



Word on Wednesday Bible Study
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Love Never Fails – 1 Corinthians 13:8-13
July 1, 2026

We have reached the conclusion of our series, What's Love Got to Do with It? Over five weeks, the Apostle Paul has dismantled our assumptions about gifts, sacrifice, and spiritual greatness and replaced them with the singular claim of 1 Corinthians 13: love is supreme. This final session anchors everything Paul has taught in one four-word Greek declaration — “He agapē oudepote piptei” — Love. Never. Fails.

I. THE PERMANENCE OF LOVE | 1 Corinthians 13:8

1 Corinthians 13:8 (ESV) *“Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.”*

Paul opens with a declaration and immediately contrasts love with three celebrated gifts in Corinth — prophecy, tongues, and knowledge. Each of those gifts has an expiration date. Love does not.

Key Greek Word: “Piptei” (from pipto) — to fall, to collapse, to come to ruin. Paul says love never piptei. Love never collapses.

Love is the one thing in the universe that is impervious to _____.

Spiritual gifts are instruments for building the kingdom in this age, but love is the kingdom itself. The gifts will be set aside when their work is done, but love will still be standing because love was never just a tool; love is the destination.

THREE THINGS PAUL SAYS WILL PASS AWAY (V. 8):

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

THE CENTRAL TRUTH OF POINT I:

Because God is love (1 John 4:8), and God never changes (Hebrews 13:8), love never fails. When Paul says, “Love never fails,” he is saying something about _____.

II. THE PROCESS OF LOVE | 1 Corinthians 13:9–12

1 Corinthians 13:9–12 (ESV) *“For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.”*

Paul gives us two unforgettable images: the child who grows into adulthood, and the ancient mirror that gives only a dim reflection. Both images point to the same truth. We are all operating with partial knowledge. We see something real, but not completely.

THE TWO IMAGES PAUL USES:

- **Childhood → Adulthood:** We speak, think, and reason with limited understanding now. Maturity comes when the partial gives way to _____.
- **Mirror Dimly → Face to Face:** First-century mirrors were polished metal — blurry and imperfect. One day we will see God _____.

Since none of us has the complete picture of God or of one another, love is not optional. It is the only appropriate response to our shared condition of incompleteness. We are all holding a piece of the mosaic.

Love is not a tool for the partial season. Love is the _____ of the perfect one.

III. THE PREEMINENCE OF LOVE | 1 Corinthians 13:13

1 Corinthians 13:13 (ESV) *“So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”*

Why is love the greatest? Faith saves us and moves mountains. Hope sustains us toward God’s promises. So why does Paul crown love as supreme?

THE DISTINCTION PAUL MAKES:

- Faith and Hope are responses to God.
- Love is the nature of God.
- The nature is always greater than the response to it.



One day, faith will become sight. One day, hope will become fulfillment. But love will never be replaced by anything greater, because there is nothing greater than love to replace it with. Love is the atmosphere of Heaven itself.

Key Theological Anchor: *“Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.” 1 John 4:8 (ESV)*

John does not say God has love or that God shows love. He says God is love. Love is not something God does occasionally — love is what God is essentially.

Because we were made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), we were created with the capacity to love the way God loves. Which means when you love someone with genuine, sacrificial, agape love, you are not just doing something kind — you are _____ the nature of God in the earth.

THE CROSS AS THE PROOF:

- Love bearing all things — Jesus carried the sins of the world.
- Love believing all things — He offered grace to a dying thief.
- Love hoping all things — He endured the cross for the joy set before Him.
- Love enduring all things — He remained until He cried, “It is finished.”

On Friday, they nailed love to a cross. On Friday, they sealed love in a tomb. But early Sunday morning, the tomb opened and love walked out. That is how we know love never fails: Love got up!

CLOSING APPLICATION

As we close this series, Paul’s final word is not a command to perform more. It is a revelation of who God is and what He has placed inside you. You were made in the image of the God who is love. That means you were made to carry the greatest force in the universe.