

First Corinthians 12, 13, 14
Brother Jesse Urbano
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We're going to deal mainly with charity. But I want to touch on both sides of charity chapter. We want to cover chapters 12, 13, and 14 of 1 Corinthians. There are vital points in all these chapters. Chapter 12 is an introduction, more or less, into charity. And if you read it as a separate chapter, you lose some of the emphasis that Paul was trying to lay down. He was laying a foundation for what he was going to deal with in the 13th chapter. In the 13th chapter, he is dealing with a problem they have. And in 14, he continues on and works that problem to its fulfillment.

You can take each one of these chapters and spend a lot of time on just that one chapter. But if you take it as a group you can see, more or less, what Paul was working on. And that's what you have to do sometimes, because the translators didn't put the chapters and verses in, but man later did. And when that happened, it was a tremendous help to us, but if we try to make the 12th chapter separate from the 13th and the 13th separate from the 14th, sometimes you lose the emphasis or point that's trying to be driven. So let's take a look at 1 Corinthians 12.

¹Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

²Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

³Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and *that* no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

Why is Paul bringing this to their mind? He says I want to talk to you about spiritual gifts. He said I don't want you to be ignorant of these gifts. But before he went any further, he brings in that they were Gentiles and carried away by dumb idols. What is his point of trying to bring them back to remembrance of where they came from? (remarks from the class) Yes, it's true that they shouldn't worship idols. But there's a point in him bringing this up to them; there was a practice that they had got caught up in, many times when they worshipped idols, if you went to some of these places to get a prophesy, or foretell the future, or some of these things; these

people would work themselves up into chants and they may give out this utterance. And this is part of the point that he is working on. He said, remember you were carried away with that kind of stuff and I'm trying to teach you the right way. This was happening in the church there. So this is part of the point he is working on; he wants them to understand not to bring in that from out there. And you know we're had trouble with that ever since? That's how the church went into the wilderness. They began to bring in things from their idol worship and different things and started bringing them into the church. This is part of what Paul is working on. That's why he brought this point out.

Then in verse 3, he said no man speaking by the spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed. Because they were making great inroads into pagan religions at this time and people were being persuaded by the gospels and by the preaching of the gospel. The ones they were coming out of, they worked themselves, also, into a chant, some type of spiritual realm and then would start calling Jesus accursed. And try to persuade the people they (saints of God and the church) were bogus. Paul was trying to make this point to them so that they understood, no one by that spirit could say that God was giving them this message that Christianity wasn't real. That's the point he was driving home. And listen to what else he said, that no one can say Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. You cannot really claim the Lord, as Lord, without the Holy Ghost. It's not that people can't accept the Lord; or speak the words "Jesus is Lord," they can but there's a greater walk for them. For him to be our Lord in reality you must have the baptism of the Holy Ghost. See MT. 7:21 so just saying the words does prove it, but living it. Without the Holy Ghost we can't live it. Also see LK. 6:46-49 where Jesus said why call me Lord and do not the things that I say. So he's trying to show them that when the spirit of God's in you, it's not going to work against itself. Jesus said a house divided will fall. When they ask him about Satan, he said, If Satan work against Satan, the house is going to fall. This is the point he is trying to drive home and to be sure that we are in the Holy Ghost.

⁴Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

⁵And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

⁶And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

⁷But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

⁸For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

⁹To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

¹⁰To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

¹¹But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

Now here there are people with different manifestations, but it's all of the same spirit. And this is what he is trying to point out. There are people that have the gift of healing; this is talking about the early church. There are people that had the gift of faith. He starts mentioning all these things, the word of wisdom, knowledge. Why would Paul bring this about? Why would he want to point out that's its all one spirit that's doing this? Has anyone in here; when someone got up to preach, have you ever thought in your heart, I wish I could do that? Or if somebody got up to testify or sing, oh I wish I could do that. Well, this was Paul's point. Remember, he's working on a problem in the Corinthian church. And he wants them to understand that every work of the Spirit is good. And do not become envious or jealous of another person's gift that they have in their life. Because each gift that God gives, He gives it for the benefit of that individual. Right? No, it's not for the help of that individual alone, but it's for the edifying of the Body of Jesus Christ. It's for the working of the church; it's for the help of the church. That's what this is for, it's for this work. And he's talking about this and trying to show them that there will be diversities of gifts, that there's going to be different things happening in the church, and just be thankful that God's delivering to His people. Be thankful that God's mindful of the body and the needs of the body, or the needs of the church. So He, therefore, provides these gifts to help out. This is the point he's driving home.

