

Being Edifying
1 Corinthians 14

Introduction & Review

This morning we will conclude our series on True Spirituality from 1 Corinthians 12-14 in preparation for the series on Spiritual Warfare that will begin next Sunday. I began this series with a sermon on the nature and ministry of the Holy Spirit (See: The Ministry of the Holy Spirit - 9/28/08) because there is so much confusion even about that. If you have a false idea about what it means to be spiritual you will be easy prey for our adversary. This morning we are going to be examining 1 Corinthians 14 and Paul's emphasis that true spirituality is demonstrated in edifying one another.

In order to understand this chapter you must understand the purpose and nature of the book of 1 Corinthians as well as the context for it set in chapters 12 & 13. Paul founded the church in Corinth and spent 1 ½ years teaching there, yet the church was still strongly influenced by the immorality of that city resulting in all sorts of problems. 1 Corinthians is Paul's rebuke and correction of their many errors which included: divisions and factions, pride, immaturity, toleration of gross sin in their midst, civil suits against one another, continued involvement with the cult prostitutes, confusion about marriage and singleness, abuse of their Christian liberty, preference for social styles rather than God's order, severe abuse of the Lord's Supper, confusion about true spirituality, and even questioning Jesus' resurrection. The church at Corinth was a catastrophe and not a model to follow.

1 Corinthians 12-14 is all one section of Paul's letter dealing with the overall subject of being spiritual. In my introduction to this (See: Being Spiritual - 10/12/08) I pointed out that 1 Corinthians 12:1 is better translated as in Young's, "*And concerning the spiritual things, brethren, I do not wish you to be ignorant.*" The word here is πνευματικός / pneumatikos, being spiritual, not χάρισμα / charisma, spiritual gifts, which does not appear until verse 4. The Corinthians "*were not lacking in any gift*" (1 Cor. 1:7), so they were not ignorant concerning spiritual gifts. They were ignorant in the purpose and use of those gifts in a proper spiritual manner.

I also pointed out from 1 Corinthians 12:2 & 3 that the Corinthians were mimicking their pagan worship practices in the church even to the point of someone blaspheming Christ and thinking it was spiritual because it appeared to be similar to speaking in tongues. True spirituality cannot be assumed because something appears spiritual, it must be judged by whether the person is bringing glory to Christ or not.

In 1 Corinthians 12:4-30 Paul explained origin and purpose of all gifts and ministries. Every spiritual gift, every ministry and the degree of power to use that gift in ministry are all manifestations of the Spirit and given by God to each one individually as God wills for the purpose of the common good of the whole body (1 Corinthians 12:7,11). In addition, every individual in Christ's body became a member of it through the baptism of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13). These truths are contrary to Pentecostal doctrine. The true evidence of the Spirit's control of a person is the fruit of the Spirit, (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness & self-control - Galatians 5:22,23). Paul used the analogy of a body to emphasize that every person, every gift, every ministry and every ability regardless of how great or small, how visible or hidden are needed and must work together for the body to be whole and healthy as God intended. There is no place for pride in the body. When a believer does not fulfill their role within the body they place themselves in a dangerous position while leaving the rest of the body handicapped. Paul concludes chapter 12 with an emphasis on the facts that there is no gift that everyone has, and no one has every gift. This is another contradiction of Pentecostal doctrine.

Paul transitions in 1 Corinthians 12:31 to his next point in 1 Corinthians 13 which is too often isolated from its context so that its real meaning is missed. The Corinthians thought they were spiritual because they had every gift, but the truth is that they were carnal and lacked the trait that best demonstrates true spirituality - love.

1 Corinthians 12:31 can be translated as either an indicative, a statement of present reality, or an imperative, a command. Most of your Bibles translate this as a command for them to earnestly desire the greater gifts. I find that translation difficult to reconcile with all that Paul said throughout 1 Corinthians 12 that God is the one that determines the gift (vs. 11, 18 & 28) as well as the body analogy that emphasized the importance of every gift including those considered to be seemingly - weaker. I think it makes a lot more sense to translate this as an active indicative of present reality, *“But you are coveting the greater gifts, and a still more excellent way I show you,”* for that is what they were doing and what Paul will contrast in 1 Corinthians 13 (See: Being Loving - 10/26/08). They sought after the gifts they thought would give themselves more spiritual prestige, but Paul wanted to show them a better way of being spiritual, the way of love.

Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 that without love the various gifts are of no value. Without love, tongues becomes a noisy irritant. Without love, prophecy, knowledge and faith become nothing. Without love, even self-sacrifice does not profit.

The description of love Paul gives in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 is not a comprehensive definition, but rather a descriptive correction of their failure to love. This was a failure that showed that though they had all spiritual gifts, they were not really spiritual. Love is patient, they were contentious. Love is kind, they were harsh. Love is content, they were jealous. Love is modest, they were braggarts. Love is humble, they were arrogant. Love is proper, they acted unbecomingly. Love is unselfish, they sought for themselves. Love is good tempered, they were easily provoked. Love is forgiving, they were vengeful. They rejoiced in tolerance of unrighteousness. Their truthfulness was questionable. They did not bear hardship well. They were skeptical. They lacked confidence in God’s promises. There are other things that can be added to a full definition of love such as it is self-sacrificial and a reflection of God living through us, but these were the corrections the Corinthians needed.

In 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 Paul shows that love is superior to spiritual gifts because it is permanent while the gifts are transitory. Even the gifts of prophecy and knowledge would lose their purpose and be done away with when Jesus returns. Tongues, the gift they valued so much, would cease of itself at an earlier time because its purpose would be fulfilled. (Note: The partial in verse 10 only refers to prophecy and knowledge from verse 9. Tongues is not included there and was separated out in verse 8 by using an intransitive with a different verb in the middle tense. The question of identification of the perfect and when the perfect comes is irrelevant to the question of when tongues will cease). 1 Corinthians 13:13 contrasts the transitory gifts with the three intransitory characteristics which will remain. *“But now abide faith, hope and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”*

The Superiority Spirituality of Edification

1 Corinthians 14:1 transitions from the topic of love being the superior characteristic of true spirituality to a specific command concerning the use of spiritual gifts within the body. *“Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts but especially that you may prophesy.”* “Pursue” (διώκω / diōkō) is an imperative, the voice of command, and it is given the place of emphasis within the sentence because it is the foundational command. What is being commanded to pursue? The superior mark of true spirituality which is love.

In the next phrase the command is given to “earnestly desire spiritual *“gifts.”* The verb here is the same one and in the same form as we saw in 1 Corinthians 12:31, ζηλοῦτε /zēloute. This time the context would favor the imperative, the voice of command, rather than the indicative, the voice of present reality. Why? Three reasons.

First, it is preceded by a command. Second it follows that command as a clarification that would not make sense in the indicative in this context. Third, and most importantly, it would be a false statement if it was in the indicative. Once again note that the word “gifts” has been added to your translation, but it should not be there. Cross it out. Just as in 1 Corinthians 12:1, the word is once again πνευματικός / pneumatikos, being spiritual, not χάρισμα / charisma, spiritual gifts. Young’s Literal Translation is better, “*Pursue the love, and seek earnestly the spiritual things, and rather that ye may prophecy.*” They had not been pursuing what was actually spiritual which is why Paul was commanding them to do so. Putting this together with Paul’s opening statement in 1 Corinthians 12:1 he wanted them to pursue being spiritual instead of being ignorant about it. Being spiritual is the continuing theme through all three of these chapters.

The third phrase in verse 1 begins Paul’s emphasis on the importance of prophecy as compared to tongues that will run throughout the chapter. Why this emphasis? Because prophecy fulfills the purpose of the gifts and therefore demonstrates true spirituality better than how they had been using the gift of tongues. Remember Paul made it clear back in 1 Corinthians 12:7 that all gifts, ministries and effects were for the common good of the whole body. Prophecy always results in the edification of others. It builds them up in their understanding of God and walk with Christ. And while the individual should always benefit from the gift, ministry and power given to him, none of those are ever given for personal use. Their main purpose is for the benefit of others.

