

Exhortation for 29/2/04 – Reading I Corinthians 13 – Bro Garnet 2004
年 2 月 29 日讲道词 读经：哥林多前书 13 章 加内特弟兄

My dear Brothers and Sisters, 亲爱的弟兄姐妹,

How wonderfully privileged we are to once more come together to encourage each other in the way to the Kingdom and to remember the saving work of our God in his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. 很高兴今天我们可以再次聚在一起, 在通往神的国的路上互相鼓励, 并通过他的儿子, 我们的主耶稣基督纪念他的救恩。

Our New Testament readings have brought us today to Chapter 13 of the Apostle Paul's inspired first letter to the Corinthian Ecclesia. It was a young ecclesia situated in a very immoral Greek city where the pride of human wisdom and self-achievement were highly prized and where kindness was seen as weakness. There were therefore many issues to be worked through as they came to learn what the Truth's principles meant in their daily lives. The Corinthian Ecclesia had also a number of questions which they'd forwarded to the Apostle at the hands of three of their members, Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus (see I Cor 16:17). Paul begins to answer these issues in Chapter 7: 1 of I Corinthians, where we read, "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me..." 今天让我们一同来看看哥林多前书的第 13 章, 这是节自使徒保罗寄给哥林多教会的第一封信。哥林多是一个年轻的教会, 它是一个位于充满罪恶的希腊的城市, 在那里人类的智慧和成就得到高度的赞扬, 而善良则被视为软弱无能的表现。因此, 当他们在学习使徒传播给他们的真理在日常生活中意味着什么的时候, 他们必须面对许多问题。哥林多教会有许多的疑问, 他们向司提反, 福徒拿都, 亚该古提出这些平日困扰他们的问题(参考哥林多前书 16: 17)。保罗在哥林多前书 7: 1 里开始对这些问题做出回答, 他写道“论到你们信上所提之事.....”

There were questions on marriage in chapter 7, questions on things offered to idols in chapters 8-11, questions on the spirit gifts in chapters 12-14, questions on the resurrection in chapter 15 and questions on ecclesial collections in chapter 16. 哥林多前书在第 7 章有一些关于婚姻的问题。在第 8-11 章则提到献祭给偶像的问题, 在第 12-14 章中提到属灵的恩赐, 在第 15 章中提到复活, 最后在第 18 章提到捐助圣徒的问题。

Our reading for today, I Corinthians 13, is in the middle of the section of the letter dealing with the spirit gifts. It seems there were problems which came from a wrong understanding of the real purpose of the spirit gifts. The gifts were various extraordinary abilities such as being able to speak in unlearned languages, or being able to prophesy or being able to heal the sick. These were given by God to members of first century ecclesias to assist the spreading of the gospel through the first century world. Such wonderful signs demonstrated the divine endorsement of the

teaching of the gospel. They remained in place until the writing of the New Testament was completed just before the end of the first century. 而我们今天要看的是哥林多前书第 13 章，它是在谈属灵的恩赐的这个问题中的一段节选。哥林多的人在正确理解属灵的恩赐的真正目的上似乎存在一些问题。这些属灵的恩赐包括讲方言，预言，治愈疾病等各种不同的神奇的能力。这些能力都是神赐予一世纪教会的使徒帮助他们去传递福音的。这些神迹证明了神认同福音的教导。在一世纪末期，新约完成以后，这种能力基本上就不存在了。

Now some of the believers in Corinth had come to think that because they had a spirit gift they no longer needed to work within the ecclesia and to co-operate with the other believers. They had begun to think that they were individually all-sufficient. They had become proud of their gift and had begun to flaunt it for their own gratification. Paul had to remind them that the ecclesia as a whole is the body of Christ. He is the head. They had to understand that they needed to work harmoniously together as a body. We note the words of I Corinthians 12:12, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body: so also is Christ". In Christ we cannot be free agents, with no responsibility to other members of God's family. We must work as members of the one team. 现在有一些哥林多的信徒开始有一种想法，那就是，因为他们有了属灵的恩赐，就不必再呆在教会里与其他信徒合作。他们开始认为自己是独特的，自足的。他们开始为自己得到的属灵的恩赐感到骄傲，并开始以此自夸。保罗提醒他们教会作为一个整体是基督的身体，而基督则是教会的头。他们必须明白作为一个身体，他们必须和谐的一起工作。我们来看看哥林多前书 12:12: "就如身子是一个，却有许多肢体；而且肢体虽多，仍是一个身子。基督也是这样。" 在基督里我们不是单独的个体，我们对神的家庭里的其他成员也负有责任。我们必须像一个整体一样共同合作。

