

Family Group Outline – February 22nd, 2026

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MBC:

1. Women of the Word meets each Saturday at 9:30am; our Moms' group meets at the church at 9:00am on Thursdays; and Pastor Spencer meets with some men on Fridays at 6am at the Starbucks on Kapolei Parkway and Fort Barrette
2. To prepare for the preaching of the word on this coming Lord's Day, we would encourage you to meditate on the passage ahead of time. This Sunday's sermon will be from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

WHAT WE BELIEVE: *Of God's Purpose of Grace* - We believe that Election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it may be known by the evidence of Christian perseverance in all who truly believe the gospel; that it is the foundation of Christian assurance. 2 Tim. 1:8-9; Eph. 1:3-14; 1 Pet. 1:1-2; Rom. 11:5-6; John 15:15; 1 John 4:19; Hos. 12:9; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; Acts 13:48; John 10:16; Matt. 20:16; Acts 15:14; Exod. 33:18-19; Matt. 20:15; Eph. 1:11; Rom. 9:23-24; Jer. 31:3; Rom. 11:28-29; James 1:17-18; 2 Tim. 1:9; Rom. 11:32-36; 1 Cor. 4:7; 1:26-31; Rom. 3:27; 4:16; Col. 3:12; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; 15:10; 1 Pet. 5:10; Acts 1:24; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:9; Luke 18:7; John 15:16; Eph. 1:16; 1 Thess. 2:12; 2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Cor. 9:22; Rom. 8:28-30; John 6:37-40; 2 Pet. 1:10; 1 Thess. 1:4-10; Rom. 8:28-30; Isa. 42:16; Rom. 11:29; 2 Pet. 1:10-11; Phil. 3:12; Heb. 6:11; Phil. 2:12.

WISDOM: "Our love grows soft if it is not strengthened by truth, and our truth grows hard if it is not softened by love." —John Stott

WORD: "The Worth of Love", 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Suggested questions:

1. Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. Was there anything that particularly challenged, impacted, or confused you from this Sunday's message?
2. Why is everything worthless without love?
3. What are some things that you sinfully look to for worth, value, or meaning?
4. How can we increase in love?

DIGGING DEEPER: What Is Love?

<https://learn.ligonier.org/articles/what-is-love>

What Is Love?

R.C. Sproul

How many people do you know that have made it to the hall of fame in music, art, literature, or sports because of their love? We elevate people to the status of heroes because of their gifts, their talents, and their power, but not because of their love. Yet, from God's perspective, love is the chief of all virtues. But what is love?

Love is said to make the world go round, and romantic love certainly makes the culture go round in terms of advertising and entertainment. We never seem to tire of stories that focus on romance. But we're not referring to romantic love when we speak of the Christian virtue of love. We're talking about a much deeper dimension of love, a virtue so paramount that it is to distinguish Christians from all other people. Moreover, love is so important to the Bible's teachings that John tells us, "God is love" (1 John 4:7–8). Whatever else we say about the Christian virtue of love, we must be clear that the love God commands is a love that imitates His own. The love of God is utterly perfect. And we are called to reflect and mirror that love to perfection, to be perfect as He is perfect (Matt. 5:48). Now, of course, none of us loves perfectly, which is why we must be covered with the perfect righteousness of Christ by faith in Him alone. Nevertheless, it's important for us to return time and again to Scripture to find out what love is supposed to look like, for we're so easily satisfied with a sentimental, maudlin, romantic, or superficial understanding of love.

First Corinthians 13 plumbs the depths of what love really means. It's a measuring rod by which we can examine ourselves carefully to see whether this love resides in our hearts and is manifested in our lives. Given that truth, I'm surprised that 1 Corinthians 13 is one of the most popular passages in all of Scripture instead of being one of the most despised. I can't think of any chapter in Scripture that more quickly reveals our sins than this chapter. It's popularity may be due to its being one of the most misunderstood and least applied chapters in the Bible. There's a sense in which we're ambivalent toward it. We're drawn to it because of the grandeur of its theme and the eloquence of its language, yet at the same time we're repulsed by this chapter because it reveals our shortcomings. We want to keep some safe distance from it because it so clearly demonstrates to us our lack of real love.

This chapter is part of an Apostolic admonition to Christians who were torn apart by contentions in the church. They were behaving in an immature, fleshly manner, and at the heart of this ungodly behavior was a manifestation of certain talents, abilities, and gifts without the presence of love in their lives. In the opening verses, Paul speaks of love as the *sine qua non* of Christian virtue (1 Cor. 13:1–3). He's speaking with hyperbole, intentionally exaggerating things to make his point. He starts off comparing love to the gift of tongues. Paul says, in effect, "I don't care if you are fluent in fifty languages or if you have the gift to speak foreign languages miraculously. I don't care if God has endowed you with the ability to speak the language of the heavenly host. If you don't have love, the eloquence of your speech becomes noise. It becomes dissonance, an irritating and annoying racket." He says here that if we speak in the tongues of men and of angels but have not

love, we become a sounding brass or a clanging symbol—mere noise. All the beauty of speech is lost when love is absent.

Paul then compares love to the gifts of prophecy and understanding, miraculous endowments that God gave to people during the Apostolic era. These tremendous gifts were nothing compared to love. The Apostle says that you can have a miraculous endowment, you can receive power from God the Holy Spirit, but it is to be used in the context of the grace of love. And without that love, the use of the divine power is a charade. Jesus had to warn even His own disciples about the danger of using a God-given gift without love. Jesus empowered His disciples to participate in His ministry of exorcism, and they went out on their mission and came back clicking their heels. They were so excited at the effectiveness of their ministry that they were rejoicing in the power Christ had given them. But what did Jesus say? Don't rejoice because you have been given power over Satan, but rejoice that your names have been written in heaven (Luke 10:1–20). The disciples were caught up with the power instead of the grace that was underlying that power. They were intoxicated with the gift, and were forgetting the One who gave it.

The bottom line is that the gifts of God can be used without love. When that happens, their value is destroyed. The essence of love, 1 Corinthians 13 tells us, is to seek the welfare of others. A person who reflects God's love is driven to give of himself for others, not to wield his power for his own benefit. But we are people who are more interested in power, in doing rather than being. We're more concerned to seize the supernatural power that God can give rather than the supernatural love that is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). We have misplaced priorities. Thanks be to God that His love for us is greater than our love for Him. May He strengthen us to pursue love above all else, a love that reflects His love for us in Christ (Rom. 5:8).

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

¹If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.