

Faith, Hope, and Charity or Love!

1 Corinthians 13:13 *“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”*

We that are Christians have been so blessed. God has done so much for us; His Spirit continually works in our hearts. God promised in **Heb. 13:5c** *“...I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”* This means that God’s Spirit, which we call the Holy Spirit will never leave us, He will never forsake us, we will never, ever be alone again. We will never as Christians walk on this earth without God and God’s hand of help. No matter what life brings, riches or poorness, health or sickness, or anything else we will endure it with God’s Spirit in our hearts. God told us this to ensure that we can believe and trust Him in life no matter where that road leads. Hebrews goes on to assure us in **13:6** *“So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”* The word “boldly” means - to exercise courage or to have confidence in the Lord because of His promise that He will NEVER leave us alone or EVER forsake us. This alone gives us faith, hope, and love in God. While all three are important God said *“...the greatest of these is charity.”* This is because love is the one single of the three, we will carry into eternity with us. It is the one single thing that will guide your life on this earth to serve the Lord in Spirit and Truth. It is the one single thing that God has given to us to be good Christians and good churches.

Now let’s study these three gifts from God and learn not only are all three important in our spiritual life, but why two will expire and one will remain in eternity.

A. Paul starts with these words. *“And now abideth...”*

1. This word is a verb, a verb is a word that means an action or state of being.
2. Jesus used this same Greek word and as a verb when He said, **John 6:27** *“Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.”* Jesus said don’t labor for things that are temporal, but for things that are eternal. The word “endureth” is the same Greek word and abideth and is also an action word.
3. The word describes a form of “permanency” because these three will remain with us all our days on this earth, but one we will carry into eternity.
4. Since these three are actions in our life, since these three will remain when other things fail or cease, they are the greatest in a believer’s life on this earth.

B. Faith

1. Faith starts in a believer's life at their new birth and is a gift of God to us. **Galatians 5:22** *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,"* – the reason their fruit of God is because there not natural to the human nature. – if one is not saved, they do not have these fruits.
2. Faith is a Christians way of life; it is how we trust God in this earthly life. **Romans 1:17** *"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."* God said here that the Christian "by faith in me, "shall live." in Me" – In Christ, in God the believer "will be made happy, or blessed; shall find comfort, and support, and deliverance. All by our faith in God.
3. In **Hebrews 10:38** *"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."* – This quote comes from Habakkuk which defines it a little better. Habakkuk 2:4 *"Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith."* The word "upright" means not straight which is pleasant, prosperous in the Lord. Living by faith is one who lives for the Lord in heart and not for show.
4. Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 5:7** *"(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)"* this is an explanation of verse 6 *"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:"* - Even though on this earth, while we are not with the Lord, we still walk in faith as we would in heaven with the Lord.

C. Hope

1. Hope means expectation or confidence. Faith and hope go together, hope feeds off of faith. Hope is the result of faith. If a man believes in the Son of God by faith, by hope he believes he shall not perish, but his hope is having everlasting life. You don't hope you do, but you have hope that you will. You know you will!
2. If a person has no faith in Christ, then they have no hope at all. God said **Galatians 5:5** *"For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith."* The Holy Spirit keeps our hope of eternal life, our hope that God will never forsake us, our hope that God controls ever part of our life, all our hope in in the faith the Holy Spirit gives us.
3. Our faith gives us hope to glory in the Lord Jesus Christ. **Romans 5:2** *"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."*
4. And the longer we have faith, the deeper we have faith, the stronger our hope is. **Romans 5:4** *"And patience, experience; and experience, hope:"* The result of such long trial in this life is to produce a stronger hope in us.

D. Charity

1. The Holy Spirit gives us love, back in **Gal. 5:22** We saw “But the fruit of the Spirit is love...”
Why did the Holy Spirit give us love, doesn't all people have love already? This love is God's love and not natural love, the Greek word is agapē which is the love God has.
2. It's the same love God has for Jesus. **John 17:26** “*And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.*”
3. This is the same love God love His children with. **Romans 5:8** “*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*”
4. This is not the natural love we are born with that we love our family or our friends.
Therefore, God gave it to us when we were saved.
5. This is the love we are to use to love God with. **Matthew 22:37** “*Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*”
6. We will lose faith in eternity, we will lose hope in eternity, but love will never leave us not even in eternity. **1 Corinthians 13:8** “*Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*”
7. A person may not exercise it, which means they failed, but the Love God gives us will never fail us, in life or in our service to God.
8. We will end with this example of love. **Romans 12:18 - 21** “*If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. (19) Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. (20) Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. (21) Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*”