There is in this a very important lesson for us today. It is possible for some to think that they have such self-sufficient talents that they don't need other members of the ecclesia. The Apostle points out very clearly from the analogy of the body that all parts are necessary to make up a body. So it is in the body of Christ. Every member is a necessary part with a function to perform, a role to play. We all need each other and therefore we should greatly value the part each contributes to the functioning of the ecclesial body. 在这里有一个对我们今天十分重要的功课。也许有人会想他们拥有如此了不起的天赋，就不需要教会里的其他成员了。保罗则通过身体这个比喻指出所有的部分对于组成一个身体都是十分必要的。在基督的身体里也是一样，所有的成员都有自己重要的作用，扮演重要的角色。我们彼此需要，故此我们也应该重视每个成员为教会所做出的努力和贡献。

There also was a problem of some being jealous of the gift possessed by another, and so they had begun to feel that because they didn't have the gift they admired in another, they really didn't feel that they belonged to the ecclesia. We see this in Paul's figure of the body in I Corinthians

12:15, where he says, "If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? The answer is of course that it is part of the body, though it is not the hand. The body is made up of a whole range of differing parts. So it is also in the body of Christ, the ecclesia. 当然也存在这样的问题, 也许会有人妒忌别人拥有这些天赋, 并且因为他们没有别人拥有的这些让他们羡慕的天赋, 而让他们觉得自己不是教会的一分子。我们看看保罗在哥林多前书 12: 15 里对身体的描述“设若脚说: ‘我不是手, 所以我不属于身子;’ 他不能因此就不属乎身子”。答案当然是-虽然它不是手, 但它仍然是身子的一部分。身体是由不同部分构成的。而在基督的身体里, 也就是教会, 那也是这样。

Today we might easily come to think that because we are not doing something prominent in the ecclesia then we don't really count in the ecclesia. Paul raises this issue with the Corinthians by continuing to use the figure of the body. He says that if all members were the same there would be no body. Look at I Corinthians 12:17, "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?" In ecclesial life there are many roles to fulfil and not everyone can do everything. We need to welcome and appreciate what others with differing abilities can contribute to helping the ecclesial body function. So in the first century, not everyone had the same gift. They needed to accept their particular God-given gift and value the part played by others who had different gifts. 今天我们也许很容易会认为, 因为我们没有在教会里做出什么卓越的贡献, 所以我们不能算作教会里真正的一员。保罗在哥林多前书里也提到同样的问题。他继续用身体的比喻给我们解答这个问题。他说如果所有的成员都一样, 那就不会有身体了。请看一下哥林多前书 12: 17: “若全身是眼, 从哪里听声呢? 若全身是耳, 从哪里闻味呢?” 在教会生活里, 有许许多多的角色从事不同的工作, 并没有人是万能的。我们必须珍惜并重视其他有不同能力的人为教会做出的贡献。所以在一世纪里不是所有人都有一样的属灵的恩赐。他们必须接受神赐给他们的能力, 珍惜有其他属灵的恩赐的人。

In the last verse of Chapter 12 the Apostle moves to reveal that there is something more vitally important in the life of a follower of Christ than the spirit gifts. He says, "yet show I unto you a more excellent way". That far surpassing way is the way of love and it is the subject matter of chapter 13. 在第 12 章的最后一节中保罗指出信徒在追随基督的过程中有一些东西比属灵的恩赐更重要。他说道: “你们要切切地求那更大的恩赐。” 那更大的恩赐就是第 13 章的主题-爱。

