

A More Excellent Way

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[0 : 00] All right, open your Bibles to 1 Corinthians chapter number 12, please. 1 Corinthians chapter 12. And pay close attention here at the beginning.

Well, and at the middle and at the end, but pay close attention at the beginning here as we're going to break down chapters 12, 13, and 14. And just allow everybody to understand where we are in the book of 1 Corinthians.

And sometimes don't have the real pleasure of time to lay the entire context out before you.

But I'm going to try to do that so that we know what's happening. Because the surrounding context is important to what we're going to be looking at here. So notice in chapter 12, verse number 1.

Paul is beginning a new section within the book. A new section. He's shifting gears from something of chapter 11 and he goes to chapter 12 saying, Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

[1 : 12] And so I have some things that I need to discuss with you concerning spiritual gifts. So you can see that he's shifting into this subject matter. And he starts off by explaining the diversity of these gifts.

And you can see verse number 4. There are diversity of gifts, but the same spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it's the same God which worketh all in all.

And so there are diversities. There are a list. Two times in this chapter he gives a list. You'll see it in verses 8, 9, and 10. He gives a list of some of the gifts.

Notice verse 8. One is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom. To another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit. To another faith by the same Spirit. To another gifts of healing and so forth.

And then at the end of the chapter he mentions them again. In a little different way. Verse 28 and 29 and 30. He says, God hath set some in the church. First apostles. Secondarily prophets. Thirdly teachers.

[2 : 13] After that miracles. Then gifts of healing. Helps governments. Diversity of tongues. And so God gives. He's explaining the diversity here. Of the spiritual gifts.

He also takes a moment to explain. Or to really nail down the distributor of these gifts. Is the Spirit of God. In verse 8.

To one is given by the Spirit. The word of wisdom. To another. The word of knowledge by the same Spirit. Verse 9. To another faith by the same Spirit. And notice verse 11.

Verse 11. But all these worketh that one and the self same Spirit. Dividing to every man severally as he will. So the Spirit of God is the distributor.

Of particular spiritual gifts. Now moving past verse 11. Verses 12 through 27. Is a section within this chapter.

[3 : 10] Where he teaches the church. That they are a body. That the body of Christ. Is made up of individuals. And these individuals have different roles.

Within the body of Christ. Christ. And so he uses the human body. As an analogy. And he describes through these verses. That there's an ear. There's an eye.

He describes feet. In verse 21. And a head. In verse 21. And so. Just like your physical body is made up of. Many different members.

Each one has their own role and function. And that's what he's telling this church. Now concerning spiritual gifts. I don't want you to be ignorant about this stuff. The Lord is. He gives to different men. Different gifts. And we're all together. To use these gifts. But we're not all. In competition with one another. And we're not. What God gave you.

[4 : 09] God gave that to you. And God wants to use you in that way. And so he closes the chapter then. With referencing the different ministerial positions.

And gifts. And God has set some in the church. Verse 28. First apostles. Secondly prophets. Thirdly teachers. After that miracles. Gifts of healing. We read that.

In verse 29. He says are all apostles. Are all prophets. Just like your body. Is it all made up of an ear. Or of an eye. Or of a hand. Or feet. No. There's different ones. And in verse number 31.

He says this. But covet earnestly. The best gifts. That's a command. That's something that tells the church. Now concerning spiritual gifts. Here's his advice. Or his command to them.

Covet earnestly. The best gifts. And then he says this. At the end of 31. And yet. Show I unto you. A more excellent way. Covet earnestly.

[5 : 06] The best gifts. And yet. There's something better. Than the best gifts. There's a more excellent way. Than exercising. By the spirit.

Special gifts. Within the body of Christ. There's something that's more excellent. Than that. And now in verse 13. Chapter 13.

He declares that the spiritual gifts. Are inferior. To this more excellent way. And he continues through chapter 13. Just fast forward to verse number 8.

Where he's talking about charity. And he says charity never faileth. But whether there be prophecies. They shall fail. Whether there be tongues. They shall cease. Whether there be knowledge.

It shall vanish away. And so there's. There's a. A more excellent nature. About charity. Above and beyond.

