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Sermon Notes

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Love Does Not Envy, or Boast; Love Is Not Proud

1 Corinthians 13:4

1 Corinthians 13:4 [Love] does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

I. The Portrait of Christ Multiplied

Probably the most famous painting in the history of art is Leonardo DaVinci's "Mona Lisa" ... which hangs behind a large piece of bullet-proof glass in the Louvre Art Museum in Paris. You have all see pictures of it, I'm sure... perhaps some of you have been privileged to be able to see it with your own eyes, although I have read recently that that is extremely difficult to do... The Louvre attracts over 10 million tourists every year... approximately 50,000 every single day; 80% of those come primarily to see the Mona Lisa... 40,000 human beings look on one portrait every single day – tiny at that (30" x 21" in size)... if you do the math, you would get approximately 1 second to see the painting if everyone got equal time in a twelve hour day... after standing in line for one hour, you get one second to stand, before you're shoed away by the people behind you

Anyway, the Mona Lisa is a portrait, and probably the most copied piece of art in history... there are galleries that will paint you an original copy of the Mona Lisa by hand for just under \$300. Every brush stroke copied by an expert painter, just to have an actual COPY of the famous portrait

I want you to fix that concept in your mind, because as we resume our study of "the love chapter" (1 Corinthians 13), we are in some ways gazing into a portrait of Jesus Christ, the Savior of

the world. The words the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to write on love are perfect, describing a perfect level of human love that has only been achieved once in all of history. God is LOVE (1 John 4) tells us, and Jesus is “the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being” (Heb. 1:3) Therefore, to look at Jesus is to see perfect love

A. Inserting Our Name... Inserting Christ’s Name

1. As we read word by word the description of love, some preachers have said we should put our own names in here
 - a. “Andy is patient, Andy is kind... I do not envy, I do not boast, I am not arrogant, I am not rude, etc.”
 - b. BUT THAT IS SO UNCOMFORTABLE! Because it is not true
 - c. It is a goal... but I have yet to live out one perfectly loving day in my life
2. But Jesus Christ lived not just one perfectly loving day, but every single day of his life was a perfect fulfillment of BOTH of the two greatest commandments: Jesus loved God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength; and Jesus loved his neighbor as himself”
3. This was perfectly and ultimately displayed at the cross

John 14:31 the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

1 John 3:16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.

4. But it was also displayed moment by moment perfectly every single day of his life

Jesus is patient, Jesus is kind, Jesus does not envy, Jesus does not boast, Jesus is not arrogant, Jesus is not rude, Jesus is not self-seeking, Jesus is not easily angered... etc.

B. The Goal of Sanctification: Conformity to Christ

1. Once we have been justified, forgiven for our sins, through faith in Christ, we begin the internal journey of daily sanctification
2. Every single day, we are being transformed little by little into the image of Christ... made to conform to HIM

Romans 8:29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

3. The Holy Spirit is the skillful artist, reproducing the portrait of Jesus Christ in his children all over the world
 - a. Better than the Mona Lisa, we are having the character of Christ painted in our very souls by the skillful work of the Holy Spirit
 - b. Every single day, he works this kind of Christ-like love in our hearts
4. When his work is done, we will spend eternity in heaven
GLORIOUSLY CONFORMED to Christ... that means we will be PERFECTLY LOVING!

C. The Holy Spirit's Work: Transforming Us from a "Brood of Vipers" to a Heavenly Colony

1. In our sin nature, we are all naturally wicked... we are far from loving as this chapter describes
2. We are much more like a BROOD OF VIPERS

Matthew 3:7-8 "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

Romans 3:13-17 "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." ¹⁴ "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." ¹⁵ "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ ruin and misery mark their ways, ¹⁷ and the way of peace they do not know."

