

The Greatest is Love (a paraphrase)

If I have the words and appearance of an angelic messenger and have supernatural gifts, but neglect love, I am like a blaring, off- key trombone and clanging cymbals at 6:00 a.m. And if I have a gift for solutions and meanings, and though I have faith that could make stuck things move and heavy things light, and have not love, I'm an obvious zero in the Kingdom. And if I give everything I own to charities and die on the battlefield of creeds and principles, and have not love, it means absolutely nothing in the end. Love is willing to put up with a lot of injustice. It smiles when frowns are in order; it goes against the flow of hatred by being kind. It doesn't look at others and say, Why not me, God? Love does not boast; it doesn't thrust its credentials to the front. It's not stuck up. It doesn't fly off the handle. Love isn't self-serving. It doesn't answer to the bell of heavyweight bouts. Evil? It doesn't even go there. It doesn't find gratification in revenge or smutty living. Instead, it is turned on by truth and justice. Love carries all things, has faith in God's will, has hope in dark valleys. It puts up with a whole lot of junk. Love is undefeated. Sooner or later, the prophecies will be over, the tongues will be silent, the knowledge will be unnecessary, and it will dematerialize. Right now we've got a glimpse, a very small glimpse, of the overall landscape of eternity, and we preach what we know. When we see our lives on this earth, we are going to see it all face-to-face and in living color. But this one thing will be the same after we see it all: three things won't move an inch. There will be faith, hope and love.

These three. But the greatest of these is love.