

Introduction (1 Cor 12:31-13:3)

It's Christmas and most people have gifts on their minds. As I was thinking about material gifts, one of my most treasured gifts was not given to me at Christmas, but upon graduation from high school. I have gifts that were more expensive, but this particular gift was something that I have been able to use for the past fifty years. It has truly been a blessing in my life. When I graduated from high school my parents took me to a pawn shop and bought me a used guitar as a graduation present. They paid \$100.00 for an old B-25 Gibson acoustical guitar. My mother played guitar and she had a Gibson cherry B-25 guitar, and this was very similar. This was obviously been played a lot by its previous owner. The case of the guitar was falling apart, and I spent a hundred dollars on a new hard case. The guitar needed a little TLC, and I had a guitar shop work on the neck. I put some new strings on it, and it had a full, rich tone, and sounded wonderful. I learned how to play most of the basic chords and a few picking patterns. I was never going to be Chet Atkins on the guitar, but I have thoroughly enjoyed this gift. One day someone asked me about the age of my guitar. I told them it was a 1953 version. The person said that it was worth some money. I looked up the estimated value of the guitar, and it was over two thousand dollars. This was exceedingly beyond what I expected.

Paul ended 1 Corinthians 12 by exhorting us to earnestly desire the greater gifts. We need to passionately desire and pursue spiritual gifts, especially the ones that edify the body. Then, he transitioned into our passage today, saying, "And I show you a still more excellent way." What he is about to share in chapter thirteen is more excellent than the spiritual gifts that we are to be so passionate about. The Greek word for excellent that is used here is huperbole (Strong's G5236), which comes from huperballo. Ballo means to throw. Huperballo means to throw beyond, or to throw farther than anticipated or to exceed what is expected. It is to abundantly exceed, or to be excellent or great. The worth of my guitar was huperbole or well beyond what I would have thought it was worth.

(1 Cor 12:31) "But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent (huperbole) way."

Chapter thirteen is known as the love chapter. In the first three verses, we discover the surpassing value of love. In verses four through seven, we find the character of love. Many people do not understand what love is, and Paul defines love for us. In verses eight through thirteen, he gives us the duration of love. In our passage today, Paul gives six valuation comparisons to the various gifts. The more excellent way, the value that far exceeds something that we are told to earnestly desire, is love. Paul said that love is more valuable than the gift of tongues. Second, love is more valuable than prophecy. Third, love is more valuable than knowledge. Fourth, love is more valuable than faith. Fifth, love is more valuable than mercy. Sixth, love is more valuable than martyrdom.

The Surpassing Value of Love

1. More Valuable Than Tongues (1 Cor 13:1)
2. More Valuable Than Prophecy (1 Cor 13:2)
3. More Valuable Than Knowledge (1 Cor 13:2)
4. More Valuable Than Faith (1 Cor 13:2)
5. More Valuable Than Mercy (1 Cor 13:3)
6. More Valuable Than Martyrdom (1 Cor 13:3)

(1 Cor 13:1-3) "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. {2} And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. {3} And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."

1. **More Valuable Than Tongues** (1 Cor 13:1)

The first comparison is with the gift of tongues. In verse one he says that if I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

(1 Cor 13:1) "If I speak with the **tongues** of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal."

Paul is not devaluing the gift of tongues. In chapter fourteen, Paul says, "Now I wish you all spoke in tongues." Later in the verse eighteen, he says, "I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all." Paul used this gift, was thankful for this gift, and he desired for everyone could have this gift. This does not sound like Paul devalued the gift of tongues. Paul's point is that love goes beyond, exceeds, and surpasses the value of this gift of tongues.

(1 Cor 14:5a) "Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues."

(1 Cor 14:18) "I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all;"

One of the things that I love about college football is the enthusiasm and school spirit. The school bands are there playing during the game, and then performing at half time. The noisy gong and clanging cymbal are perfect in that setting, and they add to the excitement and enthusiasm of the game. Taken out of this setting, a noisy gong or clanging cymbal in the apartment next door while you are trying to relax from a busy day at work, is not a good thing. The gift of tongues is a wonderful gift when it is used in the proper setting. If someone has the gift of tongues but does not have love, that gift has become a noisy gong or clanging cymbal.

