

Postcards from Corinth- pt. 8
The Way that Surpasses all Others
I Cor. 13
June 15, 2025

I. I Cor. 12 from 30,000 FEET (12:1-31)

- A. Division over SPIRITUAL (you guessed it) STATUS (12:1-3)**
- B. One GOD, Many GIFTS (12:4-11)**
- C. One BODY, Many MEMBERS (12:12-30)**

The Corinthians are so caught up in status that it is affecting the way they worship and come together as a church. Paul reminds them that the gifts they have all came from the same good giver and they are all members of the same body- the body of Christ!

1. Kid's Question: When have you been a part of a group or a team that felt bigger than yourself?
2. Have you ever felt pressure to "perform" spiritually, to measure up in some way? What brought on that pressure? Have you every felt spiritually superior/inferior to someone else? What do you think Paul would say about that?
3. What do you believe are your spiritual gifts?
4. When have you experienced that church acting as members of the body of Christ?

II. I Cor. 13- in the THICK of it (13:1-13)

- A. WITHOUT Love:**
 - 1. WORDS lose MEANING (13:1)**
 - 2. KNOWLEDGE loses SUBSTANCE (13:2)**
 - 3. ACTIONS lose EFFECTIVENESS (13:3)**
- B. With Love, our LIVES are TRANSFORMED (13:4-8)**
- C. Love is the FUTURE we are LIVING into (13:8-13)**

We have all heard this chapter at many a wedding. What if Paul is talking about more than romantic love and wants us to see how, in the church and in life, love is what holds all things together?

5. Is there a time when you have experienced the truths of I Cor. 13:1-3? When has the lack of love rendered others' words, actions, or knowledge fruitless? When has the same been true for you?
6. In what ways would your past week have been different if I Cor. 13:4-7 been your reality?
7. How does the picture of eternity being a place where only love remains affect you in the present?

III. I Cor. 14- LIVING it out (14:1-40)

- A. Love BUILDS up the CHURCH (14:1-19)**
- B. Love SEEKS our NEIGHBOURS' GOOD (14:23-25; Matt. 7:12; Matt. 22:40)**

Paul goes on to show the Corinthians how the way of love should inform their worship as a community. If we were thinking first and foremost of love, how might our worship look different on a Sunday morning?

8. How do you presently build up the church or seek the good of those around you? Is that motivated by love?

IV. From CORINTH to HOPE

- A. You are the BODY of CHRIST (12:27; Eph. 1:23; Col. 1:18; Rom. 12:3-8)**
- B. The WAY this Body WORKS is Through LOVE (I Cor. 14:1; 16:14)**
- C. The Way of LOVE is the Way of GOD (I Cor. 13:4-8; I John 4:7-16; Phil. 2:5-11)**

The reality is that when we begin to experience the love God has for us, shown in Jesus, it changes everything. Everything we say, everything we know, everything we do.

9. Why do you think the metaphor of a body is so important to Paul?
10. How does reading I Cor. 13:4-8, replacing the word love with God, affect you? Are there phrases that give you pause? Do you really believe these things? What would happen if you did?