

# Spiritual Gifts (Jr. Church Moving Up Day)

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Date: 10 June 2018

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. If you'd like to receive the newsletter, we ask that you do the same. On the back, there's a section for prayer requests, blessings, or notes to the staff.

If you'd like them to stay confidential, we can do that too. We hope that you enjoy the service and have a wonderful day. Good morning. Well, things are a little different this morning because our junior church is going to lead a large part of our opening part of the worship.

[ 2 : 00 ] So just go along with it and, you know, figure out how it works. We'll make it happen. But we also this morning have a mission moment, and it's for Alex's lemonade stand, which they'll explain about in a minute.

But remember after worship that if you get a chance, go out and help the kids support a cure for cancer with a lemonade stand. My grandma always says, when life hands you lemons, make lemonade.

I didn't know what this meant until I heard about Alexandra Scott. When Alex was four, she set up a lemonade stand in the front yard. Her idea? To give the money to doctors so they could help find a cure for kids like her with cancer.

Alex left us in 2004 when she was just eight, but not before her idea inspired others and raised over a million dollars towards cancer research. Today, Alex's lemonade stand foundation continues to carry out the work that she began.

Together, we can all make lemonade to help save lives. Alex's lemonade stand, fighting childhood cancer one cup at a time. And now I'd like to invite our junior church kids and helpers to come on up.

[ 3 : 11 ] Oh, my God. I turned it on. All righty. Junior church, I need you down here. Come on, Brayden. We're going to come right down here.

Where are all my junior church guys? Come on up. Come on up. Come on down, please. Thank you. All righty. This is the day the Lord has made.

Do you want to lead first? You ready? Okay, you lead. Here we go. Ready? Ready. Ready? Do you go straight? Ready? empezar. Okay. Go. This is the day...

Go. This is the day that the Lord has made, That the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it, and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

I will rejoice and be glad in it, and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

[ 4 : 43 ] This is the day that the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it, and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

I will rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made. Amen. Everybody fold your hands. Everybody bow your heads. And please join us in our prayer of invocation.

Dear Jesus, thank you for being with us today. We love you. Help us to worship you real well. Amen.

Amen. And now, amen. And now we're going to enter into the gates of the Lord. We're going to enter into God's presence with singing. If you want to stand and clap, if you want to stand and shake your jingle bells, if you want to join us in our parade, you're welcome to do that.

Are we ready? Are we ready? Here we go. I will enter His gates with thanks living in my heart. I will enter His hearts with praise. Come on, Kendall.

[ 6 : 07 ] I will enter His gates with thanks living in my heart. Come on, Kendall. Come on, Kendall! Come on, feather! Come on, puberty! Come on, Kel'u! Call, mad! Come on, Somebody hope you can learn to Freedom pool! Now, let him walk through Sh pull up, Jo and I will Vor01 which ELIA pass Maar Kayla. Come on, Sterile! Let him walk through Sh pull up, Stallone.

Stay with joy! Come on, Morm. Come on, END IPUCan. Now, Cast radial Judah moves vast. Now, forty sheep and ây namely, nowções are fifty shelf. Come on, everybody. See on praise full moon. I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my arms. I will enter His courts with praise.

I will say this is the day that the Lord has made. I will rejoice for He has made me glad. He has made me glad. He has made me glad.

I will rejoice for He has made me glad. He has made me glad. He has made me glad. I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my arms. I will enter His courts with praise. I will say this is the day that the Lord has made.

[ 7 : 25 ] I will rejoice for He has made me glad. He has made me glad. He has made me glad. I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

He has made me glad. He has made me glad. I will rejoice for He has made me glad. I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my arms.

I will enter His courts with praise. I will sing with thanksgiving in my arms. I will say this is the day that the Lord has made. I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

He has made me glad. He has made me glad. He has made me glad. I will rejoice for He has made me glad. He has made me glad. He has made me glad.

I will rejoice for He has made me glad. I will rejoice for He has made me glad. We need two circles right now, don't we?

[ 8 : 34 ] First, we need to pray. Let's make our circles, and then we're going to pray. Are you ready? Come on with me, Kendall. Here we go. Circles. Circles are a good thing.

All righty. Come be in the circle. All right. All righty. Are you ready? We're going to pray. Are you ready?

Come on, Brayden. Here we go. Okay. Let's pray. Let's fold our hands. And we're going to come before Jesus, and we're going to ask Jesus to forgive us our sins.