(Question from the class) Diverse tongues are talking about other languages. If you dig into what the religious world scholars say, they will tell you that Paul's' only

talking about one kind of tongues here, and that's talking about foreign languages like German, English, or Spanish and that's all he's dealing with. No, he's dealing with two types of tongues, man's tongues and angel's tongues.

(Question from class) This is one of the problems Paul was working on. It's not that they didn't have the Holy Ghost and they were having tongues representative in their midst, but they were using it; remember this, like a child would. It's something new and they're learning to play with it or to use it. This is part of what they were doing. But don't let the religious world tell you that he's only talking about one kind because there are tongues of men and tongues of angels. So the divers kind of tongues, or different kinds of tongues, (Divers was added, it's not in the original text. It's what the translators put in there to help distinguish between the two kinds) but it's a correct rendering of the thought, different kinds of tongues. And that happened on the Day of Pentecost. Every man heard them speak in their own language. But there was also a language that they spoke on the Day of Pentecost that no man understood. That's the cloven tongues or the two parts, man's tongue and angels' tongue, heavenly language. It's important to mark these points down and remember them; that he's talking about two types of tongues here.

(Question from class) Different kinds of tongues like English, German, Spanish; they did it on the Day of Pentecost because there were people from other lands that spoke that language and they knew that these men at the Day of Pentecost did not know that language; it was a sign from God. That's another thing to remember that it was a sign from God. It was a witness to those that were around and Paul's going to mention that once again. He's going to mention why God uses tongues.

¹²For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also *is* Christ.

¹³For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

¹⁴For the body is not one member, but many.

Let's get the thought that Paul's putting out here. He mentions different people, different nationalities, Jew and Gentile; Gentile covers a multitude of nationalities. And then he mentions bond and free. What made them one? It surely wasn't their nationalities. The Holy Ghost made them one. See, that's what they all had in common; they were all born of the Spirit. That was their common denominator; that was the thing that made them one. They all received the spirit and that made them part of one body. They were all Jews to begin with, but then the Gentiles began to become a part and he, wanted to make sure that they understood that there's no longer Jew nor Gentile nor Greek nor bond nor free, but we're all one. And he's still working on the problem. He's saying if you're part of the body don't be jealous or envious of another part of the body.

This is one thing we have to be careful about; when God gives you a gift, don't look despairingly on you own gift. I know there are people that God's called to the ministry and he gave them a calling in their life. It's evident what they are, but they don't want to be that, they want to be something else. There's a song we sing about that. Use what you have and the Lord will give you more. But if you're always shunning your gift and you're not using the gift that God provided you, what else is God going to give you? Use the one you have; use what you got first. If a person will avail themselves of the gift that God's placed in their life and use that gift, God sees that you're using that and going back to the picture that Jesus gave of the man that took and hid what God gave him in the dirt, in the earth (pointing to his chest), and God took it from him and gave it to someone else, one that already had some other gifts. But the other guy was using his gifts. That's what we have to do. We have to use the gift that God gave us. And if you use it faithfully and you use it rightly, many times God just adds to that gift. So that's one of the things we have to remember.

¹⁵If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

¹⁶And if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

¹⁷If the whole body *were* an eye, where *were* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *were* the smelling?

¹⁸But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

As it pleaseth Him. So if you don't like what God's given you, you're rebelling against Him. You're rebelling against what God placed in your life. Use it. We're all part of one body. We're all here to help the whole. If you lose sight of that, your gift can be taken away. Your gift can be given to someone else.

(Comments from the class) A gift will have an anointing. Many times God takes a person with a natural talent and He can add the anointing to that. Have you ever heard somebody that had a great amount of knowledge get up and they could say a lot of things, but there wasn't an anointing, or somebody that was really able to play piano or sing, but there wasn't any spirit in it. That's the difference between a gift and a talent. We've seen many times someone that does not have the ability, get up and bless the people. Here's a good picture. Sister Boles, did she have a talent for singing? No, but she had a gift. But even though her voice was crackly and broken down and everything else, **whenever** she sang the Spirit of God moved in. And I remember one time, God was trying to draw a picture for us, we were at Frankfort Avenue, and our band was great, our singers were talented. We did our best trying to get the service off the ground. I think God was not blessing us for a reason. We didn't get any where. And there was a stranger that came to visit us; he was in the back of the house and he came down to sing. He hardly had a tooth in his head. And he wasn't very talented. But he began to sing and the Spirit of God began to pour in. God was pointing to us; just remember the anointing comes from me. Don't forget where it comes from. God gives us illustrations and examples like that to help us because even though we're talented, unless God picks up that talent it's of no avail. So it takes God moving to add His increase.

