

The Holy Spirit Brings Spiritual Maturity

International Bible Lesson

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Sunday, May 31, 2015

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“When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things”
(1 Corinthians 13:11—KJV).

“When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways”
(1 Corinthians 13:11—NRSV).

Sometimes parents and grandparents see other people’s children as impatient, unkind toward other children, demanding, and insistent on having their own way. Paul wrote that the spiritually mature do not act in these ways; they resolve to put an end to childishness and act as adults. Those in Christ are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and the spiritually mature will not passively wait for the Holy Spirit to do in them what the Holy Spirit expects them to do for themselves with His help. They will keep their faith in Christ strong as they study the Bible. They will abide in hope as they remind themselves of God’s many promises (many already fulfilled) in the Scriptures. But most importantly, their faith and hope in Jesus Christ will inspire a greater love for God and others. As mature Christians, their love will lead them to pray for patience and become more patient; more often than not they will respond with patience when provoked. Love will lead them to share words of kindness to build up others instead of tear them down. Love will move them to rejoice when they see God’s gifts bestowed abundantly on any of His children. Love inspires humility with joyfulness—the humility that puts Jesus first, others second, and yourself third. Though we often see these spiritual fruits and gifts in the children raised in Christian homes, the Apostle Paul expected all the fruits and gifts of love to be evident in the life of anyone who claimed to be led by Jesus Christ.

– L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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Thinking Further

1. Why do some eloquent speakers make little impact on their listeners?
2. What can understanding all mysteries lead to, if a person does not have love?
3. What qualities of love listed in 1 Corinthians 13 do you like to see the most in others?
4. What are some of the childish ways in adults that can cause problems?
5. Give one reason you are grateful that love will never end. Give thanks to God for love.