[6 : 01] The spiritual gifts. That they are to covet. And charity's. Not going anywhere. While the others will. And so he talks about that. And I'll skip past this for a second.

To chapter 14. And we're still just breaking down. These three chapters. As they come together. Chapter 14 verse 1. And he picks right back up.

Finishes talking about charity. Saying follow after charity. And then he picks right back up. To where he ended chapter 12. By saying and desire. Spiritual gifts. That's what he said in chapter 12.

Verse 31. Covet earnestly. The best gifts. And then I'm going to show you. A more excellent way. And after he does that. He comes back to those gifts. And he says. Desire spiritual gifts.

Look at. Look at chapter 14. Verse 39. Coming to the end of chapter 14. He says this. Wherefore brethren.

[6 : 56] Covet to prophesy. And forbid not to speak with tongues. And he closes it. Let all things be done decently. And in order. Now Paul is addressing.

The administration. And the order. And the exercising. Of spiritual gifts. To this carnal. And young. Church at Corinth.

And in the midst of this teaching. And in the midst of this admonishing. Sandwiched in between. These two big chapters. Of 12 and 14. That are dominated.

By revelation. Or instruction. About spiritual gifts. There are 13 short verses. That he introduces. And expounds on something.

That he says is better. Something that he calls. A more excellent way. And so as Paul. Is to this church. Trying to clean some things up.

[7 : 55] Trying to. Set some doctrinal parameters. Of how they are to. Exercise. What God is doing. With them. We'll call them.

While he is laying down. The guidelines. For the gifts. He informs them. That there is something better. To desire. There is something better. Than all of this. To aspire to.

He calls it. In chapter 12. Verse 31. A more. Excellent. Way. And this is what I want us. To draw our attention. To this morning. This more excellent way.

And in chapter 13. He exalts. And he introduces. Charity. And I want to preach. About charity. As a more excellent way. To you this morning. And I.

I tried. Years ago. I. I'd say probably. Ten years ago. I. I really. Got my mind on this. And I was chasing down. About 28 or 29 references.

[8 : 50] That it comes in your. King James Bible. And I tried to put something. Together on it. And I just. I couldn't do it. I couldn't figure it out. I didn't know what the importance was. I didn't know. Exactly. What I was supposed to be saying.

Or putting forth. And I've heard a few messages. Preached on charity. And I'm not going to pretend. That I have something new for you. But I feel like. I did learn something. Here more recently. In this. And I feel like. And it's come up a few times. Even in this past week. In some discussions. With. In three different circumstances. And. Just. We've been really led to this. And drawn to this. This week. So I want to. Park on it. And I want to try to preach on it. And I do. Hope that you get something out of it. That you learn something. And. I'm convinced you will. If you'll pay attention. So let's pray together. And then we'll continue. Now God. I pray that you'll give me. A clear mind. And help me to know. [9 : 44] What I'm saying. And to say it. With authority. Of the word of God. But Lord. Let it not be just my thoughts. And if I'm confused about anything. Then please. Just.

Guard my tongue. And. Help me to be able to minister this word. In truth. And may it edify these people. And may it lift up the Lord Jesus Christ. May we seek to. Exercise charity. Within ourselves. And seek this. And follow after it. And Lord. I pray you'll do a work. From your words. And by your spirit. In the hearts and minds. Of each today. We ask in Jesus name. For his sake. We pray. Amen. All right. Charity. Charity is a more excellent way. That's established. From the scriptures. And so let me. Give you a three point. Outline. That deals with a few. Of these thoughts here. And tries to bring. Some things together. That has helped me. I hope it helps you.

[10 : 40] The first thing. I want to say. Is that charity. Is an excellent. Expression. What I mean by that. Is it's a pure word. It is the right word. It is the right word.

For this topic. And for this place. In the Bible. In Proverbs 30. In verse 5. The Bible says. Every word of God. Is pure. Therefore.

Charity. Is a pure word. And the Holy Ghost. Chose the word charity. He did not choose. The word love. Now you need to get this. And right away.

I'm just going to start off. Being pretty dogmatic. About something. But it's for your good. All the new Bibles. Have taken charity. Out. And put in.