Paul is going to address tongues in chapter fourteen. The meetings were out of order and people were speaking in tongues during the meetings. There were no interpretations so that others could be edified. They were being used selfishly, without regard to those around them. They were not being exercised in love, so Paul is telling them that love is far more important than the gift of tongues. Love has a surpassing value to tongues.

2. **More Valuable Than Prophecy** (1 Cor 13:2)

Paul's second comparison is to the gift of prophecy. He says that if he has the gift of prophecy, but does not have love, he is nothing. Again, Paul is not devaluing prophecy. Earlier, Paul mentioned that we need to earnestly desire the greater gifts, which would include prophecy.

(1 Cor 13:2) "And if I have the gift of **prophecy**...but do not have love, I am nothing."

(1 Cor 12:31) "But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way."

In chapter fourteen, Paul says to earnestly desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. It is one of the greater gifts because everyone is edified. The body is edified, exhorted, and consoled through the gift of prophecy. The Greek word used for especially is *mallon* (Strong's G3123), which means to a greater degree or more. Our desire for prophecy should be more than for just spiritual gifts; it should be to a greater degree. This gift of prophecy is something that is especially worth pursuing.

(1 Cor 14:1) "Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy."

Paul goes on to tell us why prophecy is greater than tongues. When someone speaks in a tongue, he speaks to God and no one understands. The one who prophesies speaks to men for edification, exhortation, and consolation. With tongues, the person is edified, but with prophecy the whole church is edified. Paul wishes that they would all speak in tongues, but more importantly, that they would all prophesy, so that the church would receive edifying.

(1 Cor 14:2-5) "For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries. {3} But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. {4} One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church. {5} Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying."

Prophecy is one of those greater gifts that Paul wished for the whole church to pursue. But, even if we did prophesy, we are nothing if we do not have love. A few months ago, I met one of our neighbors in our subdivision. I found out that his family owns Eagle Christian Tours. He briefly shared the history of their company. They have all kinds of buses that can be chartered. If one of their fancy buses, with all the wifi, outlets, flat-screen TVs, Bluetooth radio, bunks, restrooms, etc. came without an engine, it would be worth nothing. It could not be chartered or used for anything, and would have no value to them. In the same way, we could have the premium gift available, but if it does not have the engine of love, it is not worth anything. "If I have the gift of prophecy...but do not have love, I am nothing."

3. More Valuable Than Knowledge (1 Cor 13:2)

The third comparison is with knowledge. Paul says that if he knows all mysteries and all knowledge, but does not have love, he is nothing. We live in a day where knowledge is greatly valued, and readily available. At the click of a key, you can pull up information about anything or any subject in the world. The spiritual gift of knowledge is a supernatural word given about something or a situation. When God gives us a word of knowledge about something, that is pretty special. But without love, knowledge does not mean anything.

(1 Cor 13:2) "And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all **knowledge**...but do not have love, I am nothing."

Paul was always praying for people to be filled with knowledge. In Ephesians 1:15-19, he does not cease in giving thanks and mentioning them in his prayers. He prays that the Lord would give them a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. He prays that the eyes of their hearts may be enlightened so that they would know the hope of their calling. Paul wanted them to be filled with knowledge.

(Eph 1:15-19) "For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you, and your love for all the saints, {16} do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; {17} that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. {18} I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, {19} and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might"

In Ephesians four Paul tells us that we will grow and mature in our faith through the knowledge of the Son of God. Knowledge is important to us becoming a mature man. Paul is not devaluing knowledge. He wants us to be filled with knowledge.

(Eph 4:11-13) "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, {12} for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; {13} until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ."

But Paul recognizes that something is more valuable than knowledge. Look what he prays in Ephesians 3:16-19. He wants the church to be rooted and grounded in love, and to comprehend the breadth, length, height, and depth of God's love. Why? Because the love of Christ surpasses knowledge. Knowing and experiencing the love of God is more important than knowledge. When we have God's love, we can be filled up with the fulness of God. And, without love, even though we have knowledge, we have nothing.

(Eph 3:14-19) "For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father...that you, being rooted and grounded in love, {18} may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, {19} and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God."

