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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks
Baptist Church**
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Love Never Fails 1 Cor 13:1-13

Lesson Background and Introduction

Paul addressed a variety of issues and problems that had arisen in the Corinthian church in his absence. That church's many problems seemed to have been rooted in pride, which went hand in hand with airs of spiritual superiority. Some thought that they were so superior to other Christians that they could neglect the needs of others (1 Corinthians 11). The issue of spiritual gifts was also a problem at Corinth in this context. Many individuals in the early church were empowered by the Spirit to accomplish important tasks, including miraculous manifestations such as prophecy (example: Acts 21:8-9) and speaking in tongues (example: Acts 10:44-46). From the perspective of the world, love is not an essential ingredient in the use of gifts. A large financial donation still helps the needy even if the donor gives the money simply to save on income taxes. A gifted teacher can lead a powerful lesson that changes lives, even if the teacher only wishes to draw attention to himself or herself. From God's perspective, these efforts are of no value to the individual who exercises the gift because their exercise is not done with the right motive. Central to the Christian understanding of God is that he is loving. This becomes "real" for us when we have a relationship with him. God is not a dispassionate Creator. The Lord God as revealed by Jesus is one who loves us in a personal way. God's love is not based on our deservedness. Love is the guiding force in everything that God does and must be the guiding force in the life of anyone who wishes truly to serve Him. It's not optional.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

Love Is Superior to Spiritual Gifts - Spiritual gifts are given individually to Christians so they can build up the Body of Christ while on earth. However, as important as these gifts are, Paul emphasized in 1 Corinthians 13 that all these gifts are worthless if used without love. You can speak in tongues, obtain divine insights, and provide miraculous signs, but all of these gifts are useless without love. What is most important is receiving God's love, loving Him, and loving others.

Love Is More Than a Sacrifice - Some may think becoming hungry in order to feed the poor, giving all your wealth to the less fortunate, or becoming a martyr is what God wants us to do. Those things God honors, if they are done with love.

What Love Does - Christians recognize what God's love is like and become His conduit to supply His compassion to a love-starved world. God's love is patient. He has the power to punish immediately, yet He waits, walking with people through life's challenges, extending grace and mercy. God's love is always looking out for the good of others.

What Love Does Not Do - People who say they are filled with God's love are not jealous and don't resent another's elevation. They are not continually looking for rewards and are not self-absorbed, easily irritated, or annoyed. They don't look for wrongs, but rights. Once Jesus returns, spiritual gifts will disappear, along with faith and hope. Finally, we will see Him face-to-face and have free, perfect fellowship with Him forever. The dim mirror we see Him through now will disappear; Jesus will be seen crystal clear. Everything God wanted to accomplish on earth will be achieved— love will be present fully and eternally.

(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

Real love originated with our Father, who gave us the gift of His Son

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK:

As we seek to show His love to others, we can follow the example of Christ, who laid down His life for us (1 John 3:16-18)

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away
(1 Cor 13:7-8 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Nov 26, 2013)

Series: Love For One Another

UNIT: Godly Love Among Believers

NEXT WEEK

Abiding Love
(John 15:4-17)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Priority of Love (13:1-3)

Seek the greater gift love (1)

Seeking love always is seeking the building up of others (1 Cor 8:1)

In seeking, we must be willing to follow its way (1 Cor 14:1)

We must try to excel in the gift of love so as to help others (1 Cor 14:12)

Everything we do should be done in love (1 Cor 16:14)

Gifts without love (2)

Gifts without love can become a stumbling block to others (Rom 14:15)

Gifts in themselves is nothing, only faith and love working through the gifts (Gal 5:6)

Gifts are only effective if they are done out of a pure heart and good conscience toward God (1 Tim 1:5)

Giving without love (3)

Giving in the wrong way is mistreating God (Matt 25:45)

Giving without love is not edifying others (1 Cor 14:17)

We must excel in love to excel in giving (2 Cor 8:7)

One must give in love to please God (Phil 4:18)

Practice and Description of Love (13:4-7)

Love is humble (4)

Love as a servant and rely on the Holy Spirit for power (2 Cor 6:4, 6)

To be able to bear with others, it takes humility through love (Eph 4:2)

As God's chosen people, Christians should be covered with humility and love (Col 3:12)

Loving humility shows godly wisdom (James 3:17)

Love is unselfish (5)

Love says to seek the good of others (1 Cor 10:24)

Seek the good of others to aid in their salvation (1 Cor 10:33)

Christians should always be concerned for each other out of love (1 Cor 12:25)

To have the same attitude as Jesus is to love unselfishly (Phil 2:3-5)

If we don't show love to others, we don't have the love of God in us (1 John 3:16-17)

Love rejoices in truth (6)

Rejoicing in the truth is clinging to what is good (Rom 12:9)

Godly repentance leads to love and rejoicing in the truth (2 Cor 7:9-16)

One of the most important things is that truth is spread (Phil 1:18)

Effective and faithful service out of love brings rejoicing (Phil 2:17-18)

Faithfulness to the truth brings joy and good reputations (3 John 3)

Love is patient (7)

Show love through patience with the weak (Rom 15:1)

Perseverance shows our trust and love of God (2 Thess 1:4-5)

Patience through love combats pride (Eccl 7:8)

Follow the patience of biblical saints as examples (James 5:10-11)

Permanence of love (13:8-13)

Love never fails (8)

It is the love of God that provides us hope that we can then pass on to others (Rom 5:5)

It is God's love that really NEVER fails (Rom 8:35)

We should think of love as a debt to others and therefore never stop providing (Rom 13:8)

Love is complete and perfect (9-12)

Love is complete in that it can cover a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8)

Love never does harm (Rom 13:10)

Love should be rooted and grounded in God which makes it eternal (Eph 3:17, 19)

Love helps our maturity in God and is perfect when all things work as God desires (Eph 4:15-15)

Love binds into perfect unity (Col 3:14)

Greatness of love (13)

Loving God and others is the greatest commandment (Mark 12:29-31)

All of God's law is summed up in love (Gal 5:14)

God gives love through the power of His Holy Spirit therefore it is great (2 Tim 1:7)

Love proves we have been born of God (1 John 4:7-9)