

Love (Though I Speak...) (2004)

SATB w/ organ

Difficulty rating: 2+

Duration: 5'00"

Premiere: Howl!, conducted by the composer, NYC, 10/30/04

I wrote *Love (Though I Speak...)* for my chamber chorus, Howl!, and a program of settings by St. Paul. The "Love" chapter of Corinthians (1, chapter 13) is well known from its frequent recitations at weddings. For my setting I consciously avoided some of the most familiar lines ("Love is not...") to focus on the rest of this beautiful verse, principally on the primacy of love (originally 'charity') over all else. The musical material for the anthem is derived from a 3-note "Love" motif as well as from the opening choral phrase. Though the work is structurally traditional, with a darkness-to-light progression, replete with a beginning in C#-minor and a close in its relative major E, the harmonies are more contemporary.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.

Love never fails. But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they will cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

-1 Corinthians 13: 1, 2, 8, 11-13