Are you ready? Dear Jesus. Dear Jesus. I don't always do things right. I don't always do things right. Sometimes I forget.

Sometimes I forget. The things I should do. The things I should do. And sometimes. Sometimes. I even do stuff. I even do stuff.

[ 9 : 33 ] That I shouldn't do. That I shouldn't do. On purpose. On purpose. Forgive me, Lord. Forgive me, Lord. Help me to be the best person I can be.

Help me to be the best person I can be. Help me to be just like Jesus. Help me to be just like Jesus. In Jesus' name I pray. In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen. Amen. Amen. And now we know that Jesus loves us so much that he died for our sins. Right? He died for our sins and now we get to be grateful.

So let's say in the name of Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven. In the name of Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen. And now we're going to have to tell everybody how much Jesus loves them.

So can you make half a heart with one hand? Can you? And can you make half a heart with the other hand? And can you put your pieces of your heart together? And can you look through your heart?

[ 10 : 31 ] Look at all the people. Look. Everybody you see is somebody Jesus loves very much. So would you please tell the people around you Jesus loves you very much?

Jesus loves you very much. Jesus loves you very much. Yeah? Hey Eric.

Jesus loves you very much. And now we're going to celebrate Jesus. You are good. Let's have some circles. Here we go. Come on.

Rose Brayton. All right. Here we go. si. amen.

God, you are good and your mercy endureth forever For you, our good angel, reflect forever We adore it forever.

[ 11 : 40 ] People of every nation that comes from generation to generation. We worship you.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. We worship you. We worship you. We worship you.

We worship you. We worship you. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. We worship you. We worship you.

Ready? Say it. You are good. Here we go. Backwards. Backwards. You are good and your mercy and do it forever.

Forward. You are good and your mercy and do it forever. Ready, set. Here we go. People of every nation have done.

[ 12 : 43 ] From generation to generation. We worship you. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

We worship you. Who are you? Ready, set it up. We worship you.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. We worship you. We worship you. We worship you. We worship you. Ready, set. You are good.

You are good. You are good. And come on over this way and sit down with me. I'm going to sit here, so you sit down here. Ready.

All righty. You sit down here. All righty. Very good. Now we have some very special people that we want to talk about. Are you ready? That's fine.

[ 13 : 38 ] We're good. Sit right down for me, Braden. Thanks. Up. Perfect. That's perfect. Come sit down. Awesome.

You're doing good. You're doing good. We have our third graders moving up today. Just so you all know, next week every- Whoa!

Thank you. Make a joyful noise to the Lord. All ye lands. Our third graders are going to be moving up. And that means that next week our third graders won't be in junior church anymore.

They're going to be up with you. They're going to have their clipboards. And they're going to be ready to join the grown-up church, which is a wonderful blessing. And I want to announce their names. And then we're going to have a time of prayer for them.

And then we're going to finish up our worship with you. All right? The third graders that we're moving up today are Lucas Mihalski and Andrew Middleton, Ryan Walk, Devin Wheeling, Alyssa Phillips, Christian Bretain, and Mackenzie Yurden.

[ 14 : 43 ] And they're going to be receiving a Bible downstairs. When we get downstairs, they're going to be receiving a Bible from the church. And we're very, very excited for them. So can we just let them know how much we're excited for them?

Whoa! That's excited. That's good and excited. All righty. And we're going to pray for all of our third graders. And we're going to pray for all of our junior church.

Can we do that, Pastor Tom? Let's do that together, shall we? All righty. Yes. Dear Lord, we do thank you today for the blessings you give to us and for our children and for our ministries with children and for the people who are moving up in their lives into a special opportunity to worship with you, Lord.

We just pray for all the great things that you can give our kids to be a blessing before them. And to all of us, fill us with your spirit today and always in Jesus' name. Can you say amen?

Amen. Amen. Amen. What are you thankful for today? Can you share some things? Tell me what you're thankful for. Are you thankful for anything? How about your family?

[ 15 : 48 ] Are you thankful for your family? Yeah? Now, can you wait right here? I'm going to ask. You keep thinking. And I'm going to ask them what they're thankful for too, okay? Because we're all church together. Are we the congregation? Can you say congregation?

Awesome. What are we thankful for today, congregation? Yes. Amen. Amen. So that healing is coming to pass. Amen. Yes. Your mom, you're thankful for your mom?

Awesome. Other things we're thankful for this morning. Yes. Yes. Your grandson graduates. That's a wonderful thing. What a blessing, yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Amen. Amen. For all of our family and how our families support us through all kinds of things.

