

Prism (Love)

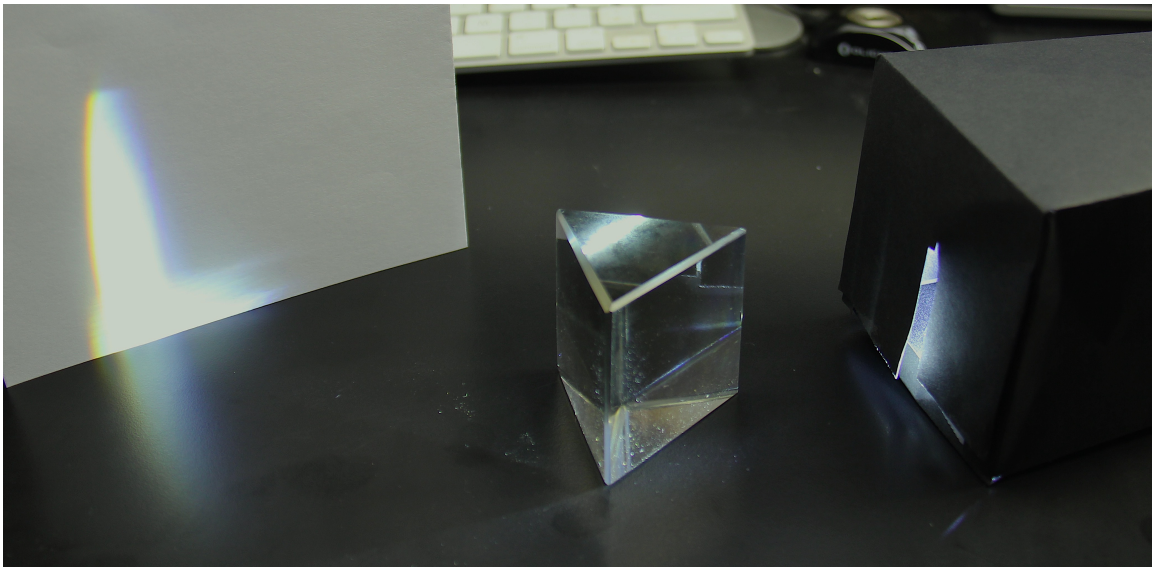
I Corinthians 13

The Basic Bible Truth

Paul explained to the Corinthian church what true love is, and how it relates to real life. In essence, everything we do must begin out of a heart of love. Love is the most important thing in the universe. God's love was demonstrated towards us for a reason. He could have told us forever what love is, but God, wanting all to know the truth about perfect love, showed the universe what it looks like to love. Without love, nothing that we do in this world has any value.

The Object

A Prism
Small LED Flashlight
A Sheet Of White Paper
A Sheet Of Black Construction Paper
Scotch Tape



This object lesson is a very simple science demonstration that is probably familiar to most, but still a bit fascinating to see in person again. I use a very intense small LED flashlight that I can place inside a box fabricated from one sheet of black construction paper. The key is to leave a narrow slit in one end to allow a narrow beam of light to travel through to the prism. By placing the prism accurately and rotating it just a bit, you can achieve a small rainbow of color projected on a white background. I then explain the physics of what is going on here. What we commonly refer to as white light is actually all of the colors of light superimposed over each other and the prism breaks the different colors out so that we can see them separately, much in the same way as a rainbow does. The projection will not necessarily be a perfect balance of colors because its source is an LED, but it gets the idea across. Love is defined by Paul in I Corinthians 13. He skillfully divides it into 11 parts—11 colors as it were.

The Lesson

In I Corinthians 13, Paul breaks our actions and dealings in life into 5 basic areas. 1. Speech—what we say to others, about others...everything that comes out of our mouths. 2. Knowledge—our understanding of the world we live in and how it operates. 3. Faith—our relationship to God, the church, and everything religious. 4. Generosity—what we give to others and to God: our time, talents, or money. 5. Our physical self—extreme sacrifice. Everything we endure for others. He reminds us that all of these things are noble and worthwhile activities for anyone to partake of. But if love is not the motivating factor, if love is not what makes us do the things we do, then we have been wasting our time. \$1,000,000 is an enormous amount of money. All of those zeros are impressive. But without the 1 in front of them all, we have nothing of value whatsoever.

He then defines love in a very clear way. Imagine a prism setting in a beam of light, and as the light refracts in the glass, it is broken into a rainbow of colors. Here we have love divided out in much the same way. We speak of love as a single entity or thing, but it is actually made up of many things. Love is:

1. Patient—love passive. Waiting on the sidelines, calm and meek, but ready.
2. Kind—love active. In kindness to others we “do unto others”.
3. Does not envy—love not jealous. The green eyed monster must be tamped down.
4. Humble—love hiding. Keeping ourselves in the shadows, and others first.
5. Courteous—love in society. Politeness and etiquette, it’s the little things that matter.
6. Even tempered—love not provoked. A hot temper is given a pass in our society today.
7. No delight in evil—love building others up. People are influenced by those who believe in them.
8. Protective—love unselfish. Expending our self to ensure another’s safe passage.
9. Trusting—love believing. Trust, the first cousin of loyalty.
10. Hope—love to come. Hope is a confidence in what is to come. A promise fulfilled
11. Perseveres—love always. We never give up and quit—no matter what.

Love is the most important thing in the world. I John 4:8 explains why. **God is love.**