

Charity (i) (Quality: very good)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 03 February 2002

Preacher: Woodhams, Raymond (1933-2014)

[0 : 0 0] depending upon the Lord for help I would direct your attention to the first epistle to the Corinthians the 13th chapter and reading verse 4 the first epistle to the Corinthians chapter 13 reading verse 4 Charity suffereth long and is kind Charity envious not Charity vaunteth not itself is not puffed up

Charity suffereth long and is kind Charity envious not Vaunteth not itself is not puffed up in the closing of the previous chapter the apostle Paul has this to say are all apostles are all prophets are all teachers are all workers of miracles have all the gifts of healing do all speak with tongues do all interpret but covet earnestly the best gifts yet show I unto you a more excellent why now this chapter follows on from that a more excellent why but if we look at those gifts he has been speaking of in chapter 12 we may say well I haven't any of those gifts

I have not the gift of healing as God did give to some apostles that wonderful gift of healing but when you think of Peter and John when they went up to the temple and the man asked for an alms they said gold and silver we have not we can't give you that gift but you see what they had got they gave them they surely gave unto him they hadn't got the gift of tongues and neither did the man need it now I want to just put a word in here with regard to the gift of tongues that is the gift enabling man to speak another language while some of you children at school will learn foreign languages some of you will find yourselves not very good at it others will slip into it like one slips their hand into a glove it will be as easy as that and so some of those apostles as they went about to preach the gospel in other lands with a foreign language the Lord gave the gift of tongues and these so called gift of tongues they can't even understand themselves now if that is just a falsehood isn't it it's just mumbo jumbo it is nonsensical but the apostles some could verily speak of the gospel speak of the gospel in a foreign tongue the fall of mankind in sinning at Bible when God divided them because of this they spoke different languages but you know remember this the gospel can overcome all sin and the effects of it so it may be thought here well how wonderful to be able to speak with the gift of tongues and to interpret the writing and the talking of other people in a different tongue but he goes on to say but carry earnestly the best gifts and yet I show unto you a more excellent way the best gifts this often again is totally misunderstood and labelled as natural gifts as some people have the gifts in art the gifts in music the gifts in mathematics and sciences they're gifts in good gifts in their right place but what the apostles speak you know this more excellent way and surely over these remarks we come to our text which speaks of that more excellent way even that way of charity now I do want to speak of the way today for there is only one way to heaven

and that is through Jesus Christ where am I going where are you going friend if heaven is our eternal home it will be through Jesus Christ and nobody else and I say if we haven't hoped to go to heaven and haven't got Christ then our case is hopeless that we are deceiving ourselves but oh the apostle here speaks of the evidence of salvation the evidence of eternal life the manifestation through the spirit of charity in the closing verses or closing verse he says now abideth faith hope charity these three these three gifts and we would indeed that the

Lord might bestow upon us faith hope and charity there may be some soul sitting here this morning and say but oh if you only but knew my faith it is so weak it is so poor that I find difficulty in believing the things that I ought to believe I find it difficult now to believe what the Lord has done for me and spoken to me therefore I wonder whether I am a child of God but I say faith you cannot but deny has been in operation in your life and another may say but I feel to be completely hopeless without a hope oh I say what a mercy it is to have a hope a person who is found drowning at sea and cannot see a ship or a person around them fearing indeed that their case is hopeless they must certainly perish but friends if someone appears on the horizon in a ship or suddenly find an aircraft or helicopter overhead there my friends they are not without hope indeed they have a hope why

[9 : 41] I might well be saved the very appearance of things completely change and so it is with hope my friends when almighty God comes and comes so quickly changes our darkness into light hope is raised up who can tell that he who has power to save will even save me friend oh faith hope oh how we need them day by day in our face but though we may feel to be void of these things Paul surely shows to us here a more excellent way and that is charity but the greatest of these is charity now you may say some younger ones may say well what is charity some people change this word to love to love well of course charity is love but you know as well as I do that there are many many kinds of love there's some love that we ought to be ashamed of the love of self the love of pride the love of the riches of this world the love of various vices that we may be indulged in indulging in friend it doesn't mean that does it no for

