



A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Text for the Week: 1 Corinthians 13

Message for the Week: What's Love Got
to Do With It?

Sunday, January 12

Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week? Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

What did you love the most about your Christmas and New Year's holiday gatherings?

Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [1 Corinthians 13](#) out loud.

(Clicking the link will bring you to multiple translations.)

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

Respond / Reflect:

How should we understand the word "love?"

What are the things we often value more than love?

God fully knows each one of us. What do you think it means to be fully known? What does love have to do with being fully known?

As you look at the list in verses 4-7 of all the different things that love is, which three stand out to you the most? Why do they stand out to you?

What is needed for love to flow freely through you/us?

Have you experienced and received the love of God that is described in 1 Corinthians 13? How does/is the love of God shaping your life and love for others?

Take Away:

What is a main point or key message that you learned, understood, observed, or experienced that you are taking away with you from your group's reflections on the bible passage or your group's conversations today?

Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Who in your group needs prayer today? Who in your group will you pray for?

Pray this prayer together:

Father, may I live fully into your love so that it flows freely through me. May I let go of those things that get in the way of sharing your love. AMEN

"Try It" - Putting our Faith into Action:

This week,...Love!

1 Corinthians 13 – New International Version

13 If I speak in the tongues^[a] of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² 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. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast,^[b] but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

⁸ Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. ¹¹ 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. ¹² 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.

¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Footnotes

- a. [1 Corinthians 13:1](#) Or *languages*
- b. [1 Corinthians 13:3](#) Some manuscripts *body to the flames*

1 Corinthians 13 - The Message

¹3 If I speak with human eloquence and angelic ecstasy but don't love, I'm nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate.

²If I speak God's Word with power, revealing all his mysteries and making everything plain as day, and if I have faith that says to a mountain, "Jump," and it jumps, but I don't love, I'm nothing.

³⁻⁷ If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love.

Love never gives up.

Love cares more for others than for self.

Love doesn't want what it doesn't have.

Love doesn't strut,

Doesn't have a swelled head,

Doesn't force itself on others,

Isn't always "me first,"

Doesn't fly off the handle,

Doesn't keep score of the sins of others,

Doesn't revel when others grovel,

Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,

Puts up with anything,

Trusts God always,

Always looks for the best,

Never looks back,

But keeps going to the end.

⁸⁻¹⁰ Love never dies. Inspired speech will be over some day; praying in tongues will end; understanding will reach its limit. We know only a portion of the truth, and what we say about God is always incomplete. But when the Complete arrives, our incompletes will be canceled.

¹¹ When I was an infant at my mother's breast, I gurgled and cooed like any infant. When I grew up, I left those infant ways for good.

¹² We don't yet see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We'll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us!

¹³ But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us toward that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love.