

Called to Brokenness

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. **—1 Corinthians 13:2-3**

Brokenness refers to the authentic person rather than to an awesome performance. Why is it that Paul says, “I am nothing”? What does he mean? He is showing what he is as a person.

What Paul wants in 1 Corinthians 13 is to show what we are as Christians, as people who have been converted; we are going to heaven, and we are going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give an account of the things done in the body. Is God going to ask us to explain how our gift of prophecy functions or whether people thought we were great preachers? No! We will give an account of the things done in the body. So that the gifts, without brokenness, equal zero.

In these verses, Paul is referring to spiritual gain; without love there is no intimacy with God. John said that our fellowship is with the Father, but if we don't have love we won't be having fellowship with the Father; there will be no spiritual gain.

He could also be referring to spiritual progress. The only time we grow spiritually is when what we do is totally hidden from others and only God knows. Then we get the honor that comes only from Him: “How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?” (John 5:44). Brokenness is when we are content with knowing that He knows. Are you suffering today? God knows. Are you going through a very difficult time? God knows.

What makes the giving of one's life, of one's possessions, of

value ... what makes the gifts effective is brokenness, the slain ego.

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