3. Picture a whole nest full of writhing, wriggling poisonous snakes... hissing, snapping at each other with bared fangs

4. Or maybe the image of a pen of junkyard dogs is more familiar to you... barking, snarling, circling each other, ready to go for the jugular

Galatians 5:15 If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

5. This is the raw material the sovereign artist, the Spirit of God has to transform into millions of little Christs... from a dog pound of rabid junkyard Dobermans to a sweet, peaceful, loving colony of heaven that puts Christlikeness on display every day

D. The Corinthians: A Paradigm of All Redeemed Sinners

1. The Corinthians were just like us!
2. They were arrogant, envying each other, boasting about their own knowledge and gifts and abilities
3. They were ridden with factions and divisions; they were suing each other in courts of law; they were angry, vengeful, carnal, selfish
4. They were JUST LIKE US! And the Holy Spirit used their weaknesses and sinfulness to teach twenty centuries of like-minded sinners what Christianity was meant to be like... he ordained that Paul would write these words and hang them in front of us
5. These perfect words describe perfect Christ-like love from person to person

E. 1 Corinthians 13 as Law

1. The LAW of God is summed up as we've said

Matthew 22:37-40 "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Romans 13:9-10 The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love

your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰ Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

2. The Law is relentless... it cannot justify us
3. However, justification is a gift of God to all who believe in Jesus; Jesus' perfect obedience of the law of love is IMPUTED TO US AS A GIFT!! In Christ, by faith, God sees us POSITIONALLY as if we are just as loving as Jesus was
4. And once we have been justified, the Holy Spirit brings us back to the moral law and WORKS IT IN US!!
5. Gazing into 1 Corinthians 13 is not only like gazing at a portrait of Jesus, the only perfectly loving man in history; it is also like gazing into a MIRROR... to see our own imperfections

Imagine renting a cabin in the Rocky Mountains with a fantastic view of the mountain you went out to Colorado to climb; you wake up just before sunrise to look out the window of your room and you see THROUGH the glass to the summit of the mountain... you watch the sunrise make the mountain glow with glory; but you can also see your face in the pane of glass... the window is a mirror... and you can see both ways at the same time – the journey to glory you are about to make, and the imperfections of your own face

James 1:22-25 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³ Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵ But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it-- he will be blessed in what he does.

This morning, we get to GAZE INTO the “perfect law that gives freedom” in order that we may be transformed into perfect, Christ-like love for other people

F. Purified from a Series of Negatives

1. As we do this morning, we begin a series of NEGATIVES

1 Corinthians 13:4-6 Love ... does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil

2. Eight straight assertions about what love IS NOT and what love DOES NOT do
3. Why all these negatives? Perhaps it is because Adam, the first human being, was originally created pure and holy, perfectly loving, in the image of God... his heart expanded beyond himself to encompass the glory of God and the beauty of all his creation...
4. But sin made man turn in on himself, become wicked and inward focused and polluted... these specific sin patterns entered his pure heart and POLLUTED him, defiled him
5. Imagine a gallon of raw sewage taken from a septic system... all it takes to make it pure water is a FILTERING of all the impurities from the water... all the pollutants that are defiling the water and making it deadly to drink would be removed
6. So it must be with our hearts... they are naturally characterized by all these negative traits
 - a. We are FULL of envy... we are FULL of boasting; we are defiled to the core by PRIDE; we are consistently rude, we are habitually and fanatically SELF-SEEKING; we flame into anger at the drop of a hat; we keep careful and meticulous records of wrongs done to us; we delight secretly in evil
 - b. This is our natural state apart from Christ
7. When we are redeemed, our heart of stone is removed and a heart of flesh is put in and we are made NEW
 - a. This NEW NATURE is created to be LIKE GOD in true righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4)

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

- b. In that new nature, we are ABLE to become loving, to have all this impurity removed from our hearts
- c. Let's begin working on these nasty pollutants one at a time!

II. Love Does Not Envy

A. Definition of Envy

Jonathan Edwards: "Envy may be defined as a spirit of dissatisfaction with and opposition to the prosperity and happiness of others as compared with our own."

1. The envious man sees the happiness of another person, his success, his possessions, his honors and achievements, his wife, his car, his house... and he is DISPLEASED with the good things the other man has... it makes the envious man angry
2. The spirit of envy is especially aggravated when the person compares it with his own lot... he compares his office to that of a co-worker, his car with that of a neighbor, his house with that of a person who owns a vacation home on the ocean—waterfront property... and his heart is embittered about it
3. This is exceedingly common... actually it drives a lot of the activity of the world

Ecclesiastes 4:4 I saw that all labor and all achievement spring from man's envy of his neighbor. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

In the 50s, it was called "Keeping up with the Joneses." Comparing your possessions and lifestyle with theirs

Envy drives a lot of effort by man in this world

B. Examples from the Bible

1. Cain was jealous of his brother Abel when God spoke well of Abel's offerings but rejected Cain's... this caused Cain to HATE his brother and murder him

2. Joseph's brothers were envious of the preference their father Jacob showed to him... they hated his multi-colored coat and his status as the heir of the family

Genesis 37:4 When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.