[ 16 : 50 ] Do you have something you want to say you're thankful for? Yet? What? Who? Yeah. For your family. You're thankful for your family. That's wonderful. Does anybody else have anything they want to say they're thankful for today? Yes. You do? For your family too? Awesome. Everyone, we're thankful for our families. That's a good thing. As we prepare to bring our gifts, tithes, and offerings before the Lord out of a heart of thanksgiving, we're going to share the Lord's Prayer with you. And we would like you to join us. Those of you who know the Lord's Prayer, you say it with me. Everybody else say it after. Are you ready? Let's fold our hands.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses.

As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation.

But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom. And the power. And the glory. Forever and ever. Amen.

Amen. We've been learning about what a good friend we have in our Lord Jesus Christ. That he is such a good friend that he gave us that prayer so that we would always be able to pray to God, right?

[ 18 : 47 ] We would always be able to pray to God, and we would always know what to say. Now we're going to sing about what a friend we have in Jesus as you're ready with your tithes and offerings. And especially, don't forget Alex's lemonade stand. Here we go. You want to turn around and look at the video?

What a friend we have in Jesus. All our sins and griefs to bear.

And what a privilege to carry. Everything to God in prayer. Oh, what peace we often forfeit. Oh, what needless pain we bear.

All because we do not carry. Everything to God in prayer. Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged. Take it to the Lord in prayer. Can we find a friend so faithful? Who will all my sorrow share?

[ 20 : 49 ] Jesus knows our memory weakness. Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Son. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Ephesons. Amen. Dear God, bless these gifts that come before you, that they might do wonderful things to bless the people around us.

[ 22 : 55 ] Bless those who have cancer, Lord, and help these gifts to be a small way of bringing healing to them. And bless us all with your grace and peace now and forever. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Please be seated. So things are a little discombobulated. That's how they worship downstairs, and so we're going to do it with them today. But that means we're doing things just a little different ourselves as well.

So I'm going to give you the clipboards now. There are two of them. One is for our Vacation Bible School coming up this summer. If you'd like to help with that or be willing to help with that, we get about 200, 250 kids and teenagers.

And so it's quite an enterprise, and we'd love to have you help with that. The second one is for the rummage sale that we do up in Niagara Falls. This is to help our missions in Niagara Falls.

And it's different than the rummage sale we do here because there's no prices. We just let people pay whatever they want to. So if you'd like to bring a donation to help with that or you'd just like to help with it, there's some opportunities on the clipboard.

[ 23 : 59 ] But after next Sunday, you can bring things and put them in the back of the sanctuary, and we'll figure out a way to get them over to Niagara Falls to help with that. One last thing I want to share with you, and that is that Pastor Jean is going to Trinity United Methodist Church on the Boulevard, as many of you know.

And since she's leaving us, we're having a party for her because she's worked here over 25 years and been our pastor for about 16 years. So we'd like to have a party, and that's going to be a week from this Saturday.

I think that's the 23rd. There is an envelope or ways you can sign up. If you're not sure, call the office. They'll get you all figured out, okay? Concerns. Well, our pastors are going down left and right, it seems.

Pastor Sherry, as you all know, went by ambulance, 911, to the hospital last Sunday, and we found out she just doesn't drink enough water. So she was dehydrated, and evidently this is a common practice with Pastor Sherry.

So if you see her, say, drink a glass of water. And, you know, we'll just keep doing that until she gets the message, right? So Pastor Bill went into the hospital up in Lockport for emergency gallbladder surgery.

[ 25 : 10 ] He's gone through the surgery, and he's home recovering, but, well, there's Pastor Bill's down too. And Pastor Jean is trying to take care of him in the midst of all this and keep him down.

Pastor Bob has an infection in his leg, so I found out he's on antibiotics last night and kind of hobbling around. So we're just, you know, pray for us, because those of us who are still up and walking are doing everything else.

Shirley Desher is going for surgery this Thursday, so we want to keep her in our prayers. What else do we have going on in our congregation? Other concerns? Yes.

Oh. Okay. All right. So we want to keep Dan's father in our prayers. He's in the emergency room. They don't know what it is yet, so. What else do we have?

Everybody's doing well? I like that. I like that. That's a good thing, so. You know, we were praying for, I'm going to call her Victoria Janes, even though that's not her name anymore, but that's how many of you know her, Scott and Karen's daughter.

