

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Outline of 1 Corinthians 13:1-13:

Verses 1-7: The Virtue Love of the Christian.

Verses 8: Virtue love continues into the post-canon period; temporary spiritual gifts do not.

Verses 9-11: Pre-Canon compared with the Post-Canon.

Verse 12: Church Age spiritual life compared with the spiritual life in the Eternal State.

Verse 13: Virtue love represents the greatest advance in the spiritual life.

This passage is discussing virtue-love, a combination of personal love for God the Father and unconditional love (impersonal love) directed toward all mankind (impersonal love has two sides: on one side there is kindness, thoughtfulness and compassion directed toward believer and unbeliever alike, on the other side there is a relaxed mental attitude that is no mental sins directed toward these members of the human race). Actually, these two categories of love form a tandem, for when the Christian has obtained love for the Father, he possesses the necessary virtue, values, humility and grace-orientation to possess the correct attitude and thinking toward mankind. This virtue is developed through fellowship with the Holy Spirit and increases as one moves toward occupation with Christ.

13:1 If [let's assume that] **I communicate in foreign languages of men** [not learned but acquired through the gift of language] **and of angels, but I do not have virtue-love** [personal love for God the Father, God the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus Christ and impersonal love for humanity], **I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal** [analogous to the emotionally ignorant Christian: a lot of noise and activity, but no virtue].

In verses one through three, Paul introduces three hypothetical situations. The Greek particle *ἐάν*: *ean* meaning "if" plus the verb in the subjunctive mood can be used to introduce a hypothetical situation. Since angelic languages are unknown to humans and since no one has ever moved a mountain by faith or ever will; these are a series of hypothetical situations with hyperbole added for dramatic effect.

Some Corinthian believers were given the gift of foreign languages (The Greek word *γλῶσσα* (*glossa*) is used in the New Testament for the literal tongue and for a language) by the Holy Spirit in order to evangelize the Jewish traders and merchants coming into the ports of Corinth and to warn (30 AD to 70 AD) them of their apostasy (Isaiah 28:10, 11). (Quite likely this gift was used to evangelize the Gentiles as well.) The sensational gift of foreign languages reminded the Corinthians of their cultural background with its cultic worship. For example, at the Oracle of Delphi, a female oracle sat on a tripod over a chasm in the rocks. Vapors rose from the fissures and caused the female oracle (also called Pythia) to go into a trance-like state. [Scientific investigation has shown there are two fault lines intersecting below this temple site namely the Delphic and Kerna fault lines. From these fault lines gasses such as ethylene, methane and carbon dioxide would escape, inducing euphoria and causing the oracle to hallucinate.] When she was ready inquirers would be led in by a priest who would ask the question which the inquirer wanted answered. The oracle would shout forth meaningless ecstatic utterances which the priests would interpret for the visitor. When some of the Corinthians were given the Gift of Languages and the Gift of Interpretation, it reminded them of their oracle at Delphi and her priests. For this reason, they

assumed that the gift of languages made them great, and many even developed a pseudo gift of Tongues as per chapter 14. However, Paul not only rejected their pseudo spiritual gift of languages (tongues), but also made it very clear that the gift of foreign languages is meaningless unless one has advanced in the spiritual life. In effect, he is saying that unless a believer possesses virtue love (with emphasis on personal love for God the Father and occupation with Christ) his spiritual gift is meaningless whatever it may be.

Although no human being has ever spoken an angelic language, Paul knew that angels do possess languages. Apparently, the angelic languages are much more complicated than human languages. So, if any human could speak an angelic language it would indicate his mental superiority over others, and many would assume even spiritual superiority. However, a great mentality and spiritual gifts do not make a Christian great; rather virtue-love makes the Christian a great believer.

Peddlers of the past and Christians without virtue have something in common. In ancient Greece and Rome there were no supermarkets, so peddlers with carts would move about the streets selling their produce and wares. As most of the homes had an outer wall around them, the peddler had to have some system of alerting the housewives regarding their presence. One method of doing this was to rub or bang two pieces of brass together making a terribly dissonant and irritating sound. This act of drawing attention to oneself is analogous to the self-centered believer who is functioning in a spiritual gift, but does not possess virtue love. Without virtue love the believer's motivation will be related to some form of arrogance, and in that state, he will always be trying to draw attention to himself, to glorify himself.