Keep this contrast in mind as we look at this chapter. We will find that the tenor of the whole chapter is in favor of prophesy as opposed to tongues because of the issue of edifying the whole church. We will see the value of prophesy set forth in verses 3,4,5,6,19,24,39 as compared to the value of interpreted tongues in verses 5 & 6, the selfishness of tongues if not interpreted in verses 2,4,16,17, and the non-value or negative value if tongues is indistinct and not interpreted in verses 9,11,23.

The Contrast Between Prophecy & Tongues

It is important to examine this chapter section by section rather than according to the verse divisions that have been added to the Scriptures. Those are helpful to us in finding the same point of reference, but sometimes, like in this chapter, they make a division where one should not be made that can lead to very poor interpretation.

Again, the transition of thought from chapter 13 and the opening commands of Paul’s related thought is in verse 1. “*Pursue love, yet earnestly desire the spiritual, but especially that you may prophesy.*” Why is this so important?

1 Corinthians 14:2,3 is the first contrast. “*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.*”

It is common for Pentecostals and Charismatics to cite verse 2 as proof that tongues is a prayer language. If this verse stood alone that might be a valid conclusion, but it is in a context which tells us that it is not. In the immediate context here it is set as a contrast to the superior spiritual character of prophesy which results in the edification, exhortation and consolation of men. It builds us up, tells us what we need to know and do and comforts us in our troubles. All gifts are for the common good and prophesy accomplishes that. Speaking in a tongue does not because no one understands. There is no edification, exhortation or consolation. There is only confusion for both the speaker and the hearers. The only one that could possibly know any meaning, if there is one, is God Himself because He is omniscient. This is actually sarcasm. Paul has freely used sarcasm in this book before (See: 1 Corinthians 4:6-14) and he uses it here in setting the contrast.

The second contrast is in verse 4. “*One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church.*” Pentecostals and Charismatics usually interpret this as a good thing. You should build yourself up so that you can then build up others. However, that interpretation is a

contradiction to 1 Corinthians 12 & 13. All gifts are for the common good, not the personal good. Prophecy edifies the church and so fulfills this purpose. Tongues does not. Without love tongues is just a noisy irritant. Prophecy is done for the benefit of others which is a characteristics of love. Tongues, as described here, is selfish, which is antithetical to love. That is why the statement that “*one who speaks in a tongue edifies himself*” is also sarcastic. If doing it actually did edify the individual they would grow and not be so selfish resulting in them stopping the practice.

The third contrast in 1 Corinthians 14:5 is more direct. *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.* Pentecostals and Charismatics like to emphasize that Paul wished that everyone spoke in tongues and they usually then miss the statement of the superiority of prophesy which is the actual point of the verse. Again, why is prophesy greater? Because the church is edified by it. Tongues can only do that if it is interpreted. Paul, like Moses in the Old Testament (Numbers 11:29), was not jealous of God using other people. He desired others to have and use their spiritual gifts which is why he began this chapter with a strong statement to especially desire to prophesy. Accordingly, this is a simple statement of his wish in this area. It is neither a command nor an expectation of it since he already said in 1 Corinthians 12:30 that all do not speak in tongues.

Overcoming the Weakness of Tongues

Since tongues was prone to an inherent weakness of failing to being of value to the common good of the rest of the body, Paul gave warning concerning it and instructions in how to overcome it in 1 Corinthians 14:6-19.

“But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongues, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation or of knowledge or of prophecy or of teaching? 7 Yet [even] lifeless things, either flute or harp, in producing a sound, if they do not produce a distinction in the tones, how will it be known what is played on the flute or on the harp? 8 For if the bugle produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle? 9 So also you, unless you utter by the tongue speech that is clear, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air. 10 There are, perhaps, a great many kinds of languages in the world, and no [kind] is without meaning. 11 If then I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be to the one who speaks a barbarian, and the one who speaks will be a barbarian to me. 12 So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual [gifts,] seek to abound for the edification of the church 13 Therefore let one who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.

The warning is two pronged. First, Paul gives a couple of analogies of the importance of having a clear sound. Some Charismatics claim that tongues was “ecstatic utterances of glossolalia” - ecstatic speech, if so this passage destroys such speech as having any spiritual value. Why? Without clear and distinct musical notes you can't name that tune, and an unclear bugle cannot communicate the battle commands. That would actually be dangerous for the soldiers and the army because the attempt at communication would give the wrong message of command. If the tongue used is unclear speech it is just worthless babbling and you are only speaking into the air. This is another reason we know that verse 2 was sarcasm when Paul said they were not speaking to men, but to God.

