

From Sinners to Saints

1 Corinthians 14:1-19

- Chapter thirteen that great encouragement on love ends with the triad to abide in faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love. Now in chapter fourteen the Apostle is going to go back to the exercising of spiritual gifts within the body, and how they are to be used in a Church service, with friends, or alone just you and God, this chapter is going to tell us how to conduct ourselves properly before God.

V1-19

- **V1-4** back in chapters 12-13 we are told that as great as it is to have spiritual gifts, **the possession of gifts** is not as important as the **exercising** of these **gifts in love**. Which is why at the end of chapter twelve the Apostle told the gift obsessive Corinthians that “**he will show them a more excellent way**”, and that way is love.
- To drive home that point chapter fourteen begins by telling us that before anyone goes after spiritual gifts no how matter how grand and great they are, first one should pursue love, as according to the end of Ch 13 love is the greatest to possess.
- Notice he says there is nothing wrong with them desiring spiritual gifts, but they had made a Godly desire into an obsessive pursuit, and for the believer our only real pursuit is love, and after that everything else then falls into place.
- I always appreciated the balance that Calvary Chapels had when it comes to the gifts as we get beat up by both sides, those who over emphasis the gifts accuse us of grieving the Spirit, while those who disregard the sign gifts say were too charismatic, so we get beat up from both sides, but such is staying biblical.
- After telling them to desire spiritual gifts, the Corinthian Church is told the gift that they should truly want is “Prophecy”, and the reason he gives is found in **V3** because it edifies, exhorts, and comforts. Of course the gift they coveted the most was tongues, and just like today its because outwardly it appears like the most spiritual.
- Which is why in some of the churches I knew of they had speaking in tongues classes, services called tarrying in which lasted all night, and tongues on demand to prove that you had the Spirit, as many taught tongues was the evidence of salvation.

- Chapter fourteen clears all of this up for us thankfully, in **V1** prophecy is to be desired more than speaking in tongues, and the reason is prophecy edifies, exhorts, and comforts the entire church, while tongues only edifies the person speaking it **V4**. This is very important as **V3** says the person speaking in tongues does not speak to people but to God, unless there is an interpretation for all to understand.
- **V5-7** he goes on and explains it further telling the church that he desired that everyone spoke in tongues, this implies that we don't all possess this gift, but he throws them a curveball by telling them that the gift of prophecy is better and therefore should be more desired than speaking in tongues. Its for the reasons previously stated as one edifies a person while the other edifies the whole church.
- If someone comes speaking to you in tongues but there is no interpretation then there will be no understanding, and he uses a musical instrument to demonstrate his point. If a flute or harp begins to make sounds but the notes are all over the place the rest of the band doesn't know what song to play or whether to stop or keep playing, or the audience whether to clap or be quiet, its just a bunch of confusion.
- **V8-11** in ancient times soldiers marched, aligned their formations, knew when to attack or retreat based on the buglers horn sound, if he is making sounds that no one understands everyone is confused and many will get killed for lack of understanding. So is someone is speaking in an unknown language and there is none to interpret its just words in the air, you may as well be two strangers from different countries speaking in different languages that no one understands.
- Prophecy on the other hand is much different, as it contains both foretelling and forthtelling, as it entails the predictive which is related to the foretelling of things to come, and revelation which is related to forthtelling of things previously unknown.
- Prophecy has the primary elements of prediction and revelation, but can also contain elements of forthtelling that come from scripture that's already been written so when I come to the pulpit and The Spirit of God shares truth through the scriptures and speaks to your life although I don't know anything about what is going on with you in that area that is revelation being revealed from forthtelling.

- **V12-13** the goal when practicing spiritual gifts is to edify the body and not receive some praise or applause individually for something that edifies no one but yourself. So if someone speaks in a tongue pray for the interpretation so others may benefit also, but with if no one can interpret? **V27-28** says if there is no interpretation then there should be no one speaking in tongues, many churches disobey this command don't they, not caring if there is no interpretation, which is disobedience.
- **V14-17** the key to edifying others is understanding scripture, if The Word says I shouldn't do something even though others are then I need to listen to The Word because my desire is to bless The God Who wrote The Word. How many people say I must listen to my spirit, but they don't have understanding, scripture says its because their understanding is unfruitful, and yet they continue to do it anyway.
- We are to pray with the Spirit, and pray for understanding, sing with the Spirit and sing with understanding, nothing unbiblical coming across the screens. For to do so is to mislead those who come through our doors not understanding all that is happening but believing that you know what your doing so they amen to it. This is telling us that we will be held accountable for misleading visitors into falsehood.
- **V18-19** he ends with the revelation that he speaks in tongues, this shuts up those who thought he was just jealous that they spoke in tongues and had this gift but he didn't. **V19** but he'd rather while in church speak just five words of understanding that he may teach and give others edification than ten thousand words in a tongue. Unfortunately that is not the attitude most in the church have for others sadly.