The word love. Even in my Bible here. The publisher. Doesn't think charity. Is the right word. But because he's. It's a King James Bible. He left it alone. But he put a little note there.

[11 : 35] To let me know. That he thinks. It should be. Love. In every single time. It shows up. Charity. Church. Is not an archaic word.

And everybody knows. That's not an archaic word. So why are we taking it out. They claim that they just remove. Archaic words. And everybody knows. What the word charity is. But every new.

And popular version. That's on the market today. Are so eager. To change the words of God. And take out the word charity. And destroy a teaching. And change it.

To the word love. Which is a mistake. An absolute mistake. An error. It is wrong. To have the word love. In this chapter. This is not the love chapter.

I don't care if you have that heading there. Cross it off. It's not the love chapter. It's about charity. And it's about ministering. In the local church. Sandwiched between the gifts.

[12 : 34] Of the spirit. And how you're supposed to operate. And what they are. And do. Right in between that. It's not a chapter about love each other. That's not this at all. It's charity.

And there's a reason. I want to try to. Try. To give you the reason why. Charity is the right word. If I didn't have a King James Bible.

I couldn't preach on charity. I couldn't teach on charity. And what I'm going to say today. Wouldn't even be in existence. For me to say today. You wouldn't get this.

If you don't have a King James Bible. Charity. Thanks to the modern versions. Like the NIV. And the ESV. And all of them. Thanks to those modern versions.

Charities disappeared. From the pulpits. And disappeared from the churches. And disappeared from the minds. Of Christians. And Bible readers. Because their Bible. Doesn't say charity.

[13 : 31] One time. And so what is it? Some people don't even know what it is. Some people don't even know it exists. Because they never read it in their Bible.

They read love. And now we have a church. That's just completely consumed with love. Love your neighbor. Love everybody. Love, love, love. And on this case. And in this chapter.

They mess something up. And I want to clarify it today. With the help of God. And if possible. Help you all to understand what this is. Charity is not love.

It's a different word. It's on a different level. It's an excellent expression. Of what God is trying. To call us to.

Call us to possess. And call us to display. In our lives. When you take the word out. And you don't have it in your Bible. You're never confronted with the need for charity.

[14:27] And charity. According to the Apostle Paul. Is a necessity. To minister to others. So charity. Is an excellent expression. It's a more excellent way.

I know that. Today. We understand the word. And it's. It's commonly thought of. As. As a way. You donate to a charity. Right.

And so. It's. It emphasizes generosity. It emphasizes helpfulness. And we know what charitable organizations are. They exist all over the place. And they're.

They. They have a selfless manner about them. They. They. They try to offer. Their resources. Their. The certain niche.

That they're. Built. To be. To. To meet a need. And because they. Have this selflessness. About them. And that. That is. They. They offer.

[15:23] Help. In. Exchange for nothing. They're not expecting. Anything return. You can kind of get a little glimpse. Of what the charity. A little bit of what it ought to be.

And what it is. Even exists. In our culture. In these organizations. But biblically. It goes far beyond. Clothing.

And feeding. Someone. This call. For charity. Where Paul. Side. Just takes a sidetrack. When he's dealing with.

Concerning spiritual gifts. Church. I. There's. You got. In chapter 14. There's things that they are. Out of order in with this. And he's got to straighten out. And while he's dealing with it. He takes a little sidetrack. To say.

You need charity. Actually. More than the spiritual gifts. And something better than them. Is charity. And that's something. Missing in your church. You need this.

[16:20] And he emphasizes it. And then goes back. To cleaning some things up. About the gifts. So biblically speaking. This call for charity. Is addressing a spiritual issue.

Within the body of Christ. Because one must possess it. To effectively minister. To others. Paul explains that.

At the beginning of chapter 13. And we'll get that. To that spot later. But for now. By way of bringing this. To the first point. Charity. Is an excellent expression.

It is the right word. That belongs in your Bible. And if your Bible. Doesn't say charity. Then you ought to get one. That does. I believe that. Because you need charity.

That's what you need. Now secondly. Charity is an excellent expression. It's a more excellent way. Because charity. Is an excellent edifier. It's an excellent edifier.

[17:17] Keep your place here. But look back at chapter 8. 1 Corinthians chapter 8. And look at verse number 1.

