

## 1Corinthians – Week 53

### I. Review: 1Cor. 14:6-19

#### A. Paul stresses the importance of understanding a message by using three illustrations

##### i. Music:

1. If an instrument did not have distinct notes, it would not impact the listener.

##### ii. Military:

1. If the bugle did not have a distinct sound, it would not impact the soldier.

##### iii. Voices of the World:

1. Every voice (language) has meaning.

2. If the language cannot be understood, it would not impact the hearer.

#### B. In the Church, everything should be done for the edification, encouragement and consolation of the hearer.

### II. Continuation:

#### A. Paul urges them to grow up

##### i. 1Cor. 14:20 (ESV), “*Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature.*”

1. A child is pleased with anything that is amusing.

2. The Corinthians were treating the gift of tongues as if it were a toy to be amused by.

3. He urges them be spiritual adults, especially when exercising certain spiritual gifts!

a. A mature mind knows that everything should be done to the edification, encouragement and consolation of the hearer!

4. At the same time, he urges them to be as innocent as infants when it comes to evil

a. An infant knows nothing of divisions, improper passions, envy, etc.

b. Paul is urging them to be found innocent of misconduct and misuse of the spiritual gifts!

5. Now, Paul explains the purpose of tongues...

##### ii. 1Cor. 14:21-22 (ESV), “*In the Law it is written, “By people of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord.”<sup>22</sup> Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers.*”

1. Paul explains the purpose of tongues by using a passage from Isaiah 28:11-12.

a. Note: It is interesting to note that the term “Law” does not merely denote the Law of Moses, but it includes the whole Old Testament.

b. When ancient Israel refused to listen to God’s Word, the Lord told them that He would speak to them through a foreign language.

i. This was fulfilled when Assyria invaded their land.

ii. The Assyrian tongue was a sign to them that they did not believe God’s word to them.

2. In like manner, “tongues” is a sign for the unbeliever – it was an attention getter for the unbeliever...

a. In Acts 2, it was the gift of tongues that caught the attention of thousands of unbelievers, causing them to hear an intelligible message (the gospel) that saved 3000 of them that day!

b. In Acts 10, it was the gift of tongues that caused the Jewish Christians to come to the belief that Gentiles, also, were included in God’s plan of salvation!

3. Therefore, Paul’s admonition to them is this: tongues, unless interpreted, should not be exercised in public worship.

4. However, prophesy should be exercised because it will edify, encourage and console the believer and at the same time, convict the unsaved as we shall see next...
  - iii. 1Cor. 14:23 (ESV), *“If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds?”*
    1. If a non-believer came to a public assembly and heard several people speaking foreign words, they would be like those who said in Acts 2:13, *“They are filled with new wine.”*
      - a. Some thought the apostles were drunk when they heard them speaking in various foreign languages (about 13 different languages were being spoken).
      - b. In the same way, an unbeliever walking into such an assembly would say, *“These people are nuts! I’m out of here!”* Especially when things are done disorderly, which Paul will address in verses 26-33a.
  - iv. 1Cor. 14:24-25 (ESV), *“But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider (Grk. unlearned) enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, <sup>25</sup> the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.”*
    1. Paul’s point is this: tongues, without interpretation, will not produce conviction, whereas, prophecy does.
      - a. There will no real conversion unless the unbeliever (or the unlearned, that is, an outsider) understands what is being said!
      - b. Note: Many churches today “convert” members using entertainment. Such “conversions” are not based on conviction of sin.
    2. True conversion happened in Acts 2 – when 3000 heard and understood the message, convicting them and converting them to Christ!
    3. Notice verse 25: What is being understood by the unsaved causes his sin to be exposed!
      - a. He feels that the speaker is directly addressing him!
      - b. The Spirit of God works in convicting his soul!
      - c. And concludes that God is really in the midst of the congregation!
- B. Now Paul turns to the subject of orderly worship...
- i. He lets them know that if they are going to impact both the saved and unsaved, they must exercise their gifts in a mature way and do things in an orderly and proper fashion...
  - ii. 1Cor. 14:26-33a (ESV), *“What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. <sup>27</sup> If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. <sup>28</sup> But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God. <sup>29</sup> Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. <sup>30</sup> If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. <sup>31</sup> For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged, <sup>32</sup> and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. <sup>33</sup> For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.”*
    1. Paul gives these directives:
      - a. Tongues:
        - i. Allow at the most 3 tongue-speakers to speak, each in turn.
        - ii. Let the tongue-speakers remain quiet if there is no one to interpret what is being said.