[ 26 : 14 ] She was having difficulties with her pregnancy. The good news is that she's doing much better right now. So the baby's doing well, and she's put on 14 pounds, which I know a lot of people would say, that's terrible, but not when you're pregnant.

That's a good thing. So we're rejoicing with her. So we have joys. We have concerns. We have many things to take before our God. Now, let's turn them all over to the Lord in prayer, shall we? Dear God, we just pray that your Holy Spirit blessings would come down into this place.

That in everything that we do and everything that we are, we might turn our hearts to your heart. That you might put your love into our lives.

That you might send your spirit into this place. That you might lift us up in the power and grace of Jesus Christ. We pray for those who need healing. Those who are facing surgeries.

Those who are recovering from surgeries. Those who are struggling with the loss of someone close to them. Those who are struggling with people in their lives that are struggling.

[ 27 : 22 ] We pray for people who are having trouble with their finances or difficulties in their relationships. We pray for those who are anxious and worried about this world and life we live in.

We pray for those who are so distraught that they would take rash and inappropriate actions. That you would reach into their heart and transform their hearts in thinking.

We pray, Lord, for our own lives. That you would reach into our lives to touch us. That you would bless us. That you would help us to be grateful for all the many good things you've done for us.

That you would also be mindful of the concerns and the worries we have for our lives and the people in our lives. Each of us comes here, Lord, with so many things to share with you.

So, Lord, listen for a moment to what all your children have to share with you. Now, dear God, we pray that your Holy Spirit would just lift away the brokenness and the worries and the problems.

[ 28 : 30 ] That you would cause us to be not anxious about anything, as the scripture says. That you would bless us in this place and fill us up and help us to praise you in our songs and our prayers.

That we might be touched by the reading of scripture. That you might bless us when we come to the table. Lord, be our peace and our strength and our hope in all that we do. As we offer our prayers to you in Jesus' holy name.

Amen. And now shall we hear from the word of God. Good morning.

Good morning. Scripture today is from 1 Corinthians chapter 13. If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

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 do not have love, I am nothing.

[ 29 : 58 ] If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient.

Love is kind. It does not envy. It does not boast. It is not proud. It does not dishonor others. It is not self-seeking. It is not easily angered.

It keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease. Where there are tongues, they will be stilled. Where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child.

[ 30 : 59 ] I thought like a child. I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror.

Then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part. Then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain, faith, hope, and love.

But the greatest of these is love. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Thank you.

Thank you.

But a house is different than a home. And over the next few weeks, we're going to talk about the difference between a house and a home. We're going to talk about what makes a house into a home.

[ 32 : 51 ] Just as we're going to talk about the difference between having a religion and a life-transforming relationship with God. We're going to talk about the Holy Spirit for several weeks through the summer.

We're going to talk about what God does and how God transforms our lives. God gives us a changed life and changes the way we live. And part of it, we're going to talk about gifts.

Now some of you have been studying about the spiritual gifts in Bible studies the last few weeks. Others have heard about it. I've preached about it occasionally. We're going to talk about a gift every single week.

One of the ones listed in Bible. And see what we can learn. Because the Bible does talk about the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, there's various people that get gifts.

One gets gifts to build things. And another one gets gifts to interpret dreams. And still another one gets a gift of wisdom. Jesus talked about it in his parable of the talents.

[ 33 : 50 ] And so the goal for us is to discover, to discern, what is it that God has uniquely gifted us to do? Because gifts are different than some of the other things we do.

They're a special ability that comes from God. Now we are going to talk about chapter 13. But it's actually the conclusion of chapter 12.

And the first verse of chapter 12 says this. I don't want you to be uninformed about spiritual gifts. And it lists for us several. Starting in verse 8 where it says, One is given the spirit of a message of wisdom.

Another a message of knowledge by means of the same spirit. Another faith by the same spirit. To another gifts of healing. To another miraculous powers. Another prophecy. Another distinguishing between spirits.

Another speaking in different kinds of tongues. And for another one, the ability to interpret those. And this is only a short list. There's other lists in the book of Romans. In the book of Ephesians. And various ones throughout the Bible.

[ 34 : 51 ] And some that we don't know. And gifts are different. Because they're given to us by God. As the 18th verse says in chapter 12. In fact, God has placed the parts of the body.

Every one of them. As he wanted them to be. So if you don't have the ability. The gift of God to do something. You know who you can blame for that?

God. Blame God. Because gifts are not something you learn. That's a skill. You can develop skills. You can learn things. Over the years, I learned how to do some mechanics.

