

THE THEOLOGY OF LOVE Introduction Part II

*“So, how important is love?”*

Reference: **I Corinthians 13:1-13**

Pastor Larry Webb

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**1 Corinthians 13:1-3**

**verse one**, *“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.”*

**verse two**, *“And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.”*

**verse three**, *“And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.”*

In the original Greek text **1 Corinthians chapter thirteen** consists of just three successive paragraphs:

- paragraph one is found in **verses one** through **three**
- paragraph two consists of **verses four** through **seven** and
- paragraph three is found in **verses eight** through **thirteen**

Each of these paragraphs emphasizes a different perspective on agape love. This morning’s message addresses just the first paragraph.

**Paragraph one** emphasizes that spiritual gifts minus love is a \_\_\_\_\_!

In **verses one** through **three** Paul discusses the absolute importance of agape love. Paul mentions 6 different spiritual gifts in this section and his argument is that if each of these gifts is exercised to the exclusion of agape love then the net result is \_\_\_\_\_ and that is a **BIG** mistake!

**Gift One**...spiritual gift of \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

**verse one**, *“Though I speak with the tongues (languages) of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass (noisy gong) or a clanging cymbal.”*

The Greek word translated as tongues is *glossa*. Sometimes *glossa* describes the actual appendage called the tongue; but, most often *glossa* described a language or languages. This spiritual gift called tongues (languages) is one of four miraculous spiritual gifts called **sign gifts**. Those **sign gifts** acted as spiritual signs that said something specific to the people that witnessed them in action.

Those four **sign gifts** are: tongues (languages), interpretation of tongues (languages), \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

There are three positions evangelicals hold to related to these sign gifts:

- **Continuationism** - According to this position those same sign gifts that were practiced in the beginning part of the first century church have \_\_\_\_\_ to be operational in the church until the present.
- **Cessationism** - According to this position those same sign gifts were \_\_\_\_\_ at the end of the apostolic age and are no longer available to the church.
- **Open but cautious** - This position isn't convinced Scripture has ruled out the continued existence of the sign gifts and it also isn't convinced that those same sign gifts are still in operation since there is so much abuse of the gifts so it's **open** to the possibility those gifts still exist but if so, is **cautious** about accepting them until it is \_\_\_\_\_ those gifts are being exercised according to Scripture.

"In essentials \_\_\_\_\_, in non-essentials \_\_\_\_\_, and in all things \_\_\_\_\_ (love)."

Fourth century church father,  
Augustine

The word *glossa* is found in the Greek New Testament some 50 times. Once it is used to describe the actual appendage of the tongue in someone's mouth (**James 3:5**), once it is used in a figurative sense describing fire shaped tongues that sat on the apostles (**Acts 2:3**), and once, in another metaphorical sense, it is used describing generic speech (**Acts 2:26**); but, all the other times the word *glossa* is used, it describes a recognizable human \_\_\_\_\_.

**Definition:** The gift of tongues (languages) is a HS gift that enables someone to speak a fluent language that he has \_\_\_\_\_.

Reference: **Acts 2:1-11** (see screen)

**Gift Two**...spiritual gift of \_\_\_\_\_  
**verse two**, "*And though I have the gift of **prophecy**...*"

The actual term "prophecy" can mean both *preaching* and *predicating*. Most of the time in Scripture "prophecy" means \_\_\_\_\_ and that is primarily how the gift is used in modern times.

**Gift Three**...spiritual gift of \_\_\_\_\_  
**verse two continued**, "*And though I...**understand all mysteries**...*"  
It is said a spiritual mystery is something secretive from the past

(Old Testament) that has been revealed to us in the present (New Testament). These mysteries are essentially \_\_\_\_\_.

**Gift Four**...spiritual gift of \_\_\_\_\_  
**verse two continued**, "*And though I...**understand ...all knowledge**...*"  
Knowledge as a spiritual gift is this unusual ability to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ truth.

**Gift Five**...spiritual gift of \_\_\_\_\_  
**verse two continued**, "*...and though I **have all faith**, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*"

**Gift Six**...spiritual gift of \_\_\_\_\_  
**verse three**, "*And though I **bestow all my goods** to feed the poor...*"

Putting all three verses together:  
**verse one** teaches a person without love  
\_\_\_\_\_ nothing of value  
**verse two** teaches that a person without love  
\_\_\_\_\_ himself of no value and  
**verse three** teaches that a person without love  
\_\_\_\_\_ nothing of value!