

Studies in First Corinthians

NT Survey Lesson 99--1 Corinthians 13

Introduction: In this chapter Paul presents what he calls in chapter twelve the "more excellent way". The Christians at Corinth were failing to use their spiritual gifts with love for one another. Paul shows them that spiritual gifts will some day cease; but love will abide until the end of time.

Lesson aim: To encourage the student to understand the duration of spiritual gifts and the need to show love toward others as God defines it.

The need for love in the exercize of spiritual gifts--1 Cor. 13:1-3

1. What does the word "tongue" mean in verse 1? If one could speak in the tongues of men and angels but without charity (love), what does Paul say about him?
2. If God gave one the power to know all mysteries and to prophesy, and that person did not have love, what does Paul say about him?
3. What other things did Paul mention one might do that also would profit one nothing without love?
4. So then, what point is Paul making about spiritual gifts in the first three verses?

The qualities of love--1 Cor. 13:4-7

1. Make a list of the different characteristics of love. Try to give a brief definition of each one.

The cessation of spiritual gifts and the abiding nature of love-- 1 Cor. 13:8-13

1. What did Paul say about love? What did Paul say would happen to prophecy, tongues, and (supernatural) knowledge?
2. Since in Paul's day God was revealing His truth through spiritual gifts that were continuing to be exercised, he said, "We know in _____ and we prophecy in _____".
3. When did Paul say the spiritual gifts of knowledge and prophecy would be done away?
4. What is the perfect (complete) thing that Paul saw coming in the future? Explain why you believe this.
5. Paul illustrates the idea of the doing away of spiritual gifts by comparing it to the growth of a person. When one is a child he does what? But when he becomes a man what does he do?
6. Paul likened the state of knowledge of his day as looking into what? What did Paul mean when he said, "we see in a glass darkly"? What did he mean when he indicated that in the future they would see "face to face"?
7. Is Paul talking about being "face to face with Christ my Savior" here?
8. What three things had Paul said would be done away? Now what three things does he say would abide? Which of these is greatest?