I even pulled a couple engines out of cars. And put them back. But I'm terrible at it. Because when I take the engine out of one car. And put it in the other. It doesn't run. I have to go find somebody who can actually make it run.

I can put it in place. And things seem to be mostly right. I usually have leftover parts. I'm not sure why. And eventually they get going again. My cousin is a master mechanic.

[ 35 : 52 ] He's been taking things apart since we were five years old. He used to take my stuff apart. He didn't know how to put it back together back then. But now he teaches other people how to do it.

Because for him, this is just so simple and so easy. It's almost something natural. Which is exactly what the gifts are. They're things given to us naturally by God.

They're not something we learn. Although we can learn more about them. They're not something we earn. Although God gives gifts to those who have done more. It's something we have as a natural ability.

You know, some people will say that I have an ability to communicate in a sermon. But in seminary, my lowest grade, which was a B minus. It wasn't that bad. You want to guess what it was in?

Preaching. I'm not a well-educated preacher. But God has gifted me with an ability to be effective in spite of that. I also got an A in another course. Don't worry about it. But the truth is, there's things that we can simply do that other people can't.

[ 36 : 58 ] And there's a lot of things other people can do naturally that we can't do at all. So we're going to talk about these gifts. And the ones that are the rarest, we're the most impressed with, aren't we?

Because in our culture, if something is rare and unusual, we consider it to be of exceeding value. So a rare gemstone to us is worth a lot more than a pile of food.

But let me tell you, if you don't have any food to eat, the gemstone won't do you very much good, right? So the difficulty is we're impressed by unusual gifts and abilities. Like, have you seen this show?

It comes on in the summer. It's called America's Got Talent. Anybody ever see this show? Some of the things these people do, we go, what? Like this guy. What?

Where did that come from, right? There are some things that people just can do that we can't even think of doing, right? So there are unusual gifts. And we'll speak about some of them that are in the Bible that are particular, peculiar, and needed gifts that a few people receive.

[ 38 : 25 ] But some are more common. And the interesting part is that while we value the things that are more unusual, God actually values the gifts that are more common. So he spreads them around a lot more.



So while we value some of these special things, unique abilities, that's really not the preacher. God only needs one of those this morning out of all this gathered group of people, right?

It's other gifts. And that's where chapter 13 comes in. So the 12th chapter ends with this verse. And it says, Eagerly desire the greater gifts, and I will show you the most excellent way.

If I speak with the tongues of men and angels, but have not love. I am nothing but a lot of noise. What are these greater gifts?

God tells us very simply, doesn't he? Faith, hope, and love. And the greatest of these is love. Because these are the things that make all the difference in our lives.

[ 39 : 31 ] Imagine a relationship with a lot of passion. And a lot of people confuse passion for love. Passion is just a sort of like a chemical reaction. Passion is what makes us attracted to one person and not another.

Really, it has very little to do with beauty or very little to do with people being handsome or clever. There's just something about certain people, you know this, that when they're around, you go, Oh, I want to be by them. Right?

There's a connection we make. Scientists have tried to figure it out. They think it's something to do with smell. They think it's got something to do with our past and our history and our parents.

There's so many things. What we know is it's simply an attraction. It's neat. It's great. I like it. I have that with my wife.

But there's something more when we come to the word love. And you can have a lot of passion. You can have a lot of ability. Somebody with all kinds of attributes.

[ 40 : 29 ] But if there's no faith and there's no hope and there's no love, you don't have a home. You have a relationship that's like a house. It's a building.

But it's not really that important. Have you ever seen these lifestyle, the rich and famous things? Right? Some of these houses you're going like, whoa! How could you live there?

I mean, this would be like incredible. But if the people you care about, the people that care about you, aren't there, it's not a home. It's just a building.

And it's not a building we really particularly want to live in. This would not be our idea of a place to be. Faith. Faith is the ability to trust someone. Faith means we can count on someone.

Faith means that we don't worry, we don't get anxious because we know that that person cares for us. We know that even if they say something that seems a little bit odd, we have to find out what the understanding or explanation is because we know that's not them.

[ 41 : 33 ] We know that we don't have to worry where they are or who they're with because we can have faith with them. And God wants to have that relationship with us. That we're not off chasing after things to keep us from our relationship with God.

But that we're faithful. And hope. You know, hope is one of the most powerful driving forces in the world. So long as you can look forward to tomorrow being better than today, or even just being a good day, we want to live for tomorrow.