This led some of his brothers to want to MURDER Joseph... but in the end, they settled for beating him up, throwing him in a pit, and then selling him as a slave

3. Haman was jealous of Mordecai the Jew... so much so that Haman could not enjoy any of his own privileges

Esther 5:13 all this gives me no satisfaction as long as I see that Jew Mordecai sitting at the king's gate

This led to Haman plotting to kill not only Mordecai but the entire Jewish nation

4. The Jewish leaders were extremely jealous of Jesus... his miraculous power and his popularity among the crowds... and this moved them every single day to oppose him and plot against him and eventually kill him... even Pontius Pilate perceived this

Matthew 27:18 For he knew it was out of envy that they had handed Jesus over to him.

C. What Is So Evil About Envy

1. The greedy, grasping, selfish spirit at the root of envy is so wicked
2. It corrupts the whole heart with bitterness... it always competes and drives us to achieve, unable to love others and their successes
3. It is (as we've seen) at the root of some of the most hideous actions in history, having murder as its ultimate goal... not only does it rob the envious of happiness in the good news of others, it robs us of happiness in our OWN successes and gifts from God
4. We become BITTERLY DISCONTENT about our salary, our car, our home, our family, our clothes... all of these are good gifts from

God, but envy pollutes them all; instead of being peacefully content and thankful to God, we grumble against God for blessing the other person

5. It is completely opposed to the love that God wants us to have for others

D. The Opposite of Envy: Delight in a Brother's Blessedness

1. To love means to DELIGHT in another person's blessedness from God

James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights

2. We see the hand and purpose of God is to bless the other person, and we delight in that person's blessings as much as our own because the SAME HEAVENLY FATHER has willed to work both of them... and whatever God does is GOOD!

I used to be UGLY competitive in sports... I used to behave like John McEnroe on the tennis court, angry, hitting balls over the fence; I had a very ugly competitiveness to me; after I was converted, God worked a change in me... as I began to realize that whatever skill I had in sports was given to me by God for me to enjoy, but THE SAME WAS TRUE OF OTHERS... the same God who gave me the ability to play well gave it to others as well...

One afternoon, I was playing basketball with a group of Christian friends; two of them were about to go overseas as missionaries; we'd played together many times, but I knew this was the last time we'd all be together; and God gave me such a peace in the performance of the sport that day... every basket made by any of us was the same as by all of us... A GIFT OF GOD! I relaxed, thanked God quietly for every good play, whether it was by me or by even someone on the other team

The same God wanted to scatter his athletic gifts to us all... how could I be envious of another person's gift from God??

3. This is the essence of LOVE... “I find delight in your happiness! I am pleased that you are blessed!”
 4. Ultimately this is what we hope for in evangelism and missions... I am willing to suffer great deprivations, persecutions, the loss of many earthly blessings so that LOST PEOPLE may have the joy and pleasure of salvation in Christ... I am DELIGHTED that you are blessed! I am delighted that you can spend eternity in heaven!
 5. So also any Christian giving we do... we find joy and delight in another person’s blessedness
 6. The spiritual gifts draw us together as well... the gifts were given to individual Christians for the good of the WHOLE BODY
 7. So this is the essence of Christian love
- E. How the Holy Spirit Works this Aspect of Love in Us
1. He causes us to see the perfect humility of Jesus... far from a spirit of envy, Jesus was humble; pride is the ugly root of all envy
 2. He causes us to be truly CONTENT in the good gifts God has given us... the overwhelming gift of salvation in Christ, but also all the other gifts as well... Christ is enough!!
 3. He causes us to expand in our hearts to our neighbor... to truly yearn for what’s best for them
 4. He causes us to see how truly ugly and repulsive envy really is
 5. He causes us to EXAMINE our hearts to see if there is any bitterness of envy within us, and to TAKE EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE to make it obedient to Christ
 - a. Perhaps it is a childless couple who sees the joy of others in a new baby
 - b. Perhaps it is a single Christian who yearns to find a godly spouse and keeps getting invited to the weddings of friends instead