The Greek fraternities and sororities related to both the cult of Sibyl (Cybele) and of Dionysus (the Roman Bacchus) involved ecstatic utterances, frenzied activity, abandonment and the clashing and clanging of cymbals. Because of this past experience, many Corinthians had a great desire to participate in some type of emotional abandonment and ecstatic utterance. Thus, though the true Gift of Tongues did not involve emotional abandonment and ecstatic speech, the pseudo gift of Tongues did.

13:2. And, if [hypothetical situation with hyperbole] I have the gift of prophecy and I know all the mysteries [τὰ μυστήρια / *ta musteria*] and all the knowledge, and if I had all the faith so that I could move mountains from one place to another, but I do not have virtue-love, I am nothing [οὐθεν / *outhen*: the high form for "nothing" to relate the believer to the Greek Tragedies].

Some of these things were true of Paul, others were not. However, that is not the point. Paul was using himself as an illustration in a hypothetical conditional sentence. For instance, Paul did have the gift of prophecy as did Peter and John (Paul prophesized regarding the rapture of the church (1 Corinthians 15:51-54; 1Thessalonians 4:15-17). He also had the gift of knowledge and knew the mystery doctrines that would be a part of the spiritual life of the Church Age believer, and all other information which would be in the New Testament.

The Greek word μυστήριον (*musterion*) was the name given to the secret teachings of the Greek fraternities and sororities. These doctrines or mysteries were known only by the members of those organizations. In the Church Age there is a new spiritual fraternity, the royal family of God with its own secret teachings revealed only in the New Testament Epistles. Because these teachings are unique to the Church Age, Paul used the word mystery (*musterion*) to describe them. The royal family of our Lord is an exclusive club with unique doctrines.

Regarding the mystery doctrines, the Filling of the Spirit was never a part of the spiritual life of Old Testament believers. The humanity of Jesus Christ was the first one to have the filling of the Spirit (Isaiah 11:1-2) which power he gave to all Church age believers (Acts 1:8). Now that Jesus is no longer on the earth, he has appointed us as His ambassadors to personally represent Him (2 Corinthians 5:20). This is a first and never will occur again. Through the Baptism of the Spirit we are entered into eternal union with Christ, becoming a new spiritual species (2 Corinthians 5:17), and partakers in His royalty, priesthood, heirship, destiny, election, righteousness, eternal life and Sonship. These are the highest possible privileges with the highest possible status that God can give to a believer. Please note also that these privileges are given at the moment of salvation (a portion of the 39 irrevocable absolutes graciously given to every believer in Christ), regardless of how far a believer will advance in the plan of God. Not even the great Old Testament believers such as Moses, Abraham and David were presented with such a high status. Our bodies are temples indwelt by God the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19), the Lord Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:27; John 14:20) and God the Father (Ephesians 4:6). Even Christian marriage (marriage between two Christians) has been raised to the highest possible standards in the Church Age and as such is included in the mystery doctrines. Ephesians 5:32 teaches: "This mystery [Christian marriage] is great; I am speaking with reference to Christ [Christian marriage as related to ones relationship with Christ: Ephesians 5:22, 24, 25] and with reference to the Church [Christian marriage as part of the mystery doctrines of the Church Age]. These mystery doctrines revealed to Church Age believers through the New Testament epistles were not known before the Church Age and function only in the Church Age.

The Holy Spirit bestowed the gift of knowledge upon certain believers in the pre-canon period of the Church Age (1 Cor. 12:8; 14:6). By means of this spiritual gift they were given knowledge of all which would be in the New Testament. (You must remember that in the early church there was no Bible. So, how were Christians living in that period of history going to learn all of the doctrines and principles found in the New Testament?) Thus, the gift of knowledge and other temporary spiritual gifts (as taught in 1 Cor. 12:7-11) were used to provide these pre-canon-Christians with the spiritual life that we now learn from the completed New Testament.

Even though the gift of faith was used in the early church, no one ever possessed a faith for the purpose of moving mountains from one location to another. There would be no spiritual reason for doing that. Remember that this entire passage is dealing with hypothetical conditional sentences in order that Paul might be able to make his point. Paul is going to demonstrate that greatness in the spiritual life is related to loving God, not what spiritual gift one possesses or what the Christian is doing. Since all the temporary spiritual gifts in the early church were spectacular, Paul is making the gift of faith even more spectacular through hyperbole. In this way, Paul's concluding statement is even more dramatic. If you have all of these sensational spiritual gifts and even if you could move mountains, but you do not have virtue-love (the advanced spiritual life), you are nothing.