Amen? Amen? That's what's going on with some of the people in our world. They're losing hope. They may even have all sorts of abilities, all sorts of talents, all sorts of things that they can do.

They may even have lots of friends and admirers, but they don't have any hope. They don't believe tomorrow will be better. And so they give up. But you see, with God we can always have hope because we not only have hope that tomorrow could be a good day, we have hope that the tomorrows and the tomorrows and tomorrows of eternity will be a good day.

So that gives us a promise and a future to live for always and something to get up for tomorrow morning. And love. Love is a fascinating word because we use it for so many things.

[ 42 : 50 ] Sometimes we use love to describe passion. The Greek had different words for love. One was eros. That's that passion love. They had a word like phileos, which is that relationship, friendship kind of love.

But then they had a third one, agape. And that love is a love that's self-giving, that concerns itself with the other. As Philippians says, that puts the other person before them.

That love is described in this 13th chapter of Corinthians, where it says to us that love is patient, it's kind.

It doesn't envy, it doesn't boast. It isn't proud, it doesn't dishonor others. It's not self-seeking, it's not easily angered. It keeps no record of the wrongs.

Boy, that's a tough one, isn't it? Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. What matters most is faith, hope, and love.

[ 43 : 57 ] These three, Corinthians tells us. The rest of it are specific gifts. It's these three that are the general gifts. The ability to truly love, to truly be faithful.

Not what we accomplish. We aren't gifted so we can stand out. We're gifted so we can love one another. In fact, in the 12th verse it says that the goal is to be fully known.

Fully known by God. So that we might have that kind of relationship, that love with each other. And that's the kind of gift that we need to desire more than all the others.

Because if you're fantastic and can do amazing things, and everybody says how gifted and talented you are, but you don't have love in your life, really, you're missing what matters the most.

God gives us those gifts. And he gives us those gifts for his honor. To honor him. In chapter 12 it says to us, different kinds of gifts, same spirit distributes them.

[ 45 : 08 ] Different kinds of service, same Lord. Different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone, is the same God at work. It's to honor God. To express our love for God.

And our love for each other. Now, I don't know if this is true of every man, but I have a suspicion that for many men, if you were to describe where they would live if they were by themselves, it would probably be one room.

There'd be a toilet in the corner. A big recliner, a TV screen the size of the wall. A refrigerator alongside the chair on one side.

A microwave on the other and a spoon. We'd be pretty well satisfied with that. We could go through life with that. Now, you'd say, but men are always like building these homes and these houses and working on this and that.

And you know why they do that? They do that for people they care about. They do that for their wives. Or they do that for their children. Or they do that for their parents. Or they do that for their friends.

[ 46 : 10 ] They do that for someone else. I have a place at Silver Lake. And we owned it with my parents. One of the greatest joys we had of every springtime was we'd work on a project and they'd come up and we'd say, Here, you want to see what we did for you?

Right? Just like little children, we do it for others. In verse 7 of chapter 12, it says that the gifts are given for the common good.

For the good of other people. We can very easily confuse passion with love. A house, which is just a building, or a home.

When a home is a place where we love. And we are loved. So what are your motives in wanting to be gifted by God? If you speak with the tongues of men and angels, but you don't have love.

Your motives are all wrong. In 1 Corinthians 13, it has a section where it says, If I, if I give, if I have, if I am, if I possess, if I gain.

[ 47 : 21 ] I, I, I, I, I. We've become an I culture, haven't we? Okay, I've got a Mi-Fi. I, iPhones. I, Pads.

I, this. I, that. Mine, mine, mine, mine, mine. Mine, mine, mine. Mine, mine, mine, mine. Mine, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine. Would you just shut up?

You rats with wings. Rats with wings. sometimes I think as people we live as rats with wings. Philippians tells us do nothing out of selfish ambition but consider others better than you. Live for the life of others and not for what you can gain. Oh they called it puppy love but I guess they'll never know.

Anybody remember that song? That's like from 100. That's back in the and you know in the last century right you know the 1950s. Wow. Paul Anka. But God calls us to something more than that.

We always kind of laugh about it but if you've ever been in puppy love what it really is is it's that first time we feel that connection. It's the first time we feel that emotion with somebody and it's amazing. After a while we discover that we can have that feeling with other people and we discover that love is more than simply having a feeling.

[ 48 : 55 ] It's building a life together. It's coming to a place where we love each other even if the other person can't do anything for us. It's a relationship where someone else becomes as important in our lives as we are.