4. **More Valuable Than Faith** (1 Cor 13:2)

The fourth comparison that Paul makes is with the gift of faith. He says that if we have faith to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

(1 Cor 13:2b) "And...if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing."

God tells us in Hebrews that without faith it is impossible to please Him. In order to come to God, we must believe who He is. We know God and we come to God by faith. I want to please God in everything that I think, say, or do. I want the meditations of my heart and the words of my mouth to be pleasing. I want everything that I think, say, or do to be pleasing to God. Without faith, we cannot be pleasing to God, so faith is very important. Yet, with all the faith in the world, without love, we are nothing.

(Heb 11:6) "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."

Paul tells us in Ephesians that it is by grace through faith that we are saved. We begin by faith and it is by faith that we please God. Yet, without love, our faith means nothing. We need to know God's love. We need to experience God's love. We need to walk in God's love. We need to be known by love. Our love should be obvious to the world. Without love, we are nothing.

(Eph 2:8-9) "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; {9} not as a result of works, that no one should boast."

Jesus was continually encouraging the disciples to have faith. He told them that they lacked faith when they were worried about their provisions. He told them not to be anxious, but to have faith that the Lord would provide for them.

(Matt 6:26-31) ""Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? {27} "And which of you by being anxious can add a single cubit to his life's span? {28} "And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, {29} yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these. {30} "But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more do so for you, O men of little faith? {31} "Do not be anxious then, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?'"

In Matthew 8, Jesus told the disciples not to be timid in the midst of a storm. He tells them that they are men of little faith. Jesus arose and rebuked the winds and the sea and it became calm. Jesus wants us to exercise our faith and speak to the storms. He wants us to be men of great faith.

(Matt 8:26) "And He said^ to them, "Why are you timid, you men of little faith?" Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and it became perfectly calm."

In Matthew 17, Jesus was asked by the disciples why they were not able to cast out a demon and heal a boy. Jesus tells them that it was because of the littleness of their faith. Jesus wants us to minister to people. Faith is not something without value. Faith is something extremely important in ministering to people and bringing about God's kingdom here on earth.

(Matt 17:18-21) "And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once. {19} Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" {20} And He said to them, "Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it shall move; and nothing shall be impossible to you. {21} "But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.""

Paul concludes chapter thirteen by saying, not abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. There are three pillars that are very important in our Christian walk, but the greatest of these is love. Love surpasses the value of faith. Even if we have the faith to remove mountains, and we do not have love, we are nothing. Love has a surpassing value to faith. Love exceeds or goes beyond the value of faith.

(1 Cor 13:13) But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

5. **More Valuable Than Mercy** (1 Cor 13:3)

The fifth comparison that Paul makes is with mercy. He says, "if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, but do not have love, it profits me nothing." We know that giving to help our brother in need is one way to lay our lives down for our brothers. However, we can give all of our possessions for wrong motives and reasons. If our actions are not motivated by love, if they are not driven by love, then it does not profit. We can feed the poor, but still not have love.

(1 Cor 13:3) "And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."

Jesus was always reaching out to the poor. He taught out of Isaiah 61 that He was sent to preach the gospel to the poor.

(Luke 4:18-19) "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord."

He told people to sell their possessions and give to the poor, so that they could have treasure in heaven, and to follow Him. Giving to the poor was important to the Lord.

(Matt 19:21) "Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.""

In the separation of the goats and the sheep, He commended the sheep for feeding and clothing the poor. He says that they are blessed of His Father. Inasmuch as they did it to the least of the brethren, they have done it unto Him.

(Matt 25:34-40) ""Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. {35} 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; {36} naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.... {40} And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'"

In Galatians 2, Paul, Barnabas, and Titus met with the apostles in Jerusalem. Paul shared with them how God had called him to preach to the Gentiles. The apostles in Jerusalem only asked one thing of Paul, Barnabas, and Titus: that they remember the poor. Paul adds to that his own attitude, "the very thing I also was eager to do." Giving to the poor is a very important part of preaching the gospel and fulfilling the Great Commission. But, without love, we are nothing.

(Gal 2:1-10) "Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also...and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we might go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised. {10} They only asked us to remember the poor-- the very thing I also was eager to do."

