

1 Corinthians 14:1-19

4-11-12

Curious & Confused!

I. Slide#1 Announce:

- A. This Sunday for our **Children at Risk mtg @ 3pm**, we are showing the film, *Nefarius*, Merchant of Souls. Behind the Veil of the sex industry. [*Ni-fair-ee-uhs* = extremely wicked]
1. It is a documentary that exposes the disturbing trends in modern day slavery.

II. Slide#2 Intro:

- A. Paul now places some **strict guidelines**, on the **value & roles**, of **tongues & prophesy**, to the **confused & curious** Corinthian church, regarding gifts.
1. Let's remember that he is specifically concerned with the order of the gifts in the **church rather than** used **privately**.
 2. See "**church**" in vss. 4,5,12,19,23,28,35.
- B. Paul deals with the 2 major objectives for the church:
1. The **edifying** of the believers! (12)
 2. The **conversion** of the unsaved! (25)
 - a) This is the 2-fold purpose of the church,...let no church forget it!
 - b) This chapter also shows **what we should find** when we go to church!
 - (1) Teaching & preaching(3); praying & singing(15).
- C. *A worship service should lift up the Lord & build up the saints, not puff up the participants!*¹
- D. **Outline: Building; Benefiting; Blessing...** others in the church!

III. Slide#3 BUILDING! (1-5)

- A. (1) **Note:** this chapter is set up by, "I show you a more excellent way"(12:31); all of chapter 13; & now 14:1 "Pursue love".
- B. **Pursue love** – or, *Let love be your highest goal!* (NLT) or, *Go after a life of love as if your life depended on it - because it does.* (msg)
1. Hunt after it, strive after it, pursue after it...**habitually!**
 2. **Love** should be your **ultimate goal**.
- C. **Desire spiritual gifts** – be zealous for. [Where the word Zealot comes from]
- D. **Slide#4** (2) **Tongues** - γλωσσολαλία/Glossolalia (Glossa/tongues - lalein/speak)
1. **Language is** an agreement between people that certain sounds have certain meanings.

¹ Warren Wiersbe, With The Word, pg.753

2. “Glossolalia is the spontaneous utterance of uncomprehended & seemingly random vocal sounds.”²
3. “Speaking in tongues is **Prayer** or **Praise** spoken in syllables not understood by the speaker.”³
 - a) **Prayer** - 1 Cor.14:14 [Note also, it is “to God!” vs.2]
 - b) **Praise** – Acts 10:46 [Pete/Cornelius] **For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God**
4. Tongues add a rich dimension to your Prayer life!
 - a) “It is a gift whereby a man might be assisted in his worship of God, or in his communicating with God.”⁴
 - b) Some ask – “You don’t have to speak in tongues do you?” **No**, but wouldn’t you want to if the H.S. deemed to give it to you?

E. **Slide#5** (3) **Prophecies!**

F. We tend to think of prophecy as **predicting** the future.

1. Before the Scriptures were complete, Gods message came through **the prophets**.
2. “So the prophet came & ministered the Word, until the Word came to minister prophecy.”⁵ (Swindoll)

G. **Do not put a narrow definition on this word. It literally means *preaching, testimony, witnessing in our daily life*.**⁶ (Redpath)

1. William Barclay translates this as “the gift of **forthtelling the truth!**”
2. It doesn’t have to mean **foretelling** the future, **but** it is the **speaking forth** of the mind & counsel of God, **or** the will & message of God.
3. W.E. Vine says, “Though much of OT prophecy was purely **predictive**...prophecy is not necessarily, nor even primarily, **fore-telling**. It is the declaration of that which cannot be known by natural means (Mt.26:68 **Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?**) it is the **forth-telling** of the will of God, whether to the reference of the past, the present, or the future.”

H. **Slide#6** Here is what prophesy produces & this should be **the 3 arrow aim** of *all preaching!*

1. **Slide#6a Aim for Edification** – To build up or increase a man’s knowledge of Christian truth & his ability to live the Christian life.
 - a) See *teach* in vs.19.
2. **Slide#6b Aim for Exhortation** – Encouragement, consolation.
 - a) In every group there are those who need to be **encouraged**.

² New International Dictionary of the Christian Church.

³ Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology.

⁴ Chuck Smith, 1 Cor.14:2 notes.

⁵ Chuck Swindoll, pg.26.

⁶ Alan Redpath, pg.184.

- b) In preaching, “you may humble a man through showing him his sin, but **it is a failure unless** it ends by pointing him to the grace of God that can enable him to conquer it.” (William Barclay)
3. **Slide#6c Aim for Comfort** – (a synonym of the previous word). It means comfort & consolation with a great degree of **tenderness**.
- a) “To comfort all who mourn,...To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness” (Is.61:2,3)
- I. (4) **Edifies himself** - Don’t see this as being *selfish*, Jesus prayed for Himself (Jn.17).
1. It is Ok to build yourself up in **Devotions** right?
 2. Also in **prayer time & in the Word!**
 3. **But...**as far as **the church setting** goes...that’s different!
- J. **Edifies the church** – thus prophesies are greater(5)
1. Seek gifts that benefit the **whole** congregation.
- K. (5) **Unless he interprets** – **Note:** Acts 2 is different than anywhere else Tongues is used!
1. In Acts 2:8, **we hear each in our own language**.
 - a) Everywhere else tongues is mentioned, men **were**n’t understanding what was being spoken (1 Cor.14:2,16,19).
 - b) **If the Tongues talked about by Paul was the same as in Acts 2 when** would there ever be an *Interpretation* needed?
- L. If the gift of **tongues** is Spirit-inspired utterance that is not intelligible; **than**, the gift of **prophecy** is Spirit-inspired utterance that is intelligible. It has a recognizable vocabulary through which God’s messages are communicated.