Now as touching things offered unto idols. We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up. But charity edifieth.

It's a work of charity. It edifies. Now come back to where you were. In 1 Corinthians. And look at chapter 14 now.

Charity edifieth. And concerning spiritual gifts. That's the goal. And that's what you're going to see in this chapter.

In chapter 14. Paul goes back to the spiritual gifts. Desire spiritual gifts. He says in verse 1. And now he's going to give a strong admonition.

[18:25] That the purpose of the gifts within the local church. Is for edification. Charity. Edifies. Now look at verse 1.

Follow after charity. And desire spiritual gifts. But rather that ye may prophesy. Why? He'll explain it. Verse 2. For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue. Speaketh not unto men.

But unto God. For no man understandeth him. Howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. But he that prophesieth. Speaketh unto men to edification. And exhortation and comfort.

He that speaketh in an unknown tongue. Edifieth himself. But he that prophesieth. Edifieth the church. Verse 5. I would that ye all speak with tongues.

But rather that ye prophesied. For greater is he that prophesieth. Than he that speaketh with tongues. Except he interpret. Why? That the church may receive. Edifying. That's what these gifts

are there for anyway.

[19 : 23] Is to edify. That's why prophecies. He says prophesying is promoted above tongues. And after verse 5. He explains that tongues just don't get the job done for the hearers.

Unless there's an interpretation. It just sounds like words they can't understand. Living in Silmar. I run into that on a daily maybe.

Weekly level. Of hearing people speak words I don't understand. And it doesn't edify me. Now. Look at verse number 12.

Look at verse 12. Even so ye. For as much as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts. Seek that ye may excel. To the edifying of the church.

Excel to the edifying of the church. That must be the motivation for these believers. For these spiritual gifts. It's not just getting their time to stand up and speak in the church.

[20 : 26] And for people to see them. And to know that they can do something. That's what they were doing. Look over at chapter 14 still. Look at verse 26. Part of what Paul is trying to clean up.

Verse 26. How is it then brethren when ye come together. Every one of you hath a psalm. Hath a doctrine. Hath a tongue. Hath a revelation. Hath an interpretation. Let all things be done.

Unto edifying. How is it then. Why is this that every time. Every single person's got to show their gift. And get their time on the stage.

So to speak. But what Paul says back in verse 12. You're zealous in spiritual gifts. Okay. Great. God gave them to them.

And he expects them to do them decently. And in order. And to use them for edification. And in verse 12 he says. You're zealous in spiritual gifts.

[21 : 23] That's great. But he says this. Seek that ye may excel. To the edifying of the church. Notice that word. Excel. Because he's told us.

There's a more excellent way. There's a way that you can excel. Above all use of spiritual gifts. A more excellent way. A way that will excel. A way that will edify.

And that's charity. Charity is an excellent edifier. I want to show you this from the Bible. A little bit about it. Look back at Romans chapter 14.

You can keep your place here. But just go to the book. A few pages back. Romans 14. And this will be the first time. Charity in any form.

Shows up. And we can learn something about it. Right here. Right here. Right here. It seems to me.

[22 : 21] And I hesitate to say anything. Purely about it. But it seems to me. That the primary role. Or function of charity.

Is to edify. Now watch this in chapter 14. Romans 14. I'll start in verse 14. And well let me back up. Look at verse 1. Him that is weak in the faith. Receive ye. But not the doubtful disputations. Not the debate and argue.

But he's talking about somebody that's weak in the faith. So they're saved. They're in the church with them. But they don't know a whole lot of truth.

And they're confused about some issues. And he tells the grown and the mature believers. How to handle that younger brother or younger sister.

[23 : 20] That weaker brother in the Lord. He describes several things in the chapter. And we're just going to focus in on one here. Verse 14. Paul says. I know. And am persuaded by the Lord Jesus.

So you're not going to change Paul's mind on this. He knows it. He's persuaded by the Lord Jesus. That there is nothing unclean of itself. Nothing. Unclean of itself. He's speaking about meat.

But to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean. To him it is unclean. Why is that? Well if you think it's a sin to eat certain seafoods.

