

Love Never Fails

What Is Distinctive About Christian Love?

1 Cor. 13:5-13

- *Band of Brothers*, Stephen Ambrose
- What ___ holds _____ us together?
- Context: spiritual gifts
- Characteristics of love (continued)
- Genuine love is not _____ unconditional _____
- Five characteristics of love (verses 1-4)
 - patient
 - kind
 - does not envy
 - does not boast
 - is not proud

1. Ten more characteristics of love (verses 5-7)

- Not _____ rude _____
- Not self-_____ seeking _____
- Not easily _____ angered _____
- Keeps no record of _____ wrongs _____
- Does not delight in _____ evil _____
- Rejoices in the _____ truth _____
- Always _____ protects _____
- Always _____ trusts _____
- Always _____ hopes _____
- Always _____ perseveres _____

2. Now what?

- Jesus is the _____ personification _____ of love
 - Put “Jesus” in place of word “love”
 - Now put your name in place of “love”

3. Love is _____ permanent _____, not temporary (verses 8-10)

- “Love never fails”
- Tongues, prophecy & knowledge are temporary

4. Love is _____ complete _____, not partial (verses 11-12)

1 Cor.8:2. *The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know.*

Rom. 11:33-34. *Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?”*

- Childhood
- Cloudy mirror

5. Love is _____ superior _____ among the eternal (verse 13)

- Faith, hope and love

(1 John 4:7-11) *Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

Conclusion:

- How am I (are you) doing with regard to love?
- How are we doing as a church?
"Life is not made of years but of moments." Elie Wiesel.
- How are we doing as a nation?

e. **You have a tremendous advantage**

Sermon-based Small Group Discussion Guide

Week of November 8, 2009

1 Corinthians 13:5-13

1. Icebreaker: Name a time when you felt most loved.

1. Why do you think that Paul didn't put "love" on the list of spiritual gifts?
2. Choose one of the traits of love from the sermon notes and meditate on it. Jot down some thoughts to share with your group.
3. Which trait of love comes most easily for you? Paul lists a total of 15. Use the technique of substituting your name for the word "love."
4. What have you done lately that is an example of what love is? (Is not?)
5. Which trait of love is most difficult for you to exhibit? Why?
6. Which trait(s) do you see being used at St. Paul's?
7. Is there a trait that you think needs some extra help at St. Paul's?

8. Does a Christian have any advantages when it comes to loving others?
9. Paul says that love will outlast your spiritual gifts (vs. 8). What does he mean by that and how does that make you feel?
10. When Paul contrasts childhood to adulthood (vs. 11), what is he saying about love?
11. What does it mean to you that you will see Jesus face to face (vs. 12)?
12. Paul says that the greatest of these is love. How important is love?
13. What impact has this chapter had on your understanding of love?
14. What things do you think can be done to encourage love within St. Paul's family?

Prayer:

Ask God to increase His love among brothers and sisters at St. Paul's.

Pray for one another.