

1ST CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 13
G R E A T C H A P T E R S O F T H E B I B L E
"A MORE EXCELLENT WAY"

I. INTRODUCTION.

- a. Brief Review of I Corinthians, Chapter 12.
 - i. Spiritual gifts were to benefit all. (1-11)
 - ii. Need for maintaining unity seen in the illustration of Christ's church and the physical body. (12-27)
 - 1. Not all parts serve same purpose, but all are essential.
 - 2. Despite having many and diverse parts, the body works as a unit.
- b. *"But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet I show unto you a "MORE EXCELLENT WAY." (I Cor. 12:31)*

II. "A MORE EXCELLENT WAY."—Study of I Corinthians 13.

- a. Paul uses "conditional" statements—"though I speak", "though I have" to show need for a "more excellent way" of love to avoid the multitude of problems exhibited by the Corinthian church. (1-3)
- b. Paul explains what love does and what it does not do:
 - i. Two things it does: (4a)
 - 1. "Suffers long".
 - 2. "Is kind".
 - ii. What love "does not do". (4b-6)
 - ii. What love does in relation to "all things". (7)
- c. The enduring quality of love (the "more excellent way")
Is contrasted to the temporary (transitory) nature of spiritual gifts. (8-12)
 - i. Love never fails, but the spiritual gifts will pass away. (8-10)
 - ii. Two illustrations of the meaning of this contrast. (11-12)
 - 1. Paul's "childhood" contrasted to his "manhood".
 - 2. Contrast of "seeing in a mirror" and "seeing face to face".
- d. Important lessons on "the more excellent way" of love. (13)
 - i. Three things abide now: faith, hope and love.
 - ii. The greatest of these is declared to be love.
 - iii. Therefore, "Follow after love...". (I Corinthians 14:1)