

## Motivated by love

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

### I. The Motive for Service is Love

*And now I will show you the most excellent way.<sup>1</sup> If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.<sup>2</sup> If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.<sup>3</sup> If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.*

**1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3(NIV)**

*If I speak with human eloquence and angelic ecstasy but don't love, I'm nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate. If I speak God's Word with power, revealing all his mysteries and making everything plain as day, and if I have faith that says to a mountain, "Jump," and it jumps, but I don't love, I'm nothing. If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love.* **1 Corinthians 13:1-3(MSG)**

### II. The Quality of Service is Divine

*<sup>4</sup> Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.<sup>5</sup> It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.<sup>6</sup> Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.<sup>7</sup> It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.<sup>8</sup> Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.* **1 Corinthians 13:4-8(NIV)**

*(In place of "blank" put your name)... \_\_\_\_\_ is patient, \_\_\_\_\_ is kind. \_\_\_\_\_ does not envy, \_\_\_\_\_ does not boast, \_\_\_\_\_ is not proud. \_\_\_\_\_ is not rude, \_\_\_\_\_ is not self-seeking, \_\_\_\_\_ is not easily angered, \_\_\_\_\_ keeps no record of wrongs. \_\_\_\_\_ does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. \_\_\_\_\_ always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. \_\_\_\_\_ never fails.*

*Jesus is patient, Jesus is kind. Jesus does not envy, Jesus does not boast, Jesus is not proud. Jesus is not rude, Jesus is not self-seeking, Jesus is not easily angered, Jesus keeps no record of wrongs. Jesus does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. Jesus always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Jesus never fails.*

*"Rather than let this scripture remind us of a love we cannot produce, let it remind us of a love we cannot resist - God's love".*

**Max Lucado**

### III. The Purpose of Service is Maturity

*<sup>9</sup> For we know in part and we prophesy in part,<sup>10</sup> but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.<sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.<sup>12</sup> Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.<sup>13</sup> And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.* **1 Corinthians 13:9-13(NIV)**

*You are not where you want to be, but neither are you where you used to be.*

**Rick Warren**

*Jesus in \_\_\_\_\_ is patient, Jesus in \_\_\_\_\_ is kind. Jesus in \_\_\_\_\_ does not envy, does not boast, is not proud. Jesus in \_\_\_\_\_ is not rude, is not self-seeking, is not easily angered, Jesus in \_\_\_\_\_ keeps no record of wrongs. Jesus in \_\_\_\_\_ does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. Jesus in \_\_\_\_\_ always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Jesus in \_\_\_\_\_ never fails.*

Max Lucado asks, *“Will we ever love like that? Will we ever love perfectly? No. This side of heaven only God will. But we will love better than we have. When kindness comes grudgingly, we’ll remember his kindness to us and ask him to make us more kind. When patience is scarce, we’ll thank him for his and ask him to make us more patient. When it’s hard to forgive, we won’t list all the times we’ve been given grief. Rather, we’ll list all the times we’ve been given grace and pray to become more forgiving. Lets see next Tuesday as a test run. Lets drink deeply from heaven’s endless love. For when we do, we will discover a love worth giving,”* worth sharing. Lets pray.

### **Spiritual Exercise**

- Begin each morning by inviting God to use you through the day.
- Make yourself available to be used at home.
- Throughout the day as you begin a conversation, pray a secret “use me” prayer.
- Ask God to use you in the life of a seeker this week.
- Make your work an exercise in being used by God.
- When you are interrupted, pause to see if this is an opportunity to be used by God through a moment of unplanned servant hood.
- Each time you pull out your wallet or write a check, pray a “use me” prayer with respect to your financial resources.
- Be available to serve someone who is different than you.