Second, even if the tongue is a clear and a meaningful language, if that language is not known by those hearing then there is no communication. Nothing of any value has been accomplished. There has been no profit to the rest of the body. There has been no revelation from God, no knowledge imparted, no prophecy made, no teaching accomplished. The gift has become worthless.

Paul's solution for this is simple. If you speak in a tongue, then pray that it is interpreted so that it will be of value in edifying the rest of the body. He ties this back to his theme in verse 12 saying that they were zealous (ζηλωτης / zêlôtês) to be spiritual. Once again we find that the word “gifts” has been

added and it does not belong. The word this time it is πνευματων / pneumaton meaning of spirit, not spiritual gifts. If they wanted to be spiritual then they needed to desire to overflow in edification of the church. Tongues without interpretation is unfruitful, but with interpretation the church is edified.

Another weakness of tongues and its solution is brought out starting in verse 14. *“For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. 15 What is [the outcome] then? I shall pray with the spirit and I shall pray with the mind also; I shall sing with the spirit and I shall sing with the mind also.”* As much as Pentecostals and Charismatics want to claim tongues as a beneficial prayer language, these verses are contrary to the idea. Before I explain that in detail let me make two quick notes about these two verses.

First, this verse gives us an insight into the nature of the gift of tongues. The person was saying whatever the Spirit led them to say, but they themselves may not have understood what they were saying. No wonder the pagan practice was an easy substitute. Second, the “spirit” in these verse is referring to the person’s spirit and not the Holy Spirit

These verses tell us that mindless praying is not acceptable, and without interpretation, that is what praying in a tongue would be. The phrases in verse 15 are not an either or but a both and. You do not pray or sing in spirit sometimes and with the mind at other times. You are to pray and sing in both spirit and with the mind at all times.

Paul strengthens his case for this in verses 16-19. *16 “Otherwise if you bless in the spirit [only,] how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the “Amen” at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying? 17 For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified. 18 I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all; 19 however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind, that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue.”*

This is a practical illustration of his point. What good is it to give thanks in a public place if with you do not know what you are talking about. Can they properly pronounce and “amen” to what you have said if they did not understand you? The answer should be no since without knowing what you said they cannot discern if you were giving a blessing or a curse. Paul made that point back in 1 Corinthians 12:3. Even if your prayer was genuine thanksgiving the other man was not edified by it and so it was without public value. Why would someone pray in public if it was not to have others join into his prayer with him? Jesus corrected the Pharisees for their hypocritical practice of doing this in Matthew 6:5-8.

Pentecostals and Charismatics also commonly use verse 18 to promote tongues since Paul thanked God for giving him the gift of tongues, yet it seems they never bother tying that with verse 19. Paul’s statement is quite strong. Since the purpose of the gifts was to build up the church, he would rather speak five words with his mind, just one phrase or sentence, than ten thousand words in a tongue that those in the church did not understand.

This brings up the next subject Paul addresses. What then was the purpose of tongues if its use in the church was so inferior to prophecy?

The Purpose of Tongues - 1 Corinthians 14:20-22

20 Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be babes, but in your thinking be mature. 21 In the Law it is written, “By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people, and even so they will not listen to Me,” says the Lord. 22 So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to unbelievers; but prophecy [is for a sign], not to unbelievers, but to those who believe.

Paul gives three commands in verse 10. First, to no longer be like children in their thinking. Second, to be infantile concerning evil. Third, to be mature in their thinking. While Paul wanted them to be ignorant and innocent when it came to evil, he wanted them to become mature in how they thought. Those general commands have direct application to us as well. I meet too many Christians that are the

opposite. They seem to have an adept knowledge of evil and its practices while at the same time they show little evidence of having their minds renewed by the Spirit and the Word of God. But what else could be expected when so many professing Christians spend such little time in the Scriptures and thinking about the things above, and instead spend their time being friends with the world resulting in being conformed to its reasoning and practice.

