation – the reason why we** ✓ speak, ✓ know, ✓ do, and ✓ give up! So, in response to God's great love for us through Jesus, *may we live wonderful, love-motivated lives!*

2. **A Description of True Love:** Since our *new natures desire* to act in love, *let's learn what that means:*

a. What Love **Is**:

- i. <sup>4</sup> **Love is patient** – So love is willing to wait, *even as the Lord is currently waiting for more and more to repent (2 Peter 3:9)!*
- ii. **love is kind** – So love is merciful, *holding back the punishment that is deserved.* The Almighty God has shown great mercy to us by *not punishing us*, then *punishing Jesus in our place!*

b. What Love **Is Not**:

- i. **[love] is not jealous** – So love is content with its looks, possessions, status.
- ii. **[love] does not brag** – So love takes action without drawing notice to itself.
- iii. **[love] is not arrogant** – So love takes action with humility, giving the glory to God.
- iv. <sup>5</sup> **[love] does not behave disgracefully** – So love acts in ways that are thoroughly proper.

- v. [love] **does not seek for itself** – So love seeks to be a blessing to others.
- vi. [love] **does not provoke to anger** – So love is sensitive to the feelings of others.
- vii. [love] **does not take into account evil** – So love continues to love in the face of evil.
- viii. <sup>6</sup> [love] **does not rejoice over wrongdoing** – So love rejoices over right-doing.

c. How Love Functions:

- i. **but [love] rejoices with the truth** – So love especially rejoices with God's truth.
- ii. <sup>7</sup> **Love keeps confidential all things** – So love is trustworthy, it keeps a secret a secret.
- iii. [love] **believes all things** – So love is firm in its convictions.
- iv. [love] **hopes all things** – So love is sure that God's promises will come true.
- v. [love] **endures all things** – So love keeps loving no matter what!

3. **Love Is Eternal; Many Other Things Are Temporal:**

- a. Continuing and Ending: <sup>8</sup> **Love never becomes invalid; but as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for speaking in tongues, they will cease; as for increasing in knowledge, it will come to an end.** <sup>9</sup> For we know in part and we prophesy in part, <sup>10</sup> **but when the perfect [complete, mature] comes, the partial will pass away. //** Since eternal things are so much more important than temporal things, *let us live in love!*

b. Three examples of temporal things:

- i. How we act: <sup>11</sup> **When I was a very young child, I spoke as a very young child, I thought as a very young child, I reasoned as a very young child; when I became a man, I brought to an end the ways of a very young child. //** As we have aged, *our behaviors have changed!*
- ii. What we see: <sup>12</sup> **For now I see through a mirror in a riddle [like looking into a very poor quality mirror], but then face to face. //** Our current view of God and heaven are very limited, *but a time of clarity is coming!*
- iii. What we know: **Now I know in part, but then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. //** Now we know in part, *but a time of full knowledge is coming!*

4. **Love Is Timeless – For Now and Forever:** <sup>13</sup> **So now faith, hope, and love abide [continue, exist], those three; but the greatest of those is love. //** Once we see the reality of what we believe, *faith will no longer be necessary*. Once we experience the fulfillment of God's promises, *hope will no longer be necessary*. So, *since love is for now and forever*, it is the greatest!

**Conclusion:** Now, with a better understanding of true love, *and rejoicing in God's true love for us*, let us go forth to live wonderful, love-motivated lives!

And all God's people said: **Amen!**