¹⁹And if they were all one member, where *were* the body?

²⁰But now *are they* many members, yet but one body.

²¹And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

²²Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

²³And those *members* of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness.

²⁴For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked:

²⁵That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

You ever saw someone with beautiful eyes. Oh, I want to be an “eye” like that. And we put a lot of emphasis on that or on their face. But where would it be without a stomach or a heart, things which you can’t even see. Are they important parts of the body? Yes. It’s just like us. We’re covered from the head down. Well, you see our hands, our head, our ears, our eyes. But let me tell you, you drop something on that big toe, even though no one sees that big toe; your whole body is concerned. Your whole body goes to help that big toe. All of a sudden your back begins to bend just because you dropped something on your toe, your back bends. And all of a sudden your two arms begin to reach toward that toe. And your hands begin to untie your shoe to pull your shoe off. And then your eyes begin to look at that toe. Why? It’s injured and your whole body feels it. So we as the body of Christ, this is what he’s getting ready to go into, when one member suffers, we all suffer. When one member hurts, we all should hurt. When one member rejoices, we should all rejoice because we’re all part of one body. Some might not know what a schism is. That is a division. That’s what Paul was working on is that the body is one just like the spirit of God is one. And he doesn’t want the hand fighting the foot or the eye fighting the tongue or visa versa. But we’re all together working for one good.

²⁶And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

²⁷Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

²⁸And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

²⁹*Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles?*

³⁰Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

³¹But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

A more excellent way; he brought the ministry into this; he talked about the apostles, prophets, and the teachers. He's working on this problem. If you recall, Paul in some of his other writings, was condemning the church. He said, "Some of you say I'm of Paul and some say you're of Cephas, well, I'm of Christ." What were they doing? They were picking and choosing who their hero was, so to speak. And they were trying to show one-upmanship. That's what they were doing. And I'm afraid we have a tendency to do that. Many of you here, some of you may not, but how many times did you go to a meeting or something and Brother James Sowders get up. How'd you feel? That's **my** pastor. I belong to **his** church. I remember going to Houston once. When I was in Houston, Brother Sowders came back and talked to me while I was standing there. And I was hoping everyone saw it. What was that? (Someone said, pride) That's something that's in all of us. This is part of what Paul's working on. He's working on a problem that was there in the Corinthian church. We do that with our basketball teams, our football teams. And we're working on a pride issue. But remember, we're all one body. So I should have been just as pleased as if some small church's pastor came up and talked to me. I should have been just as pleased as when Brother Sowders came and talked to me. That's part of what we've got to work on.

(Remarks from the class about why evangelist and pastors weren't used) Paul wasn't really teaching on the five offices of the ministry here. He was just using, the offices he spoke of to illustrate. Many people don't want to be an evangelist and they don't want to be a pastor. They want to be a prophet, a teacher, or an apostle. Again, that's immolation. We're looking and desiring some-thing, a greater gift. Why do we want that greater gift? (Comments from the class) I think he is giving a broad picture of this. He was working on a problem directly in Corinth, but he's using the universal church as a picture. (More comments)

Let's look at this. Remember, there are some thoughts, and it's got some credibility that he did include these other gifts of the ministry when he included, after

that, miracles then gifts of healing, helps, government, and diversities of tongues. That these other things were dwelling in those other two offices; not that it didn't also dwell in the prophet, teacher, and apostle. But these other two worked in the local area on that. (Comments from class) You start right after teachers and you read them on down. He includes them all.

Does everyone see the situation now? Paul's working on animosity, envy, pride within this local church. And the last thing he says in the 12th chapter was but covet earnestly. What were they doing about these other gifts then? They were coveting other gifts and he said, "It's all right to covet, but covet the better gifts." What's better than an apostle? What's better than a prophet? What's better than a teacher? What's better than the gift of healing? What's better than all these other gifts that he's been making mention of? What's better than that? Let's find out what Paul's going to say, because this is what he's been working on.

¹Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

All right, tongues of men and of angels, two kinds of tongues. That's important to keep in mind. And he says, though I can do that, that's one of those gifts that he mentioned, diver's tongues and interpretation of tongues, that's two of the gifts that he had already mentioned.

²And 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, and have not charity, I am nothing.

