

1 Cor. 13:1-4 "The Late Night Drummer"

For the Children: When people are first learning to play a musical instrument, it often sounds pretty bad. The sound may not have any real tune to it. Perhaps the wrong notes are hit, or it takes a long time between the notes. Perhaps you put your hands over your ears, and beg, "Please stop that awful sound!" When a person tries to do good things for the wrong reason, it is like a bad sound to the Lord. The only right reason is to please and obey Him, thankful for His mercy to us. That means we should do things out of love for God and love for other people as well. **Questions:** What are some wrong reasons for doing good deeds? Would you expect those who love God and other people to keep acting like they're more important than everyone else? What is "love"?

Introduction:

First Point: The Things We Do

- 1) The List of Deeds: Many people think they can promote themselves, earn the favour of God and men, by the deeds they do. The apostle lists 6 types of deeds by way of example: the exercise of extraordinary gifts (speaking in tongues, prophecy, possibly (miraculous) knowledge, a strong faith for doing great miracles; the gift of understanding doctrine if "knowledge" is not the extraordinary kind; diaconal giving; and the giving of one's life as a martyr
- 2) The Missing Ingredient: The use of gifts listed here involves extreme and impressive acts of service. But in each case the apostle warns that these things are virtually worthless if they do not arise from the motive of love, an inner grace from the Holy Spirit. If this is true of these extreme deeds, we may assume that the same applies to all other acts of service we might perform

Second Point: The Thing We Need

- 1) What Man Is Without Love: The seriousness of the warning is underscored by the apostle's description of the person who performs his service without love. He is a "noisy gong or a clanging cymbal" – a "noise that draws attention but produces little of beauty or value when it is by itself. He is a "nothing" – even if he is trying to put himself forward as a "somebody." And he is "profited nothing" – spiritually speaking. This shows how essential Christian love is
- 2) The Nature of Christian Love: Christian love is a grace or fruit, worked in us by the Holy Spirit, along with the gift of faith. Hence the emphasis is on what we have and are – by God's working in us - not what we do. God's love comes before ours (1 Jn. 4:10). But the fruit of that must outwork itself in whole-hearted love towards God and –closely related – love of neighbour, especially our brethren. The rest of the chapter describes what that love of others looks like. See also 1 Jn 4 on the necessary connection between loving God and loving one another

Conclusion:

