

Live In Love

FEBRUARY 14, 2021 // 1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-13

▶ Landing Point

Jesus is the source of love and to become a better lover and live in the most excellent way of love requires you not only getting His love but giving it away.

▶ Introduction

1 Corinthians 13 is the love chapter and we see Paul remind this early church and these new Christ-followers that there is only one thing that really matters...love. At the church in Corinth, they got caught up focusing on spiritual gifts. They were focused on a good thing, but the conversation went south when arguments started about what gift and who was most important in the church.

Practically speaking, the Corinthians were "burying the lead" when it came to their faith in Jesus – this saying is used in journalism circles and it means you should write the most important thing first so readers don't lose interest and have to search for the most essential points or facts. Paul brings the Corinthians back to "the lead" of what's most important to Jesus: the way of love, the most excellent way.

Q: Describe how "the lead" of loving God and loving others gets buried in our everyday spiritual lives?

▶ Deeper Dive

• Love Matters Most

As Americans, we have one word for "love," and we use it for everything. We can truly mean that we love all these things: I love ice cream, I love snow, I love my dog, I love long walks on the beach, I love my wife. But we don't love them in the same way. In the Greek language, they had 4 words for love...Phileo, Eros, Storge, and Agape. Paul is communicating the way of love to God is an "agape" love. This self-sacrificing, others elevating love is used in the Bible to describe the way God the Father and God the Son love each other. This type of love is the one thing we must do as Christ-followers because we demonstrate the character of God when we love with Christ's love.

Q: Have volunteers read 1 John 4: 8 and Matthew 22: 37-40. How does God esteem love as most important in these passages?

Q: Understanding the truth that God doesn't want something from you, He wants to give something to you...His love. Practically, how can you act in love and share the heart of God with your family, and friends, at school, at work, in the community you live?

• Love Matters Most

Love is partly emotion but love that is emotion only is shallow and destined to fail. Love acts in spite of what you feel some times. "Love is a choice you make, a habit you shape, and a lifestyle you cultivate."

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Q: Read and review 1 Corinthians 13:4-6. Paul gives 10 choices that love makes until it becomes your lifestyle. Which statements below do you find it easy to declare and live out through love? Which statements do you find it most difficult to embrace and walk out?

10 Positive choices Love makes:

1. I choose to be patient.
2. I choose to be kind.
3. I choose to bless you.
4. I choose to talk about you.
5. I choose humility.
6. I choose to treat you right at all times.
7. I choose to act selflessly.
8. I choose to be peaceful.
9. I choose to forgive.
10. I choose to be faithful and true.

• Love Lasts

Love lasts because God is love. He wants you to have a love that lasts too, both a love for Him and a love for people. 1 Corinthians 13:9-12, Paul wrote that a lot of things will pass away. Prophecies will cease. Miraculous speaking in tongues and supernatural revelations will pass away. We know that political kingdoms will rise and fall. Even the present heaven and present earth will one day be burned. But the one thing God says will remain is love.

Q: What is an area in your life where you need the lasting love of Jesus to come through in a real and tangible way?

Q: What is one way you can choose to love in grace and trust in a personal relationship?

► Closing

Love is the lead in who God is and how He relates to Himself and us as His children. Jesus' love is transformational because His love changes you and how you feel about yourself and talk to yourself. Once you experience His love, He commands you to give it away. The love you get from Him is the love you give to others.

Q: What are some ways that your group can encourage one another to be love givers?

Q: How can the group be praying for you this week?