

1Corinthians 18-09-09a

This is Sunday, the 9th of September, 2018. We are gathered together at Grace and Truth Bible Church to appreciate the grace of God in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, to spend time together in fellowship and in the study of His Word. It's great to see everyone that's here and to greet everyone who is joining us at a distance.

But it is a blessing and a privilege to spend this time. It charges our spiritual batteries, at least we trust that if we are diligent and faithful in the exhortations of Scripture that point us toward the Lord Jesus and through Him to God the Father and then toward each other. This is really the theme of First Corinthians, is how to be a healthy and effective Christian.

So we have an opportunity this morning to expand our understanding as we pick up with First Corinthians chapter 13. We are actually going to have to step back one verse because in my further investigations I have to make a little wrinkle smoothing, a little correction, an enhancement I think that is pertinent and germane and naturally it's a minority view. However I think you will see, Matthew will remember that one of the words of Satan on our Job recording is, someday you will see that I am right.

Someday I shall rule on a twin throne with God. But I think this is something that will resonate and make a good sense of our passage. And it is a significant change from the translation in your Bible.

So we'll take a quick look at that. There are two words in chapter 12 verse 31 that we want to examine closely because it sets the stage for this great chapter 13 which we are now investigating. But let's begin by asking God's blessing on our study, our fellowship, the rest of our day, the rest of our week and indeed our lives.

And then we'll begin. Father, we thank You for Your saving grace, Your love expressed toward us in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, who He was and what He accomplished on our behalf is a constantly expanding appreciation that we have. We thank You for Your ongoing grace in sustaining us, delivering us, forgiving us from our sins and restoring us when we fall short, when we fail, when we sin.

We thank You for the cleansing and the restoration that comes to us through Your Holy Spirit and through Your Word. And we appreciate the opportunity this morning to spend this time looking at Your Word and seeking to be edified and built up and made stronger and more fruitful in this life. We ask that as we look at this portion of the Bible together that the Holy Spirit will be our teacher, will minister the presentation and the receiving of it in a way that will create that potential that allows us to lay hold of righteousness by faith, to invest in eternity and to more fully reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus.

In whose name we pray, Amen. Well you will remember, we've been looking at it for some months now, the situation in Corinth and there is a distraction factor. I think you could

summarize really the first eleven and a half chapters of 1 Corinthians as Paul addressing by appeal, by reason, by rebuke, by correction, by instruction.

Problems in the church. And I used to have the impression and I was told in our survey courses that you have some letters of Paul that go to groups of mature believers and more advanced and stable churches such as Philippians, you've got a lot of retired military in Philippi and the content and such is more positive and more that you can learn from. And then Corinthians, the Corinth church has issues and problems and so it's largely a group of immature believers.

And I think that that's not necessarily wrong, but I don't think it really gets at what we've seen in these past twelve chapters. It's not so much that they are immature in the sense of not knowing. They've been taught by the Apostle Paul.

Can you imagine if your church had as its pastor Paul the Apostle for three years? I have to think that there is a core of believers who have learned and come to understand and ask questions and have made advance. The problem is not so much a lack of maturity as it is a misdirected zeal. It is a misdirected passion.

And I would suggest that we can see that in of course every generation of the church, but certainly no more obviously than in the present day. You look around and there are a lot of wonderful, committed, motivated believers attending churches. We're meeting here on a Sunday morning and all over the nation at the hour of worship people are gathering in hordes and droves to do what they believe is the Sunday morning worship model and motif.

They're not getting together with malice and jealousy and envy. They're not, I don't think they're doing it because they're all spiritually immature. But I would submit that all of us have to be careful to recognize where we are being deflected.

There's 360 degrees in a circle. If you're an artilleryman there are 600-400 mils. Artillery has to be so precise because a slight difference in deflection makes a great difference at the range your artillery shell is going to finally descend back to the earth and impact.

So you need much more granularity for a circle. So artillery divides a circle into 6,400 parts. And so we don't say you're 180 degrees out.

We say you are 300-200 mils out if you're going the exact opposite way. But a very small difference in your orientation in artillery is called deflection. It's the direction that you're shooting.

It can seem very small at the origin. But the greater the distance, the more flight you have, the further off it can be. And you can be hundreds of meters, hundreds of yards off.