Another gift, and understand all mysteries, all knowledge, all faith; so if you don't have charity, what are you? Nothing. So if you're an apostle and you don't have charity, what are you? Nothing. If you're a prophet and you don't have charity, what are you? Nothing. If you're a teacher and you don't have charity, what are you? Nothing. If you can do miracles and you don't have charity, what are you? Nothing. If you can heal people, raise the dead and don't have charity, you're still

nothing. That's the point he's trying to get across. You desire all these things to get puffed up in your own flesh. You desire these gifts just to make you somebody. Well, I'm telling you, you're nobody, if you don't have charity.

(Comment from the class) You can be an apostle and not ever make the bride. You know why I say that? Because Paul himself said I'm fearful that after I've preached the gospel to others, I myself, might be a castaway. And Paul's explaining the important thing is you can make it, you can overcome, and you can become perfect. This was Paul's messages in everything that he preached. He didn't preach second-hand. In other words, he didn't preach much about the final resurrection. But he was preaching people, let's go on to perfection. And Jesus told the story of the man that had an abundance of crop and he went out and built bigger barns. Well, see God was blessing him. But that night his soul was required of him. He neglected the most important thing, and that's charity. He neglected that. God can use a person; he can give them a gift and he can use them. But if they don't go on themselves, they're sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, they're nothing. Even though God has a gift on you and He's using you, just like Judas; Judas was chosen to be an apostle. Where did he wind up? He wound up in a potter's field, without hope, lost. But yet he was an apostle. So he's directing us the right way. Let's go to the best gift.

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

What is charity then? Is it giving to the poor? That's what we say today, a charitable institution, somebody that helps people in need. If you've got charity, you're going to help people that are in need. But this word charity means the love of God. That's what it's talking about, an agape love. This is what he's trying to get. So it's not the kind of charity that maybe you sometimes think of in today's world. (Comments from class) It's everybody that needs charity. Without charity, you will not make it. Without putting charity in your life, you will not make it. You just mark it down. It's one of the foundation stones. And you cannot build without a good foundation under you. Charity is one of the most difficult things that you're going to

put in your life. How can you get charity, through suffering, through tribulation, through trials. We're going to go over some of the ingredients of charity. And this will help explain to you how to get charity. We're going to work on that.

We're going to start with verse 4. Everyone needs to pay attention because these are some of the ingredients that Paul is telling you that charity consists of. This is very important that we understand this.

⁴Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

⁵Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

⁶Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

⁷Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Suffereth long #1, and is kind #2, it doesn't envy #3, it doesn't brag on itself, is not egotistic #4, is not rude to people #5, it doesn't do things that look or appear evil in any way #6. It's not selfish #7, not easily provoked, temperate #8, thinks no evil (evil imaginations)#9, rejoiceth not in iniquity, in other words, righteous; rejoices in the truth. It has to have a love for the truth #10. Beareth all things, not a few, not some, but all #11; believeth all things #12. Now, if somebody comes up and tells you a big lie, does that mean you're suppose to believe it? No, it's talking about believing all things that are truthful, all things about the word of God, and so forth. Hopeth all things; a positive outlook #13. Endureth all things #14.

I call these, you could say, 14 or 15 ingredients of charity. I put other words that were sometimes more descriptive for us. Number 1, when it says "suffereth long" what does that mean? It means that you have patience. How do you get patience? Tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, and experience hope, hope maketh not ashamed. So these are all building blocks.

Number 2 kindness is love in action. Kindness or being kind is not something just God drops in your life, but you have to work on it; it's love in action. You work on it. It's never rash. It's not inconsistent and it's not proud, not puffed up. This is part of what's involved in kindness.

Number 3 is envieth not. That's part of what he's been working on, all these gifts, you envying these gifts. Don't envy what God's given to others. So in other words, it's not competitive. It's not somebody getting up and quoting; this really happened. A brother got up and used 36 scriptures. The next brother says I'm going to have to use more than that. So when he gets up, he goes for 45. Well, that's the wrong spirit. That's a competitive spirit. What you need to do is quit worrying about what God's doing with your brother and get behind him and support him; not that you're going to do better than him. Because God will bless you one time and not bless the other brother and visa versa. Again, he's working on all these attributes in our life.

Then we have vaunteth not itself. And I included "puffed up" with that because it's kind of connected, being egotistic, in other words, it has humility. Charity has humility. You don't set about parades when you do something. Jesus talked about that, didn't he? You give something to someone to help them, and then you go and blow a trumpet before you, look what I've done. No, that's not the way to do it. It has humility. After that, we have doth not behave itself unseemly. You ever been rude to somebody? You been disrespectful to somebody? You been discourteous to somebody? Charity is not like that. You ever had somebody say something smart to you? And what's on the tip of your tongue? A response. That's not charity. Are you getting what it takes to get charity? It's a work, but this is what we're suppose to covet, is earnestly desiring these traits.