- c. Perhaps it is a pastor jealous of the success of another man's ministry
- d. Perhaps it is a set of parents whose teen is a chronic underachiever, and whose Christian friends have a teen who has been accepted at many prestigious colleges
- e. Examine your heart to see if there be any offensive way of envy in you
- f. Ask the Holy Spirit to work perfect love inside your heart

F. Heavenly Consummation

- 1. No envy of the rewards and glory of others
 - a. We will delight in the honors of others AS MUCH AS our own

1 Corinthians 12:26 if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

- 2. Perfect unity of the Body of Christ

III. Love Does Not Boast; Love is Not Proud

A. The Parallel Evil to Envy: Boastfulness

- 1. Whereas envy is angry and jealous over a blessing given to someone else, boastfulness is pride over the blessings given to us and NOT to someone else
- 2. It makes us feel superior to others... filled with ourselves
- 3. In BOTH cases, it forgets that all blessings come from God... as we already saw in James 1:17 "Every gift comes down from above"
- 4. And more powerfully

1 Corinthians 4:7 For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

- 5. The Greek word related to WINDBAG... a bloated billowing

B. The Root Evil: Pride

1. Pride was at the root of Satan's fall
 - a. God created all creatures, including angels and human beings, with varying levels of glory... he invested some with more glory and ability and position and power than others
 - b. In Isaiah 14, Satan thought so much of his power and abilities that he decided to ascend to the heights to topple God... overwhelming PRIDE
 - c. In Ezekiel 28, Satan is depicted as the most luminous and beautiful of all God's angels, and became enamored with his own beauty and worshiped himself... again, PRIDE
2. Humanity joined Satan's revolt in the Garden of Eden... Eve was attracted to the forbidden fruit because it was powerful to make us like God, knowing good from evil... Adam joined in this same temptation
3. The accounts in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 about Satan's fall from heaven are couched in the language of oracles against human kings—the King of Babylon and the King of Tyre... so we human beings are steeped in pride... we are enamored of our gifts and abilities and talents and beauty; we compare ourselves to others and effectively worship ourselves
4. Envy springs from that pride... making us hate that anyone has any blessing from God greater than ours; we become pridefully jealous, even to the point of murder—then seize from our neighbor what it his; arrogant boasting is also clearly rooted in pride... worshiping ourselves in front of others

Daniel 4:30 "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?"

The fundamental sin: failing to be humble toward God

Daniel 4:25 until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes.

5. Our daily boasting is less grandiose... but it's very real

- a. Someone tells a story, and we can't wait to tell ours... "You think that's something... wait till you hear this!"
 - b. We use our words to elevate ourselves and lower others
 - c. We tell stories in which we are the hero and others are the villain
 - d. If we do some act of service, we want to be noticed for it and praised
 - e. We talk about our virtues and hide our vices
6. We have forgotten that every single blessing we have comes from God and is given to bless others... so that we as a conduit of all our gifts should be a blessing to everyone around us

IV. Salvation is a Work of Humbling by the Holy Spirit

A. The Gift of Humbling is Essential to Our Salvation... and to our Love

- 1. In order to love, we need to be humbled... humbled to the core
- 2. Salvation is a very humbling work... every aspect of our salvation is designed to humble us, to slaughter our pride

1 Corinthians 1:29 so that no one may boast before him

1 Corinthians 1:31 Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

- 3. Truly humbled people know how LOWLY we are before God
 - a. We are lowly simply because we are CREATURES and there is an infinite gap between God the Creator and every creature in the universe

Psalm 113:5-6 Who is like the LORD our God, the One who sits enthroned on high, ⁶ who stoops down to look on the heavens and the earth?

- b. God has to descend from on high to even look at the holy angels, even the radiant archangels

- c. And the burning holy seraphim in Isaiah's vision of the throne room of God HIDE THEIR FACES and COVER THEIR FEET in the presence of such a HOLY GOD... though they have committed no sins, they are completely aware of how vast is the gap between them and God
- d. How much more we human beings... we are lower than angels in glory and power...

