

# THE POWER OF LOVE

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

- **Spiritual activity is not the same as spiritual maturity.**
- **The true evidence that Christ is transforming our lives is not merely what we know, what we say, or what we do, it is how we love.**

## **THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT**

- *“If I speak human or angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so that I can move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give away all my possessions, and if I give over my body in order to boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.”* (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)
- **Spiritual Gifts are given for the good and benefit of the Church Body, rather than for self-centeredness or signs of spiritual superiority.**
- **Without love as our motive, spiritual gifts are abused and misused creating chaos rather than Christlikeness.**

## **AN UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION OF BIBLICAL LOVE IS THE KEY TO BIBLICAL WORSHIP AND SERVICE**

- *“Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful, is not arrogant, is not rude, is not self-seeking, is not irritable, and does not keep a record of wrongs. 6 Love finds no joy in unrighteousness but rejoices in the truth. 7 It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”* (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)
- **Division and confusion are overcome with *agape* (love) leading to a unifying effort to see God glorified and people transformed for His glory.**
- **Biblical love involves being transformed by the renewing of our minds.**
- *“Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.”* (Romans 12:2)

## **SPIRITUAL GIFTS ARE TEMPORARY BUT LOVE IS ETERNAL**

- *“Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. 9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, 10 but*

*when the perfect comes, the partial will come to an end. 11 When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put aside childish things. 12 For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, as I am fully known. 13 Now these three remain: faith, hope, and love—but the greatest of these is love.”* (1 Corinthians 13:8-13)

- **There will be no need for faith, hope, or spiritual gifts in heaven, but love will never end.**
- **Growing up in Christ involves exchanging selfish ways for a sacrificial love that is centered on the good of others and the glory of God.**

## CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION

### **Observation:**

- According to verses 1–3, what does Paul say about spiritual gifts, knowledge, faith, and sacrifice if love is missing?
- In verses 4–7, what characteristics does Paul use to describe what love is and what love is not?
- In verses 11–13, what contrast does Paul make between spiritual immaturity and maturity?

### **Understanding**

- Why do you think Paul places this chapter about love in the middle of his discussion about spiritual gifts?
- How can Christians today fall into the same trap as the Corinthians, valuing gifts, knowledge, or influence more than love?
- Which description of love in verses 4–7 is the most challenging for you personally (patience, kindness, humility, forgiveness, etc.)? Why?
- How is biblical love different from the way love is often defined in our culture?
- Why is it often easier to serve, lead, or speak than it is to consistently love people well?
- Think about your daily relationships (family, church, work, community). Where might God be calling you to demonstrate Christlike love more intentionally?
- What is one practical step you can take this week to show the love of Christ through patience, humility, forgiveness, or sacrifice?

### **Loving Outward:**

- Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
- Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
- Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?