So we want to be sure that our aim is true. And that's what Paul is doing for the Corinthians. They are aiming at a lot of things.

They're not dividing into factions because they're trying to be unspiritual. Each of them believes that their faction is the most spiritual. This is the way to be the most spiritual.

This is the way to be the most holy. This is the way to be the most something, even if it is the most in the eyes of my fellow churchgoing members. And that itself is a deflection.

You think, well, if I'm esteemed, I must be doing it right because everybody appreciates me. And appreciation doesn't necessarily mean accomplishment. And of course, you know, my mental photo next to that concept are these television programs where somebody gets up and dances very gymnastically or sings very gymnastically.

And, you know, Aretha Franklin recently passed away. And you've had an innumerable host of imitators who, instead of singing the one whole note that's written there, want to throw 32 notes into that measure because Aretha did it. And she pioneered a soulful rendition that has been often imitated, but in my opinion, not often duplicated.

But to say, well, this is achievement, I mean, all you have to do is look at the life of Whitney Houston, who started out in church and is a believer and has gone to glory, but through the thousand yards of ground glass entrance, not the glorious steps through the wondrous gates entrance. And it's misdirection. God gives you a talent.

God gives you an ability. And it is widely appreciated. But appreciation is not accomplishment.

You can be appreciated as a pastor. You can be appreciated as a helper. You can be appreciated as a number of things.

But human appreciation is not a reliable measure. Nothing wrong with appreciation, properly founded, properly contained, minimally present. But we don't live for appreciation.

We don't work for appreciation in any realm other than the courts of heaven, the presence at the judgment seat. So Paul is issuing a series of corrections to the Corinthian enthusiasm for excellence. They're trying to be in the best group.

I think the Peter group is better than the Apollos group. Well, I think the Paul group is better than the Peter group. Well, I think the Jesus group is better than all of them.

They're striving to excel. And that's usually worthy. We want to be the best, to do the best, at least we should.

I question whether the more recent youth generations have been imbued with any real drive to succeed and excel. I think a lot of them are just kind of content to coast and enjoy. They don't want to be the bus driver.

They just want to look out the window and watch the nice scenery go by. And that's unfair to a whole lot of people that are in those generations. But the expression of the culture, where it raises its head as an ethos, and Gen X and Gen Y and the Millennials and all these other labels

that are put on vast groups, when you look at the culture through which so many of them express themselves, it's not the culture of, say, the greatest generation, where people take pride in character, in integrity, in your word being, your bond, doing business on a handshake and it works, in looking out for the other guy, in putting yourself in someone else's shoes.

Our culture used to be imbued much more with biblical values that have largely evaporated, and starting with the Pepsi generation, I'd like to teach the world to sing my song in perfect harmony, and anyway, it all became me, myself, and I, and it began before the current youth. But in Corinth, by the time you come to chapter 13, Paul has come around, having laid his foundation, he's making his point. And in their striving for excellence, and in their striving to be great, some of them are doing it to be great in each other's eyes.

Some of them are doing it to be great in their own eyes. This is what I feel makes me righteous. This is what makes me feel good about myself.

And so, you've got two or three different courts of excellence to which you can appeal. Do I think I'm living a great life because I'm enjoying the heck out of it, or I really feel fulfilled, I feel satisfied, I feel like my dream is coming true, or I am on the road to a place where I think I want to be, and I'm pushing in that direction because that's what, that's my dream. You know, climb every mountain, ford every stream, follow every rainbow, not to help anybody else, until you find your dream.

You know, I think there's some things you could say positive about the sound of music, but I hate that song. I've always hated it. I hated it when I was a little kid.

Climb every mountain, follow every rainbow. How long is it going to take you to get to your destination if you're following a rainbow? Seriously. It's just a dumb song.

In my opinion, my humble opinion. But it reeks of the self-centered view. You know, you are the air beneath my wings, or whatever that song was.

That's so denigrating. That's so dismissive. It must be cold there in my shadow.

Well, if it's the shadow of your ego, it probably is, because that's an enormous shadow blocking the sun. It must be cold there in my shadow. I couldn't get past that line in that whole song.

I think Whitney Houston sang that song. That's probably part of her problem, is she might have believed it. But we're still in Corinth, and I'm still going to get to my point through whatever forests I have to hack down with the machete of my cultural criticism.