Because you see it back there in the Old Testament law. You think catfish or any shellfish. Or anything like that is unclean and unlawful to eat. Paul says look.

I know. I'm persuaded by the Lord Jesus. That there's nothing unclean of itself. And if you're not sure. Read 1 Timothy chapter 4. It will clear it up. There's nothing unclean.

[24 : 21] But. That man that thinks it's unclean. He looks at that thing and thinks. I'm not allowed to eat that. Well it's unclean to him. Why? Because in his mind and conscience.

He can't touch it. He doesn't have the light yet. To know and to be persuaded by the Lord Jesus. That it's. There's nothing unclean. So he looks at it and says. I can't touch that.

It's wrong for me to touch that. And if he ends up taking it. And partaking of it. He's violating what he thinks. He's sinning in his own mind.

Even if it's pure. And Paul's saying. He needs to grow. He needs to learn. Alright. Now how do you handle somebody like that? Verse 15.

But if thy brother be grieved. With thy meat. Meaning you eat it. But he thinks it's wrong. Now walkest thou not.

[25 : 17] Charitably. You're not walking charitably. How's that? Toward him. Toward the weaker brother. That is confused. You have the liberty. It is not unclean to you.

But if you're going to walk charitably. Toward that weaker brother. Then you're going to have to change. Some things in front of him. For his sake. Notice in verse 15.

If thy brother be grieved with thy meat. Now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him. With thy meat. For whom Christ died. Paul wants him to get a chance.

To grow in the Lord. Let not your good. Be evil spoken of. By the weaker brother. For the kingdom of God. Is not meat and drink.

But righteousness and peace and joy. In the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things. Serveth Christ. Is acceptable to God. And approved of men. Notice verse 19. The context of all of this.

[26 : 17] Let us therefore. Follow after the things. Which make for peace. And things wherewith one. May edify another. For meat destroy not the work of God.

That would be the weak brother. All things indeed are pure. But it is evil for that man. Who eateth with offense. So I hope you understand that. I don't have time to really. Draw it out any further. But the case here.

Walking charitably. Is walking in a way. That edifies another. Specifically. A weaker brother.

Someone you might say. Is below you. In the faith. Who doesn't have the understanding.

Who is. Does not know. And is not persuaded. By the Lord Jesus. About some certain things.

Doesn't have the truth. And so not walking charitably. Is doing something.

That would grieve. His weak conscience. Even if it is okay. Even if it is. As he says in verse 20.

Pure. Because all things indeed are pure. But he doesn't understand that yet.

[27 : 18] So Paul says. I have to exercise charity. Because I want to edify. That weak brother. I don't want to destroy him. I don't want to stand.

And just point out. It's fine. There's nothing wrong with it. Grow up. Or you're so messed up. You don't know anything. But rather. He has to humble himself. And change the way he lives.

And eats or acts. Because he doesn't want to destroy. That weaker brother's conscience. He doesn't want to destroy him. He wants to edify him.

That's the command. Let us follow after. Things that makes for peace. And things where with one. May edify another. And charity. Church. Charity is an excellent.

Edifier. Now come back to chapter 13. In first Corinthians. Chapter 13 here. So because I care about the weaker brother.

[28 : 16] Because I don't want to confuse him. Because I don't want to harm him. And I don't want to harm his spiritual growth. I will behave myself. In his presence.

In a manner that edifies him. In a manner that encourages him. In the Lord. Even if it infringes upon my liberty. Even if he's wrong. And I'm right.

And so the Bible says about charity. Some things that it. Beareth all things. It endureth all things. It suffereth long.

It thinketh no evil. Charity is an excellent. Edifier. Now look at chapter 13. Let's look at the first three. Verses here. And I want you to consider this phrase.

That ministry. Without charity. Is vanity. It's vain. It's profitless. It does nothing.

[29 : 14] And Paul says this of himself. Verse one. Though I speak with the tongues of men. And of angels. And have not charity. I become a sounding brass. Or a tinkling cymbal.

I'm just making a lot of noise. And it's the wrong noise. And verse two. 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. Boy what a minister. I mean what a man of God. That has all faith. That he could do such things.