Though Paul wrote in Koine Greek, occasionally he would throw in some Classical Greek words, phrases and expressions. When he did use Classical Greek, there was always a reason. In verses 2 and 3, Paul should have used the Koine Greek word, "ουδεν" (*ouden*) both times since he wrote in Koine. So, when Paul instead threw in the Classical word "ουθεν" (*outhen*) in verse 2, it would have forced the Corinthians to focus on that word, and would have caused them to recall how the Greek heroes in the tragedies became nothing (*outhen*) through failure. Paul wanted the reader to make a comparison between the Greek heroes of the tragedies and the potential Christian hero, and just as the Greek heroes all failed so do all Christians who fail to obtain virtue love. Thus, if Paul in verse 3 would have again used the Classical Greek word "*outhen*" to describe the failure of Christians, he would have been

equating the failure of the Christian to that of the Greek hero, but Paul did not do that. Rather to indicate that the failure of believers is a much greater tragedy than the failure of the Greek heroes, Paul after having established the analogy no longer calls the believers who fails to obtain virtue love "*outhen*" as he did in verse 2, but "*ouden*," a Koine or common Greek word. (In the time of Paul, educated people studied and wrote in Classical Greek, whereas the common people spoke Koine.)

One of the Greek tragedies was about an ambitious and self-seeking king named Agamemnon. He had a lovely wife named Clytemnestra, a beautiful daughter, Iphigenia and a young son. Despite many blessings in his life, he wasn't satisfied. He wanted to be a great hero, for this was the age of heroes. When war broke out between the Mycenaean Greeks and the Trojans, Agamemnon was given command of the Mycenaean Navy and Army – and the perfect opportunity to become a hero at last. However, as preparation for war was being made a disaster occurred which easily could have caused Agamemnon to lose his position as commander and thus his chance for greatness! The Mycenaean Greeks had assembled a huge naval fleet in the harbor of Aulis, though as the winds were unfavorable at that time the ships could not depart Aulis to sail toward Troy.

The Greek religion of that period was related to human sacrifice and demonism, the activities of which were governed by the temple priests. After the ships had sat idly in the port for many days, the priests approached Agamemnon to explain that the reason for the lack of wind was that one of the animals sacred to the goddess Artemis had been killed by the soldiers, and that in her anger she had calmed the winds. In order to appease the goddess's wrath, Agamemnon would have to make a great sacrifice - that of his daughter's life. (Iphigenia loved her father and so had requested, and been given permission, to accompany her father on his ship.)

Agamemnon could have demonstrated true greatness and refused to murder his daughter for the sake of this evil religion, but he didn't. If he had, he probably would have been removed as overall commander of the fleet and army and his dream to become a great hero would have never come to pass. Since Agamemnon's lust to become a great hero was greater than his love for his daughter, he permitted the priest to cut the throat of his daughter and to burn her as an offering to Artemis.

The soldiers thought that he was great for making this great sacrifice, though his wife Clytemnestra thought otherwise, and became very bitter when she heard the news of her daughter's cruel murder. After the war, Agamemnon returned victorious to a hero's welcome in Mycenae. Also waiting for him was his lovely wife. She pretended to still love him, but in her heart was bitter revenge. On Agamemnon's return to his residence, Clytemnestra prepared a nice warm bath for her husband. Just as Agamemnon eased down into the warm tub, she, with the help of her lover, Aegisthus, threw a net over his body and chopped him into little pieces. In his arrogant lust for fame, he became "*outhen*" - nothing (the high form).

God has loved the Christian for billions and billions of years. He has designed a spiritual life for the Christian so that he might also love him that is to reciprocate his love. However, what are most Christians doing? They are being distracted by many things which prevent them from ever developing a love for God. These distractions are the tragic flaws of the Christians today - instead of becoming great heroes and heroines, they are failures.

If the believer learns the Word consistently (under the authority of a prepared pastor) someday he will develop a love for God. He may not become famous or be recognized as great by others, but in God's plan he will become a great and noble believer who had the good manners to reciprocate God's love.

However, most believers are like Agamemnon. They want to be great. They want wealth, promotion, recognition, success, and romance more than anything else (false values and priorities). So, they do not spend the time under the authority of a pastor to learn about God and his plan. At the end of their lives, they may have achieved many things including all the desires of their selfish nature, but if they have not achieved personal love for God, they are lower than Agamemnon in virtue; they are “ouden” (the low form of “nothing”).