The threat, the issue, the danger, is that we appeal to some standard other than God's for excellence, for accomplishment, for meaning in our lives. If we are looking anywhere else than what our Heavenly Father thinks, and what His Son is going to judge. Jesus said, all authority has been committed to me.

All judgment has been committed to the Son by the Father. He's the one that's going to judge. It's the judgment seat of Christ.

He's been here. People could say, well, you know, God the Father, when He's judging me here for eternity, He doesn't really understand what I've been through. Well, you can't say that at the judgment seat of Christ.

He's been through it all and more than any of us will ever face. So is He a qualified judge? Will we be qualified to judge, to rule and reign with Him because of what we've been through? We may not understand why we go through what we go through, but in the future, if we are holding a position of authority that the Lord Jesus has asked us to fill and to exercise, people should find us qualified because we have endured. If we endure, we will reign with Him.

If we endure. Because endurance teaches us the things that qualify us with good judgment. It takes endurance.

It takes consistency, not failing, not falling short, not giving up in the face of adversity. If you think about it, a lot of those concepts are coming up in chapter 13. But I want to pick up this morning now with the text, with that background.

Verse 27 of chapter 12, you are the body of Christ and members individually. How did this letter start? I hear that there are wars and divisions among you. There are factions.

I am of Paul. I am of Paulus. I am of Cephas and so on.

You are the body of Christ. If somebody asks you, you know, what kind of an ist are you? What denomination are you? You're body of Christ. That's really the only identifier we need.

You are the body of Christ and you are members individually. So you should see yourself from two perspectives. You are a member of a body, individually.

But there is the body that is identified not because you're in it, but because it is the body of Christ. So God has appointed these in the church. First apostles, second prophets, third teachers.

Notice that the first and second and third that are enumerated. He says first, second, and third. Then he leaves off.

He doesn't say fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh. But the first, second, and third are all communication gifts. They are communication gifts.

First apostles. The apostles are the source of New Testament doctrine. Church age teachings and truth.

They got it directly from the Lord Jesus. The words of the Lord Jesus that we have were preserved and communicated to us by whom? Why do we know anything that Jesus said on this

earth? Because of the apostolic witness and the apostolic ministry. Luke set down what the apostles said.

Mark is an apostle. Matthew is an apostle. Paul is an apostle.

John is an apostle. Peter is an apostle. These are the men who wrote the New Testament and every one of them got their information as an apostle or from an apostle.

All of them. You can say, well, what about James and Jude? Well, James and Jude, if they are the brothers of the Lord, didn't come to faith until after Jesus was raised. And who taught them what they know? Jesus wasn't around to do it.

They got their information. James, the leader of the Jerusalem church, half brother of the Lord, was taught by the apostles. And so was Jude.

They did not follow the Lord during his earthly life. Remember, they did not believe in him. But in the first couple of chapters of Acts, you see that the brothers of the Lord are assembled with the apostles.

And that's where they learned. They came around late. But all of the New Testament is from apostles.

So it is a communication gift. Content. Teaching.

Truth. Propositional clarifications of what the doctrines that pertain to the church, the promises and the principles. First, apostles.

Second, prophets. Because in the days of the early church, the apostolic witness had not all been set down in writing. So to get those truths before the book is published, to get the draft, you have the prophets.

And the gift of prophecy was teaching the same truths we have in our scripture before these Bible books existed. They didn't have any unique and different doctrine. They didn't have anything inconsistent with what's in the New Testament.

It was just a preview. They needed that information before the letters circulated, before they were set down, before they were put together into the New Testament canon. So prophets gave a preview and particular applicable sections of New Testament truth in a temporary fashion before it took its final form as scripture.

Third, teachers. Teachers take the witness of the apostles and the prophets and clarify it. Interpret it.

Help apply it. Show its meaning, value, pertinence, consistency. Explain the comparison and contrast with Old Testament truth.

That's what teachers do. First, second, and third, it's all about communication of truth. That is the foundation.

Jesus is the truth. John 14, 6. I am...the truth. So it's all about the Lord Jesus Christ because we are His body.

After that, miracles, gifts of healing, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. These are maintenance and support functions for the body of Christ. It's maintenance and support.

But the food comes from the apostles, the prophets, and the teachers. After that, you have authentication and verification. That's what miracles were for.

You have gifts of healing. This is to further authenticate and verify that God is present. The Holy Spirit is in the midst.

