

Though perfect eloquence adorned
my sweet persuading tongue,
Though I could speak in higher strains
than ever angel sung;

Though prophecy my soul inspired,
and made all myst'ries plain:
Yet, were I void of Christian love,
these gifts were all in vain.

Nay, though my faith with boundless pow'r
ev'n mountains could remove
I still am nothing, if I'm void
of charity and love.

Although with lib'ral hand I gave
my goods the poor to feed,
Nay, gave my body to the flames,
still fruitless were the deed.

Love suffers long; love envies not;
but love is ever kind;
She never boasteth of herself,
nor proudly lifts the mind.

Love harbours no suspicious thought,
is patient to the bad;
Grieved when she hears of sins and crimes,
and in the truth is glad.

Love still shall hold an endless reign
in earth and heav'n above,
When tongues shall cease, and prophets fail,
and ev'ry gift but love.

Here all our gifts imperfect are;
but better days draw nigh,
When perfect light shall pour its rays,
and all those shadows fly.

Now dark and dim, as through a glass,
are God and truth beheld;
Then shall we see as face to face,
and God shall be unveiled.

Faith, Hope, and Love, now dwell on earth,
and earth by them is blest;
But Faith and Hope must yield to Love,
of all the graces best.

from *Corinthians I: 13; The Scottish Psalter (1650)*
for Park Street Church, Boston, MA (2009)