Seeketh not her own; it's selfless. You're not looking to lift yourself up or to do good for you. But you want good for your brother, you prefer your brother. That's what it's about. When we're selfless, we're not selfish, we're not sour. Have you ever been sour? Maybe you just didn't feel good that day. Maybe you had a headache and someone spoke to you and you were sour toward them. Well, that's not part of charity. It seeks only good for others. This is something else that charity never does; it never retaliates. And it doesn't seek revenge. You ever sought revenge? I think we have all sought revenge. If someone does something to us, what happens? The gears start turning. Oh, I have to get them back. Your mind starts whirling. That's evil imagination. You're trying to figure out someway to hurt

your brother, to hurt your body. You ever heard the phrase, cut off your nose to spite your face? This is what we tend to do. If you see somebody beating their head against the wall, are they sane? I've been so angry at myself, I want to punch myself. You ever been that way? What's wrong with me? When I smack my face or whatever, that's my body. If Brother Leo does something to me and I go over and smack him as hard as I can, I'm hurting myself. This is the point Paul's trying to drive home. We're all part of one body. No man hateth his own body but he cherisheth it. That's what we're supposed to do. So when Josh does something to me, I don't say get him, I say Lord help him. This is the attitude that we're supposed to have.

The next thing is, not easily provoked. You're temperate. Anybody in here have an anger issue? Anybody in here get mad? You know what happens when you get mad? You lose your mind. You become insane. You know when you really get hot, steaming mad, you don't think about what you're going to do, you just do it. You just react. You know why? Because your body is pumping all these chemicals in there and it causes temporary insanity. You'll do things that you would never think of doing. And then after the anger has left you, you look back and say, oh my. If it was in a crowd, instead of your face being red with anger, it's red with embarrassment. I just ruined my own reputation. Charity, we've got to have charity.

The next one is thinketh no evil. Or it's not critical of one another. You ever seen somebody do something and all of a sudden a thought pop into your head, they just did that to make a show of themselves. They did that just because they want to be somebody. They did that because of this or that. That's evil imagining, evil imagination. And we're not supposed to be like that. That's part of charity.

The next one is rejoiceth not in iniquity. Or in other words, it likes righteousness. And even if you see your brother doing iniquity, you don't take joy in that. Maybe you've had trouble with a brother or sister and you see them do something wrong and you think, I knew it. Yes, they thought they were hot stuff. They thought they were so great. Well, they aren't no better than me. Maybe they're not but maybe you're not any better than them, either. So we don't rejoice in iniquity even when part of our body is doing evil, we don't rejoice in that fact because we think it pushes us up higher.

Then the next one, rejoices in truth. Or it loves truth. And even truth that hurts us. That's part of charity, truth that hurts us. Pastor tells you, you shouldn't do that and it hurts. You get a rebuking for it (see pro.9:8) rebuke a wise man and he will love thee. But yet you love the truth anyway. I know I shouldn't do that. And you love correction. That's part of charity. Correction is to take you on to perfection. You love correction. How many loves to be corrected? Anybody in here love to be corrected? Well, we should be. We should love to be corrected. Because we have to realize that correction, if it's done the right way, is not to hurt us but to help us.

The next one is, beareth all things, not just some things. What do you bear then? Do you bear when someone comes and pats you on the back and says, boy you did a fine job. You don't have to bear that, do you? But when somebody comes and says, try again next time maybe you'll get it right. You bear that. You bear when somebody turns into a big angry bear. You bear it when people mistreat you, when they speak evil of you, you bear it. That's part of charity.

The next thing, believeth all things. It's all truth, it's not we're believing every story that comes along, or every tale that comes along, or every myth that comes along but it means believing the word of God, believing that God's out for our good. These are the type things you believe.

And it hopeth all things. What could we say about that? In other words, have a positive outlook. You're always hoping for the best. You're not hoping for calamity or evil but you've got a positive outlook, you're got a positive outlook about the things of God, you've got a positive outlook concerning your brother or sister. You're not negative. That's part of charity. You ever have negative feelings toward other people? But see, we should have a positive outlook concerning the things of God. We should have a positive outlook for our brothers and sisters; hoping for the best in every individual. We're not looking for every flaw we can find. We're not looking for things we can criticize, but we're looking for the good in people.