Helps, administrations, and varieties of tongues. And you say, well, tongue talking. There's a lot of churches, even in our area, and maybe especially in our area, that think that this is a regular part of worship.

Let me just show you one quick thing. If you flip forward to chapter 14, verse 22. Just to keep it in perspective.

This is probably something that Paul told them in the day. Tongues are for a sign. This is what tongues are for.

They are for a sign. Not to those who believe, but to unbelievers. That's what tongues are for.

Paul explains it. He's an apostle. This is New Testament, Church Age truth.

Tongues are A, a sign. And B, a sign to a particular group of people. That group is unbelievers.

Tongues are a sign to unbelievers. Now, as I look around the room here, I am certain beyond all doubt that every single one of us is a believer. Four-legged companions, not in view.

So, in any age of the church, from Pentecost until now, would tongue-talking pertain in this group? No. Why? Tongues are for a sign to unbelievers. If there are no unbelievers present, there should be no tongues present.

Because tongues are for a sign to unbelievers. That's a declarative, factual, non-controversial truth. Tongues are a sign for unbelievers.

If you're in a church where everybody's a believer, there should be no tongues, ever. You don't even have to worry about cessation or temporary gifts or anything else. If there's no unbelievers, there should be no tongues.

Tongues are a sign for unbelievers. It's a declarative, unqualified truth. So, just so we know where we're going here.

But back to chapter 12 now. You are the body of Christ and members individually. This is context.

This is perspective. When you view yourself, you can look at yourself in two ways. I am the sum of my hopes and dreams, my aspirations, the things that make me happy, my memories, my experiences, where I've been and what I've done.

You can look at yourself the way an unbeliever does. You look at what happens to that if you lose your memory. If you don't know who you are and you don't know who your loved ones are and you can't remember where you've been or what you've done.

You don't remember your profession. You don't remember your experiences. We are defined by what we remember.

If you woke up this morning with a blank slate, what happens to your relationships? What happens to what you've learned in life? You're not you anymore if you can't remember the past. If you can't remember the formative experiences. If you can't recognize the people that are related to you, near and far.

If you don't know who's a friend and who's an enemy. You don't know how to do anything other than basic motor functions. You're not you anymore.

If all you are is what you remember, any unbeliever can be that and do that. If they lose their memory, they are nothing. We as believers have a superior and higher and more permanent definition of who we are.

It's right here. You are body of Christ and members individually. Even if you lose your memory, even if you wake up every morning like so many people I've seen in the Alzheimer's wards.

You wake up and you're a happy camper but you don't recognize anybody. You don't remember anything except maybe in the great distant past. You're still body of Christ.

Your identity can't be taken away from you no matter what happens to your mind because you're a believer and God has you in his hands. And he is still going to take you and restore you and bring you back not just physically but mentally. And you will know even as you are known as he's going to conclude the next chapter.

So we don't want to give short shrift to this statement. You are the body of Christ and you are individually a member of it. And the Lord Jesus died to put you there.

You have been purchased with the inestimable price of his blood. And it doesn't matter what happens to you or your mind in this life. If you are saved you are body of Christ and an individual member of it.

And you should be viewed as that by your fellow members and you should view your fellow members in that light. Equally purchased. Equally redeemed by grace.

Equally objects of God's love. Equally objects of the attention and the care of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. God the Father above and the Holy Spirit below.

But the Trinity is intimately involved with every member of the body of Christ. Don't forget it. It's more important than any other aspect of what defines us.

And if we begin to define ourselves or if we begin to pursue things in this life and we get zealous for things that aren't a part of that definition we're going to end up like Corinth. We're going to end up astray. A very slight few miles off in our thinking is going to make a big difference in our destination.

Just like an artillery shell. We've got to constantly be checking our deflection. We've got to constantly be checking our quadrant elevation.

It's got to be precise. It's got to be exact. It's got to be on.

Who am I and why am I here? My favorite naval quote of all time. I hope they've added that to Reef Points at the Naval Academy. There's a little section of this book that has all the stuff you're supposed to memorize.

And you have how's the cow and what time is it and why didn't you say sir and the laws of the Navy and famous naval quotes. Take her down and don't give up the ship. It is not enough that an officer of the Naval Service should be a capable mariner.

