

Love will never come to an end. Are there prophets? their work will be over. Are there tongues of ecstasy? they will cease. Is there knowledge? it will vanish away; for our knowledge and our prophecy alike are partial, and the partial vanishes when wholeness comes. When I was a child, my speech, my outlook, and my thoughts were all childish. When I grew up, I had finished with childish things. Now we see only puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we shall see face to face. My knowledge now is partial; then it will be whole, like God's knowledge of me. In a word, there are three things that last for ever: faith, hope, and love; but the greatest of them all is love.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:8-13 NEB

### CONVERSATION STARTERS

- The author's final appeal in this passage for love to be the controlling force in all of our relationships is based on the fact that (circle one):
  - love will stand the test of time
  - in comparison to the gift of love, all other gifts are just tinker-toys
  - from the perspective of eternity, any bragging about personal gifts is childish
  - what you value is a good indication of what you are
- The best illustration for me to understand the meaning of "The partial vanishes when wholeness comes" is (circle one):
  - the taking down of the scaffolding when the building is completed
  - the removing of the plaster cast when the bone is OK
  - the putting aside of the "walker" when the child can walk by himself
  - the dawning of the morning sun
  - the musical prelude before the curtain opens

The part of this passage that really speaks to me is (circle one):

- "Love will never come to an end."
- "When I was a child, my speech, my outlook, and my thoughts were all childish. When I grew up, I had finished with childish things."
- "Now we see only puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we shall see face to face."
- "My knowledge now is partial; then it will be whole."
- "In a word, there are three things that last for ever: faith, hope and love; but the greatest of them all is love."

- To me, the meaning of "when wholeness comes" is:
  - growing up
  - the dawning of perfect and complete knowledge
  - seeing God face to face
  - seeing all of the pieces of the puzzle in place
  - reaching my own spiritual maturity
  - being joined completely to God in union

### DEPTH ENCOUNTER

- Heaven to me is (choose three and rank 1, 2, 3):
  - \_\_\_\_\_ streets paved with gold
  - \_\_\_\_\_ the absence of pain and suffering
  - \_\_\_\_\_ the reunion with loved ones
  - \_\_\_\_\_ the fulfilment on earth of all the hopes and dreams
  - \_\_\_\_\_ perfect love
  - \_\_\_\_\_ being with Jesus
  - \_\_\_\_\_ celebration and singing and dancing all day long
  - \_\_\_\_\_ shedding the limitations of the physical world
  - \_\_\_\_\_ realizing my true self
- Reflecting on this passage makes me feel (circle one):
 

a. sad	h. guilty
b. homesick	i. nostalgic
c. bored	j. exposed
d. anxious	k. blah
e. proud	l. warm
f. happy	m. hostile
g. ecstasy	n. great
- As far as my own relationship with God is concerned, it might be described by the words (circle two):
  - stagnant
  - growing
  - uncertain
  - regressing
  - having problems
  - just beginning
  - frustrating
  - moving forward in spurts
  - doing great
  - nonexistent