All of 1 Corinthians describes their childish thinking in many areas. That was Paul's complaint against them back in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3. They were babes that could only handle milk instead of spiritual men who could handle the solid food of more difficult doctrine. In the immediate context here in 1 Corinthians 14:21 Paul points out that they had neglected to check out prophetic history about the use of tongues. They were following their former pagan practices resulting in a childish false spirituality characterized by selfishness and pride instead of checking out what the Old Testament prophets said concerning the gift of tongues.

Paul quotes Isaiah 28:11 which is from a passage of judgement upon Ephraim because of their rebellion against the Lord. They will know they have been judged when God has to speak to them, the Jews, through people of foreign languages. What was the Biblical record about those who spoke in tongues? They spoke about the mighty deeds of God (Acts 2:11). The purpose of Biblical speaking in tongues was a sign of judgement upon the unbelieving Jew. That is exactly what happened in Acts 2.

Isaiah 28:13 records that judgement declared by this sign also included a coming captivity. We find that after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 that tongues did cease on its own as described in 1 Corinthians 13:8. Its purpose had been fulfilled and so it stopped. It is interesting to note that 1 Corinthians was written about A.D. 55 and no later epistle by any of the Biblical writers - Paul, John, Peter, Jude or the writer of Hebrews mentions tongues at all. Historically, tongues are not found, alluded to or even hinted at in any of the Apostolic Fathers. Chrysostom and Augustine (4th century) both described tongues having ceased. Chrysostom said of them, "*our ignorance of the facts referred to and by their cessation, being such as then used to occur, but now no longer take place.*" Augustine added, "*These were signs adapted to the time . . . That thing was done for a betokening, and it passed away.*"

The Improper Use of Tongues - 1 Corinthians 14:23-25

Paul continues on in 1 Corinthians 14:23-25 to describe the madness of their practice and again show the superiority of prophecy. *23 If therefore the whole church should assemble together and all speak in tongues, and ungifted men or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad? 24 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all; 25 the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you.*

Many of us have had this experience ourselves or personally know someone else who has had it when they were in a Charismatic meeting or heard it on radio, TV or a recording. Note that it is both the ungifted Christian and the unbeliever that come to the same conclusion when they hear the confusion of many people speaking in tongues at the same time. These people are out of their minds. Prophecy is superior because that same person, whether an unbeliever or an ungifted believer, will be brought to conviction and the eventual worship of God. Proper use of a spiritual gift causes others to recognize God is at work.

Order in the Church - 1 Corinthians 14:26-33

In 1 Corinthians 14:26-33 Paul explains the proper practice of tongues. This is important because tongues was still an operative gift at that time and those who claim it for today are obligated to obey it.

26 What is [the outcome] then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. 27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, [it should be] by two or at the most three, and [each] in turn, and let one interpret;

28 but if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God. 29 And let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment. 30 But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, let the first keep silent. 31 For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted; 32 and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets; 33 for God is not [a God] of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

Paul's emphasis is that all things are to be done for edification. His instructions are very practical in keeping the meeting orderly because God is not a God of confusion. Tongues must be interpreted. People are to speak one at a time. What is said is subject to Biblical examination. The tragedy in our own day is that while there are some notable exceptions, the vast majority of Charismatics show their utter spiritual immaturity in either their ignorance of these commands or their defiance of them.

Since Paul was on the subject of order in the church, he briefly talks about women being silent in the church in verses 34-36. Without getting into the details of this section it boils down to women demonstrating their own true spirituality by their submissive spirit even as Paul had pointed out earlier in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16. Peter speaks of the same thing in 1 Peter 3.

Paul concludes the chapter with a warning and a final emphasis on the superiority of prophecy and proper order in the church. The warning in verse 37 is that those who want to think of themselves as prophets or being spiritual (πνευματικός / pneumatikos) must recognize that what Paul has said in these chapters are the Lord's commands. These are not optional instructions. Those who do not follow them should not be recognized in the church.