He must be that, of course, but also a great deal more. He should be as well a man of refined manners and punctilious courtesy and the nicest sense of personal honor. On and on and on.

You memorize all of these things. Well, what they ought to memorize is what Admiral Stockdale said at the vice presidential debate when the first words out of his mouth, when they gave him a chance to speak, he said, Who am I? Why am I here? That is a golden quote. We've got to ask ourselves every day, three times a day at least, Who am I and why am I here? What's the answer to the Who am I question? You can say it out loud.

We just read it. I am body of Christ. I am a member individually of it.

That's who I am. That's who you are. And that's the foundation.

You've got to have survey to establish good direction. You've got to have some reference point that is true. We, in the old days, did it by the stars.

We do it by correcting magnetic north to true north. We do it by technology and GPS now. But you need some external standard to establish genuine direction.

This is your standard. Christ is the standard. You are body of Christ.

You are individually a member of that body. I cannot emphasize how important that is. And God

has appointed these in that body, in the church.

Apostles, prophets, teachers. Those who communicate the truth of Christ. After that, you have support and maintenance.

Now, verse 29. Are all apostles? What's the answer to that? No. Are all prophets? No.

Are all teachers? No. Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? No. No.

No. No. No.

Then in verse 31, you have it translated here, but earnestly desire the best gifts. No. No.

No. No. No.

That's not, in my humble Greek opinion, what it says. It's an interesting thing here about the word that is translated earnestly desire, which is the word zelo, Z-E-L-O-O. And the second O has a long sign over it because it's an omicron and then an omega.

So, Z-E-L, this is zeta, eta, lambda, omicron, omega. Z, long E, so when you transliterate it, if you're going to keep your two Es and your two Os straight, this is Z, long E, L, O, long O. Zelo. We get our word zeal and zealous from this.

And you know what zeal is. It's having a passion for something. People are all about their passions today.

What are you passionate about? Pursue your passion. Passion can be good or passion can be bad, right? All depends on how you aim it. This form here is zealute.

You know how you conjugate a verb. Well, Z-E-L-O-U-T-E, you still got Z, long E, L, then omicron, epsilon, tau, and epsilon. I'm sorry, you have eta, Z-E-eta.

Zealute is a double form. It can be an imperative, but it is also the standard indicative form. You know the difference between an imperative, that's a command.

You desire. I command you to desire a thing. How successful is it to command somebody to desire something? Desire coffee with hazelnut creamer.

Desire hazelnut. Patty hates hazelnut, by the way. Desire hazelnut, Patty.

How do you imperativize desire? Love that girl, young teenage boy. She's got a great personality, love her. Desire a welding certificate.

I actually do kind of desire a welding certificate. I think it would be great. But somebody tells you, go desire that thing.

Can somebody tell you to want something? And, okay. This is the, in my view, the indicative. And not just me, a lot of other people.

This goes back hundreds of years. I think the translation committees for nearly all of the modern translations have gotten this wrong. So what I would like to suggest, and if you're with me on this, between the first and second word in verse 31, just put the pronoun you, which is implicit in the form.

This is the second person plural, y'all. So what it says is, and this is not an imperative or an exhortation, it is a statement. Are all apostles, are all prophets, are all teachers, do all have gifts of healing, do all speak with tongues, but you all are zealous for greater gifts.

It's an odd thing in Greek that when you have the article, we typically don't translate it. When you don't have the article, we typically put the in there. It's the reverse.

So my translation of the first part of verse 31 is, but you all are zealous for greater gifts. The implication by translating this as an imperative is that if you want a better gift, maybe you can pray and get it. I only got the gifts of help, but a greater gift is the gift of teaching.

I want to be a teacher, not just a helper. While I'm only tongue talking, I'd like to be an apostle. So I would earnestly desire to be an apostle if I'm responding to Paul's imperative.

I don't think that's what he's saying here at all. This is the standard indicative form. He says, God has appointed these in the church.

God has appointed them. The things that God appoints aren't subject to you saying, but Lord. Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why have you made me thus? I believe there's a pretty famous section of Romans 9 that covers this topic.

You don't go to the one that has appointed who you are, where you are, how you are, what you face, what your spiritual gift is, and say, but Lord, I wanted a better one. God has appointed these in the church, and not everybody gets the same gift, but you all are wanting greater gifts. You're wanting to get promoted.