Jesus has said love not the world neither the things of the world surely this charity is not confined to that family love which is good a good love but you know that love will not save us will it so there is a different kind of love I like to think oh of charity as the highest grade of love charity that love that can save your soul from ruin that's love that only comes to poor sinners by Jesus Christ charity in saying this I do not mean that we it doesn't go beyond that

I believe this if the love of Christ is found in us it's that by that grace he makes us charitable charity that love has no barriers you know sometimes we're very conscious of it that some people's love is strictly confined to their relatives and what indeed is attached to that love and done by that love is so exclusive that not though the poor and the needy would never have a look in they would have no chance concerning that love if it was left to the creature because they're not in the family or the phrase that is often used among our people sad to say they're not one of us oh my friend when

I hear that works spoken the great thing is am I one of them all that more found in that more excellent way charity then as spoken of here is given is described by the apostle Paul and I as the Lord might help me I want to follow on in this line of thought charity as suffereth long or when we consider the love of God the love of Christ oh how it suffereth long or when we consider unregeneracy when we were without God and without hope in the world doing those things that were so wicked so evil that had

God cut us off then he would have been just in doing so is that right is that right can we just pass these things aside but charity does suffer long suffer long the time comes and did it not come when such was the love of God he waited to speak to you to work in you and for you too his love was my friends not slow in acting but my friend it suffereth long it is guided and directed by eternal wisdom the wisdom of God and do remember he never never makes a mistake he never makes a mistake charity suffer long

[16 : 18] I say has not the Lord manifested his love to his people and how they have backslidden and done wrong unheard why we may go over what we have done in the past week the past months and so on and yet my friend our mercy is we are still enabled to go to the throne of grace charity suffer long he has Jesus has said that if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins unforgiven sins is no like matter therefore charity suffereth long he waiteth that he might be gracious unto us that we might come in that right unacceptable spirit we sometimes use that phrase and hear that phrase we don't expect to go crawling to them or they to come crawling to us and so on or that is what we might want but friends that certainly not found with charity he waiteth that he might be gracious that he might receive us to pardon and to forgive us in charity that wondrous love now my friends love we know it has effect on other people love will generate love charity will generate charity and if it be by the grace of

God to us it will be by the grace of God it will cause us to show charity to others suffer it long friend what a mercy do we pray for such charity Lord give me that grace to suffer long and to wait and wait for thee and thee alone oh I say oh this is a more perfect way it may have been across their mind and have said well I'm going to go and speak to them about this I'll go to have it out with them I'll give to them a piece of my mind not a very nice piece of your mind either would it be but it wouldn't suffer long and it wouldn't degenerate that which is good no but charity is suffer as long that oh good might even come out of seemingly evil did not

Jesus say that when we are smitten on one cheek then offer yes the offender the other cheek also it suffers long yes again and again how foreign we find this to be to our human nature but blessed be his name when grace subdues our sins when grace indeed shows to us what we are and where we would have been surely then it will bring forth mercy with love out of our heart to those who are opposers of themselves charity and suffer it alone I say how we need this in family life we need it in church life there's one or two men in particular that I have in mind at this time and

I was very touched by one last year who said these people have kicked me around they said all manner of untrue things about me but now they are my best friends and oh what a joy it is to receive them again I thought how wonderful to have such a spirit of this and to really rejoice in it and thank God for it charity my friends then is supremely above everything else you may not think much of a person we may think that we are more righteous and just than thy but I ask the question have they charity and if you have to grudgingly say yes they have then

I ask you another question have you got that same charity in your heart and if the answer is no then surely they are in a better position and place than you are and therefore how dare we be so presumptuous as to look down upon them as being such who are of no interest to you friend oh this more excellent way charity suffer it's long it soft is long it closes us down it shuts our mouths it puts our mouth in the dust if so be there may be hope blessed effect is charity then when wrought upon us that oh we might indeed be humbled under the knowledge of the lack of it of our self yet still it suffers long he waits that he might be gracious he will have us come to him in a right spirit and in a right frame of mind