6. More Valuable Than Martyrdom (1 Cor 13:3)

The final comparison that Paul makes is with martyrdom. He says, “if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.” Martyrdom is the epitome of being sold out to the Lord. It is the willingness to lay your life down for the gospel. It is a willingness to stand up for the sake of the gospel no matter what happens. Yet, martyrdom without love profits nothing.

(1 Cor 13:3) "And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."

There are five crowns spoken of in Scripture. The Crown of Life, also known as the Martyr's Crown, is given to those who undergo severe hardship, testing, tribulation, and/or physical death on His behalf. We find this in Revelation 2:10, where we are promised the Crown of Life if we are faithful unto death. The Bible does not say anything about whether or not these 5 crowns are ranked in any way as to which is greater. However, there is a very good chance that this crown is ranked number one out of the five crowns available to all believers for special service. Dying for your faith in God and Jesus is the ultimate sacrifice.

Five Crowns

1. Crown of Life (Martyrs Crown) (Rev 2:10)
2. Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim 4:7-8)
3. Incorruptible Crown (Imperishable Crown) (1 Cor 9:24-27)
4. Crown of Rejoicing (1 Thess 2:19-20)
5. Crown of Glory (1 Pet 5:1-4)

(Rev 2:10) “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the CROWN OF LIFE.”

Even though there is a crown given for martyrdom, the Lord tells us that love is something greater than martyrdom. When John wrote that by this all men will know that you are Christians, he did not finish the statement, “because you are willing to die for your faith.” John wrote, “by this all men will know that you are My disciples if you have love for one another.” Love, not martyrdom is the greatest evidence of our faith.

(John 13:35) “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

At the same time, God tells us there is no greater love than to lay your life down for your friends, which is what Jesus did for us. He also said that He demonstrates His love towards us that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. John wrote, “We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” Laying our lives down for one another can be a great act and demonstration of love. It must be done out of love, which is how God demonstrated His love to us.

(John 15:13) “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.”

(Rom 5:8) “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

(1 John 3:16) “We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

Martyrdom was very common in the early church. The stoning of Stephen brought a severe persecution against the church. Historical documents record the death of over two thousand believers in that persecution. Eleven of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb were martyred.

1. James, the son of Zebedee, was put to death by Herod Agrippa. As he was led to the place of martyrdom, his accuser was brought to repent of his conduct by the apostle's extraordinary courage and undauntedness, and fell down at his feet to request his pardon, professing himself a Christian, and resolving that James should not receive the crown of martyrdom alone. Hence they were both beheaded at the same time. These events took place A.D. 44.
2. Philip. He suffered martyrdom at Heliopolis, in Phrygia. He was scourged, thrown into prison, and afterwards crucified, A.D. 54.
3. Matthew. He labored in Parthia, and Ethiopia, in which latter country he suffered martyrdom, being slain with a halberd in the city of Nadabah, A.D. 60.
4. Matthias. He was stoned at Jerusalem and then beheaded.
5. Andrew, the brother of Peter, preached the gospel to many Asiatic nations; but on his arrival at Edessa he was taken and crucified on a cross, the two ends of which were fixed transversely in the ground.
6. Mark. He was dragged to pieces by the people of Alexandria, at the great solemnity of Serapis their idol, ending his life under their merciless hands.
7. Peter. He was condemned to death, and crucified, as some do write, at Rome. He was crucified, his head being down and his feet upward, himself so requiring, because he was (he said) unworthy to be crucified after the same form and manner as the Lord was.
8. Jude, the brother of James, was commonly called Thaddeus. He was crucified at Edessa, A.D. 72.
9. Bartholomew. Preached in several countries, and having translated the Gospel of Matthew into the language of India, he propagated it in that country. He was at length cruelly beaten and then crucified by the impatient idolaters.
10. Thomas. He preached the Gospel in Parthia and India, where exciting the rage of the pagan priests, he was martyred by being thrust through with a spear.
11. Simon. He preached the Gospel in Mauritania, Africa, and even in Britain, in which latter country he was crucified, A.D. 74.
12. John, who planted the churches of Smyrna, Pergamos, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and Thyatira, was sent to Rome to be martyred, where it is affirmed he was cast into a cauldron of boiling oil. He escaped by miracle, without injury. Domitian afterwards

banished him to the Isle of Patmos, where he wrote the Book of Revelation. He was the only apostle who escaped a violent death.