You think that there's some sort of step program where you can go up the ladder and get a better gift. Well, he's talking in tongues, and I think that's a great gift. I want to talk in tongues.

Well, he's a teacher, and I think that's a great gift. I want to be a teacher. Paul says, you all are zealous for greater gifts, and yet I'll show you a more excellent way.

You're trying to step up in gifts. Let me show you a more excellent way. That's why the last half of that verse is there.

If he's saying earnestly desire the best gifts, I'll just be a period and go to chapter 13. He's saying, you all are missing it. Your direction is off.

Your zeal is misguided. It's wonderful that you've got a zeal for God, but it's not according to knowledge. Don't you know that God has appointed these things? He knows what's best.

You've already got the best gift. How can you desire a greater gift if God has already appointed your gift? You're thinking you've got a better idea of what a great gift is than God does, and God has already appointed your gift? Why on earth would Paul say, you all need to desire a better gift, a better gift than the one that God appointed to you? That's just near blasphemy. It's not what Paul is saying here, and I am committed to this view enough that I'm not even going to say maybe.

This is an indicative. Paul is saying your problem here is you're not recognizing what God has appointed. God has decided who has what gift.

You're wanting something greater, and that something greater, you're saying I want a greater gift. He says, if you want something greater, let me show you a more excellent way. More excellent is the other word that I want to look at real quickly.

In fact, I think I'll save that for after the break because more excellent here is a compound word in Greek just like it is in English, or it's a combination of two words actually. This is kata, which is according to, and then huperbalo is the verb. This is huperbalen.

Huper, that's over. It's like hyper, and balo is to throw, to throw over, to surpass, to go beyond, to excel, to exceed, to be. You've got five guys that throw a javelin.

Which one got thrown the farthest? That's the one we're talking about. It's the more excellent. Huperbalo.

You all are trying to move up in the realm of gifts. You earnestly desire better gifts. Your gift is not going to change.

There's nothing in Scripture that says your gift ever changes. I'm not a pastor today and a tongue talker tomorrow and a healer the next day and a miracle worker the next day, and I've got the gift of faith the next day. These gifts are appointed by God, and there's a lot of other things.

You can have a Briggs and Stratton motor, an engine, in a lot of different things, but you can't just say, well, I've got a two-and-a-half horse, and I want a four horse. Well, are you a rotary tiller? Are you a mower? Are you a string trimmer? Are you a compressor? What are you? There's a whole lot of other parts that define who you are, and you can't just say, well, I want a motor upgrade. I want an engine enhancement.

I want more CCs. You overpower a string trimmer, and it's going to be too heavy to move, and it's going to break the strings. These things are balanced.

God puts us together. Our spiritual gift isn't just a hat. It's part of who we are in Christ.

You are members of a body, and you're not disconnected, and you can't just, well, I'm an ear today, but I'm an elbow tomorrow. You don't want an elbow on the side of your head. God puts you in a place.

You are members individually of a body. You're not going to change gifts. So telling somebody to earnestly desire a better gift is just counter-rational.

Their problem is that's exactly what they're doing. They are counter-rational because they're thinking that there are greater gifts, and I want one of those. I'm not content to be administrative.

I want to have a splashy gift, a showy gift. I want to be appreciated. Wouldn't it be great to be appreciated? Wouldn't it be great to have an impact, to impact people? Wouldn't it be great to make a difference, to be appreciated because I am the means by which... I mean, we used to have people, and this goes back decades, there are people who used to pray a salvation prayer for somebody else.

You can hear it in the gospel songs. Big Chief Jim Wetherington for the Statesman Quartet has got a couple of songs where he says, I brought this poor sinner down, and I prayed to the Lord, Lord, save this sinner. You can't pray for somebody else to be saved.

Who do you think you are? You're elbowing your way in for the Holy Spirit, and you're speaking for somebody else. You can't do that, but people think they can because they haven't paid attention to the apostles and the prophets and the teachers who are communicating these truths. Paul is the apostle, and a prophet and a teacher here is saying you're off course when you're trying to change your station.

You want to be spiritually gifted in a different way. That's what you're doing. Let me show you a surpassing way.

Let me throw the javelin beyond here and show you what you ought to be doing. That's the setup for chapter 13. That's why we have chapter 13.

Take your attention off the gifts and focus on something else. When we come back from the break, that's what we'll look at.