[23 : 35] Jesus makes it clear that we cannot come to him for forgiveness if there's that in our heart that will not forgive our brother when I say brother it may be literally so or it may be our neighbour those that we live very close to or anyone no my how can we ask for forgiveness we are directed in scripture to lay our gift at the altar and go and be reconciled unto thy brother charity my friend suffer it long it will go on and walk until it brings about reconciliation it it suffereth long it's a solemn thing is it not especially when we are called to officiate at the graveside the things that are spoken there my friend or what a man says at the graveside will not direct a poor soul to heaven will it charity suffereth long it will bring him before he dies yea to Jesus

Christ the sinner's friend it will bring him to Jesus Christ as nothing in his own eyes yes it's charity suffereth long I remember oh some years a few years back now when I was reading that word in this pulpit with regards to though they were shut out or what a mercy to be shut in it will not matter if we have wondrous gifts wonderful ability if we shut out will it if we look really the part and the admiration of men but my friend to be shut in heaven a poor and needy soul a base and found upon the righteousness of

Jesus Christ oh who suffereth long for his people oh then may God in his mercy oh God give to us that long suffering charity that we may watch and pray and wait at his gates in Zion return oh for he alone is able to turn our captivity he alone indeed is able to cause us to return though I speak with tongues of men and of angels and have not charity I become a sounding brass and as a tinkling symbol in other words it's all noise all noise but nothing in it we have a parable sorry a proverb in this country the empty vessels that make the most noise why we know this that if you opened a drum and filled it with sand and closed it up again you could not play it as a drum to get sound of it it'd have to be empty my friends so the proverb is that if we've got nothing in us it's all sound and noise but no value at all in it friends though indeed we hardly may know how to pray lift up our voice or speak because of our sin and of our shame yet my friend

I hear the groaning of the prisoner the groaning of the prisoner charity suffer long and is kind is kind that word kind how needful how we need to think of it so often before we anticipate doing anything or is it kind and will it be kind to other people if we do it or are we in different spirit and say well it's none of their business it's nothing to do with them it's mine I can do what I like with it we do not find that in the spirit of the gospel but charity it's kind my friends it has that distinctive mark upon it for many of these gifts that are spoken of in

Corinthians here we might have but my friend if there's no kindness within us what use are they but surely in the day of judgment it could be said you have all these gifts but it hasn't brought full kindness and charity out of your heart it has brought forth nothing but the spirit of antichrist antichrist we often speak don't we of the spirit of antichrist of those who are downright out and out unbelievers saying we do not believe in christ that's true isn't it but surely are not those antichrists also who say

[30 : 56] I believe in christ but underneath is written what they do not what I say why call ye me lord lord and do not the things that I say is there kindness in our heart and is there love in our heart to christ oh that we might have this desire lord if I'm kind to anybody that I might be kind unto thee if I if ye love me keep my command man why keep thou all of them charity suffereth long and is kind is kind oh and

I speak these things oh how we feel to so come short ourselves so remiss if we are selfish we cannot say we are really kind or perhaps I could water it down a little if we are selfish we cannot really say that our charity stretches very far when there are those things within our power and within our reach and we do them not why should I let someone else do it my friend Jesus didn't say that he didn't say that he knew how wicked men had been and knew that

God would punish sin so out of pity Jesus said he would bear the punishment instead do you know anything of this kindness does such kindness break thy heart does such kindness draw your affections unto him does that kindness govern and rule your life ah my friends charity suffereth long and is kind oh I would to God that we might live in kindness oh all the days of our life oh we need that re adjusting we need that reviving we need that restoring by his grace and his loving kindness how dare we say we are children of God if we are completely void of charity that suffereth long and is kind surely oh if that is so how dare we say of another person they're not children of God

