

## FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

### Int.

1. Aim: To show the supremacy of love and why.
2. 1 Cor. 13:13 “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.” (NKJV)
  - a. In chapter 12 Paul closed by saying that he would show a “more excellent way”
  - b. This is the way of love in chapter 13
  - c. The purpose of this chapter is to show God’s people a way to solve their problems and to be happy on their way to heaven.
  - d. This chapter has been called Paul’s hymn to Love - it is one of the greatest things he ever wrote.
  - e. V. 13 is a summary of the main ingredients of Christianity and it has love in the place of honor
3. In this study we will look briefly at the whole chapter and then the last verse to see why love is the greatest.

### Discussion

#### I. EXPLANATION OF LOVE - v. 1-13

##### A. Importance of Love - v. 1-3

1. Underlying our speech and actions must be the motive of love. The power behind one’s tongue is not determined by the extent of his vocabulary, but by the quality of his heart.
2. Without love his deeds are nothing.

**B. Characteristics of love - v. 4-7**

1. Love comes from God - God is love - 1 John 4:16 "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."
2. Love seeks, desires, and promotes the highest good.
3. The 15 characteristics of love are Paul's practical definition of love
  - (1) **v. 4** Love suffers long
  - (2) and is kind;
  - (3) love does not envy;
  - (4) love does not parade itself,
  - (5) is not puffed up;
  - (6) **v. 5** does not behave rudely,
  - (7) does not seek its own,
  - (8) is not provoked,
  - (9) thinks no evil;
  - (10) **v. 6** does not rejoice in iniquity,
  - (11) but rejoices in the truth;
  - (12) **v. 7** bears all things,
  - (13) believes all things,
  - (14) hopes all things,
  - (15) endures all things.

**C. Permanence of love - v. 8-12**

1. Spiritual gifts are temporary
2. But this more excellent way of love is permanent
3. These spiritual gifts will cease and they have
  - a. When that which is perfect - the complete will of God - has come then the gifts will cease
  - b. God's revelation was given in the first century
  - c. Therefore these temporary gifts have ceased
4. Love will endure forever

**II. THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE - v. 13****A. Now abides Faith, Hope and Love**

1. Spiritual gifts such as prophecies, tongues and knowledge are gone
2. They will no longer be needed
3. But these three remain because they are essential as long as the church shall last
  - These three are essential to the salvation of each individual
4. But these spiritual gifts of the first century were not essential for salvation and many did not even have a single spiritual gift
5. But now we have Faith, Hope and Love

## B. But Paul does not say that these three are eternal

1. **NEB** says "There are three things that last forever" - This is wrong
2. Faith looks forward to fulfillment
  - a. Heb. 11:1 "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Assurance = ASV
  - b. While we live in this world we "walk by faith, not by sight" 2 Cor. 5:7
  - c. Faith is a characteristic of this age
  - d. Without faith it is impossible to please God - Heb. 11:6
3. Hope is limited to earthly experience
  - a. Rom. 15:4
  - b. Hope is
    - (1) Waiting - Gal 5:5, "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith."
    - (2) Expectation - Phil 1:20a "According to my earnest expectation and my hope, "
    - (3) Looking Tit. 2:13 "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;"
  - c. Hope is the anchor of the soul - Heb. 6:19 "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;"
  - d. We hope for "that we see not" Rm. 8:25
  - e. Rom. 8:24 "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? "

4. When earth is no more and the eternal day has dawned, faith will be lost in sight, and hope, in fruition. Faith and hope will not exist in heaven. Faith will be realized and hope will be seen.

**C. Faith, Hope and Love - the relation of these three**

1. Faith will lead one to accept as true anything which the Bible teaches
2. Hope enables us to put confidence in everything which God promises
3. Love causes us to obey - **John 14:15**    **1 John 5:3**
4. Faith moves us and hope sustains us: but it is our love for God and man that moves us on to obedience. Therefore love is greater than faith or hope

**D. The process**

1. Word of God, or the seed of the kingdom, that is received in a good and honest heart produces faith - Lk. 8:12    Rom. 10:17
2. Faith in the promises of God produces hope.
3. The end of faith and hope is a person living in harmony with the will of God and that is the way of love or the more excellent way.
4. Faith must fill the mind with hope, and work by love.
5. Since love is the basis of both faith and hope, then love is greater

### E. The greatest is love

1. Faith will be lost in sight
2. Hope will come to fruition
3. Therefore love is the greatest - it will continue - "love never faileth" - it will always be important and will always be there
4. As these three - faith, hope and love, are greater than the spiritual gifts because they endure after they have ceased - so love is greater than faith and hope because it will endure after faith has turned to sight and hope has given way to fruition
5. We now believe in Jesus but in heaven we will have knowledge of him.
6. We now have a hope of heaven but then we will have realized that hope and "hope that is seen is not hope" Rom. 8;24

### Conclusion

1. 1 Cor. 13:13 "And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." (NKJV)
2. All three - faith, hope and love are of God
  - a. But love alone is in God - God is love
  - b. He implants faith and hope in us
  - c. He shows His love to us and expects us to return that love to him
3. Nothing, including death, "shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rm. 8:39
4. If we love Him - we will obey Him.
5. Plan of Salvation - Hear, Believe, Repent, Confess, Be baptized - Acts 2:47

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