

Timeless Teachings of Love: Exploring The Love Chapter: 1 Corinthians 13 #Agape #1corinthians13

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[0:00] 1 Corinthians 13. A message of love.

And really love is the most important quality that we can know, isn't it?! That we can have in our lives. Yet I think the meaning of the word love has got lost somehow, corrupted in our culture. Love is used for other things that are really not the love that is God's kind of love. And that's what we want to look at today. We've heard about the more excellent sacrifice. Now, the more excellent way, which is love. The more excellent way. So we're going to look at what they call the love chapter. And really it's the most comprehensive description of love from God's perspective, isn't it?

Of what love is and what it is not. And Jonathan Edwards, the old time preacher, he preached to exhort his church to a life of daily love with one another.

[1:01] And he preached 16 sermons on 1 Corinthians 13. On these 13 verses. 16 sermons in the year 1738. But we're just going to have the condensed version tonight.

One sermon. But there's a lot we could say. Really there's much we could say about all of these lovely verses. And really love speaks to us of what is dear, what is precious.

And we're talking of God's love. It's that awesome love that is his precious, undeserved love, isn't it? His relentless, enduring love.

His selfless love. Love that keeps no record of offense. Love that loves no matter what. And it says in 1 Corinthians 8 verse 1 that knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.

Love edifies. Love builds up. And so love is really so precious. We can have all kinds of knowledge but lack the love. Then we're missing out on what is really critical.

[2:00] Love. And love really is more important than any spiritual gift, any endowment of ability that we could know. Love is the most excellent way.

And really love is God's greatest gift, isn't it? And so we're going to pick it up there from 1 Corinthians 12, 31. Paul writes, of course, the context of spiritual gifts.

And he tells us here, verse 31, but covet earnestly the best gifts. And yet show I unto you a more excellent way.

He says that we should covet earnestly. We should desire these gifts, the best gifts. And he says really the most excellent way, the more excellent way is love.

Paul goes on to tell how we may have this kind of love and what it looks like. The kind of display of love. There's all kinds of displays of spirituality, but without love, they're vain.

[3:02] And we see that there as we get into 1 Corinthians 13. And Paul says this, Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

So the Corinthians had this time when miraculous things were going on. Yet for all of this, they were missing out on the more excellent way. They were getting prideful, fleshly, carnal.

Yet for all of these things that they had, these miraculous wonders, they were missing out on the more excellent way. And that's what Paul was chiding them about.

Love was missing. Without that, it was just noise. And we can make that mistake too, where love is that vital ingredient. And when it's missing, everything falls flat.

Now I know you ladies, while we won't be sexist, you men that make cakes, if you're making that cake and you're missing that vital ingredient, it makes the cake useless, doesn't it?

[4:03] When that vital ingredient is missing, everything fails. Imagine a cake without the main ingredient. This was what was happening at Corinth

here in this church.

Their missing love was lacking. And so he's exhorting them that way. Let's learn about God's kind of love here as we go through some of the qualities that Paul tells us of. What he's talking about is love, agape love.

Really God's special, ultimate, perfect love, isn't it? God is love. Love. It's who he is. And this love, this love is God's kind of love.

It's truly unconditional, sacrificial. And Romans 5.8 tells us God commends his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

He loved us while we were his enemies. He loved us so, to extend his love gift to us. And verse 2 we read on, Though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I can remove mountains and have not charity.

[5:13] Until next day.