Chapter 13 is made up of the following sections: verses 1-3 show the vital necessity of having the characteristic of love over the spirit gifts, verses 4-7 define Bible love, and verses 8-13 show that the spirit gifts will eventually cease but love will endure. 第 13 章由几个部分组成: 第 1-3 节主要讲拥有爱的重要性, 从 4-7 节是给出圣经对爱的定义, 第 8-13 节则讲到属灵的恩赐终会消失, 而爱则会永远长存。

In this chapter the Apostle taught that to follow this way of love required no spirit endowment whatsoever. Love was a matter of mental attitude. It brought a whole new set of values to the Corinthian mind. It meant learning to live the self-denying life of sacrifice for others. 在这一章里保罗提到追寻爱的道路不需要任何属灵的恩赐。爱是精神上的态度。它给哥林多教会的信徒带来了一套新的价值观，它意味着人要学着去为别人自我牺牲。

When Paul first arrived in Corinth he perceived how great was the sense of human pride exhibited by the citizens and culture of that city. His preaching of the gospel there emphasized the example of our Lord in living the crucified life. He comments on this in I Corinthians 2:1, 2. "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." 当保罗第一次到哥林多的时候，他从市民和城市文化中强烈地感觉到人类的骄傲。他在那里的传道强调我们的主被钉死在十字架上的经历。他在哥林多前书 2: 1-2 中对此做出了评价：“因为我曾定了主意，在你们中间不知道别的，只知道耶稣基督并他钉十字架。”

The whole concept of the gospel Paul taught stood clearly in opposition to human prowess and achievement. Paul set this principle pointedly forward so that as verse 5 puts it, "your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 保罗所传的福音教导了很显然是与人类自身的力量和成就相反的东西。保罗在 2: 5 中尖锐地提出这一原则：“你们的信不在乎人的智慧，只在乎神的大能。”

In I Corinthians 13 verses 1-2 the apostle therefore emphasized how valueless was the possession of the whole spectrum of the spirit gifts unless accompanied by love. In verse 3 he showed that the most dire sacrifice of self, even to martyrdom, without love would be unacceptable before God. 所以在哥林多前书 13: 1-2 中，保罗强调如果没有爱，那么所有的这些属灵的恩赐都是没有意义的。在第 3 节中，他甚至提到如果没有爱，连最极端的自我牺牲都是不被神悦纳的。

The word translated love is agape in the original Greek text of I Corinthians 13. It is a word which is unique to the New Testament. It is a word used to summarise the character of God Himself in I John 4:8 where we read, "for God is love". It is a quality which has its source in God. He is the origin of love as I John 4:7 expresses it: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of (Greek ek = out of) God; and everyone that loveth is born (that is begotten) of God and knoweth God". 在哥林多前书第 13 章里的爱，希腊语的原文是“agape”。这个词在新约中是十分独特的。在约翰一书 4:8 中这个词实际上是被用来总结神的品性的：“神就是爱。”就像约翰一书 4: 7 里所说得神就是爱的源头一样：“亲爱的弟兄啊，我们应该彼此相爱，因为爱是从神来的。凡有爱心的，都是由神而生，并且认识神。”

So back in I Corinthians 13:4-7, Paul proceeds to provide the Corinthian believers with an understanding of agape love. 现在我们再回到哥林多前书 13:4-7, 保罗教导哥林多的信徒从认识神的爱中得到收获。

He says it "suffers long". This means it is slow to anger. It patiently endures whatever challenges or circumstances might come. 他说道：“爱是恒久忍耐”。这就意味着不要轻易发怒。无论遇到什么环境或挑战仍能耐心地忍耐。

He says it "is kind". It is gentle and warmly caring of others. 他说到“爱是有恩慈”。就是说要对其他人温和, 热心, 关心他人。

He says "love envieth not". It is not jealous of what others have. 他说到“爱是不嫉妒”。就是不妒忌别人所拥有的东西。

He says it "vaunteth not itself". It doesn't boast about its achievements. 他说：“爱是不自夸”。就是让我们不为自己的成就夸口。