If you had all the sensational temporary gifts of the early church, but you do not have virtue-love, you are nothing, a total failure in God’s plan. People who are nothing are always unhappy people. Therefore, Church Age believers who fail to develop a love for God the Father and occupation with Lord Jesus Christ become unhappy nothings. You may be extremely moral; you may be a famous pastor or missionary; you may give 30 percent of your money to Christian charities; you may pray from morning to evening, but if you do not love God, you are nothing but a superficial Christian.

13:3. And if I give all of my possessions to those in need of help [literal translation from the Greek word ψωμίζω / *psomizo*] **and if I deliver over my body** [for martyrdom] **that I may boast** [καυχῆσθαι / *kauchesomai*], **but I do not have virtue-love** [with emphasis on personal love for God], **I gain nothing** [οὐδεν / *ouden*].

In 1 Corinthians 13:1-2, Paul stated that even though one might have several sensational spiritual gifts, if he does not possess virtue-love, he is nothing. In this verse Paul states that even if one performs a spectacular Christian deed or sacrifice, but he is not motivated by his appreciation, respect, and admiration for God, he gains nothing.

To give all your possessions away is spectacular giving. In this illustration, the Christian gives all of his wealth so that he becomes impoverished. This is exactly what Barnabas did (Acts 4:36, 37). Barnabas, who accompanied Paul on his initial missionary journey, was a wealthy landowner with a great spiritual life and complete trust in God’s provision. So, he sold all of his property and gave the proceeds to the many impoverished Christians in the Jerusalem area at that time. However, Ananias and his wife Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10) were jealous of the approbation which Barnabas received after he had given all of his money away. (Barnabas himself didn’t care about the approbation. He just wanted to please God.) In their lust for approbation they lied about their giving, telling Peter that they were giving all of the proceeds from the sale of their property for the purpose of helping the needy. Now, keep in mind that no one asked them to sell their property or give money to the poor. That was their idea. Because Barnabas had sold all of his property and had given all of the proceeds from the sale to the poor, they had decided to do likewise so that they would receive approbation as Barnabas had. However, lacking faith in divine providence they were unwilling to donate all of their money as Barnabas had done. In other words, they lied about their giving in order to obtain maximum approbation.

Ananias and Sapphira were not great Christians who suddenly became bad through greed and lying about their offering to the poor. They had lived their entire spiritual lives out of fellowship, remaining under the influence of Satan’s thinking. “Then Peter said, Ananias, how is it that Satan has filled your heart” (Acts 5:3a). It takes a long time for Satan to completely fill the stream of consciousness of a believer with his thinking and values. The spiritual life is a system of thinking, but Satan also has a counterfeit spiritual life related to thought. If the Christian is constantly out of fellowship, he will learn this system. This is exactly what happened to Ananias and Sapphira. This lie was not an isolated act, but the result of a lifetime of functioning out of fellowship.

Many Christians are like Ananias and Sapphira. They are falsely motivated because they do not understand the spiritual life, and do not love the Lord. They appear to be accomplishing many things for the Lord, but in reality they are producing only dead works, wrong doing (the Greek word “adikia” as found in 1 John 1:9b) produced while grieving (Ephesians 4:30) and quenching (1 Thessalonians 5:19) the Holy Spirit. Some day they too will die an inglorious death (the sin unto death: 1 John 5:16).

Some translations differ regarding this verse depending upon what manuscripts were used. Some manuscripts use the Greek word “καυθησωμαι” (*kauthesomai*) while the three most reliable uncial manuscripts (written on parchment), the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus scribed in the 4th century, and Alexandrinus scribed in the 5th century all use the word “καυχῆσωμαι” (*kauchesomai*) (to boast, to glory). Also, among the most important papyri “p36” a Chester Beatty Papyri written in the 3rd century uses the word “*kauchesomai*” (to boast, to glory). Neither the greatest uncial manuscripts nor the most reliable papyri contain the word “*kauthesomai*” (to be burned).

Furthermore, “*kauthesomai*” (to be burned) is future subjunctive in form which did not even exist in the Classical Period nor in the Biblical Period, but only came into existence in the Byzantine period (4th to 15th century). Thus, in Bruce M. Metzger’s book, *A Textual Commentary On The Greek New Testament*, the author writes: “The reading *kauthesomai* (= future subjunctive!), while appearing occasionally in Byzantine times, is a grammatical monstrosity that cannot be attributed to Paul (Blass-Debrunner-Funk, para. 28; Moulton-Howard, p. 219).”

