

Essential qualities versus Secondary qualities

	Essential	Secondary
Airplane	Flies	Good legroom, great food, great entertainment, right temperature...
Alarm clock		
Flash light		
Teacher		
Mechanic		
Christian...		

Limitless

1 Corinthians 13

Chinese: page 1863
 Spanish: page 1464
 Brown: page 1152
 Green: page 785



Ancient Corinth, Greece

Values in society
that became values in the church

- Wealth & influence
- Noble birth
- Wise by human standards
 - *Eloquent / great speaker*
 - *Powerful presence / boldness*
 - *Persuasive*

→ **Spiritual gifts (“gifts”)**

- *Speaking in tongues*
- *Prophecy / knowledge*
- *Faith to do miracles*



1 Corinthians 11-14

11-14: Instructions about church gatherings

12: About “gifts of the Spirit”

- A God-given ability to serve
- Of particular interest to the Corinthians:
 - Wisdom & knowledge
 - Faith, healing & miracles
 - Prophecy & discerning spirits
 - Speaking in languages (“tongues”) & interpreting them
- Paul: The church is one body with many different parts
 - All parts are to be valued and honored, even if they seem less valuable

13: Critical instructions about “gifts”

14: Practical aspects of speaking in tongues & prophecy

1 Corinthians 12:31-14:1

12:31: "Gifts" are great, but there is something greater

1-3:

4-7:

8-10:

11-12:

13:

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12:31: "Gifts" are great, but there is something greater

1-3: "Gifts" (even at their best) without love are useless

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12:31: “Gifts” are great, but there is something greater

1-3: “Gifts” (even at their best) without love are useless

4-7: Love is a limitless, glad commitment

to find and pursue the good of others

8-10: • Even (especially?) when it is hard to find

• Not naïve or foolish

11-12: • It does not approve of everything

• Rather: “Love always keeps looking with expectation for the good in others”

13:

14:1

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to find and pursue the good of others

8-10: Love will always be valuable

• Love is the preeminent quality of heaven

11-12: • “Gifts” will lose their value and be discarded

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11-12: “Gifts” are like a child’s tools or childish thinking

- We will someday outgrow them,
and we should then discard them

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13: 3 enduring things: faith, hope, and **LOVE**

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13: 3 enduring things: faith, hope, and **LOVE**

14:1 Given love, eagerly pursue “gifts” that help others

The Big Idea

**Love is being limitlessly committed
to good for others
in attitude and actions
and it is supreme
over all other gifts and qualities**

- A Christian who is not loving is like...
 - An airplane that doesn't fly
 - An alarm clock that doesn't wake you up
 - A teacher who doesn't help people learn
 - A mechanic who doesn't fix anything

The first quality
to find & develop for
church membership
& church leadership

- Love!



Application

- Value love more than any other gift or quality
 - What other gifts and qualities are valued and valuable?
 - What other gifts do I value more than love?
 - Without love, they are nothing!

Application

- Value love more than any other gift or quality
- Love **GOD'S LOVE**
 - Love is best seen when it encounters someone who is being hard to love
 - What does love do when it encounters non-love?
 - Patient and kind
 - Not easily angered, keeps no record of wrongs, does not delight in finding weakness

Application

- Value love more than any other gift or quality
- Love
- Realize: Truth and love are not competitors!
 - Love is not blind or foolish
 - Example: God's discipline of His children is always loving

What about when I fail to love...

- This love is not natural for anyone!
- Receive God's love
 - He is...
 - Patient and kind
 - Not keeping a record of wrongs
 - We have forgiveness in Christ, so confess **and** repent
- **Know** God, and live out what we find
 - Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. *1 John 4:7-8*

“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

1 Corinthians 15:58

“Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love.”

1 Corinthians 16:13-14

– “Moral sweat”

The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.

1 Corinthians 16:23

The Big Idea

**Love is being limitlessly committed
to good for others
in attitude and actions
and it is supreme
over all other gifts and qualities**

Battles are rarely won in the moment

When/where/who?

Reframe your head, heart, hands early and often

→ Especially: Love comes from God, so seek His presence