

TITLE AND NUMBER: 65. Christian love



REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S): 1 Corinthians 12:31 - 13:8

And yet I will show you the most excellent way. (12:31b)

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. (13:2)

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (13:4-8)

LOOKING FURTHER: Luke 10:25-37

What does this Bible passage tell us?

Paul is teaching the young church at Corinth about the central importance of Christian love. The love that Jesus showed in His own life has the power to break down the barriers that so often spoil relationships.

One of the problems at Corinth was that the Christian community had been spoiled by selfishness and squabbling, rather than being built up through mutual sharing and harmony. Paul is helping them to turn things around and he gives very practical advice.

The advice is challenging. Let's look at it in more detail:

Showing Christian love means showing **patience, kindness, trust, hope and endurance.**

It means working hard at not being envious, boastful, proud, rude, self-seeking, easily angered and not holding on to grudges.

Jesus summarised it as **loving God and loving our neighbour as ourselves.**

Retired Archbishop John Sentamu writes in his book *Faith Stories*: "We need to believe, not only that a better future is possible, but also a better present too. We need practical outpourings of God's love. God has the power to transform any and every situation. All we have to do is come to Him and be ready to serve. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, 'Be the change you want to see'".

Reflections:

- How do you find that patience, kindness, trust and hope help you to keep going in our Christian life? Write down any examples which have helped you.
- John Sentamu writes that, "God has the power to transform every situation." Pray about any situation that you would like God to help you with today.
- What changes would you like to see and how can you work towards being the change you want to see?

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



LOVE

Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