Isaiah 40:15-17 Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales; he weighs the islands as though they were fine dust. ¹⁶ Lebanon is not sufficient for altar fires, nor its animals enough for burnt offerings. ¹⁷ Before him all the nations are as nothing; they are regarded by him as worthless and less than nothing.

- e. Not only is this so, but the truly humbled person is doubly humbled because we have sinned... we have joined Satan in rebellion against this holy God; our greatest attributes—that we are created in the IMAGE OF GOD, with a mind and an imagination, with a will and power to shape the earth—all of our best attributes are deeply marred and defaced by sin
 - f. The truly humbled person is thus DOUBLY humbled... humbled in NATURE, because we are creatures and God the Creator; humbled MORALLY because we are deeply stained with sin
4. Every aspect of our salvation, then, is designed to humble us deeply
- a. Eternal election from before the foundation of the earth HUMBLE US... because we were chosen in Christ before we had done anything good or bad
 - b. Justification by faith alone HUMBLE US, because we could not save ourselves, but had to have Jesus Christ enter the world for us; justification by faith apart from works HUMBLE US, because we cannot boast about our achievements, our works, our generosity to the poor, our pure morality... nothing could wash away our sins but the blood of Jesus Christ; his atonement for us on the cross deeply HUMBLE US, because as we look on his infinite torments under the wrath of God, we realize that that is what God thinks I deserve for my sin... the imputation of

Christ's righteousness HUMBLER US because our best righteousness is as a filthy rag in his sight; Christ's mighty resurrection from the dead HUMBLER US because we were powerless before the grave...

- c. Sanctification daily HUMBLER US, because day after day, we fail to do the very thing we want to do... and we do commit the very sins we hate; we are humbled day after day by our weakness and failures and wandering minds and hearts; again and again, the Holy Spirit convicts us of the same sins; again and again, we beg forgiveness and resolve to do better, only to fall once more... as we grow more and more in Christ, we become more and more aware of how infinitely far above us he is... the work of sanctification is not some triumphal journey of victory after victory; but rather a deeply humbling revelation of how much we needed Christ to die for us, how much we needed Christ's righteousness imputed to us as a gift
- d. Glorification in the future will HUMBLE US, because in an instant God will do to our souls and then to our bodies what we could never have done in a thousand lifetimes—become completely conformed to Christ; heaven will HUMBLE US, because we will see God face to face and realize as the holy angels do our infinite smallness before him

B. The Link Between Humbling and Love

1. How then does this deep work of humbling produce love?
2. It does not automatically do so... for simply the display of superior power and majesty by God to Satan, the demons, and the damned produce only rage and gnashing of teeth amongst them... they are motivated all the more to FIGHT against the Holy One... to hate him and oppose him
 - a. Look at how Satan, the demons, and the wicked leaders of Israel treated Christ... though he clearly displayed his moral purity and his surpassing power, all it did in them was cause deeper hatred and opposition
3. But when God wills to save a sinner, he works in him not only a lively sense of God's transcendent majesty and moral perfection,

but also an **ATTRACTION** to those... an allure... a **MAGNETIC PULL** toward the beauty of God's holiness... it causes us to **LOVE** God for his holiness and majesty, and to be drawn **TOWARD** him, to be with him, to stand and bask in his presence and to be delighted with him

4. This is the beginning of the **LOVE FOR OTHERS** that 1 Corinthians 13 is about... this "love chapter" is not directly about love for God... "love is patient, love keeps no record of wrongs..." these things could never be said of our love for God; Paul is clearly writing about our love for other people; but it **FLOWS** from our love for God... and our love for God flows from his love for us; and the great work of salvation the Spirit is doing in us is a **HUMBLING WORK** in reference to God
5. From that saving work flows first and foremost **LOVE FOR GOD**

