

## **1 Cor 12:27-13:3 – Sermon from Sunday 3 Dec 2019 – Small Group Notes**

It is a common temptation to want to look or be better than others.

- How do you see this expressed, and where do you think it comes from?
- Is there a healthy expression of this, and when is it especially unhealthy?
- Can you think of a time in your life when you made a quick shift to try to redefine yourself... did it work?

### **That They May Boast...**

**Read 1 Cor 13:3**

- What motivation could one have to give all they possess, or to give over their body, 'that they may boast'?
- Can you think of any times you have people doing the right things with the wrong motives?
- In what ways, do you think, it is harmful when people exaggerate or lie about things that are spiritual? How does this hurt themselves and others?
- How do you spot false piety in yourself or in others?

This issue, of false piety, was exacerbated by supernatural spiritual gifts. If ever you are gifted with a supernatural gift of the Spirit it is exciting. They, however, let the supernatural gifts become a source of boasting.

- Why are supernatural gifts especially dangerous territory in regard to false piety?

### **Who Is More Important...**

On Sunday we thought about this question - 'Who is more important... the preacher or the person who cleans up after the preacher?'

- In what ways are they equal, and in what ways is saying they are equal unhelpful?

### **Read 1 Cor 12:27-31**

Paul, when talking about spiritual gifts, doesn't make them equal to each other. Which is especially interesting when you remember the context. In Corinth we have people competing trying to claim spiritual superiority to others. So far it has come out in some super distressing ways. It would be simple if Paul could just say, 'you're all equal'.

It is likely that Paul is putting the spiritual gifts in an order of importance in 12:28.

- If this is the case, why would he put tongues last?

### **Eagerly Desire the Greater Gifts...**

And in Verse 31a - Now **eagerly desire the greater gifts.** comes up in 12:31 and 14:1

In one sense we should be content with whatever God has called us to.

In another sense we should all desire that God would use us more.

- What does it mean for us to 'eagerly desire the greater gifts'?
- Why would Paul want us to desire gifts we don't yet have?
- What examples of genuine extraordinary faith can you think of in scripture?
- Why are genuine examples helpful to us?

### **The Most Excellent Way**

**Read 12:31-13:3 - 'and yet I will show you the most excellent way'**

What descriptions in these verses sound like extreme examples of faith?

Love is our motivation and is meant to accompany all of the spiritual gifts.

**Read 1 Cor 13:8**

- How does this drive home the importance of love?

I don't think people care what car you drive, what clothes you wear, or about how impressive you are. People just want to be loved with an honest love.