

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Fall Term of 2023**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
FIRST CORINTHIANS**

Message Fifteen

**The Most Excellent Way and the Excelling Gift
for the Building Up of the Body of Christ**

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 12:31—13:8; 14:1, 3-5, 12; 1 John 4:8, 16, 19-21

- I. First Corinthians 12:31—13:8 reveals that love is the most excellent way for us to be anything and to do anything for the building up of the Body of Christ:**
- A. The love of God is God Himself; love is the inward essence of God and the heart of God—1 John 4:16.
 - B. God is love; we love because He first loved us—vv. 8, 19.
 - C. God's predestination of us unto the divine sonship was motivated by the divine love—Eph. 1:4-5.
 - D. God first loved us in that He infused us with His love and generated within us the love with which we love Him and the brothers—1 John 4:19-21.
 - E. The love of God has been poured out in our hearts—Rom. 5:5:
 - 1. As believers, deep in our hearts we have something of the divine essence, and this is God the Father in His love—v. 5.
 - 2. In our experience and enjoyment of God as the Father in His love, we experience and enjoy the dispensing of love as the nature of God's essence into our hearts.
 - F. The life that we have received from God is a life of love; Christ lived in this world a life of God as love, and He is now our life so that we may live the same life of love in this world and be the same as He is—1 John 3:14; 5:1; 4:17.
 - G. We must be persons who are flooded with and carried away by the love of Christ; the divine love should be like a rushing tide of great waters toward us, impelling us to live to Him beyond our own control—2 Cor. 5:14.
 - H. We are God's species because we have been born of Him to have His life and nature—John 3:5-7:
 - 1. We have been regenerated to be God's species, God's kind, and God is love—vv. 3, 5; 1 John 4:16.
 - 2. Since through regeneration we have become God in His life and nature, we also are love; this means that we do not merely love others but that we are love itself—John 1:12-13; 13:34.
 - 3. As God's species, we are love because God is love—1 John 4:8.

- I. First John 4 tells the secret of how to stand boldly before the judgment seat of Christ—abide in love—vv. 17-18; 2 Cor. 5:10, 14:
 - 1. To abide in love is to live a life in which we love others habitually with the love that is God Himself so that He may be expressed in us—1 John 4:16.
 - 2. Perfect love is the love that has been perfected in us by our loving others with the love of God; such love casts out fear and has no fear of being punished by the Lord at His coming back—vv. 17-18; cf. Luke 12:46-47.

II. Prophesying is the excelling gift for the building up of the church, the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 14:1, 3-5, 12, 24-26, 31-32, 37, 39:

- A. Prophesying in 1 Corinthians 14 is not in the sense of predicting, foretelling, but in the sense of speaking for the Lord, speaking forth the Lord, to dispense Christ into people—vv. 1, 12, 39a.
- B. God's desire is for all His saints to prophesy—Num. 11:29; 1 Cor. 14:31:
 - 1. All the believers have the capacity, the ability, to prophesy—vv. 31, 24.
 - 2. The capacity to prophesy is in the divine life, which the believers possess and enjoy and which needs to increase within them so that this capacity may be developed unto their ability—Col. 2:19; cf. 2 Tim. 4:5.
 - 3. The obligation to prophesy is the fulfillment of our spiritual service, in which we are indebted to God's salvation—Rom. 1:14-15.
- C. Prophesying is the excelling gift among all the gifts, making its seekers excelling—1 Cor. 14:12:
 - 1. Prophesying is excelling in revealing God's heart, God's will, God's way, and God's economy to His people—cf. 12:8.
 - 2. Prophesying is excelling in convicting people, exposing people's real condition, and showing people their spiritual need.
 - 3. Prophesying is excelling in speaking forth Christ to minister and dispense Christ to people for their nourishment.
 - 4. Prophesying is excelling in building up the church in the organic way so that it may be built up as the organism of the processed and consummated Triune God for His fullness, His expression.
- D. We must speak with the three constituting elements of prophesying:
 - 1. We must possess a knowledge of the Word of God—the human element of learning—2 Tim. 3:16-17; Ezek. 3:1-4.
 - 2. We must have the instant inspiration of the Holy Spirit—the divine element of inspiration—1 Cor. 14:32, 37a; 1 John 1:6-7; Rom. 8:4.
 - 3. We need to have a vision concerning God's interest and economy, the church as the Body of Christ, the local churches, the world, the individual saints, and even ourselves—the view through the enlightening of the divine light—Eph. 1:17; 1 Cor. 2:11-12.
 - 4. We speak what we see with the living words of this life under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and with His enlightenment—Acts 5:20.
 - 5. For the sake of the building up of the church, we need to build up a habit of speaking the word of the Lord by letting His word dwell in us richly—Col. 3:16; cf. 1 Tim. 6:20.