

The Balanced Spirit-Filled Church

Overview of 1 Corinthians 12-14

Power: The gifts of the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:1 (NASB) Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware.

1 Corinthians 12:4—7 (NASB) Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. ⁶There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all *persons*. ⁷But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:31 (AMP) But earnestly desire {and} zealously cultivate the greatest {and} best gifts {and} graces (the higher gifts and the choicest graces). And yet I will show you a still more excellent way [one that is better by far and the highest of them all--love].

Love: Personal sacrifice to benefit others

1 Corinthians 13:1—3 (NASB) ¹If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have *the gift of prophecy*, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

Order: All things must be done properly

1 Corinthians 14:1—5 (NIV) ¹Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. ²For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit. ³But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort. ⁴He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. ⁵I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified.

1 Corinthians 14:40 (NASB) But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner.

1.) Love is the superior gift

The Corinthians had not followed the excellent way of love but were worldly minded, seeking to exalt self, and were ambitious in their manner of using the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The condition of the Church, divisions, self-exaltations and self-confidence were the results of not being governed by the more excellent way of love.

—Explorer's Bible Study: New Testament Epistles & Revelation

It is tragic that in many churches, as in the one in ancient Corinth, the love that is basic to Christian character does not characterize the membership or the ministry. Love was missing in Corinth. Spiritual gifts were present (1:7); right doctrine for the most part was present (11:2); but love was absent. Throughout history it seems that the church has found it difficult to be loving. It is easier to be orthodox than to be loving, and easier to be active in church work than to be loving. Yet the supreme characteristic that God demands of His people is

love. In opposing that love the enemy of the church makes some of his supreme efforts.

—MacArthur's New Testament Commentary: 1 Corinthians

Love: G26 ἀγάπη *agapē ag-ah'-pay* from **G25** ἀγαπάω *agapaō ag-ap-ah'-o*

The word *agape* connotes a deep, abiding, self-sacrificing love—the kind that looks out for the other person first. —Life Application Bible Commentary: 1 & 2 Corinthians

John 3:16 (NASB) “For God so loved (*agapaō*) the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. (emphasis Added)

John 13:34—35 (NASB) ³⁴“A new commandment I give to you, that you love (*agapaō*) one another, even as I have loved (*agapaō*) you, that you also love (*agapaō*) one another. ³⁵“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (emphasis Added)

John 15:9—11 (NASB) ⁹“Just as the Father has loved (*agapaō*) Me, I have also loved (*agapaō*) you; abide in My love (*agapē*). ¹⁰“If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love (*agapē*); just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love (*agapē*). ¹¹“These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full. (emphasis Added)

1 John 4:16 (NASB) We have come to know and have believed the love (*agapaō*) which God has for us. God is love (*agapaō*), and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. (emphasis Added)

2.) Without love its just noise

1 Corinthians 13:1 (NASB) ¹If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

1 Corinthians 13:1 (NLT) ¹If I could speak in any language in heaven or on earth but didn’t love others, I would only be making meaningless noise like a loud gong or a clanging cymbal.

3.) Without love it’s meaningless

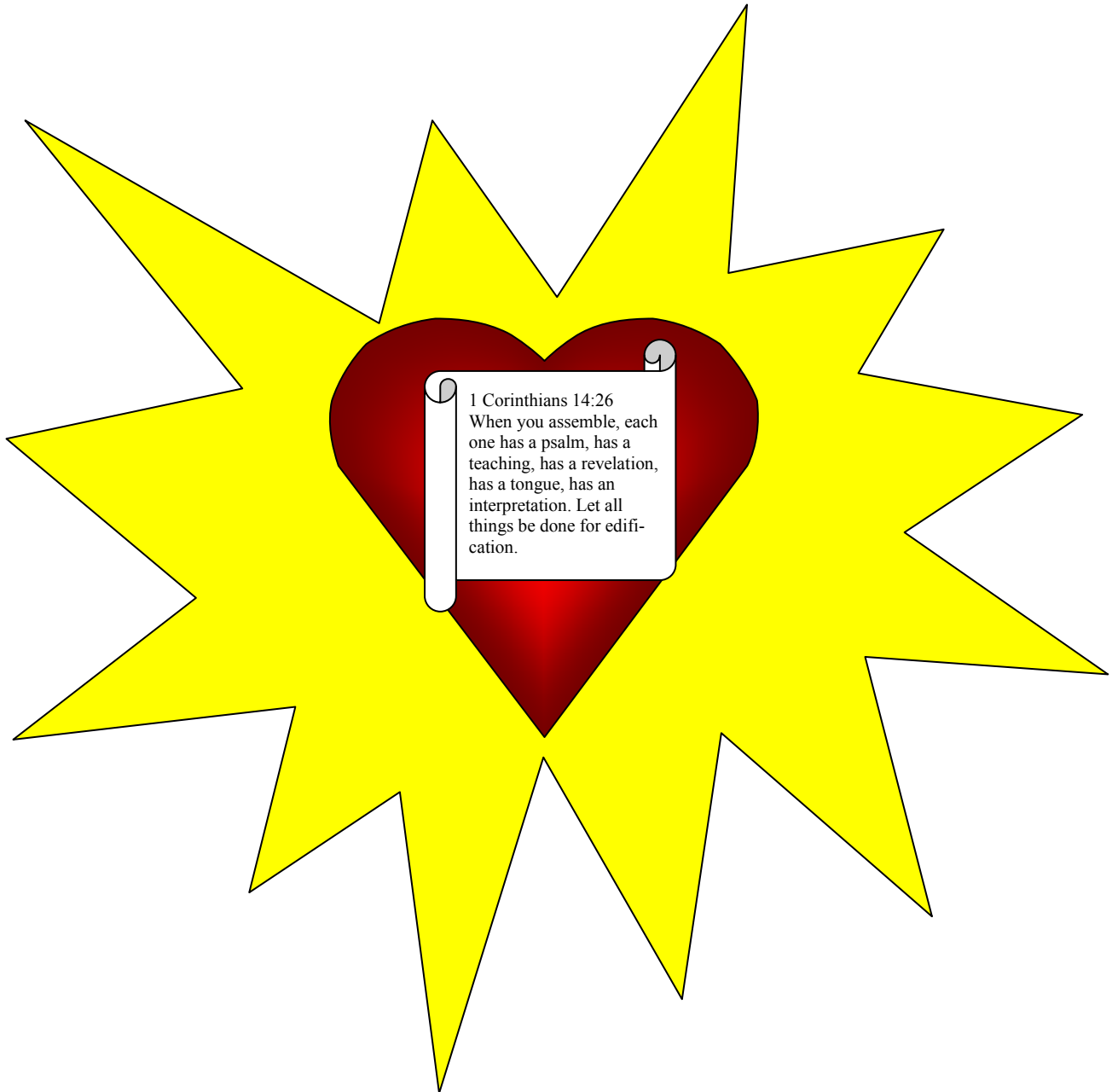
1 Corinthians 13:2 (NASB) ²If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

4.) Without love there is no benefit

1 Corinthians 13:3 (NASB) ³And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:13—14:1a (NIV) ¹³And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. ^{14:1}Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts . . .

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1 Corinthians 14:26
When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

Chapter 12 **POWER** – Introduction to the gifts of the Holy Spirit

Chapter 13 **LOVE** – Personal sacrifice for the benefit of others

Chapter 14 **ORDER** – All things must be done properly, in order