I'll tell you a story. There was this farmer. He had this farm just outside a little town. He was leaning up against his fence, which was right up close to the road. This man came through in his vehicle. He pulls up and he says, "Hey, sir, I'd like to ask you a question." He said, "All right." He said, "that town just up there, what kind

of people live in that town? What kind of town is it?" He said, "Well, what kind of town did you come from." He said, "Oh, I came from a town where people were back-biting, they were always after one another. People were not happy; they were always upset and angry and irritated. That's just the way it was." He says, "Well, I'm sorry to tell you, you're going to find the same thing up here." The old farmer just stood there along side of the fence and another vehicle came up. And he was thinking of moving into town. "Sir, can I ask you a question?" He said, "Yes." He said, "I'm thinking about moving to this town right up the road. What kind of town is it? What are the people like?" He said, "What kind of town did you come from?" He said, "Oh, it was a wonderful town. People just cared about one another. They loved each other. They were always trying to help one another. It was just a wonderful town. I just hated to leave it." And he said, "Well, you're going to find the same thing in that town up there."

How could they both be true? You find what you're looking for. If you're looking with hope and looking for good in people, you're going to find it. If you're looking for evil or bad in people, what are you going to find? Charity doesn't look for things to criticize; but it looks for things to lift up, to edify. That's what those gifts of the ministry were for. They were to edify, not tear down, not destroy. Now a minister sometimes has to take a rod of correction. That's not what Paul's talking about. But he's talking about the general attitude of people.

And the last thing, endureth all things. You persevere. You go through it with an attitude; I'm going to make it through. You've got you mind, your eye set upon a goal and you're going after it. That's another part of charity. How many has charity tonight? How many want charity tonight? Well, that's what we've got to work on. We've got a work in front of us. These are some of the things and that's how we get them, by putting these things into practice.

⁸Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

People will misuse this scripture; they will misuse this scripture badly. They say, "Charity never fails. But prophecies, they're going to fail." Are true prophecies going to fail? No, false prophecies are going to fail. What about whether there be tongues, they shall cease? Was Paul saying he knew speaking in tongues was going to come to an end? **No!** That's not what Paul's working on. That's one of the keys to these two chapters. That's one of the keys! Put a big key by that verse; because that's one of the keys of these chapters. Are tongues going to cease? No, he was talking about the way they're using tongues, their immaturity and the way they were using that things of God, that's what's going to cease. And as we get into the 14th chapter, we're going to find out that in a greater way. How God was showing them that this foolish way they were doing, because he's still working on the problem. When he was talking about charity, he was giving them all the things that they needed to work on. But he's telling them the way that you're using these tongues, is going to cease. And whether there be knowledge, it's going to vanish away. The immature knowledge that they had at this time would vanish or become more mature. Is knowledge and wisdom going to vanish away? Are we all of a sudden going to become stupid individuals? No, the way you're using this knowledge, the way you're using these things inappropriately, that's going to vanish away.

⁹For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

¹⁰But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

There's another part of that key. Right now, you're prophesying in part. We know in part; we have knowledge in part; and you prophesy in part, but when you get to that which is perfect, this what you're doing in part will vanish, will be done away with.

¹¹When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

In other words, what you're doing here in the church is acting like a little child. You have a new toy, and you're using it as a toy. He's describing how they were in

the church. They were still child-like. They were children. They didn't understand how to use the things of God. But then he gives them another point. So, when you mature, when you grow up, you'll stop doing the things that you're doing now. Right now you're still childish.

¹²For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

¹³And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

They can't see through it clearly. Why? Because they only had part knowledge; they don't understand everything yet. Later on, you'll see it clearly. That's the greatest thing we can seek right now, is charity. These are things, these ingredients, 14 or 15 points; this is what we've got to add. That's what Paul is trying to work on. He's trying to let them see that charity is the thing they need to desire; not to be lifted up and puffed up and think that they are going to be greater than somebody else because they get up and they speak in tongues. Because this is what this church was doing. They were getting up and speaking in tongues. But this is the point he's trying to drive home. That's why we need to take all three of these chapters and work on them together.

Next week, we'll pick the last part of the 13th chapter and read it along with the 14th chapter. And hopefully then we'll understand what Paul was working on. That it was a problem in the Corinthian church that he was dealing with. (Comments from class) And that's something that we don't want to do. But that's what charity does. It will suffer the problem, it will suffer harm, it will suffer wrong, and if you do that, it just boost you up higher.