

A Well-Known Trio

by John Gipson

A man can starve his soul as readily as he can starve his body. There are some who do not believe that. They think they are so strong, and so intelligent, that they can make their own way in the world.

Such people need to be reminded of the words which the apostle Paul wrote to his friends in Corinth: *“So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love”* (1 Corinthians 13:13).

Here we have man’s three greatest necessities. Try to live without them and you will have to find something else which looks like them. If you discard faith and hope and love, you must discover some counterfeits.

You can’t get by in life without reliance upon something. For reliance lies at the heart of all faith. For the apostle Paul that reliance was Christ. He could write, *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me”* (Galatians 2:20). That faith did not prevent sorrow nor pain nor injury, but it did prevent murmuring, complaining, resentment, and revenge. It was **faith** which enabled him to live in the midst of troubles. If you don’t have that kind of faith you will have to find something which looks like it.

You can’t get by in life without **hope**. When hope dies men are ready for suicide. Christianity offers *“a living hope.”* There is something to look forward to. Without hope life is a sham. With hope we have an anchor which gives stability to our lives. Calvin saw a connection between faith and hope and called hope *“perseverance, in faith.”* Whatever you call it, it’s a necessity. Life without hope is no life at all.

And then there is the necessity of **love**. It is like breathing. Breathing is not a duty; it is a necessity. We breathe or we suffocate. Loving is the key to life, said Jesus. Love God; love your fellowman. A life without love — forget it. There’s no such thing. Babies die without love, and so do we. We must receive love, and we must give love, or we will wither on the vine.

So when all is said and done there are three things which remain: **faith, hope, and love**.

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