



Power Lifting: Empowered by the Spirit
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“A More Excellent Way”
5/14/23

Key Verses: 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13

Key Thought: The only sure foundation for our use of the spiritual gifts is LOVE!

Points to Consider:

- A recent survey of Christ Community Church indicated that 84% of us understand the gifts, 54% of us know what gifts we have, and only 43% of us are using our gifts. → The aim of *Power Lifting* is to help more of us identify and use our gifts.
- The Corinthians were *BELIEVERS* who were also *BROKEN*. → Consequently, their use of the spiritual gifts sometimes caused more harm than good.
- Paul declares to them— and to us (cf. 1:2)— that the spiritual gifts must be exercised in LOVE. (Note that chapter 13 is between 2 chapters focused on spiritual gifts.)
- Four Ways to Know that Love is the Foundation of the Gifts:
 - i. The Excellence of Love (12:31-13:3): Love is the essential ingredient that makes the spiritual gifts beneficial.
 - ii. The Description of Love (13:4-8a): Love seeks the good of the *other*, and love is expressed in *action* (these are all present tense verbs).
 - iii. The Permanence of Love (13:8b-10): Whereas most of the spiritual gifts will become obsolete when the kingdom fully comes, love is— to a degree— the kingdom come already!
 - iv. Love is “A More Excellent Way” (13:11-13)

Discussion Prompts:

- How do you tend to use your gifts (e.g., reluctantly, for attention, or lovingly)?
- Paraphrase and clarify Paul’s description in 13:4-8a. → Where can you most see yourself (or each other), and where can you most... well... NOT see yourself?
- What makes it hard to love? | | | Why is love such a blessing?
- Can you share a story of when you have seen the gifts “at their best”?
- How can Paul’s description of love inform your use of spiritual gifts?