Our scripture comes from 1 Corinthians 13:1. While you’re finding that, a man had a bad car accident. When the police officer arrived, the man told the officer, “I think the driver of the other vehicle was drunk.” The officer just nodded. “I said – the other driver was drunk.” “I heard you sir.” After a moment the man shouted, “The other driver was drunk!” As the officer put the cuffs on, he said, “The other driver was a cow.” **The Truth isn’t always revealed in words.**

**1 Corinthians 13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.**

Our scripture this morning is part of a 13-verse chapter on love. In English, the word love can mean many different things. It’s become a throwaway word – we love someone’s new dress, we love our child, we love our friend, and we love God. The same word, yet not the same meaning. In the Greek language, there are 8 words for love – we’re most familiar with 3 - eros (romantic love between a man and woman), phileo (love between friends), and agape (unconditional love). Many, when these verses are read at a wedding, think that this is eros love. When read at a funeral, we think these verses refer to phileo love. Neither is true. Paul is speaking here of agape love. The love here is the exact same love that is referred to in 1 John 4:16 - And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. It’s the very same word that we find in Ephesians 4:15 when we read about speaking God’s Truth in love. *but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ.* In fact, Ephesians 4:14 & 15 highlight this agape love as a sign that we are no longer children in the faith, but that we have grown up and are therefore prepared to speak the truth in agape love, from a place where the person doesn’t need to be someone we approve of, someone we like, someone who looks like us… we have an agape love, an unconditional love, for the very soul that dwells within the tent that is that persons earthly form – we love that soul and we speak from our soul to that persons soul, humbly, patiently, calmly, recognizing that God raised us up from spiritual children so that we might help claim and raise the spiritual children we encounter coming into the Kingdom every single day.

 In our scripture it says *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.* Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, I’m only making noise if I do not have the love of God sent to me in the form of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised in John 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. The Holy Spirit teaches us what to say in every situation. He is our counselor. Listen to what Jesus says in Luke 12:11-12 “Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.”

 How can we tell if we are speaking from a place of the Holy Spirit and not speaking as a clanging cymbal or a sounding brass? In Galatians 5:22-23, we find the fruit of the Pneuma – fruit of the Spirit. This is the exact same Greek word as used in Luke 12:12. The Spirit will teach us to say our words and those words will have the characteristics of love, joy, peace, longsuffering (patience), kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

 But we must first receive the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit through repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, it is impossible to speak the words that only the Holy Spirit can provide. No matter how Christlike they sound, no matter how angelic the person appears, no matter how the words tickle our ears… without first receiving the Holy Spirit, we cannot speak the Truth of Jesus in love to a lost and hurting world.

 Matthew 22:38 gives greatest commandment – Love God. Love comes from the same base word for love as in our scripture. Then we read verse 39, And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ Agape, unconditional, soul seeing, soul seeking love that can only be spoken when we are controlled by the Holy Spirit.

 How many remember the teacher in Charlie Brown? We could never understand her. WAH, WAH? Yet, the children understood each other perfectly. Could it be that only by speaking as a child and listening as a child that true communication happened for Charlie Brown and his friends? I believe so.

 Likewise, could it be that only by listening in love, speaking in love, that we will ever be able to make love understood and witness effectively? Something to consider isn’t it? It’s important that we examine how we’re speaking the Truth of Jesus. Are we speaking the Truth, but it’s not wrapped in the agape love taught by the Spirit? Then, it’s really no wonder that all the world hears is a clanging cymbal, a sounding brass, WAH, WAH. But, when we see a person’s soul as God sees it, we wrap our words in love and the world hears the love of God spoken with words taught to us by the Holy Spirit. This week, what love will we speak?