

Marinating in God's Word: 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

You've got mail! A letter sent long ago to someone else, now by the power of the Spirit has been forwarded to you, so that you may grow in Jesus Christ.

For further reflection on your own or in a small group, consider these questions:

- What was your favorite love song when you were a teenager? How would you define the love of that song?
- We often hear this chapter in full at weddings, but we rarely pause to notice the details. One such detail is the context of this chapter in Paul's letter, between chapters about spiritual gifts. Why do you suppose Paul interrupted that flow to put this chapter here?
- Another detail to notice is the repeated "if ... then" statements in these three verses. What are they? Are the "if" conditionals good gifts and/or pursuits? If so, how are they lacking without love, and what does love do to complete them?
- When New Testament writers addressed love they could be more specific in Greek than we can in English. What are the various meanings of "love" in English? The main words for love in Greek were eros (romantic, sensual love), phileo (friendship love), and agape (sacrificial love). Paul is describing the nature of agape here. How is each of these loves of value?
- Who in your life taught you more about agape love than anyone else? What have you learned about love in recent years?

Next week we will focus on 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.