

If I ... Do Not Have Love ...

Scripture Reading — 1 Corinthians 13

If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship ... but do not have love, I gain nothing.

—1 Corinthians 13:3—

The Cherokee cowboy humorist from Oklahoma, Will Rogers, famous in the 1920s and '30s, once said, "I never met a man I didn't like." It's commonly known that a good sense of humor helps to keep us in balance amid the struggles of life, especially in relationships, and to "take things with a grain of salt."

In light of that, you might enjoy renting the videos of an old TV series based on James Herriot's All Creatures Great and Small. It's about the challenges and misadventures of a country veterinarian who, with humor and tact, gently wins the hearts of people who sometimes are abominably rude to him.

Even more important than humor, love is indispensable for helping us "like" people, for keeping us from flying off the handle, for forgiving others, for keeping our relationships healthy and our lives joyful.

In summary, 1 Corinthians 13 tells us that love is patient, kind, doesn't envy, doesn't boast, isn't proud, isn't rude, isn't self-seeking, isn't short-tempered, doesn't keep a grudge, doesn't delight in evil but prizes the truth, always protects, always trusts and hopes, always keeps hanging in there. Could there be a better description of how to get along with the difficult people we have to deal with every day, how to overcome evil with good?

Prayer

How sad, Lord, that love is so often thought of as a sentimental, empty word. We know that love is the heart of your heart, the key to the universe. Teach us how to love you and the people all around us. Amen.

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