I do not and would not receive them friend if the same measure of justice was measured to us would be cut off in but a moment charity envy us not envy is a sin is it not clear and open by God's word even in the ten commandments is it thou shalt not covet charity envious not what is the root of envy sure is this when we see somebody with a possession and we say within ourselves

I don't see why they should have it and not me or how guilty we find ourselves perhaps in this matter but charity envious not if the spirit righteous surely charity is absent charity is not active charity is a foreign matter within us is it not charity envy envy us not friend oh what a mercy if to be kept from envy but you know seeking those best gifts that's not envy but because surely this where we have nothing in our hand to bring and even if we had all the riches that we attained in this world we still couldn't possess grace we couldn't possess eternal life oh charity envious not but surely charity will take us directly to the throne of grace does it not bring forth that plea out of your heart

[37 : 08] Lord help me oh Lord I am not worthy of the least of thy mercies but without thy love I shall fall and I shall be lost eternally oh wonder of wonder is charity it envieth not charity I say it openeth the door of hope whereby envy ceases it ceases for we see such a fullness in Christ that is able to meet all our need and although we are so unworthy of this that in that fullness Jesus Christ loves poor and needy sinners oh the wonderful love of

Christ who can rightly speak of it you may have noticed lately how I've spoken quite many times about the love of Christ is that which saves the soul yes charity of the highest grade of love it envious not when working within a poor sinner's heart did you notice that envy that was found in the disciples hearts and the Lord never encouraged them in it did he he rebuked them for it they fell out by the way who should be the greatest and we find it so today who's going to be on top of the pile and be noticed first who indeed is going to be first in line to be recognized and set up friend oh our churches are they not full of it from time to time oh but charity envious not oh to be the meanest

I'm content said the hymn writer what a mercy oh to know that charity been activated within us to be a door keeper in the house of God this is many years ago now I was but a lad and I heard some deacons talking at Red Hill Shaw's Corner and one deacon said I wouldn't let him get away with it he must put your foot down he said this other one said I don't mind he turns all this the pews upside down and makes people sit on them upside down if the gospel is preached and sinners hear it and I thought what a strange thing oh for him to sigh but I thought about it several times and I thought what charity was in that man's heart he put first things first and this is what we need isn't it first things first and that is to know my

Jesus crucified by far exceeds all else beside do you agree with me do you see indeed the point of the old deacon do you see the point of the apostle Paul here a more excellent wife friend oh if by the grace of God those who we might say are autocratic in their outlook are subdued by the love of Christ then they are conquered they're overcome but I've sidetracked somewhat here there may be a cause there may be a purpose charity suffers long is kind charity envious not my friends what a mercy it doesn't mean to say a person is inactive that they are lethargic and indifferent no it envious not the love my friend in their heart it goes heavenward and seeks indeed thy will be done not my will but thy will said

Jesus and if Jesus should say that how much more so or we need that grace to say thy will be done although I'm pushed around though I'm despised though I'm spoken against yet indeed to be found looking to Jesus and to Jesus Christ alone it envious not my friend just a quick warning here in closing and it's this envy is a spiteful sword envy is a sword that is invisible of times but my friend the Lord knows it envy can do a lot of damage before it is too and it's too late to stop it oh charity will not do that for you my friend envy will charity will not destroy a people a family and charity indeed will heal it and it will gather it together again charity my friend is kind how wonderful that love of Christ after

[44 : 14] Peter had smote off the ear of Malchus the high priest servant he said put up thy sword but my friend Jesus put forth his hand and he healed the man's ear some may argue and say well that wasn't very effective was it they still took him prisoner they still took him away and mocked him and crucified him my friend envy will forget but charity doesn't forget it's a great mercy if indeed it doesn't allow you to forget that you can say to know my Jesus crucified by far excels all else besides it doesn't allow me to forget it causes me to remember that I shall be a debtor as long as I live it will bring forth praise to a never ending eternity amen amen let's honor to worship just before us next

Wong is to square