

Without Love I Profit Nothing

I Corinthians 13:3

In I Corinthians 13:1, the Apostle Paul points out that even if I could speak in the tongues of all peoples' everywhere, without love *I say nothing*. In verse 2, Paul states that if I had the gift prophecy and understood all mysteries and all knowledge, without love *I am nothing*. Paul says though I give everything away, including offering my life, without love, *I profit nothing* from it.

I. Giving away my material possessions to help the poor is an act praised by people.

"And if I give away all my possessions to charity ..." The word translated "give" is a specific word meaning *"the intentional, and volitional giving away"* of my material goods for others. Paul is going to discuss with the Corinthians in chapter 16 about taking a collection for the poor believers struggling with famine in the middle east (II Cor. 16:1). The Corinthians give!

A. Giving is helpful to those in need.

We see Jesus encouraging His disciples to give away their material possessions. Giving generously is a trait admired by people in general and specifically by all Christians.

B. Giving is also helpful to one's reputation.

When people are praised for their giving, they become elevated in others' eyes. But without love, giving away your possessions profits *you* nothing eternally. Give quietly.

II. Surrendering my life for the sake of others is an act lauded by the history books.

"And if I surrender my body to be burned ..." This phrase "surrendering of the body" means:

A. Placing yourself in harm's way for others.

Think of the heroism of soldiers, firefighters, or any others selflessly give of their lives.

B. Giving your life as an act of martyrdom for religion.

Which includes "dying for God" or refusing to give allegiance to political kingdoms.

C. Surrendering your life for human rights or social change.

Fasting until change occurs, or setting yourself on fire to draw attention to a problem.

If you don't have love, surrendering your body for good profits *you* nothing eternally

"All the above "are done with no true love to God, a real affection for Christ, or to His saints; but to get yourself a name, or to receive honor and praise of men" John Gill.

III. Without love all my excellent and moral actions *profit me nothing in the future*.

"If I give... And if I surrender... but do not have love, it profits me nothing" (v.3).

A. There is a *profit to me* when loving God and people.

What is that profit? Well, it seems clear that the profit is something in heaven. Jesus said, *"So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly, they have their reward in full. When you give, do it secretly so that your heavenly Father (who knows) will reward you"* (Matthew 6:4).

B. There is a *promise for me* when loving God and people.

"Love never fails" – it will not fail the people you love, nor your own life.

C. There is a *problem in me* when loving God and people.

The greatest hindrance in loving God and His people in this life is the fiery darts of my enemy who questions me, *"Has God really said...? God is telling me that the greatest thing I can do in life is to love others in the same way that He has always loved me.*