

## 1 Corinthians 13

Describe a time when you have chosen to follow bad directions. What was it that persuaded you to follow the directions, even though it led you the wrong way?

**Context:** We are in the midst of learning about the Bible's view on marriage, divorce and homosexuality, in order to help us engage with people in a helpful and faithful way. However, if we as a church are seeking knowledge and the ability to defend our faith, it is possible that arrogance might creep in to our attitudes. Truth is of vital importance, but in doing ministry together, *the most excellent way* for us is to do this with love. But what does love actually look like?

### **Pray and read 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:13**

In verses 1-3, Paul raises several gifts of the Holy Spirit that are to be used in ministering the gospel. What does he say is crucial (the most excellent way) in exercising our spiritual gifts?

What is the result of exercising our spiritual gifts without love?

What examples of Christian people can you think of that embody the most excellent way in speaking or preaching the truth, or knowing lots about the Bible and truth, or serving the poor? What do you think is the most compelling thing about these people?

Sometimes there are many different meanings of the word "love." What definitions of "love" does our society and culture often give for love?

How does Paul define the kind of "love" he is talking about in this passage (vv. 4-7)? How does this contrast with our society and culture?

How might Paul's definition of love act as a kind of signpost for our lives?

Who has fulfilled the most excellent way perfectly (1 John 3:16)?

Suppose that Kevin is a Christian who knows the Bible's teaching about marriage, but has a nephew who is gay. How should Kevin share the truth of the gospel with his nephew through the most excellent way of love?

What gifts have you been exercising the wrong way without love? What steps do you need to take to change this?