A scribe living in the Byzantine period deliberately changed this word. Actually, all he had to do was to change one letter. By changing the Greek letter χ (chi) to a θ (theta), he was able to change the whole meaning of the word. Now the question remains: why did he do this? The most likely explanation is that this scribe was very impressed with Christian martyrdom and did not agree with Paul’s negative statement regarding martyrdom.

Under certain conditions, God permits certain great believers to be martyred that he may be glorified. When mature believers are being martyred, they are motivated by both unconditional love for their fellow humans (including those who are martyring them), and personal love toward God. In this passage Paul is saying that the motivation for martyrdom in many cases is for self-glory. Paul was distrustful of many of the believers’ motivation for martyrdom in the early church warning the Corinthians that if one gives his body over to be martyred, but does not have love for God, he accomplishes nothing. Paul made an issue out of this since some Corinthian believers apparently had deliberately martyred themselves.

This Greek word “*kauchesomai*” has two basic meanings: to boast in oneself or to glory in God. In this context, Paul is making reference to Christians boasting in their martyrdom. These were Christians who had failed completely in their spiritual lives. After a life of total spiritual failure, they thought that martyrdom would automatically make them great believers with great rewards in eternity - therefore implying that there is merit in martyrdom itself. If there is merit in martyrdom itself, then the person being martyred has a right to boast. Furthermore, if there is merit in martyrdom itself, then martyrdom would glorify God. However, this is not true. The merit is in the application of doctrine that occurs while a great believer is being martyred, not in the function of being martyred.

The most sophisticated form of Greek language was Classical Greek of the 5th and 4th centuries B. C. and spoken by the Athenian Greeks and by such great men as Socrates and Plato. However, when the Bible was being written, Koine Greek (common Greek), a less sophisticated grammatical form of Greek

was the language of the people. Thus, some writers of Scripture used only Classical Greek (i.e. Luke and the writer of Hebrews) and other writers used a mixture of Koine with Classical Greek. Paul especially was an expert in mixing these two languages.

Thus, it should not be surprising that Paul uses these two Greek languages in this passage. The Classical Greek word for nothing is “*outhen*,” whereas Koine Greek word for nothing is “*ouden*.” Even though they have exactly the same meaning, they can be used to communicate subtle differences. Paul in this passage first uses the Classical form then switches to the Koine form. In this way, he is able to communicate a fascinating story with just two words.

In verse two of this chapter Paul identifies the Christian with the Classical period by using the word “*outhen*.” This is necessary to introduce the believer as either a potential hero or a tragic failure in the spiritual life. Agamemnon was nothing because of his arrogant lust for fame; he gained nothing (the high form: *outhen*), he died a humiliating death. The Christian who fails to execute the spiritual life is nothing, and he gains nothing (the low form: *ouden*), he dies under maximum punishment (Philippians 3:19, 1 John 5:16). By switching to “*ouden*”, we understand that the failure of the Christian to glorify God is infinitely greater than the tragic failure of Agamemnon.

13:4. Virtue love [agape] is not swayed by emotion, virtue love is kind [merciful], virtue love is not jealous, it does not brag [is not shamelessly disrespectful in thought, speech and behavior, e.g. is not insulting or presumptuous], is not inflated with arrogance [the advance stages of arrogance].

The Greek word μακροθυμέω (*makrothumeo*) most basic meaning is “not to be swayed by emotion” (not caused to swing from one side to another; not influenced by emotion). It also means to be free from the emotional reaction of frustration; free from the irrationality that occurs when one is under pressure. It is composure under pressure and adversity. Since it is not affected by emotion, it has a steadfast patience. In the Ionic Greek which is older than the Attic Greek, it meant long-suffering toward someone (to bear injuries, insults, trouble without complaint or emotional reaction).