He says it "is not puffed up". It doesn't have an inflated or exaggerated perspective of itself. 他说：“爱是不张狂”。它不因自我而膨胀。

He says it "doth not behave itself unseemly". It acts consistently with the principles of the Truth. 他说：“爱是不作害羞的事”。爱就是行真理的道。

He says it "seeketh not her own". It does not promote itself or its ways. As one translation (RSV) puts it, "Love does not insist on its own way". 他说, “爱是不求自己的益处”。爱不是追求自身利益。就像修订版的圣经翻译的一样, “爱不是坚持己道。” He says it "is not easily provoked". That is, it is not soon irritated or stirred up by whatever occurs. 他说：“爱是不轻易发怒”。也就是说无论发生了什么事也不轻易发怒。

He says it "thinketh no evil". It doesn't judge others and attach bad motives to their actions. 他说：“爱是不计算人的恶”。就是不论断人, 不臆想别人的行为中有恶意的动机。

He says it "rejoiceth not in iniquity". It finds absolutely no delight in any form of injustice. 他说：“爱是不喜欢不义”。就是不会在任何不义的事中寻着快乐。

He says it "rejoiceth in the truth". It finds wonderful joy in sound, honest, trustworthy dealings. 他说：“爱是只喜欢真理”。就是在诚实的行为中发现快乐。

He says it "beareth all things". It covers its own privations so as not to become burdensome to others. 他说：“爱是凡事包容”，就是包容他人的缺点，不给别人增加压力。

He says it "believeth all things". It is not suspicious of everyone. It interacts with good will. 他说：“爱是凡事相信”，就是不要怀疑别人，而应该彼此有良好的意愿。

He says it "hopeth all things". It has a positive optimism about life. 他说：“爱是凡事盼望”，就是对生活抱有一个乐观的态度。

He says it "endureth all things". It is not put off by life's tribulations. It presses on resolutely towards the kingdom. 他说：“爱是凡事忍耐”。不要因为生活的磨难而放弃，而要在通向神国的路上一直坚持到底。

He says it "it never faileth". It is never driven off course. It never wanes. 他说：“爱是永不止息”，当然了，爱永远不会消逝的。

When we review these characteristics of the love taught in Scripture, we stand in awe as we see how they were totally outworked in the sacrificial life of the one we have come together to remember today. Our Lord's example surely encourages us to strive to follow his footsteps as the children of God, the God of agape love. 当我们回顾经文里教导的这些爱的品性，看到这些品性在我们今天来到这里纪念的那位牺牲者的身上完全地体现的时候，心中顿时有了敬畏的心。我们主的榜样确实鼓励了我们作神—那位拥有大爱的神的儿女，努力地追随着他的足迹前行。

In verses 8-13 the Apostle contrasts the temporary nature of the spirit gifts with the endurance of agape love. He indicates that the gifts such as prophecy, tongues and knowledge will cease "when that which is perfect (Greek 'telios' = complete) is come, then that which is in part shall be done away". That which is in part relates to the spirit gifts. One had this part or gift and another that part. For example, if one had the gift of tongues then another had the gift of interpretation of tongues and yet another the gift of prophecy. So the Apostle teaches, with the completion of the writing of the New Testament, the spirit gifts would be phased out. The need for such witness would cease. All of the answers to life in Christ would, thenceforward, be found from the Bible, alone. 在哥林多前书 13: 8-13 里，使徒用圣灵的恩赐的暂时性和爱的永久性做对比。他指出圣灵的恩赐，比如说预言，说方言，或是智慧的言语，将会停止“等那完全（希腊语是 'telios'，‘完成’的意思）的来到，这有限的必归于无有了”。这句话指的是圣灵的恩赐。有人有这样的恩赐，有人有那样的恩赐。例如，就像如果有人有讲方言的恩赐，就有另一个人有翻方言的恩赐，又有一人有讲预言的恩赐。所以使徒教导说，随着新约的完成，圣灵的恩赐将要停止。那时已经不需要这些圣灵的恩赐所作的见证了。所有关于基督的生命的解答之后都将只能在圣经里找到。