That warning should be especially meaningful to those who think tongues are still operative today. Charismatics are fond of pointing out that Paul said in verse 39 *do not forbid to speak in tongues*, but they usually miss the warning in verses 37 & 38 and the final emphasis in verse 39 and 40 to *desire earnestly to prophesy* and that *all things be done properly and in an orderly manner*. If tongues are not used properly those doing it should not be recognized. They are not spiritual people. Requiring them to meet the Biblical standard for tongues cannot be construed as forbidding tongues. In addition, in view of the fact that the purpose of Biblical tongues was fulfilled and historically the practice did cease, those who wish to practice it today need to make the Biblical case that what they are doing is Biblical tongues and that their practice of it is following the Biblical instructions of this chapter. That is not forbidding Biblical tongues, but it is forbidding those things that seek to masquerade as such.

Conclusions

True spirituality will be manifested in the proper use of spiritual gifts to build up the rest of the body of believers, which is actually an action of love. This emphasis is seen through out these chapters and illustrated in the reason prophecy is superior to speaking in tongues.

1 Cor. 12:7 “ . . . each one is given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good.”

1 Cor. 12: 12-30 - The analogy if the body.

1 Cor. 13:4-7 - The nature of love

1 Cor. 14:1 - “. . . but especially that you may prophesy . . .”

1 Cor. 14:3 - Prophecy “speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.”

1 Cor. 14:4 - “the one who prophesies edifies the church”

1 Cor. 14:5 - “. . . greater is the one who prophesies . . .”

1 Cor. 14:5 - “. . . so that the church may receive edifying”

1 Cor. 14:6 - “what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation or of knowledge or of prophecy or of teaching”

1 Cor. 14:19 - “. . . speak five words with my mind, that I may instruct others also . . .”

1 Cor. 14:24 - “If all prophesy . . . he is convicted, called to account, disclose his heart, he will fall down and worship . . .”

1 Cor. 14:26 - *Let all things be done for edification*

1 Cor. 14:31 - *“prophecy . . . so that all may learn and all may be exhorted.”*

1 Cor. 14:39- *Therefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy.*

1 Cor. 14:40 - *But let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner.*

The purpose of tongues was a sign of judgement to unbelieving Jews (1 Cor. 14:21-22; Isaiah 28).

Tongues is only valuable to the body if it is interpreted

1 Cor. 14:5,6 - *“ . . . one speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying . . . ”*

1 Cor. 14:27 - *“If one speaks in a tongue. . . let one interpret.”*

Without interpretation, tongues are contrary to the purpose of spiritual gifts for they are selfish and without value.

1 Cor. 14:2 - *“ . . . does not speak to men, but to God; for no one understands, but in spirit he speaks mysteries. ”*

1 Cor. 14:4 - *“ . . . edifies himself ”*

1 Cor. 14:9 - *“ . . . how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air. ”*

1 Cor. 14:11- *“ . . . they will be barbarians to each other ”*

1 Cor. 14:16 - *“how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the “Amen” at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying? ”*

1 Cor. 14:17- *“ . . . the other man is not edified. ”*

1 Cor. 14:23 - *“ . . . will they not say you are mad? ”*

True spirituality is manifested in love which includes using spiritual gifts, ministries and power for their proper purpose in building up the rest of the body of Christ to maturity in Him (Ephesians 4:11-16). Paul illustrated this with the contrast between prophecy and tongues, but the truth applies to every gift. Anything less than that is selfish, unloving and definitely not spiritual.

Sermon Notes - 11/16/2008
Being Edifying - 1 Corinthians 14

Introduction

False ideas about _____ leave you as easy prey for our adversary

1 Corinthians is Paul's rebuke and _____ of their many errors

1 Corinthians 12-14 is all one section dealing with the overall subject of being _____

The Corinthians were ignorant of true _____ (πνευματικός / pneumatikos), not spiritual gifts (1:7)

They were mimicking their _____ worship practices in the church with someone even blaspheming Christ

Every spiritual gift, ministry and power is a manifestation of the _____ and given by God as He wills

The purpose of all spiritual gifts, ministries and power is for the _____ good of the body.

Every believer has been _____ by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13)

The Corinthians thought they were spiritual, but they were actually _____

1 Corinthians 12:31 is an indicative stating what they were _____ *"But you are coveting the greater gifts"*

Without _____, the various spiritual gifts are of no value - 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Paul's description of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 is a _____ of their errors, not a full definition

Love is _____ to spiritual gifts because it remains forever while gifts are transitory.

