

EFCDP SERMON NOTES • April 14, 2024

Series: *Love Letters* # 1

“The Most Excellent Way” • 1 Corinthians 13

---

The Big Idea: *The most important thing in life is to love.*

**1. Everything depends on love. Vv. 1-3**

**2. Love brings heaven down to earth. Vv. 4-7**

**3. Love is the meaning of life. Vv. 8-13**

# *Digging Deeper*

A guide for personal and small group study for the week of April 14, 2023.



→ Was any part of the message unclear? Which aspect of the message do you think will be the most challenging to apply to your own life?

→ Do you agree with the “big idea” of this passage? Why or why not?

1. Do you have a favorite love song from your high school years? If so, name it.

2. During your teen years, did you “fall in love” with someone? If so, how did that turn out? How did you know that you were “in love?” (what were the signs & symptoms?)

3. Has your understanding of love changed since you were a teenager? If so, in what ways?

4. If you asked people on the street to define “love,” what kind of answers would you get?

5. How did your parents (or other people important to you) communicate to you that you were loved?

6. Have you observed spiritual gifts being **mis**used in the local church? If so, in what way(s)? How has this impacted your view of God? Ministry?

7. Have you determined what your primary spiritual gift is? If so, what is it?

→ Have you given thought as to the role love should play in how your gift is used in the local church? If so, what is that role?

8. How can you tell if a fellow believer is serving God out of a motivation of selfless love or something less noble?

9. Does Paul's definition of love in 1 Corinthians 13 something a person feels or does? What is the evidence for your answer?

10. In the table below, list the positive qualities of love in each:

<b>1 Corinthians 13</b>	<b>Galatians 5:22-24</b>

→ Are you surprised by the overlap? Why or why not?

→ Which of the qualities listed above are the most difficult for you to do consistently?

→ Review Galatians 5:13-26. What does it look like when a believer is truly “walking in/by the Spirit?”

11. Have you experienced someone use love (such as the threat of losing it) to manipulate you into doing something you didn't want to (or shouldn't) do? If so, how did that turn out?

12. Have you experienced someone doing something loving for you, even though you are sure they didn't “feel” like doing it? If so, explain. How did that impact your relationship with them?

13. Have you done something you considered loving for another person, yet they didn't seem to appreciate it? If so, how did that impact your relationship with that person? Your relationship with God?

14. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15. What three loving actions are Christians commanded to do? How are Christians supposed to determine which action to take in each situation?

15. Is it always loving to do the thing an individual requests? Are there times when the most loving thing to do is to deny a request? If so, how can you determine this?

16. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 and 1 Corinthians 5:9-13. In each of these cases, what is the problem? How can a church (or individual Christian) discern how to help such people, whether they are treating them with love or simply enabling them to continue living in an irresponsible way?

17. Read Hebrews 12:3-17. Have you observed God's discipline at work in your life? If so, how? Have you observed the local church exercising discipline in a healthy way? If so, what was the outcome? How does such discipline fit with Paul's description of loving others in 1 Corinthians 13? Can discipline be an expression of real love? If so, how?

18. Read Romans 5:5. If someone asked you how they can grow in their love for God and other people, how might this verse help?

19. Have you been convicted by meditating on 1 Corinthians 13? If so, what changes are you going to try to make in the next two weeks?