

1 Corinthians 13-14

1 Corinthians 13

Verse 1

- **Tongues of men:** what if you could speak every language? Why would that be beneficial? What would you do with that power? How could that ability be a powerful tool in your life?
- **And of angels:** And what if you could speak to those on the other side of the veil? You could speak to the angels! What kind of questions would you ask? How would you use that gift? What would you do with that gift?
- **And have not charity, I become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal:**
 - Think of an instrument that is a sounding brass... a trumpet... a trombone... And then think of cymbals or a percussion instrument like that. Those are important instruments and add a lot in the proper time and place – but if played alone, it can be loud and overbearing. They are generally not solo instruments.
 - So what is Paul saying? So you have this amazing gift to speak to *anyone* on either side of the veil. But if you don't have charity... what are you doing? *You are just making noise.*

Verse 2

- **Though I have the gift of prophecy:** What if you could know what the future holds.... How would you use that power?
- **Understand all mysteries:** What if you understood all the things that man (without the Spirit) can't figure out? You understood the deep, deep doctrines? How could that benefit you? What would you do with that power?
- **And all knowledge:** There isn't anything you don't know. How would you use that power?
- **And have all faith, so that I could remove mountains:** You have so much faith that there isn't anything you couldn't do. What is more sure than a mountain? How long would it take man to take an entire mountain away? But you... you have enough faith to remove it without a shovel.
- **And have not charity, it profiteth me nothing:** Paul has continually raised the bar with each gift. From languages to deeply spiritual gifts. It is NOT the gift that matters. It is Charity. Charity is so fundamentally important, that without it – it doesn't matter what you have, what you can do, or what you work on – it won't matter without charity.

Verse 3

- Paul is going to raise the ante to the highest degree...
- **And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor:** So, here are the keys to my house, my car, my safety deposit box... here is my savings and checking account, my investments...
- **And give my body to be burned:** I lay down my life for a cause... I am a martyr.
- **And have not charity it profiteth me nothing:** There is no higher price than what Paul is suggesting. But it is NOT the action that profits us in the eternal sense, it is the intention... the motivation.

Charity

- What is this Charity that Paul is talking about? And why does it hold SO much significance?
- Bible Dictionary: "Charity. The highest, noblest, strongest kind of love, not merely affection; the pure love of Christ. It is never used to denote alms or deeds or benevolence, although it may be a prompting motive."
- The world uses "Charity" like it is used on our tax forms – money that is given to a person or organization. This is NOT what Paul is talking about here. Giving money, and calling it charity, can be a fruit (or result) of charity – but it is not the charity Paul is talking about.
- "Charity is the pure love of Christ" (Moroni 7:47) ... but what does that really mean?

- What is the Pure Love of Christ? What do you think it means if we have the love of Christ? If we love like he does?
- Moses 1:39 lets us know what He and Heavenly Father are all about – what their work and glory is. ...To bring to pass our immortality and Eternal Life.
- Is that our work and glory too? Do we wish this for every person we ever meet? Do we love others like Christ loves them?
- We may feel that love for our family and close friends, but the challenge is to have it for all men.
- And having the “Pure” love of Christ.... Pure means that it is unadulterated and uncontaminated. So our intentions and motivations have to be solely for another’s well-being and not for any personal gain.
- You can hold up every doctrine, every principle, every problem, every situation to Charity – and through the lens of Charity – it will become more clear. The right choice is more easily seen.
- It is good to note that if Charity is something you want to gain – it will take A LOT of repenting!
- Zion is described by people who are Charity.
 - Moses 7:18 “They were of one heart and one mind”
 - 4 Nephi 1:15 “There was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people”
 - 4 Nephi 1:17 “They were one, the children of Christ,
 - 4 Nephi 1:16 “there were no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; and surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God.”