Tongues will _____ of themselves when their purpose is fulfilled.

The Superiority Spirituality of Edification

Two commands: 1) Pursue _____ 2) Desire earnestly spiritual _____ (πνευματικός / pneumatikos)

Especially that you may _____ because it fits the purpose of the gifts better than tongues

The Contrast Between Prophecy & Tongues - 1 Corinthians 14:2-5

_____ edifies, exhorts and consoles.

_____ speaks mysteries that only God could understand - this is sarcasm.

_____ edifies the church, expresses love, & fulfills the purpose all gifts have in the common good

Tongues without _____ is selfish, lacks love, and is contrary to the purpose of spiritual gifts

Prophecy is greater because it _____ the church. Tongues can only do that if interpreted

Overcoming the Weakness of Tongues - 1 Corinthians 14:6-19.

Unclear speech _____ communicate, it is speaking into the air

Even a clear tongue in a meaningful language is _____ benefit to those who do not understand it

Zealous to be spiritual will be seen in the _____ of the church. Tongues must be interpreted

Prayer and singing are to be with _____ the mind and spirit, not either the mind or the spirit

Prayer in tongues without interpretation does not edify, it only _____

_____ words understood is better than a thousand in a tongue that is not understood

The Purpose of Tongues - 1 Corinthians 14:20-22

3 commands: Do not be _____ in your thinking. Be infantile concerning evil. Be _____ in your thinking

The purpose of tongues was given in Isaiah 28 - a sign of _____ on the Jews - including captivity.

Historically, tongues _____ on their own after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70

_____ are not mentioned by the Apostolic Fathers, and Chrysostom & Augustine say they had ceased

The Improper Use of Tongues - 1 Corinthians 14:23-25

Tongues used improperly results in the conclusion that those doing it are _____

_____ results in conviction, the worship of God and the conclusion God is present

Proper Order in the Church - 1 Corinthians 14:26-33, 34-36

All things are to be done for _____. Tongues must be _____. Order is maintained

Women are to show their spirituality by demonstrating a _____ spirit (see also 1 Corinthians 11)

Conclusions

Those who were spiritual would recognize what Paul said were the Lord's _____

Unless tongues meet the Biblical standard of practice, they _____ be recognized

1 Corinthians 12-14 is about true spirituality being _____ and using gifts properly for the common good.

Tongues is only valuable to the body if it is interpreted so that it can _____ +6

Without interpretation, Tongues is _____ to the purpose of spiritual gifts

KIDS CORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help. **Young Children** - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Do one or more of the following: 1) Count how many times the words "Prophecy" and "tongue" are mentioned. 2) Talk with your parents what it means to be truly spiritual.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. What is the danger of not understanding what it means to be truly spiritual? What is the purpose of the book of 1 Corinthians? What is Paul correcting in 1 Corinthians 12-14? How had the Corinthians shown their lack of true spirituality? What is the origin and purpose of all spiritual gifts, ministries and powers? What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit and what does it accomplish? How does Paul's body analogy help you understand the nature of the church and the relationship of its members? How is love a superior demonstration of being spiritual? How does Paul's definition of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 correct the Corinthians? Is that passage a full definition of love? If not, what elements are missing? How do tongues differ from knowledge and prophecy in why and when they will no longer be practiced? Why does Paul contrast prophecy and tongues throughout 1 Corinthians 14? How is prophecy superior to tongues? What are the indications that tongues were being used in a selfish manner by the Corinthians? Are tongues a prayer language? Why or why not? What is the value of tongues if they are not interpreted? If they are interpreted? Where is Paul sarcastic in 1 Corinthians? In Chapter 14? What does the Old Testament say about the gift of tongues? What then was the purpose of tongues? When was that purpose fulfilled? What is the historical evidence that supports that claim? Have you had any experiences similar to 1 Corinthians 14:23? To 1 Corinthians 14:24-25? Paul gives specific instructions concerning order in the church. Explain their application in your own church and Bible studies. What can be concluded if a church service is one of disorder and confusion? How can you distinguish between Biblical tongues and its mimics? When should someone be stopped from speaking in tongues?