

A More Excellent Way (13:1-13)

- I. **Introduction: 1 Corinthians on its own vs. in context**
 - A. 1 Cor 13 is often preached apart from the context of spiritual gifts
 - B. 1 Cor 13 links the main themes of the epistle – **unity, holiness, love**
 - C. Outline of sermon / pray
 - D. Establishing context from chapter 12:29-31

- II. **The necessity of love (1 Cor 13:1-3)**
 - A. Clarifying the meaning of the Greek word for love - *agape*
 - 1. Dispelling some wrong ideas about *agape*
 - 2. The importance of rightly defining love “Feelings” vs. “Gospel”
 - B. v. 1 – *If I speak with the tongues of men and angels ...*
 - 1. Paul includes himself or diminish the harshness of the rebuke
 - 2. Tongues
 - a. a supernatural ability to speak another language
 - b. Are “*tongues of angels*” a private prayer language?
 - c. The gift you exalt most is useless without love!
 - C. v. 2 – *If I know all mysteries ... and have all faith ...*
 - 1. Without love, I am nothing!
 - D. v. 3 – Isn’t self-sacrifice the ultimate proof of love?
 - E. Paul is correcting a false view of “spirituality.”
 - 1. Let us examine our own lives and motives

- III. **The superiority of love (1 Cor 1:4-7)**
 - A. 15 portraits that show us what love looks like
 - 1. patient, kind
 - 2. not jealous, does not brag, is not arrogant,
does not act unbecomingly, does not seek its own
 - 3. is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered
 - 4. does not rejoice in unrighteousness, rejoices in truth,
 - 5. bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things,
endures all things
 - B. But who can love like this?
 - 1. You can’t, but Christ did – so believe and trust Him!

- IV. **The permanence of love (1 Cor 13:8-13)**
 - A. Love never ends but spiritual gifts will all cease
 - 1. When will the gifts cease?
 - a. When “the perfect comes”
 - b. When we see things “face to face”
 - c. When we “fully know” as we are “fully known.”
 - d. When the child grows to maturity
 - e. When we no longer see through a mirror dimly
 - 2. Have the Spiritual gifts ceased in our day?
 - a. The answer will depend on your understanding of the gifts
 - B. *Faith, Hope, and Love abide, but the greatest of these is love*
 - C. How should we then love? (1 John 4:7-21)