



DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

February 22, 2024



Photo: Our Daily Bread

MOTIVATED BY LOVE

If I . . . do not have love, I gain nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:3

READ 1 Corinthians 13

Jim and Laneeda were college sweethearts. They got married and life was happy for many years. Then Laneeda began to act strangely, getting lost and forgetting appointments. She was diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's at forty-seven. After a decade of serving as her primary caregiver, Jim was able to say, "Alzheimer's has given me the opportunity to love and serve my wife in ways that were unimaginable when I said, 'I do.'"

While explaining the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the apostle Paul wrote extensively on the virtue of love (1 Corinthians 13). He contrasted rote acts of service with those overflowing from a loving heart. Powerful speaking is good, Paul wrote, but without love it's like meaningless noise (v. 1). "If I . . . give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing" (v. 3). Paul ultimately said, "the greatest [gift] is love" (v. 13).

Jim's understanding of love and service deepened as he cared for his wife. Only a deep and abiding love could give him the strength to support her every day. Ultimately, the only place we see this sacrificial love modeled perfectly is in God's love for us, which caused Him to send Jesus to die for our sins (John 3:16). That act of sacrifice, motivated by love, has changed our world forever.

By **Karen Pimpo**

PRAY & REFLECT

Loving God, thank You for loving me. May my actions flow out of a loving heart today. Amen

How have you tried to serve others without love? How can a love for God and others inspire your actions today?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

First Corinthians 13 is considered to be the love chapter of the New Testament. The love Paul describes is contrary to what our culture values and portrays. It has nothing to do with lust or satisfying one's own needs. Instead, it's directed outward toward others and is totally unselfish. Such love isn't primarily an emotion but an active decision to stay engaged and remain connected. Yet this type of love is impossible apart from God's work in us through the Holy Spirit. It's the greatest of human qualities (v. 13) and an attribute of God Himself (1 John 4:8). – By **Alyson Kieda**

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