

DEVOTIONAL - A NOT SO LOVING LOVE LETTER

I memorized it in third grade Sunday School. I have probably read it at more than half of my 1,000+ weddings at which I have officiated. It's the season of hearts and roses and love, so Paul's prosaic love letter (I Corinthians 13) comes to mind.

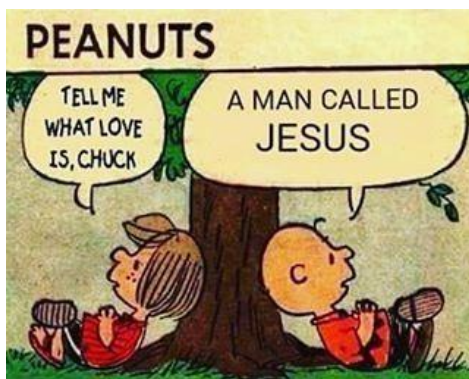
If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.....⁴ Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷ It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never ends.....¹³ And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Now, if you turn to I Corinthians 12, the tone of the words in I Corinthians 13 is explained. The 13th chapter is a not so loving love letter because in the 12th chapter Paul is chastising the church members for their less than loving attitude. "My gift of tongue speaking is more important than your prophesying...My gift of a sacrificial lifestyle is more important than your wisdom seeking." Basically the Corinthian Christians were saying to each other my way of thinking and acting is more important than yours. The church was being divided. Add that reality and Paul's love passage has a demonstrative tone to it. The words love is patient and kind, love is not arrogant or rude and all that follows has a "now get that" tone to them! "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I reasoned like a child.....but when I became mature in the faith I gave up childish ways!" That's Paul's way of saying "grow up, be childlike, not childish!"

Paul's letter changes our Valentine's season way of saying I love you! I remember when I was in third grade we had valentine sharing among all the class members. I had a little blond girl in my class who would tease me and a little bully boy who would hit me for no reason. I didn't want to give them valentine cards, but my parents and teacher said I must. In the churches I served on occasion I encouraged members to send valentine cards to people with whom they felt separated. Out of the blue people were receiving love letters from members they weren't sure they liked. The response was both heart-warming and sometimes quite humorous.

My new friends in Christ, won't you be my valentine, I Corinthian 13 style. And please remember how Paul defines Christ's love for us so that we can share that love with each other.

In Christian Love,
Bob



Two Different Genre of Christian Prayer Love Songs

(While listening, why not write and send some valentines to those who you love and also those who you find hard to love?)

Traditional - Love Divine, A Loves Excelling – The Mormon Tabernacle Choir

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=love+divine+all+loves+excelling&&view=detail&mid=0AB09E65B035E58491920AB09E65B035E5849192&&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dlove%2520divine%2520all%2520loves%2520excelling%26qs%3DMM%26form%3DQBVMH%26sp%3D1%26ghc%3D1%26pq%3Dlove%2520divine%2520%26sc%3D8-12%26cvid%3D43F68C26C154480593B370B0C2C776B2>

Christian **Contemporary** Love of God Song – Nobody Loves Me Like You – Chris Tomlin

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=christian+love+songs+youtube&view=detail&mid=7FE7C68D2821A8A344387FE7C68D2821A8A34438&FORM=VIRE>