

Summit Woods Baptist Church
First Corinthians Sermon Study Equipping Class

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

❖ Day 1

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

For these lessons, the sermon text is provided in a format that visually helps display the structure of the paragraph or section of text. The main verbs are underlined. Generally, the main indicative clauses remain to the left, and the supporting clauses are either directly underneath when they have equal priority to what comes before, or are tabbed to the right when the clause supports, develops, or draws a conclusion from a neighboring clause.

¹If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels,
but have not love,
I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

²And if I have prophetic powers,
and understand all mysteries and all knowledge,
and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains,
but have not love,
I am nothing.

³If I give away all I have,
and if I deliver up my body to be burned,
but have not love,
I gain nothing.

1. What is the main subject that provides the context for the larger section in which this week's passage falls?
2. The three sentences in this week's passage all have a parallel structure. Write the parts of each sentence under the appropriate category below.

IF
Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

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BUT

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

(implied) THEN

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

3. What connections do you see in the “if” sections to the lists of spiritual gifts from chapter 12 and from Romans 12:6-8, etc.? How do these connections help you place this passage in the context of chapters 12-14?

4. Where in the list did Paul place tongues in 12:28? So then, why start with tongues here?

❖ Day 2

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 again.

5. Look at the three “then” sections. What is similar about Paul's conclusions? What is different?

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6. How are the three “then” conclusions the opposite of what we can imagine the Corinthians expected to result from their exercise of these gifts?
7. In all three sentences, what does Paul say is the reason that the exercise of the gifts could result in noise or in nothing?
8. Without love, how would a person likely use his knowledge? And how might this relate to what we discussed in 8:1?
9. Verse 3 describes the *nothingness* of a selfless-looking act done *without* love. Describe the motivation(s) for the self-sacrifice of a loving person (without using the word ‘love’ in your answer)?
10. Next week we will look at Paul’s detailed description of love, but briefly define ‘love’ in your own few words.

❖ Day 3

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 again.

11. Why does God give spiritual gifts? (Remember our thesis verse in 12:7.)

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12. How does this focus on love relate specifically to 12:31 from last week's passage?
13. How does this focus on love relate to the metaphor of being the body of Christ?
14. To summarize, restate what Paul is saying in this week's passage to a 7-year-old.
15. How do these verses cause you to reflect either on the ways that you have used your spiritual gifts in the past or how you will commit to use them in the future?

In preparation for Sunday, pray that we would exercise our spiritual gifts in love for the common good.