So it is that in the words of verse 11, "when I became a man I put away childish things" Paul calls upon the believers in Corinth to develop maturity and to realize that the gifts of the spirit were but a passing growing-up phase, a temporary crutch in establishing the Truth in the first century. The time would come when they would cease. Clearly any who claim to possess the spirit gifts today are not in harmony with the Word of God. Any such claim is a total error. 所以在第 11 节里说道：“既成了人，就把孩子的事丢弃了”。保罗呼召哥林多的人成熟起来，理解圣灵的恩赐只是成长中的一个阶段，只是在一世纪用来确立真理的一种暂时性的手段。事后到了，这样的恩赐自然会停止。很明显，如果今天宣称自己拥有圣灵的恩赐的人，那和神的道是不相符的。这样宣称的人完完全全的错了。

In verse 13 the Apostle teaches that for the time being faith, hope and love must continue. But understanding that eventually faith and hope will be realized, he concluded that agape love is the greatest. As a summation of the character of our God it will continue on into the kingdom, beyond the fulfillment of our faith and hope. 在第 13 节里，使徒教导那时，信，望，爱将永远长存。但是人们要明白信和望，他又总结说神的爱是最大的。爱作为对我们的神的品性的总结将因为我们信和望的实现，在神国里继续。

Like the Corinthian brothers and sisters, we too struggle to rise above the morality of our contemporaries. We too must seek the enlightenment that comes with an understanding of the Scriptures. We too must seek to grow more like our Lord who we remember in the memorials this day. In the Apostle Paul's words in Ephesians 5:1-2, "Be ye followers of God as dear (agape) children; And walk in love (agape) as Christ also hath loved (agape) us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour". We are called upon to follow Christ's example in giving ourselves for one another. 像哥林多的弟兄姐妹一样，我们也需要和自己的道德作挣扎。我们也必须寻求来自圣经的教化。我们也必须效法主不断地长进。使徒保罗在以弗所书 5: 1-2 里讲到：“所以你们该效法神，好像蒙爱（神的爱）的儿女一样。也要凭爱心行事（神的爱），正如基督爱（神的爱）我们，为我们舍了自己，当作馨香的供物和祭物，献与神。” 我们被呼召效法基督的榜样，为他人奉献。

So, too, the Apostle John in I John 3: 16-18, says: "Hereby perceive we the love (of God is not in the original and should be deleted) because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." 所以，使徒约翰也在约翰一书 3: 16-18 里讲到：“主为我们舍命，我们从此就知道何为爱；我们也当为弟兄舍命。凡有世上财物的，看见弟兄穷乏，却塞住怜恤的心，爱神的心怎能存在他里面呢？小子们哪，我们相爱，不要只在言语和舌头上，总要在行为和诚实上”。

May we learn from our God this spirit of selflessness, this spirit of agape love. Before us in the bread and wine is exhibited that spirit. May we be drawn by our Lord's selfless love to show forth that same spirit one toward another. 希望我们可以从神那里学到无私的品性，学到神的爱的品性。我们面前陈列的饼和酒就展示了这样的品性。希望我们可以被主无私的爱浇灌，向别人显出这同样的品性来。

For Discussion 讨论

1. To assist us in better fixing in our minds exactly what agape love is in practice, review and discuss the meaning of each of the defining statements of verses 4-7. 2. Discuss why agape love is the greatest. (See verse 13). 3. Discuss why agape love is a more excellent way. (See 12:31). 4. For individual meditation: In what ways could I better show agape love to my brothers and sisters? When will I commence?

1. 为了帮助我们更好地理解神的爱在实际中是怎样表现的，回顾并讨论哥林多前书 13: 4-7 每一个爱的定义。 2. 讨论为什么神的爱是最大的。（参考哥林多前书 13: 13） 3. 讨论为什么神的爱是更大的恩赐。（参考哥林多前书 12: 31） 4. 个人默想：我可以通过哪些方式更好地向我的兄弟姐妹显出神的爱来？我什么时候开始行动？