

The Prologue of Eternity

1 Corinthians 13

Bulletin Notes

Love: the Prologue of Eternity

- The Priority of Love
- The Nature of Love
- The Preeminence of Love

Looking Back

1 Corinthians 13 is the greatest wedding passage that isn't about marriage! And that's not without good reason. It is an exquisite text, filled with the warmth and beauty of a life laid down for the good of others. Situated between two chapters on spiritual gifts, this exploration of self-giving love offers the Church a foundation for all of its functions.

Love can be a fuzzy word to understand in the English language. We use the same word to convey our relationship to tacos, movies, sports teams, and our families! If we love *Star Wars* the same way we love our spouse or kids, something is seriously off! Paul roots his definition of love (the Greek term *agape*) in the very person and work of Christ – the one who gave himself in the ultimate act of love. Paul calls the people of God into this kind of love as the prologue of eternity – when the love of God will fill all in all.

Thinking It Through (agree/disagree, consider/contemplate)

“Love in action is a harsh and dreadful thing compared with love in dreams...active love is labor and fortitude.” – Fyodor Dostoyevsky

“We do not learn from experience, we learn from reflecting on an experience” – John Dewey

“If you had to summarize Christlike character in one word, there would be no competition: love.

*Love is the acid test of spiritual formation. The single most important question is, **Are we becoming more loving?** Not, Are we becoming more biblically educated? Or practicing more spiritual disciplines? Or more involved in church? Those are all good things, but not the most important thing.” – John Mark Comer*

Working It Out

1. What stood out to you from this week's sermon / text?
2. Read 1 John 4:7-12. What stands out to you? What challenges your thinking? What challenges your *living*?
3. Recall a recent experience where you were unloving (in the sense of 1 Corinthians 13 – i.e. not patient, not kind, etc...). What led you to act in that way?

4. Recall an experience or relationship where you felt truly known, and thus, truly loved. What feelings or sensations come to mind?
5. What do you sense love might be leading you (individually) and your community into? This isn't meant to be abstract – it's a very practical question! (Examples: serving at a local food pantry, interacting with the homeless downtown, serving within the church, inviting your neighbors to dinner, intentionally practicing patience in your interactions with your children, etc...)

Prayer Points

- Pray that GFC would be a community invaded and motivated by love, and that God would start with you.
 - Pray that you might discern where love is leading you to action in your specific season of life.
 - Pray that you would know, experience, and enjoy the love of God in a deep and profound way this week.
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