1 John 4:19 We love because he first loved us.

6. And inevitably, when we are **HEALED** from our wicked, selfish **PRIDE**, when our hearts are moving **UPWARD, VERTICALLY** toward God in a genuine affection for him, a heart attracting to his moral purity, it also spreads out **HORIZONTALLY** toward people whom God has created...
 - a. Envy is **GONE**... because we are **DELIGHTED** in the blessings God has bestowed on another person... we want as many blessings as possible for that person
 - b. Boasting is **GONE**... because we realize that every blessing we ourselves have received is from God, and is really meant to bless others

C. Heavenly Consummation

1. In heaven, we will be perfectly liberated from this narrow, bitter, inward self-worship
2. Heaven will consist of a constant, direct view of the glory of God... the entire universe will be illuminated with the glory of God and of Christ; the New Jerusalem will not need the light of the sun or

moon or the light of the lamp, for the glory of God will radiate it at every moment

3. All creatures in the heavenly world will be perfectly righteous, for the New Heavens and New Earth are called “the home of righteousness”... they will shine like the sun in that world... angels and the redeemed from every nation on earth
4. All of the glory that they will display will be God’s glory, and we will KNOW IT... our own glory will be perfect, and we ourselves will shine like the sun; but unlike Satan at creation, we will not be enamored of ourselves; we will not be amazed at our own glory; for we will know perfectly that our own glory is really God’s glory worked in us
5. And other people will have more glory than us... but we will not covet their glory, for their dimensions of glory will have been allotted to them by God and worked in them by God, and we will delight in what God has done for them and celebrate it with a perfect love
6. Neither will we be arrogant over those who have less glory than us in heaven, for we will delight in whatever glory those people display... and we will know that whatever differences there are between us are ultimately worked by God... PERFECT HUMILITY will result in PERFECT LOVE

V. Applications

A. 1 Corinthians 13 is meant to be a mirror into our own circumstances... look at yourself now... DO YOU LOVE? Or do you see clearly these sin patterns... ENVY, BOASTING, ARROGANT PRIDE?

B. Begin with your own salvation

1. Are you a Christian? Have you ever trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of your sins?
2. If not, you must see the PRIDE that is at the root of your refusal to bow the knee to the Lord Jesus Christ

3. Almost certainly you have heard the gospel many times before... that God made you, but that you have violated his laws... you have sinned; you have lusted, and coveted, and been greedy and lived for yourself; your conscience testifies against you that you have sinned in the sight of God... You know that God sent Jesus Christ into the world—his only begotten Son—that whoever believes in him might have eternal life; you know that Jesus Christ died on the cross under the wrath of God for sinners; you know the gospel commands you not to try to save yourself by doing good works, but by simply believing in Christ and receiving a gift... you know that God raised Jesus from the dead; you know all this... but until right now, you have resisted the command from God to repent and believe the GOOD NEWS
 4. Please don't wait anymore... I am begging you to come to Christ RIGHT NOW! Allow him to work salvation in your heart
- C. If you are already a Christian, 1 Corinthians 13 is meant to search you and know your heart and expose sin
1. It is like a trip to a skillful caring dentist... I have the best dentist in the world for me... Dr. Jim Eaker... he and his technicians have cared for my teeth for years... but I always have a secret dread of going to sit in his chair, not because of pain—he is extremely skilled at reducing pain; but because of having my deficiencies and corruptions exposed and revealed... the decay in my teeth is a symbol of the deeper decay of my soul
 2. Ask yourself: do you have ENVY in your heart toward others? Do the blessings that God pours out on others make you jealous? Does it curdle in your heart to see the material or intellectual or spiritual blessedness of another person? Do you secretly wish it were you... or at least that it would NOT BE THEM? This is a chance to REPENT from envy... to ask God to work a heavenly perspective of LOVE in your heart where you truly delight in the blessings poured out on another person
 3. On the other hand: Ask your conscience whether you are given to BOASTING or to a heart arrogance in reference to your own blessings? Do you think that your own skills and industry and intelligence have made you successful? Do you secretly vaunt

yourself above others for these blessings that God has bestowed on you? Do you hoard the blessings to yourself? When you do move out to bless others, do you expect to be noticed and praised and thanked? And if you have not been noticed and thanked, do you talk about what you have done to others so that you will be noticed and praised and thanked?

D. Repent!

E. Ask the Holy Spirit to do a work of genuine LOVE in your heart toward others