

# The Most Excellent Way – Lesson 1

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## 1 Corinthians 12:31

But eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.

Paul had devoted 1 Corinthians chapter 12 to the manifestations of the Spirit and to the operations of the Body of Christ, notice his transition into chapter 13, the love chapter:

- verse 31 *“And now I will show you the most excellent way”*
- **Question:** Why would walking in love be the most excellent way?

When we consider all there is to Christianity, like pleasing God and making the greatest impact in our generation- demonstrating the Love of God tops the list!

## The Love Chapter – 1 Corinthians chapter 13

Let’s examine this chapter together and see why God’s love is the most excellent way

**Verse 1:** If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

- Charismatic Christians tend to over emphasis tongues at the expense of love
- Also gossip, slander, and having a judgmental and critical spirit

**Verse 2:** If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

**Question:** Miracles are great in getting people saved, but what keeps them in the church?

**Verse 3:** If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

- Imagine giving your life as a martyr, but fail to walk in love – what have we gained?

## 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 AMP

**Verse 4:** Love endures long and is patient and kind; love never is envious nor boils over with jealousy, is not boastful or vainglorious, does not display itself haughtily.

**Question:** What do you think is at the root of what causes folks to be jealous and envious?

**Verse 5:** It is not conceited (arrogant and inflated with pride); it is not rude (unmannerly) and does not act unbecomingly. Love (God's love in us) does not insist on its own rights or its own way, for it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong].

**Question:** What was Lucifer's original sin? What is the difference between pride and love?

**Verse 6:** It does not rejoice at injustice and unrighteousness, but rejoices when right and truth prevail.

**Question:** Would you consider God's love to be bold and courageous, why?

**Verse 7:** Love bears up under anything and everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances, and it endures everything [without weakening].

**Question:** What is it about love that makes it is positive in how it views people?

**Verse 8:** Love never fails [never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end].

- **Please Read: 1 Corinthians 13:8-13**
- Everything in this life is temporary, but love is eternal because God is love
- Putting childish ways behind is what growing and maturing in love does for us
- One day when we see God face to face – we will be looking into the eyes of eternal love
- Therefore our ultimate goal as Christians is to be like Him in this world

**Ephesians 5:1-2,** "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

*In our Christian experience, if we are going to get one thing right- let it be to walk in love!*

## Unity - the Product of Love

- The secret to strong marriages and homes is to walk in love
- The secret to all of our social ills is for people to walk in the God kind of love
- The secret to unity is for us to walk in love towards one another
- Another reason why Love is the most excellent way is how it produces unity
- **Please Read: John 17:20-23**

The heart of God is that we experience what it's like to love one another as God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit enjoy and express love for each other- **Read: Psalm 133.**

- The unity of the Trinity is rooted in Love – that's the secret to God's power and strength
- Unity of any kind is key to getting things done; division defeats us- divide & conqueror
- **Please Read: Genesis 11:1-9**
- Satan uses fear and intimidation to keep order in his camp
- Love is the divine glue that holds the Kingdom of God together

**Matthew 12:25**, "Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, 'Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand.'"

- Allowing the love of God to dominate our lives, will unify us as the Body of Christ
- Unity- all about oneness – walking in love unites us

### **Colossians 3:12-14**

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

### **Ephesians 4:3-6**

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

**Romans 15:5-6**, "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."