

11.09.14 - **1Corinthians 13:8-13**, "God's Love is Eternal!"

**8** Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

God's love is permanent, it will never fail, never pass away, unlike prophecies, tongues, and knowledge.

Prophecies will cease (be abolished, pass away, be done away with), knowledge also will pass away (cease, be abolished, be done away with) both of these infer [someone or something else will cause them to stop, from without]. Tongues (meaning known languages) will be stilled, i.e., they will come to an end through a self-causing action from within, like a battery with a limited energy supply and lifespan, Tongues stops by itself.

**9** For we *know* in part and we *prophesy* in part, **10** but when perfection [NASB- the perfect] comes, the imperfect disappears [the partial or imperfect, will be done away with].

Prophecy and knowledge are said to end when the perfect comes; but interestingly enough, the ceasing or coming to an end of tongues is not mentioned in relation to the coming of the perfect. Why is that? I'm glad you asked. The reason is that speaking in tongues (other known languages) will have ceased at an earlier time.

By the end of the first century the New Testament was completed and the gift of tongues had come to an end, its purpose fulfilled, it ran out of energy, it ceased! You see, its purpose was to serve both, as a confirming sign of apostolic authority under the new covenant of Grace and as a judgment on the Jews, a sign of rebuke toward their unbelief. In Isaiah 28, God is fed up with the hardhearted disobedience of Israel (v.11), "Very well then, with foreign lips and strange tongues God will speak to this people."

1Corinthians 14:21-22, "In the Law it is written: 'Through men of strange tongues and through the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me,' says the Lord. Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is for believers, not for unbelievers."

When the perfect comes there will be no need for rituals, regulations, or holy days (see Colossians 2:13-17), nor will there be any need for knowledge and prophecy; in fact, we won't even need our Bibles.

**The B I B L E:** Basic Instruction Before Leaving Earth.

So, what is the perfect? The perfect seems to be the eternal heavenly state of believers, it begins for each of us, either at death, when we go to be with the Lord, or at the rapture when the Lord takes us to be with Himself, where we'll be forever in the presence of the Living Word, the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only Perfect Son of Man, for He was sinless.

Spiritual gifts are only for a time, but love, God's Love, is for all eternity.

**11** When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. **12** Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

Wow! Paul is illustrating what happens when the perfect comes, when we are perfected. In our earthly lives we are merely children, compared to what we will be when we are perfected in the presence of God. Paul uses an example common to him, to illustrate this: A Jewish male was considered a boy until his bar mitzvah ("son of the law") after which he was considered to be a man. One moment he was a boy; the next he is a man.

Our perfection in Christ will be a type of eternal spiritual bar mitzvah; for at that moment everything childish will be removed. All immature and childish imperfections, even the limitations of knowledge and prophecies will be done away with.

In this present life, we have God's Word completed, revealed, and the personal indwelling of His Holy Spirit; yet, we are incapable of fully understanding God, for we see only a poor reflection like that in a mirror.

**Deuteronomy 29:29**, "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law."

**James 1:25**, "The man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it--he will be blessed in what he does."

One day, we will enter into the Lord's presence, and we will see Him face to face (see Revelation 21:1-4).

Now we know only in part, but then we shall know fully just as we also are fully known; for we will be incorruptible, immortal and perfect; as we live in the presence of the Lord forever (**1Corinthians 15:50-57**).

The greatest thing in the world is to be an instrument of God's love; for everything else is going to pass away.

Our greatest expression of love for Him is in dying to ourselves, living in a manner that reflects His love in us, i.e., our obedience to His Word (**Romans 10:9-10, 13**).

Jesus loves us so much, that He sacrificed His own life as the payment for our sins. Everyone is a sinner in need of God's love; but only those who accept God's provision of love through Jesus Christ will know God's love.

**Romans 5:8**, "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

No wonder Acts 4:12 says, "Salvation is found in no one else, there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." Jesus is the way, and the truth, and the life; He has given us new birth into a living hope, and we are eternally protected through faith, for God's love never fails: it always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

This is how we know what love is (1John 3:16) "Jesus Christ laid down his life for us," (1John 5:3) "This is love for God, to obey His commands," (John 15:12-14) Jesus says, "Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command."

**Verse 13...** And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."

**Romans 8:28**, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." **31**, "What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?" **38-39**, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

My fervent prayer today is that each one of us will seek to serve God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, trusting in His sovereign protection and provision today, tomorrow, and forever, knowing that God's Love is Eternal!