



Bible Study: Thursday, FEBRUARY 15th, 2018.

TOPIC: FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

LOVE IS THE GREATEST. PART 1

1 Cor 13:1-8, 13.

1 ¶ Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

4 ¶ Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;

5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;

6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;

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.

13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

INTRODUCTION: Of all words most used by people, love fills the greatest of the vocabulary and of every word most abused, love is the greatest victim. 75% of all the music has something to do with love. A lot of the tragedies experienced in relationship started with that four-letter word dominating the whole affair. Lives have been ruined; an entire generation have been rendered sad and depressed because this word has been misunderstood. However, of all that life has to offer, the greatest remains love. It is the greatest of all virtues, the very nature of God. Love is the most beneficial attitude in life, most beautiful but unfortunately most misunderstood. It is one of the strongest pillars if not the strongest on which Christianity is based. It differentiates Christianity from every other religion. This explains why the devil strives with all passion to adulterate it. The bible explains love to its fullest. This is obviously because the author is love.

What is love? This is not the easiest of words to define. Most people define love as emotions. Yes, they might be right. Indeed, there is a part of love which has a lot to do with emotions. However, I believe that the love which holds the world in place is beyond feelings and emotions. 1 Cor 13:1-8.

What is emotion? A feeling, a reaction, a sentiment, passion, an excitement.

It is a natural instinctive state of mind derived from one's circumstances, mood, or relationships with others.

Read I Cor 13: 1 from the AMP Classic edition

THREE KINDS OF LOVE.

1. **Agape**, Love that is wholly self less. 1 Cor 13:1-8, 13, John 3:16, Rom 5:8.
2. **Phileo or Philia**. Fondness or attraction towards someone or an object. Matthew 6:5,10:37, 1 Sam 18:1-4, Amos 3:3, I Cor 16:22
3. **Eros in Greek**: Rayah in Hebrew: Sexual love or desire. Songs of Solomon 2:13,5:2.

So, when we talk about love we are talking about any one of these types of love. Unfortunately, many of us have problems distinguishing between them. The line between them could also be very thin especially when you compare 1 to 2 and 2 to 3. Time and your leaning is the best proof of whichever one you are demonstrating. Agape hardly dies with time. It is consistent.

For this study, our focus is not going to be numbers 2 or 3 but number 1.

I must say at this point that whatever we will discuss concerning love might not make any sense to you if you are not a genuine Christian. Apology for using the word genuine Christian. As people will ask me is there a fake Christian? As a matter fact, one true test of your Christianity is when you have true love.

Numbers 2 and 3 could be natural but number 1 is supernatural. This is because you can only have it if you have the nature of God. Dogs and other animals could respond to numbers 2 and 3 but will not be able to respond to 1.

Not everyone can love because it is not natural; Luke 6:26-27, 23:34, Matt 5:43-44, Acts 3:17; 7:60; 1Cor 4:12, Matt 4:46-48.

From this moment till the end of this study, when we refer to love we shall be talking about Agape or

Love is not optional and who should we love; Mk 12:28-30, I John 4:20