13:5. does not behave dishonorably [indecently, or unmannerly], is not self-seeking [self-promoting; preoccupied with self, self-indulgent, irrationally ambitious] it is not provoked [does not become irritated, bitter, angry, petty, hypersensitive], does not react to evil [is not mindful of wrongs, does not react to the injustices or wrongs that comes into life, does not think in terms of retaliation, does not react to hatred or antagonisms],

13:6. does not rejoice over injustices, but joyfully sides with the truth [rejoices in the truth]

13:7. It covers all things [keeps all things confidential: true love respects the privacy of another; it literally means to throw a cloak of silence over all things: avoids gossip, maligning, judging, vilification], always believes [advance function of the faith-rest drill] always has confident expectation [regarding one’s personal destiny both in time and in eternity], always perseveres [the believer always maintains his relationship with God in a state of happiness under the testing of the three stages of the adult spiritual life],

13:8. Virtue-love is never phased out [verses 8b thru 12 is a parenthesis], (but if prophecies, they will be discontinued. If tongues [foreign languages], they shall be terminated [abruptly]. If knowledge [knowing what will be written in the New Testament] it will be discontinued.

Virtue-love remains part of God's plan in both the pre-canon and post-canon period of the Church Age. It is the highest system of thinking that has ever existed, and yet the Corinthians were placing their emphasis on emotion and the sensational spiritual gifts, and had abandoned this virtuous system of divine thinking. So, Paul interrupts his dissertation on love (1 Corinthians 13:1-8a) by contrasting virtue love which will last throughout the Church Age with these temporary spiritual gifts (The temporary spiritual gifts such as prophecy and knowledge which were discontinued sometime after 96 A.D. allowing time for the New Testament canon to be assembled and distributed), the gift of tongues was terminated in August of 70 A. D. when the Roman Legions broke through the Jerusalem walls.) Paul's point is that instead of placing unnecessary emphasis on these temporary spiritual gifts, they should be advancing toward virtue love. Then after having compared virtue love with these gifts, he makes another comparison which is found in the last verse of this chapter.

The gift of foreign languages was designed to warn the Jews regarding the historical trend of their nation (See the book *"Tongues"* by R. B. Thieme Jr.) The majority of the unbelieving Jews at that time had rejected the Gospel message, and the majority of the Jewish Christians had rejected the spiritual life. For forty years, from 30-70 A.D., the Jewish unbelievers would hear the Gospel message which the majority would reject and the few that did respond were influenced by Judaism and thus became legalistic. Since only a few responded to the gospel and advanced to spiritual maturity, the nation was destroyed by the Romans in August of 70 A. D., under the principle that the Lord Jesus Christ controls history.

In the Law [the Old Testament] it is written, "By men of strange tongues [languages] and by lips of strangers [Gentiles] I will speak to this people [Jews], and even so they will not listen [negative volition] to Me [quote from Isa. 28:11]," says the Lord. So then tongues are for a sign [a warning to Jewish unbelievers of the proximity of divine judgment and dispersion], not to those who believe, but to unbelievers. (1 Corinthians 14:21-22a)

What was the situation in 30 A. D., at the onset of the Church Age? At that time, Jews were scattered all over the Roman Empire. Even so, God made it possible for tens of thousands of those Jews to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. They arrived during the Passover and remained until after the Day of Pentecost. (God wanted those Jews who were interested in the Gospel to be in Jerusalem at that time.) On Pentecost, the gift of foreign languages (tongues) was given to most of Christ's disciples since there were so many Jews in Jerusalem who needed to hear the Gospel in their own gentile language.

These Jews that were living in different parts of the Roman Empire no longer spoke Aramaic and many of them had no understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures. Thus, when they arrived in Jerusalem for the Passover on April 14th [this date was concluded to be accurate by R. B. Thieme Jr.], they had a difficult time understanding the ritual as presented by the Levitical Priests. However, on the Day of Pentecost which occurred in the first week of June, these pilgrims heard the Gospel in their own gentile languages through the gift of foreign languages.

13:9. For we know [from the gift of knowledge] in part, and we prophesy [from the gift of prophecy] in part.

Paul knew a part of the knowledge which would make up the Bible, also Peter and John as well as other writers of Scripture. None of **them** had all of the knowledge. They all contributed to the formation of Scripture. The same was true regarding the temporary gift of prophecy. No one individual wrote all the

prophecy in Scripture. Paul, Peter, John as well as others did some prophesying. They each contributed a part. When all of these parts were finally collected and put together into one book, the Canon of Scripture was completed.

13:10. But, when the perfect [the completed cannon] **has come** [canon completed and distributed], **the partial** [the temporary spiritual gifts of the pre-canon period] **will be discontinued**].

