



Spiritual Gift #6

The Greatest of These is Love (1 Corinthians 13)

What We Have Learned So Far...



1. These are **spiritual** gifts from God (1 Cor. 12:1, 4) given by His **grace** (Eph. 4:7; 1 Peter 4:10)
2. They are for **all believers** in the church (1 Peter 4:10; 1 Cor. 12:7, 11, 18) to **perform functions** in the church (Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-20)
3. They are neither **fruit of the Spirit** (Gal. 5:22-23) or **natural talents**
4. There are **4 lists** in the New Testament (Romans 12:6-8; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Cor. 12:28-30) and each of them have their own theme

Support Gifts and Service Gifts



- ▶ In Ephesians we see Paul focus on the **support gifts** as the foundation of the church—apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers
- ▶ In Romans, Paul mainly focus on the **service gifts**

With Hands	With Heart	With Mind
Giving	Faith	Leading
Serving	Exhortation	Teaching
Helping	Showing Mercy	Administration

- **Sign gifts**—to **authenticate** God's messenger through signs and wonders (2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:4)
- They would **cease** one day (1 Cor. 13:8-10)
- The gift of **miracles**—supernatural power from God
- The gift of **healings**—to authenticate God's messenger through healing
- Although healing is not guarantee before the new heaven, God can heal and has a **perfect plan** for us
- The gift of **tongues**—a sign for unbelievers, especially Jews, for the purpose of **evangelism**
- There are **clear guidelines** on how tongues should be practice in church, (1 Cor. 14) especially important is the interpretation of tongues.



Love Is Enriching (13:1-3)



- ▶ the purpose of spiritual gifts is to equip the church and to edify the saints. And it is impossible to truly accomplish these tasks **without love**. (imagine the opp.)
- ▶ Without love, we may have an **external appearance** of fulfilling the Great Commission, but it won't last (Rev. 2:5)
- ▶ It is much easier to focus on external changes and missing the **changing of mind and heart** (Rom. 12:1-9)
- ▶ Only true love can releases the power of God and allows us to put others above us. (Eph. 3:16-21, John 15)

Love is Edifying (13:4-7)



- This passage is not about marriage, it is about love in the church or ministry
- Love is **patient** and **kind** (1 Peter 3:8-9)
- Love does not **envy** or **boast** (Gal. 5:26, 1 Tim. 6:3-4)
- Love is not **arrogant** or **rude** (1 Cor. 4:6; Rom 12:3, 16)
- Love does not **insist on its own way** (Phil. 2:21, Gal. 5:13)
- Love is not **irritable** or **resentful** (think evil) (Prov. 14:17)

- ▶ Love does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but **rejoices with the truth** (Rom. 12:9)
- ▶ Love—**bears** all (Gal. 6:9; Col. 3:12-15)
- ▶ Love—**believes** all (Phil. 2:1-4)
- ▶ Love—**hopes** all (2 Cor. 4:1; 1 Peter 1:13, 21-22)
- ▶ Love—**endures** all (Col. 3:12-15)
- ▶ (Psalm 94:18; 143:8) It is **God's love** that lifts us up, and with God's love we are to lift up one another (Rom. 14:19; 1 Thes. 5:11)



Love is Enduring (13:8-13)

- If anything will allow us to **stay in the ministry**, it is love (2 Cor. 4:16; 5:14)
- Both faith and hope are not eternal, as we only need it in this present age, but **love is eternal**.
- Moreover, what makes love greater is that faith and hope are only **man's character**, but love is a character of both man and God. We share this **immutable attributes** with God (1 John 4:7-8)
- Because of love, God and man can relate to each other to enjoy each other's **fellowship** (John 15:9-15)



Conclusion

- ▶ As a church, it is important for us to regularly examine ourselves together that our focus is on the **greatest commandment—Love**
- ▶ It is so much easier to focus on **programs** (external) and neglect the changing of heart and mind (internal)—this is our calling, and spiritual gifts are the tools by the grace of God to fulfill this calling
- ▶ Personally, we are called to exercise our spiritual gifts with love, not just for the sake of **fulfilling a task** or for **self-gratification**. (i.e. all the “one another”)
- ▶ Are you **willing** to love your brothers & sisters?