IV. **Slide#7 BENEFITING! (6-15)**

- A. (6) **What shall I profit you?** – (profit = benefit)
1. There is no public profit when tongues are being used.
- B. (7-9) **He now uses 3 analogies from...**
1. **Slide#8 The Music world**–if notes are not played w/tone/pitch/time they’re only *noises*
 - a) **Or**, our bird Eli, trying to repeat “*Jesus loves me*” whistle.
 2. **Slide#9 The Military world** – if the bugler just plays random notes, the troops wouldn’t know to retreat or advance. [If he whips out some *Herb Alpert* they wont know to advance]
 3. **Slide#10 The Daily world** – a language must be clear & distinct for the message to be understood.

- C. **Slide#11,12** (10-12) Here Paul **steers** their zeal in the right direction. *Don't squash zeal, steer it!*
- D. (13) He doesn't normally understand what he is speaking.
1. "Tongues are the abasement of All Pride of Intellect!"
 2. They keep us **humble**; help prevent **intellectual pride**; & remind us **God is greater than our understanding** & that He **works in ways** that transcend our understanding.
- E. (14) **My spirit prays** - "This is the ability to express ourselves to God w/o funneling our feelings through our intellect!"
1. Sometimes it seems words can't express exactly what we feel.
 2. **Have you ever come to a place where your feelings are greater than your capacity to express them?**
 3. This is bypassing the *narrow channel* of your intellect.
- F. (15) **The conclusion...both** are important.
1. **Note:** "w/the spirit" is contrasted with "w/understanding".
 - a) And see it follow in vs.16 "w/the spirit"

V. **Slide#13 BLESSING! (16-19)**

- A. **Slide#14** (16,17) **Giving thanks** is the issue!
- B. (18) In this verse (& verse 5) Paul places the importance on **Tongues!**
1. **What arrogance** if we willingly reject such a precious way that He has provided for us to communicate w/Him!
 2. Pray for it & **earnestly seek it**. [Get alone w/God – Pray, give thanks, Praise Him – In faith let your tongue go! **Or, Detach your tongue from your intellect, & attach it to your spirit!**]
- C. (19) In this verse (& verse 1) Paul places the importance on **Prophecy!**
1. **Ever sit through a church service in another language?**
- D. **Slide#15,16,17** - 10,000 verses 5!
- E. **10,000 words in a tongue** – We are not to come to display our spirituality.
1. Only **5 words?** – **Yep**, 5 would be enough!
 - a) "For your sin, Christ died!"
 - b) "Christ, lived, died, buried, Risen."
 - c) "Deceived, Repent, Believe, Receive, Cleave."
 - d) "Sought, Fought, Distraught, Caught, Bought."
- F. **Remember** - "A worship service should **lift up** the Lord & **build up** the saints, **not puff up** the participants!"⁷

⁷ Warren Wiersbe, With The Word, pg.753

G. (MSG) ch.14

1-3 Go after a life of love as if your life depended on it—because it does. Give yourselves to the gifts God gives you. Most of all, try to proclaim his truth. If you praise him in the private language of tongues, God understands you but no one else does, for you are sharing intimacies just between you and him. But when you proclaim his truth in everyday speech, you're letting others in on the truth so that they can grow and be strong and experience his presence with you.

4-5 The one who prays using a private “prayer language” certainly gets a lot out of it, but proclaiming God's truth to the church in its common language brings the whole church into growth and strength. I want all of you to develop intimacies with God in prayer, but please don't stop with that. Go on and proclaim his clear truth to others. It's more important that everyone have access to the knowledge and love of God in language everyone understands than that you go off and cultivate God's presence in a mysterious prayer language—unless, of course, there is someone who can interpret what you are saying for the benefit of all.

6-8 Think, friends: If I come to you and all I do is pray privately to God in a way only he can understand, what are you going to get out of that? If I don't address you plainly with some insight or truth or proclamation or teaching, what help am I to you? If musical instruments—flutes, say, or harps—aren't played so that each note is distinct and in tune, how will anyone be able to catch the melody and enjoy the music? If the trumpet call can't be distinguished, will anyone show up for the battle?

9-12 So if you speak in a way no one can understand, what's the point of opening your mouth? There are many languages in the world and they all mean something to someone. But if I don't understand the language, it's not going to do me much good. It's no different with you. Since you're so eager to participate in what God is doing, why don't you concentrate on doing what helps everyone in the church?

13-17 So, when you pray in your private prayer language, don't hoard the experience for yourself. Pray for the insight and ability to bring others into that intimacy. If I pray in tongues, my spirit prays but my mind lies fallow, and all that intelligence is wasted. So what's the solution? The answer is simple enough. Do both. I should be spiritually free and expressive as I pray, but I should also be thoughtful and mindful as I pray. I should sing with my spirit, and sing with my mind. If you give a blessing using your private prayer language, which no one else understands, how can some outsider who has just shown up and has no idea what's going on know when to say “Amen”? Your blessing might be beautiful, but you have very effectively cut that person out of it.

18-19 I'm grateful to God for the gift of praying in tongues that he gives us for praising him, which leads to wonderful intimacies we enjoy with him. I enter into this as much or more than any of you. But when I'm in a church assembled for worship, I'd rather say five words that everyone can understand and learn from than say ten thousand that sound to others like gibberish.