Verses 4-7

- Draw 2 trees on a paper or the board. Have both have a trunk, branches and leaves. Label one of the trees “charity”. At the base of the tree, write “pure love”. Label the tree with fruits as you discover them in the remaining verses. On the opposite tree, label it with opposite virtues. At the end, decide what to label the tree.
- **Charity suffereth long:** being patient is not being passive, and being passive is not being patient. Patience born of charity puts us in the position where we may have to suffer awhile while others are learning and growing. That does not make us doormats, but rather loving, watchful eyes who may take a hit now and then. It can be a serious situation, or just an inconvenience – but the key is putting the progression of another (or at times ourselves) in front of our personal preferences or timeline. Like teaching a child to ride a bike. If your true desire is for them to learn – how quickly they learn is up to them – not you. So you are done teaching them when they have fully learned. If we say – I will teach them for 15 minutes, and then if they haven’t got it, that is their problem. That is not very “long suffering” of us. Charity is not on our terms.
 - It is wise to remember that being long suffering doesn’t guarantee that another will learn, come around, or repent. They are agents unto themselves. Our role is to love them regardless of their choice.
 - It is also wise to remember that being long suffering does not imply not giving consequences to those who need them. In fact, being long suffering could very well mean not giving up and continually following through with consequences.
 - Long suffering simply means, being in it for the long haul – whatever that “haul” is.
- **And is kind:** I believe the kindest people are the strongest, most enduring souls. Kindness requires such strength, wisdom, and pure love. It isn’t just being nice. It is being aware, and completely present in the treatment of another. If someone has pure charity for you, then they will take every opportunity to compliment, lift, lead, thank, teach, and even correct you.
- **Charity envieth not:** If I was only concerned in the absolute best for you, why would I envy any success or talent you have? Would I not rejoice in them? Would I not thank Heavenly Father for your successes, as if they were my own?
 - This is a virtue a parent can easily feel for their children. Parents don’t envy their child’s A in school, they rejoice in them. However, this rejoicing could also come with a impure

motivation. Such as, rejoicing because you have a smarter child than someone else's. Or resenting another child because they were given the lead in the school play over your child, because you want the best for your child. The test isn't to have charity for our family only – the test is to have charity for all men. So... to rejoice for that other child because they will have that great opportunity to be the lead in the play; or to rejoice when your child does their best regardless of what anyone else thinks about it. Or to rejoice in another's promotion, calling, new car, or talent. Realizing that those who we often put ourselves in competition with are also Heavenly Father's children, will give us a new understanding, a new heart.

- ***Charity vaunteth not itself:*** Vaunting means boasting. The intention of boasting is to wave our accomplishments, strengths and talents before others in hopes to be admired. Our goal is to lift ourselves up, while at the same time, necessarily pushing others down. Charity would never do this. You would never boast to your 3 year old child that you can read and they can't. What if they took it as if they weren't smart enough? You would never want to harm them, but only to give them confidence in themselves – so you are far more gentle than that. Charity would never wish to lift themselves above another. Even if they knew that they had talents that could be boasted of – they wouldn't. They would simply recognize them and be grateful for them, but never use them to set themselves above others that they love. Likewise, charity will not only not boast – but they will not demean. So often we think that if we deny we are talented or have certain abilities, that is being humble. But perhaps, not recognizing the gifts we have within us, acknowledging them and being grateful for them is actually prideful. Rather, recognizing that we are children of God with the capacity to become like them is being a true realist and having charity for yourself and others. The belief that we can all become truly great. If I am a great singer, I wouldn't boast of it, but rather seek to develop that gift more and more in order to bless others with the power of music, and rejoice when others do the same. Likewise, I would never say that "I can't sing..." thinking that it will sound like I am humble. Recognizing our gifts that God has given us *is* true humility.
- ***Charity is not puffed up:*** Elder Holland said once that when he hears this he thinks of the Pillsbury Dough Boy walking down Lover's Lane, holding his own hand. I think that is a great description of this! If you puff yourself up, you are making yourself bigger than you really are. The phrase just before, about not boasting, is different than this. We all have plenty to boast about that is true. But this is about what isn't true. Exaggerating or misinforming, in order to be seen as more than we really are. Charity is about what is real and true. I am not going to puff myself up because that isn't who I am. I am not going to puff myself up with the hopes of lifting myself above others. And I am not going to puff myself up to be seen to be able to do things I really cannot do – there are others that really can do that. One who is puffed up only has eyes on themselves – that is why I like Elder Holland's description.
- ***Doth not behave itself unseemingly:*** This means inappropriately. I would never go into a classroom and disrespect the teacher if I have charity for the teacher and the other students – I would NEVER want to make them feel bad or get in the way of their learning. If I had charity, I would never mistreat someone else! I would never want to be at fault for them feeling bad about themselves – because what if they believed me? If I had charity, I would watch how I act, speak and dress all the time, lest I do something to harm someone else. True chivalry should be born of being solely concerned with the welfare of another. To make them feel like children of God. The intention ought to be that we treat each other with such honor and such respect all of the time, that when someone comes across our path who happens to treat us badly – our reaction is to reject that treatment, and not ever let it define us.
- ***Seeketh not her own:*** If I am seeking my own, I desire my personal gain, praise or accolades over that of others. This doesn't mean that we don't seek for gain – in fact, charity could very well mean working very hard for gain so that you are more capable of giving to others. Just not when it is fueled by pride.