All mysteries. All knowledge. But at the end of the verse. And have not charity. I am nothing. Oh no Paul.

In our circles. In our Christian world today. You're a man of God. You're to be held in high esteem. Everybody should flock to you. And follow you. And get your signature. And read your books.

[30 : 11] And follow you. Like you're the guru of everything. That's how men react to that stuff today. And he says. But if I don't have charity. I'm nothing. Ministry.

Without charity. Is vanity. Verse 3 says. And though I bestow all my goods. To feed the poor. Well that sounds like a charitable organization. But it could be without charity.

It's a bit of a. A conundrum there. And though I give my body to be burned. And have not charity. It profiteth me. Nothing.

So you could have. A powerful preacher. With a dynamic delivery. With all understanding. Standing in faith and mysteries. And just being able to put it out there.

And tell it like it is. But if he's missing charity. If he's not seeking to edify others with the truth. He's just barking. He's just barking.

[31 : 09] And sounding off his own horn. And his own praise. And gets his own reward. And what I would say. He needs to get himself on out of the ministry. Or get some charity.

There's a difference between. Blasting somebody with the truth. And edifying someone. With the truth. And Paul's example that he gave us. Back in Romans 14.

The truth was actually being withheld. From somebody. Because they weren't able to bear it. That was walking charitably. Charity. And so Paul says in this chapter.

Without charity. I am nothing. Nothing. And it's not about the gifts. And it's not about the knowledge. It's not about being able to minister.

In all these magnificent ways. It's about how you use those gifts. And how you use that knowledge. Charity is necessary.

[32 : 09] Charity is an excellent edifier. When I come to understand. This effect of charity. That it edifies. That it helps. That it's putting myself down.

So that I can minister. And help them. When I consider the necessity. For charity. In myself. When I'm confronted with this teaching.

From the scripture. Inside of me. My heart smites me. It shows me. You don't even come close. For the way I treated other people.

Other believers. That treated me bad. They were weak. They acted out. In carnality.

It was a weakness. In their flesh. And I was supposed to show charity. And instead.

[33 : 09] I fought fire with fire. Words with words. Carnality with carnality. Strife with strife. And I'm reminded of relationships.

And of men. And women. And of believers. In my life. And in my past. That were spiritually.

Weaker. And it was evident. That were spiritually babes. In Christ. And they should have been better. They should have submitted to the Bible. They should have grown up. They should have gotten it right.

And while that's true. I should have shown charity. I should have been better. And instead. My flesh got active.

And said what it wanted to say. And put them in their place. Or rebuked them. Or talked about them. Or ignored them. And their spiritual need. And just avoided them.

[34 : 06] And said. Well it's okay. We don't all get along. And that is true. That is true. There's. Not everybody gets along. But at the root of that.

Somewhere. Is pride. That is closing the doors of charity. There's a reason we don't get along.

There's a reason I don't get along with some people.

It's because. I don't have charity. I should be grown. I should be more mature. And just have charity. Because charity edifies.

It's a more excellent way to minister. It's a more excellent way to serve God. It's a more excellent way to love others. It's an excellent edifier.

One more thing I want us to see about charity. Is in chapter 14. Charity. Is an excellent endeavor. It's an excellent endeavor.

[35 : 05] In verse 1. It says. Follow after. Charity. Follow after charity. It's a more excellent way. It's high ground.

It's as high. As it gets. In chapter 13. Verse 13. Now abideth. Faith. Hope. Charity. These three. But the greatest of these. No question about it.

Paul says. The greatest of these. Is charity. It's charity. The gifts. That he writes to them about. They can covet.

And exercise. And use. To edify. They cease. They vanish away. But in chapter 13. And verse 8. Charity never faileth. And in verse 13.

It's still abiding. And it abides for you. And for I. To follow after. It's an excellent endeavor. Let's consider. Some other.

[36 : 01] What other. Some other places. In the scripture. That talks about charity. Come. Keep your place here. We're going to come back. But look at chapter 16. First Corinthians 16.

And look at number. Verse number 14. You're going to see some things. Some repetitive phrases. Similar phrases.

That. As it describes. Charity. Verse 14. Let all your things. Be done. With charity. All your things. So if something. That you're doing. Whether in the pulpit. Or in the pew. Something that you're doing. In the body of Christ. If it doesn't have charity.