Now that's very different than the selfishness of passion that is about what makes us feel good. And gifts are meant to live out that love.

They're meant to give us abilities so that we can be with one another. It says when I was a child I spoke like a child. I talked like a child.

When I became an adult I put those ways behind me. There are certain feelings we have that change over life. Now I've been married for over 41 years which is a little more than some people.

And as someone who's been married that long I've seen the stages of love. The first stage is that passion and wow you just are excited about that person. But then you go into what the book of Genesis calls building a life together.

[ 50 : 07 ] A proper helpmate. Someone that completes us. Someone that fills in the gaps for us. But then there becomes a point in life where it's just being together. You can drive down the road for 400 miles and you're happy to be in the car with each other even if they're doing nothing but playing on their cell phone the whole time.

Because you just want to be together even if that person no longer can do anything to be your partner anymore. We're not babies. We're not meant to be selfish and live in that kind of passion driven life.

I'm proud of the homes I live in. I work to make them look nice and to be nice. And I do that largely for the people that live there. To show my love to them.

You know a house becomes a home when we can live in it and care for the people in it. Have you ever, I don't know if they still do this, but back when I was a kid I would go to people's houses and you go in their living room and there were sheets on the furniture.

You know. Some people even have plastic. Do you remember the plastic? Now what I always thought was fascinating is even with the sheets which were of course intended to protect the furniture. Even with plastic on it, we weren't allowed to sit in it.

[ 51 : 21 ] It's like what? What are we going to do? It's like covered in five mil plastic, man. I can't hurt this thing. A home is where we live.

Not something that we brag about, but something that we live into. Eventually, it says in verse 10, in the new creation, we will understand completely.

And we will be gifted in ways we can't even imagine. We will be made complete. But right now, we're not made complete. I don't know if you're aware of this, but God made you intentionally dysfunctional.

Did you know that? Another thing you can blame on God. God made you intentionally ill-equipped to do things. Did you know that?

Do you know why? Because if you could do everything, you would need nobody. Do you see? God wants you to need somebody else.

[ 52 : 19 ] God wants you to have a life where you're not complete unless you have other people in it. People, people who need people are the luckiest people in the world.

Right? People that complete each other. People that fill each other's life up. That's what God wants us to be gifted for. Gifts, the actions, the abilities.

In verse 8, it says they'll pass away. They'll fall apart. They won't be anymore. But love will remain.

Love will remain past this creation and into the next. The greater gifts of faith, hope, and love are for everything and forever. Someday, I'll be some old guy that nobody will want to hear talk.

Someday, my hands will be crippled up with arthritis and I won't be able to build or fix anything anymore. Someday, I won't really have a whole lot of gifts and abilities that anybody will be interested in.

[ 53 : 26 ] I know that. That's the way of life. But I know that love and faith and hope will carry us past that time and through that time to a better eternity.

So we need to go from a childish faith to a faith that's mature. We need to go from a vague understanding to being fully known. We need to go from here to eternity.

From selfishness to agape love. From aimless life to a purpose-driven life. Mature love understands.

And loves selflessly. With long-term, even eternal goals. Ephesians says to us that this is our goal.

Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is Christ. From him, the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work.

[ 54 : 32 ] We need to take our lives from a house to a home. I have a home. It looks like this. This is my house. It's a very, very, very fine house.

That I've spent 30 years of hard labor creating. We gather there with people we care about and we love. And I had a dream one time about that place.

It was after my parents had passed on into glory. And I was dreaming, you know. And in dreams, all kinds of things can happen. So we were having a party, if you will, at this cottage.

And everybody was there. My grandparents were there. My parents were there. My friends were there. Everybody I loved and cared about were there. And I went over to the refrigerator with my father.

Well, you see, in the fall, we had this ritual where we'd have to look in the refrigerator because we own the house together and decide which of this food he was going to take and which of this food I was going to take.

[ 55 : 30 ] And so we opened up the door and he said, hey, Tommy. So what's yours and what's mine? And I said, well, dad, you're dead, so it's all mine.

And I woke up. I woke up. Just like that. One of the most beautiful dreams of my life just ended like that. Wow. Mine, mine, mine, mine, mine.

And it's not just seagulls that talk that way. The truth of the matter is, is when we turn to selfishness, we destroy love. When we start worrying about what's in it for me, we take all our dreams away.

When all we see is our own concerns, we destroy hope and faith and love. And God calls us to something greater, something more powerful.