- ***Is not easily provoked:*** If I am easily provoked or offended then that means that I am ready to fight or put up my arms quickly and easily. I will throw a punch pretty quick, or I will snap back at you right away. Basically my temper and insecurities rule my behavior rather than my pure love for you.
 - We could all come up with a list of daily inconveniences that provoke us, and could we not reevaluate why we let them do this. What do we gain from our reaction, and what is the cost? Are we hurting those we love because of our reaction?
 - Likewise, there will be times that the provoking is serious and at times intentional, and even evil. Charity will help us see more clearly what our actions should be at this point. If we look at our attacker as a child of God who is acting this way for a reason, could not this help us act with more love? What has or has not happened that has caused them to want to harm another? If your child comes home from school in a terrible mood – is that not a sign that something has gone wrong, and an indicator that it is a time to nurture or teach? What if we felt that love for our neighbor, co-worker or enemy?
 - Moroni is a good example of this. Amalickiah gave him plenty of opportunities for Moroni's blood to boil over and act swiftly in revenge or to prove his point. But he continually offered Amalickiah opportunity to change – to make the better choice. Amalickiah wasn't in the frame of mind to necessarily see it that way, but the scriptures have left a clear record of Moroni's intentions.
- ***Thinketh no evil:*** First, thinking evil usually involves the destruction or harm of another. So one full of love would never want to think that way of those they love. Second, one with charity would never want to defile themselves because they want to be as strong as possible for themselves and others.
- ***Rejoiceth not in iniquity:*** There would never be a situation where evil is present, that one with charity would rejoice in. They would recognize the true nature of it and be saddened at the choices and consequences of those involved
- ***But rejoiceth in truth:*** Anytime light and truth are present, one with charity would embrace. And they would want others to share in that as well. They know that truth is enduring, and that it comes from God; therefore, they would only be interested in those things that will bless, heal, lift and last.
- ***Beareth all things:*** Any trial, inconvenience, adversity or burden that they or others experience, one with charity would see the divine nature of it and press on. Their dark times would only prove that they stand on holy ground with firmness, and they will help you stand in your dark times as well.
- ***Believeth all things:*** Any truth, they will embrace. They are not doubters or sign-seekers. They know that they don't understand all mysteries yet, but they are not cynics. Faith has gotten them to where they are, and they know that faith will get them much further. They seek for truth knowing that it will only make them stronger and therefore more capable of loving and serving others. They would never say, "I don't want to learn because I don't want to be accountable", they would say "Teach me all I can know so I can be more capable."
- ***Hopeth all things:*** Many people believe, but they don't necessarily have hope. They may believe that the Atonement works, but they may not have hope that it works for them. They may believe that the Spirit communicates, but not hope that the Spirit communicates with them. One with Charity has belief and hope. They have hope that the Gospel works for everyone – including themselves - therefore they truly know *how* to love. They know what to point others to and they know that they need to be an example of that.
- ***Endureth all things:*** Those with charity have the strength to press on to the very end. They keep their eye on the goal, and don't selfishly or pridefully decide to give up. Their lives are a walking witness of the power of the Atonement. Of the gifts of the Spirit. Of faith, hope and charity.

