

1 Corinthians 13

1 If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. 3 If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.

4 Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud 5 or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. 6 It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. 7 Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

8 Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless. But love will last forever! 9 Now our knowledge is partial and incomplete, and even the gift of prophecy reveals only part of the whole picture! 10 But when the time of perfection comes, these partial things will become useless.

11 When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things. 12 Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.

13 Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.

Questions:

Is anyone willing to admit to having a favourite love song? What is it?

When in your life have you felt most loved?

1. Given the quest for spiritual gifts and power found in the Corinthian church, what point is Paul making in verses 1-3? How can this be applied to us?
2. How many ways can we think of in which the qualities listed in verse 4 to 7 are seen in Christ?
3. Which of the qualities listed in verses 4 to 7 do we find hardest to achieve?
4. Have you ever done a religious act without love? What was it like?
5. In what ways might verses 8 to 12: a) keep us hopeful; b) keep us humble?
6. Why in verse 13 is love greater than faith and hope?

Would you say that St George's is a loving church? Are there any ways in which it could be more loving?