

## LOVE IS THE BIG THING!

February 21, 2016 1 Corinthians 13 by Bob Branch  
Tooling Up To Change The World, Part 5

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### Have you ever met a loveless Christian?

**MAIN IDEA:** As we move into a more full expression of biblical spirituality (i.e. spiritual gifts, aggressively going out, going deep with God, etc.), love must filter and propel everything we do and say. Love is the grease that makes spiritual gifts helpful to all. *Love is the big thing!*

<sup>31</sup> Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. And I will show you a more excellent way. <sup>1</sup> If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> If I have *the gift of prophecy* and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may be burned, but do not have love, I gain nothing. **1 Cor. 12:31-13:3**

### The absolute necessity of love

*"If I speak in tongues of men & angels"*

*"If I have prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains"*

*"If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to be burned" is the Cause.*

- 1. All expressions of religion (incl. spiritual gifts) without love are simply noise, nothingness, and benefit no one. Love is indispensable.**

<sup>4</sup> Love endures long, and gives kindness. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. <sup>5</sup> It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. <sup>6</sup> Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup> It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. **1 Corinthians 13:4-7**

***Gifts expressed with this love in mind are incredibly powerful and affective.***

**Long-suffering & kindness describe God's love (Rom. 2:4)**

"I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you." **Jeremiah 31:3 ESV**

*"Love... takes joy in the truth. It always quietly covers over, always believes the best, always expects good to prevail, there for the long haul."*

- 2. Love does—it must move from ideals and feelings to character and action, and every expression of the Spirit's work must be love-expressed.**

<sup>8</sup> Love never ends. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. <sup>9</sup> For we know in part and we prophesy in part, <sup>10</sup> but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. <sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. <sup>12</sup> For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. <sup>13</sup> And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. <sup>1</sup> Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy. **1 Corinthians 13:8-14:1**

**Love is the only thing that really lasts. (permanence of love.)**

<sup>1</sup> love does has no expiration date. <sup>2</sup> The gifts do. <sup>3</sup> a time is coming when the gifts listed will no longer be needed. <sup>4</sup> Something will replace them that is complete. <sup>5</sup> That completeness will be a face-to-face completeness. <sup>6</sup> When will we see God face-to-face? (Christ's return; rez; ch. 15) <sup>7</sup> Thus, in eternity, the partial nature of the gifts will no longer be needed.

- 3. Invest heavily in loving others as you grow spiritually and in the gifts because ultimately it is the only thing that will last into eternity.**