Verse 8-10

- ***Charity never faileth:*** First, you never lose when you act with charity. This doesn't mean it will always end up in your favor, and it doesn't mean that you won't be ridiculed (in fact charity often puts you in a vulnerable position to be attacked), but you will always hold true to your baptismal

covenant and your integrity. So you will never truly fail. It is ok to be made fun of or persecuted. Second, charity will last forever. Moroni said “it endureth forever”... Charity is a quality of the Celestial. And it is a quality of the soul – you get to take it with you.

- ***But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether they be knowledge, it shall vanish away:*** Paul is furthering his point here about Charity not ever failing. The things that we put so much stake in, does have a completion date. Prophecies – they will be checked off one by one. Languages? We will all speak one language one day. Knowledge? How much of what your brain is filled with is non-essential or non-eternal? But charity? Every moment you spend on gaining that virtue – that is an investment in your future.
- The rest of these verses further Paul’s point. We only understand some things now – but later we will understand. ***But that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away:*** “in part” means “just a small part”, or not the complete whole. One day, we will understand things “in whole” and all of those judgments or decisions we made with our limited vision will be seen clearly. Look how he says it in the next verse:

Verse 11

- Paul recognizes that he did not comprehend this doctrine earlier in his life – and it was evident in how he behaved. But now that he understands – he has put away those childish notions and behaviors. ... those with charity reveal themselves with their actions, and those without it likewise reveal themselves. In fact, how they act has very little to do with others. A man with charity will treat his wife with love, honor and respect – no matter if he married Susie or Jane. He will treat the bagger at the grocery store the same as his clients at work. He will treat the guy who ran into his car the same as the neighbor who just shoveled his driveway. His specific actions may be different – but his motivation is the same – so he will be consistent because he does not see in part. He sees them for who they *really* are.

Verse 12

- ***For now we see through a glass darkly:*** Picture a “dark glass” or a tinted window. What does the person on the other side look like? Just a mere silhouette. You can see them, but not clearly – but we may make all sorts of judgments about who they are – and then treat them according to our assumptions.
- ***But then face to face:*** Then the window rolls down and you see clearly or “in whole” – were you right? Was your original judgment correct? Imagine this window being the veil – how many people in our lives are we seeing as their true eternal nature? How many people do we treat as who they *really* are? Or do we treat them “in part”? Or with our skewed view?
- There is another thing to think about with this analogue. When we are seeing and treating others “through a dark glass” look closer and what do you really see? Our own reflection. If we could only remember that the way we treat others has very little to do with them, and the way others treat us has very little to do with us.

Verse 13

- ***But the greatest of these is charity:*** Faith is acting on what we believe. Hope is believing that it will work for us and for others. And Charity is being that walking, talking example of the Gospel so that we can truly lead others to Christ and all of the promises in store for them. Christ didn’t just love – he showed. Being Christlike is doing likewise.

1 Corinthians 14

- Now that Paul has taught about Charity, he can use it as the lens to view and teach everything else through. Through charity, desire spiritual gifts. Why? So you can love more capably and effectively. Desire to lead better, to pray with more earnestness, to bear a mightier testimony. Work on your teaching, your mothering, your presiding. Gain more knowledge, more humility, be more diligent. Pray for the energy you need, for a softer voice, for a firmer conviction. Spiritual gifts come in a vast array. But they come. And Charity will motivate you to get them.