As mentioned above, the gift of tongues was terminated in 70 AD at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. The remaining temporary spiritual gifts which were necessary in the early church were discontinued sometime shortly after 96 A. D.

13:11. When I was a child, I used to speak as a child [limited vocabulary and frame of reference], **think like a child** [emphasizing sensational matters], **and reason like a child** [simplistic]. **When I became a man, I did away with childish things.**

Because a child has a limited vocabulary and understanding, he has a limited ability to speak, think and reason – obviously, one cannot think beyond the size of his vocabulary and understanding. Since a mature adult has a large vocabulary etc., he can think, speak and reason as an adult.

Illustration: Two people are watching a soccer game. One person knows the game well. He knows all the rules, the function of each player, the defensive and offensive movements, the technical vocabulary, and everything about good tactics and strategy etc. The other person watches the game in a state of total ignorance. Which person do you think will be more mentally involved and which one do you think will be more emotionally involved?

In the early church there was no canon of Scripture. This is analogous to a child with a limited vocabulary and understanding. In the early church there were many sensational spiritual gifts like the gifts of healing, miracles and tongues etc. A child would like these for they would be appealing to his emotions and his lack of values. However, the post-canon period of the Church age has a completed Bible which is analogous to an adult vocabulary and understanding. You would think that Christians would want to learn and master the content of the New Testament and in so doing learn to think like an adult. Yet, many childish Christians want to return to the pre-canon period of the Church Age in their desire for the gifts of healing, tongues etc.

Also, children prefer 'doing' over 'thinking'. Today, many Christians emphasize doing without knowledge of God's plan and so are involved in pseudo Christian service. It is pseudo since it is being executed with human power, not divine power.

13:12. For now [in time], **we** [Church Age believers] **see by means of a mirror** [the New Testament canon metabolized in the soul: James 1:19-25] **an opaque reflection** [reflected as on a picture not as real as face to face], **but then** [in the eternal state, we will see] **face to face**. **Now** [in time], **I know in part, but then** [in resurrection body after the destruction of the universe and the creation of the New Heavens and the New Earth] **I will fully understand** [We will have more capacity to understand God and his Word in the eternal state.] **even as I have been fully understood** [the omniscience of God has always understood us].) (The parenthesis that Paul began in verse 8b is now closed.)

Seeing by means of a mirror does not imply that the canon of Scripture is inferior to information provided in the eternal state. What it does mean is that cognition in time cannot be compared to

cognition in the eternal state. The contrast is between seeing someone in a mirror (less clearly) as against seeing him face to face (more clearly).

In the Church Age, our spiritual assets include 10 Problem Solving Devices with which we can make applications to solve any and every problem we might face while living in the devil's world. However, there will be no need for problem solving in the eternal state since there will be no problems, pressures, adversities etc. Though we will have no need for problem solving in the eternal state, we will still have a spiritual life. So, fellowship with the Spirit, love for God the Father, sharing the happiness of God, and occupation with Christ will still function and even at a much higher level since our capacity will be much greater in resurrection bodies.

13:13. Now, there remains in place [in the Church Age] **faith, confidence and love, these three** [will remain as a necessary part of the spiritual life], **but the greatest of these is love.**

The greatest phase of the spiritual life in the Church Age is the last phase where the believer functions in virtue love and shares the happiness of God. Faith, while applied in all phases of spiritual growth, here represents spiritual childhood and includes the use of the Faith-rest drill, grace and doctrinal orientation. Confidence represents spiritual self-esteem and is the entrance-way into the advanced stages of the spiritual life. Love represents the adult believer and includes love for the God the Father, unconditional love for the human race, sharing the happiness of God and occupation with the Lord.

However, entering into the adult stage of the spiritual life does not mean that the Christian abandons what he has learned in childhood and in spiritual self-esteem. To the contrary, his faith-rest drill becomes enhanced in spiritual adulthood; his spiritual self-esteem keeps increasing as he advances into the adult spiritual life etc.

In the Old Testament, the spiritual life focused on the use of the faith-rest-drill though they were commanded in Deuteronomy 6:5, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." Though this command was given, the spiritual life of these believers centered on the faith-rest-drill as recorded in their Hall of Fame (Hebrews 11). However, as Paul has emphasized in this chapter, love is the focus for the Church Age believer. So, if the Church Age believer wants to enter the Hall of Fame for the Church Age, he must develop virtue love to the maximum.

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