**Charity**

I Corinthians 13:1-3 "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not **charity**, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not **charity**, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not **charity**, it profiteth me nothing."

Showing charity toward others is so critical that other important things do not profit us if we do not have **charity**.

Dictionary.com – charity (just talking about the English word first)

2. something given to a person or persons in need; alms

A Christian has a **duty** to share with the less fortunate physically.

Heb 13:16 "But do not forget to do good and to **share**, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." (NKJV)

Should not help someone who won't work - II Thess 3:10 - "... this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."

Wouldn’t it be disingenuous to not give to the Salvation Army “because of their false religious teaching,” but never give to the American Cancer Society or Muscular Dystrophy Association, or such like?

Did we give any to the hurricane relief efforts a few months back?

Do we ever help with unfortunate Christians' exorbitant health care bills?

How about giving blood to the American Red Cross?:

* That saves people's lives and doesn't cost us a dime.
* If you had to have a blood transfusion, wouldn't you want it to come from a Christian who you know is living clean and therefore there is much less chance for communicable disease transmission?

Selfish is spending all our income on ourselves, or saving it all, or any combination of just those two.

James 2:15-17 "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it **profit**? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."

This illustration points out that advice or encouragement without help does not profit.

James 2:18 "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."

So this "faith leads to works" principle doesn't just apply to baptism and the Lord's Supper; we also show our faith by helping others physically.

Matt 25:41-46 "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." **So we will be lost if we don’t help**

5. benevolent feeling, especially toward those in need or in disfavor

Matt 14:14 "And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with **compassion** toward them, and he healed their sick."

Mt 9:36 "... when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with **compassion** on them, because they ... were ... as sheep having no shepherd."

there are 6 or 8 more verses about Jesus' compassion just like those two

I Pet 3:8 "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having **compassion** one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:"

We must have compassion on others like Jesus, show pity, & be courteous

I John 3:17 "But whoso ... seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of **compassion** from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

Compassion leads to benevolent acts toward the needy.

6. leniency in judging others; forbearance

James 2:13 "For he shall have judgment without **mercy**, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment."

James 3:17 "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, **gentle, and easy to be intreated**, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

We don't forgive men until they repent (Luke 17:3), but once they repent, forgiveness is not optional - Matt 6:14-15 - "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Matt 5:7 "Blessed are the **merciful**: for they shall obtain mercy."

Rom 12:18 "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live **peaceably** with all men."

I think this would be a good time to go back to I Cor 13 to let it tell us what "charity" is ...

I Cor 13:4-7 Charity ...

suffereth long - is patient with others

and is kind - treats people in a gentle way

charity envieth not - is not jealous of others

charity vaunteth not itself - does not talk about what "I" do

not puffed up - doesn't think I am better than others (even non-Christians)

Doth not behave itself unseemly - treats others with respect

seeketh not her own - makes the welfare of others a priority

is not easily provoked - doesn't get mad easily

thinketh no evil - thinks the best about others

Rejoiceth not in iniquity - is never happy about anybody's sin

rejoiceth in the truth – instead is happy when others do well

Beareth all things - is not easily offended

believeth all things - takes people at their word until proven otherwise

hopeth all things - hopes for the best in others

endureth all things - is willing and able to suffer for Christ and others

7. Christian love; agape.

I think this is probably the meaning in I Cor 13:1-3.

Found this comment on the internet "One important aspect of agape love is that it extends beyond emotions. It's much more than a feeling or sentiment. Agape love is active. It demonstrates love through **actions**."

We can easily see this in John 3:16 "For God **so loved** the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Do we have that kind of love for others?; do we demonstrate our love through actions?

John 14:15 "If ye love me, keep my **commandments**."

Eph 4:15 "But speaking the **truth** in love ..."