Others

13. Paul. Nero sent two of his esquires, Ferega and Parthemius, to bring him word of his death. They, coming to Paul instructing the people, desired him to pray for them, that they might believe; who told them that shortly after they should believe and be baptised at His sepulcher. This done, the soldiers came and led him out of the city to the place of execution, where he, after his prayers made, gave his neck to the sword.
14. Barnabas. His death is supposed to have taken place about A.D. 73.
15. Stephen. His death was occasioned by the faithful manner in which he preached the Gospel to the betrayers and murderers of Christ. He was cast out of the city and stoned him to death. Upon his martyrdom, a great persecution was raised against the church. About two thousand Christians, with Nicanor, one of the seven deacons, suffered martyrdom during the "persecution that arose about Stephen."
16. Luke. The evangelist travelled with Paul through various countries, and is supposed to have been hanged on an olive tree, by the idolatrous priests of Greece.

Even if we deliver our bodies to be burned and die of martyrdom and do not have love, it profits us nothing. Love has a surpassing value to martyrdom.

Conclusion

This morning we have looked at the surpassing value of love. Even though we are to zealously desire gifts, especially the greater gifts, we must prioritize love. We must love God and love one another. Everything that we do must be done out of love. The apostle Paul was a great teacher, and in 1 Timothy 1:5, he said, "The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith." Like Paul, whatever our gifting is, we must do it with the goal of love in mind.

(1 Tim 1:5) "But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."

Love is more important than tongues. Love is more valuable than knowledge. Love is more valuable than prophecy. Love surpasses the value of all gifts. We believe in the gifts of the Spirit. We desire the gifts of the Spirit to be exercised and operated in our services and our small groups. Yet, our greatest desire is to be a church that is known for its love.

In Romans 6:23, Paul tells us a gift that was given to us in love. God gave us the free gift of eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord. That gift was given in love, carried out in love, and this gift exceeds the value of all other gifts. If you have never received Christ into your life, and would like to receive this gift, pray with me.

(Rom 6:23) "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Father God, thanks for sending this incredible gift. Thanks for giving it to us in love. I believe that Jesus came in the flesh, died for my sins, and was raised up by You. I believe and confess Jesus as Lord, and I ask Jesus to come into my life and forgive my sins. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Closing Prayer

Father God, thank You for letting us know the surpassing value of love. You want us to zealously pursue the gifts, but if they are not exercised with love, they are nothing. Help us to zealously desire spiritual gifts. Even more, help us to always keep love as the priority in our lives and ministry. Help us to love you with our whole heart, mind, soul, and strength. Help us to lay our lives down for one another. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

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Introduction (1 Cor 12:31-13:3)

1. **More Valuable Than Tongues** (1 Cor 13:1, 14:5a, 14:18)
2. **More Valuable Than Prophecy** (1 Cor 13:2, 12:31, 14:1-5)
3. **More Valuable Than Knowledge** (1 Cor 13:2, Eph 1:15-19, 4:11-13, 3:14-19)
4. **More Valuable Than Faith** (1 Cor 13:2, Heb 11:6, Eph 2:8-9, Matt 6:26-31, 8:26, 17:18-21, 1 Cor 13:13)
5. **More Valuable Than Mercy** (1 Cor 13:3, Luke 4:18-19, Matt 19:21, 25:34-40, Gal 2:1-10)
6. **More Valuable Than Martyrdom** (1 Cor 13:3, Rev 2:10, John 13:35, 15:13, Rom 5:8, 1 John 3:16)

Five Crowns

1. Crown of Life (Martyrs Crown) (Rev 2:10)
2. Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim 4:7-8)
3. Incorruptible Crown (Imperishable Crown) (1 Cor 9:24-27)
4. Crown of Rejoicing (1 Thess 2:19-20)
5. Crown of Glory (1 Pet 5:1-4)

Conclusion and Applications (1 Tim 1:5)