You're missing. And you're nothing. And you're not profiting. And it's not edifying. It's not ministering. Although you're working. And doing. And putting effort.

[37 : 05] But let all your things. Be done with charity. All of them. Come to. To. Colossians chapter 3. Colossians 3.

And in putting on the new man. In verse 10. He's renewed in knowledge.

And in putting him on. You put on some things. In verse 12. Put on therefore. As the elect of God. Holy and beloved. Bowels of mercies. Put on kindness.

Put on humbleness. Of mind. Meekness. Long suffering. Forbearing one another. And forgiving one another. Put that on.

And if any man have a quarrel. Against any. Even as Christ forgave you. So also do ye. Now verse 14. And above. Above all these things.

[38 : 12] Of mercies. And kindness. And humility. And long suffering. And forbearance. And forgiveness. Above all of it. Put on charity. Why?

Charity is the bond. Of perfectness. The bond. Of perfectness. I'm reminded of a passage.

I'm going to just. Flip to it quickly. You don't have to. But. You can write it down. If you want. In Matthew 5. At the end of the chapter. In Matthew 5. Christ is. Telling these.

Jews about the kingdom. And he's telling them. Moses told you this. But I'm saying this to you. And it's. It's some stuff. That he puts on him. And one thing he says is this. You've heard that it hath been said.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor. And hate thine enemy. That's. That's. The Psalms. And the Old Testament. But I say unto you. Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you.

[39 : 09] Do good to them. That hate you. Pray for them. Which despitefully. Use you. And persecute you. So I'm showing you four things.

He says. Not just love. This is going to connect to charity. Because of that. Charity is the bond of perfectness. And in Matthew 5. Verse 44.

Again. These four things. Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you. Pray for them. Which despitefully. Use you. And persecute you. And at the end of this chapter.

When he finishes. What he. He continues the thought. And he closes by saying. Be ye therefore perfect. Even as your father. Which is in heaven. Is perfect.

It's not just. Love them. It's have charity. Have charity. Amongst yourselves. Look at. First Peter. Chapter. Number four. That's what he says there.

[40 : 03] I'm getting ahead of myself. First Peter. Chapter four. Above all these things. The highest level of maturity. Is charity.

It's the bond of perfectness. Which are called to be. First Peter. Chapter four. And now verse number eight.

And above all things. There it is again. Should we not be picking this up. Above all things. Have. Fervent.

Charity. Among yourselves. For charity. Shall cover the multitude of sins. Have charity.

Among yourselves. Because you sin against yourselves. Among yourselves. But having charity. Will cover that. It will overlook that. It will.

[41 : 03] Suffer that. And endure that. When you grow to this level of maturity. The calling is to help.

And to assist. And to lead. And to grow. The weaker brethren. And to do it with patience. And to do it with pleasure.

With rejoicing. Remembering. Remembering. Remembering. That it's the mercy of God. And by his mercy. That. That was you. Just not too long ago.

Now come back to chapter 13. And we're going to read this little list here. Of charity. If you see. If you see. If you see. If you see.

This printed. Anywhere. In our society today. It's got love. And it's wrong. It's charity. And it always has been.

[42 : 02] And I want to notice. As we read these things. Remember again. This is sandwiched. In between 12 and 14. Those two chapters. About spiritual gifts. And Paul says.

I'm going to show you. A more excellent way. And the things that he says. About charity. The spiritual gifts. Cannot do. They can't do any of this stuff. And so in verse number four.

Charity suffereth long. And is kind. And now he tells us. What charity is not. Contrasting it. Charity. Envieth. Not. Doesn't do that. Charity. Vaunteth not itself. Is not puffed up. Knowledge puffeth up. Charity is not puffed up.

Doth not behave itself unseemly. Seeketh not her own. You see that? How it wants to edify others. It's not easily provoked.

[43 : 07] Thinketh no evil. Rejoiceth not. In iniquity. In iniquity. But now what it does. It rejoiceth in the truth. Charity in verse seven.

Beareth all things. Believeth all things. Hopeth all things. And endureth all things. You can see in verses.