So I invite you for an adventure this summer. Explore the possibilities of what God can make happen in your life, the dreams of what you can be, the hopes and the possibilities of your life, so that you can learn how to live into the power of God's love and what he means for you and for me and for us together.

[ 56 : 49 ] Lord, I come to you.

Let my heart be changed, renewed. Glowing from the days that I've found in you.

Lord, I come to you. And when we say that I see and believe, There will be simple way, by the power of God.

Hold me now. Hold me now. Hold me now. Let your heart be changed, renewed.

Bring me now. Bring me now. Come to your side. Come to your side. And as I wait, I'll rise up like the heat.

[ 58 : 22 ] And I will stand with you. Your spirit leads me on. By the power of God.

Lord, unveil my eyes. Let me see you face to face.

The mountain of your heart. The mountain of your heart. As you live in me.

Lord, renew my eyes. As you live in me. As you will unfold in my life. In living every day.

By the power of your love. Lord, renew my eyes. In living every day. Lord, renew my eyes. I will do. In living every day.

[ 59 : 27 ] Oh, be close. Let your love surround me.

Bring me near. Draw me to your strength. And as I wait. I'll rise up like the ego.

And I will so reveal. Your spirit leads me on. By the power of your love.

Higher than the mountains that have made.

Stronger than the power of the grace. Constant in the trial and the day One thing remains  
One thing remains Your love never fails, never gives up Never runs out of me Your love  
never fails, never gives up Never runs out of me Your love never fails, never gives up  
Never runs out of me Your love Honey, honey, honey, honey goes It overwhelms and  
satisfies my soul

[ 61 : 35 ] I never, ever have to be afraid One thing remains One thing remains Your love never fails, never gives up Never runs out of me Your love will fail and never give up, never runs out on me Your love will fail and never give up, never give up, never give up, never give up Oh Lord In death, in life, I'm confident, I'm perfect I've applied a pure grave up My debt is paid, never stop me back and separate my heart from your grave

Your love will fail and never give up, never runs out on me Your love will fail and never give up, never give up, never give up, never give up, never give up Your love Higher than the mountains that I face Stronger than the power of the grave Constant in the trial and the change One thing remains This one thing remains Please be seated For God so loved the world

That he gave his only begotten son that whosoever should believe in him would not perish but have eternal life That's the love that never fails That's the love that God has for us And he loves us so much That he invites us to be part of that great love So we're invited to come to the table To come and share in all that God has done for us To make it possible For us to love Like God loves Like God loves For us to be loved With a love that never fails Everyone is welcome If you love God, repent of your sin and seek to live in peace As a disciple of Jesus Christ You are welcome at the table You don't have to be a member of this church or any church You can just come Because Jesus invites you

So enter in to the presence of God In an amazing and wonderful way Enter in with thanksgiving in your heart Because God has made you glad Amen The Lord be with you Lift up your hearts Let us give thanks to the Lord our God It is right and a good and joyful thing Always and everywhere To give thanks to you, Father Almighty Creator of heaven and earth In the beginning your spirit moved over the face of the waters You formed us in your image And breathed into us the breath of life When we turned away and our love failed Your love remained steadfast Your spirit came upon prophets and teachers Anointing them to speak your word That we would hear, receive, and repent So with your people on earth and all the company of heaven We praise your name And join their unending hymn

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of power and might Heaven and earth are full of your glory Hosanna in the highest Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord Hosanna in the highest Holy are you and blessed is your son Jesus Christ At his baptism in the Jordan Your spirit descended upon him And declared him your beloved son With your spirit upon him He turned away the temptations of sin Your spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor To proclaim release to the captives And recovering of sight to the blind To set at liberty those who are oppressed And to announce that the time had come When you would save your people He healed the sick He fed the hungry And he ate with sinners By the baptism of his suffering Death and resurrection You gave birth to your church Delivered us from slavery To sin and death

[ 66 : 55 ] And made with us a new covenant By water and the spirit And when the Lord Jesus ascended He promised to be with us always Baptizing us with the Holy Spirit And with fire As on the day of Pentecost On the night in which he gave himself up for us Jesus took bread He gave thanks to you And he broke the bread And gave it to his disciples He said take and eat This is my body Which is given for you Do this in remembrance of me And when the supper was over He took the cup He gave you thanks and praise And gave it to his disciples He said drink from this all of you This is the cup of my blood The blood of the new covenant Poured out for you And for many For the forgiveness of sin

[illegible]

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. May God be with you and bless you today with faith, hope, and love.

Amen.