

The Power of Love

I Corinthians 13:1-13

9/9/01

Intro

- Growth Groups
- Kaveh preaching last week/ outdoor service

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In the last chapter, Paul has been teaching about the gifts of power from the Holy Spirit. But there were some people who had been misusing what they had been given and were even acting superior to others who didn't have such gifts.

In this chapter, Paul gives the greatest lesson of all in one the most powerful chapters in the whole of the Bible.

This is about the most powerful force known to man, the power of love. Why is it powerful, because it changes people.

This chapter is about the power of love.

There is an old song from the 70s that has captured the hope of millions of people. *"What the world needs now is love, sweet, love."* But after five failed marriages, it was something he didn't find.

Then there is the famous definition given to us by the movies, *"love is never having to say you're sorry."* Which was the worst definition of all. This is about what the author of love has to say about the most powerful word in the universe.

I. Love is what makes us something.

Vs 1-3

A. You could accomplish incredible, awesome feats, but without love, it is nothing.

- Actually, Paul says in verse 2, **"I am nothing."**

B. Love, then, is the quality that makes us something.

I John 4:7-13

- It is the quality most like God.
- God is love.
- Therefore, it is the powerful way that people can see that God is in us.
- Because God's form of love is the opposite of human nature.

Illus –

II. How, then, do you measure love?

Vs 4-7

A. First, how should we define it?

- We have one word, love, that is used in way too many ways.

Illus- We say we love frozen Snickers on ice cream, then say we love our wife, our kids, our job, and the Seattle Mariners all in the same breath.

- The Greeks had many different words for love – storgay, eros, phileo, and one not found in classical Greek, agape.
- The King James uses "charity" because it captures the thought of giving yourself away.

B. Paul gets very specific in vs 4-7.

- But this list is impossible to do.

Illus- Put your name in place of the word love in the list for an easy test to see how you're measuring up.

Put Jesus' name and it fits beautifully.

- Do we compare ourselves to each other, or to the author love?
- In fact, that's the way to change. To cherish the Lord is to be like Him.

Illus – There is a story of a very wealthy man who died without any immediate family left...

III. Why would we want to be a loving person?

A. Consider the alternative.

Illus – the result is to be a small, grouchy, irritable old cuss.

B. Here are some reasons to be a loving person.

- God said so. Deut 6:4 says it well.
- It demonstrates that Christ dwells within us like nothing else.
- It's the most fulfilling way to live.

- Love causes us to increase. (When we give ourselves away, we get back much in return.)
- You're then flowing in the Spirit. It's the *Most Excellent Way*, Paul refers to.
- There's a part of us that wants to make a difference in this world.

Conclusion

My prayer is that, as a church, we can desire to change; to be able to see the qualities of love more evident in our lives as we grow as a church, as we draw closer to Him in every decision we make.