In verse seven there. It may sound confusing to understand it. But in relation to edifying a weaker brother. Charity believeth all things. Charity has the faith that this is.

That this is. You're going to grow. You'll get past this. You'll. You'll. You'll. I'll. I'll minister to you. And I'll stay on your level. And. You're not going to stay there forever. Charity hopeth all things.

It rejoices. In the truth. And it sees. The growth potential. It sees things. The way God sees things. When they're looking at that. Carnal Christian. Or that unbeliever.

[44 : 09] Or rather. That one that has done them wrong. And it sees. No God can change their heart. And it believes that. But the flesh says. That dirty rotten scoundrel.

They should know better than that. They've been in church all their lives. Just like me. They should not have treated me that way. Or said. And in flesh. Just pours out. And that's not charity. Charity will edify.

That foolish. That mistaken. That carnal. Out of line Christian. By bearing all things. By enduring. Things. Reminds me of Jesus Christ. Enduring reproaches. Enduring the cross. Wonder this morning.

Has God given you any victories. In your Christian life. Then you should have charity. With others. That are struggling. It's not in your.

[45 : 07] Your nature to do that. It's not in your carnal nature. You want to correct them. You want to straighten them out. And Paul says. No. We need to have. Charity. And we need to. Let that cover.

The multitude of sins. And. We need to have charity. Amongst ourselves. We need to edify. Each other with this. We need to suffer. That stuff. Suffer it long.

So that God can get. The victory. And the glory. Has God given you. Knowledge. Well it's a good thing. To have knowledge. It's a wonderful thing. To know the truth.

Well then you ought to have. Charity with those. That don't. Has God given you. Some abilities. Some gifts. Then use them. To edify.

Others. Use them. So that Jesus Christ. Is glorified. And not you. It's a more excellent way. It's a way that Paul. Couldn't even finish.

[46 : 02] What he was telling them. About these spiritual gifts. He had to get sidetracked. And just. Take charity. And show. No. This is. The more excellent way. This is what you should follow after. It never faileth.

It's a more excellent expression. Than love. Charity is the right word. And thank God for it. It's a more excellent edifier. It's better than exercising all the spiritual gifts.

And having all the power. Charity edifies. And it's a more excellent endeavor. Something that we all need to follow after. To make it.

Our goal. To be charitable. In all your things. As he said in Romans 14. To walk charitably. Let's bow our heads together.

And take a moment this morning. As you bow your head. With nobody looking around. And. I said some things this morning.

[47 : 01] About charity. I wonder if you recognize. Your personal need for it. Do you recognize today. That you. Don't have it.

But you need to get it. Do you recognize it. Where it's absent in your life. And in. In your dealings with others. And your relationships with others.

It's the bond of perfection. You remember that James says.

In the book of James. That every good and perfect gift. Cometh from above. And so charity comes from above. Because it's the bond of perfection.

I invite you this morning. If you know it's absent. In. Your relationships. And in your heart and spirit. I invite you to seek God. And seek charity.

[48 : 00] And follow after it. And pray for it. And ask God to perform this work. Inside of your heart. Because without it. You're nothing. You're nothing.

And all that you can do. Profits you. Nothing. So God help us to have charity. Amongst ourselves. And to seek to edify.

And to seek to edify. Because that's what it'll do. Father please take the message. Take the words of your book. And strengthen our hearts.

And as we said in Sunday school. Allow it to reprove. Allow it to. Condemn us. But also correct us. But also correct us.

Lord may we grow in charity. I pray that for my heart God. That you'll help me to grow in charity. To be a minister that can edify others.

[49 : 05] Without trying to edify myself. Without worrying about how I look. But worrying about the younger or the weaker brother or sister.

And what their needs are. And that you care for them. And that you've called me to minister to them. Oh God forgive us for our pride.

Forgive us for our selfishness. Lord may we grow together. Please do a work of charity in each heart. Starting with mine. I'm supposed to be an example.

Of the believers. In charity. God please work that work in all of us. And may it be evident.

And may others be edified. May we grow together. And may Jesus Christ be pleased. And glorified. As we submit to you and to your word. It's in Jesus name I ask.

[50 : 18] Amen.