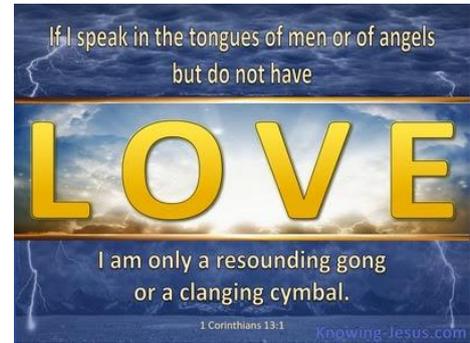


## Growing Spiritually

### Reading-1 Corinthians 13

#### Introduction

This wonderful hymn of love chapter is very often read at Weddings. The context of it is not romantic relationships but the Church family. In the previous chapter he's been talking about Spiritual gifts within the Body of Christ. There had been arguments in the Church at Corinth about which gifts and which people were greatest. Now Paul says, he wants to tell us about the greatest gift of all which is love. Love is the more excellent way.



Only in the context of love for the Lord and for one another, do the other gifts mean anything. Tongues, prophecy, knowledge and generosity only have strength when love is present. Otherwise we are like a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

Verses 4 - 7 contain the greatest definition of love for us. Reflecting the love of Jesus love is patient, kind, unselfish, forgiving and trusting.

Real love never fails. Other things pass away but love endures and perseveres. Faith, hope and love remain but the greatest of these is love. God wants us to grow in this love. As He himself is in very nature love, we reflect more the nature of God when we grow in love.

#### Discussion Starters

- Would you think about the context of this chapter? Why do you think it is placed here after talking about other gifts?
- Looking at the definition of love how do you apply it to different relationships that we have? Apart from the word love what other words would you use to describe what is being said?
- How do we ourselves grow in this love that never fails? What do we find that we need to put behind us if we are to grow?
- Think about the way in which we relate not just to people we love already but to those that we find it difficult to like. How do you show love to people like this and how do you show love to the Lord?

#### Prayer time

Please pray for needs that are known to you and shared. Please also pray for love to grow and flourish in many different contexts.