

# L136 | I Corinthians | Charity & Spiritual Gifts in the Church | I Cor. 14:1-12

## I. Intro/Review:

- Charity
- Charity never fails
  - Prophecies fail
  - Tongues cease
  - Knowledge vanish away
- Illustration of child to man to detail "in part" and "perfect"

## II. Preview:

- Prophecy is greater than tongues because it edifies the church in accord with charity (v1-5)
- Paul's illustrations
  - v6 - when he comes
  - v7 - instruments
    - v8 - trumpet in battle
- The fundamentals of speech and the meaning of voice

## III. Sermon:

- **Prophecy is greater than tongues because it edifies the church in accord with charity (v1-4)**

**Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.  
{1 Corinthians 14:1}**

1. **"Follow after charity"**
  - Charity from 1 Corinthians 13
2. **"Desire spiritual gifts"**
  - The spiritual gifts were given by the Spirit for the Spirit
  - The problem was elevating some above others (1 Cor. 12)
3. **"But rather that ye may prophesy."**
  - Desire "prophesy" - isn't that elevating one above another
  - They desired spiritual gifts that were showy and used out of context was selfish
  - Prophecy is a spiritual gift that profits everyone and therefore is in line with following "charity"

**For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.  
{1 Corinthians 14:2}**

- **"for"** - further explanation
- **"he that speaketh in an unknown tongue"**
  - "tongue" vs. "tongues"
  - Gibberish or babble of the pagans isn't of the languages thus singular
  - Therefore the tongue is completely "unknown"
  - I think "tongue" here refers to the tongue of the "he that speaketh" (singular)
- **"speaketh not unto men, but unto God:"**
  - When the hearers don't understand they speak not to me, but to God
- **"for no man understandeth him;"**
  - No man that doesn't know the tongue doesn't understand
- **"howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries."**
  - In his own inner man, in his knowledge and understanding he speaks mysteries

**But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.  
{1 Corinthians 14:3}**

- **"but"** - the contrast to tongues
- **"he that prophesieth speaketh unto men"**
  - Tongues speak not unto men, but unto God - in the spirit mysteries
  - Prophecy speaks unto men - to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.
    - Edification - building up the church in understanding - growth
    - Exhortation - instruction and admonition - calling to action
    - Comfort - aid in affliction, calm and console

**He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.  
{1 Corinthians 14:4}**

- **"He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself"**
  - The edification of the one speaking in a tongue unknown to the men only edifies himself
  - What does this mean?
    - "in the spirit speaketh mysteries" - therefore he doesn't understand nor do the hearers understand
    - No profit toward the church
- **"but he that prophesieth edifieth the church."**
  - Prophesying serves the church and builds the church providing the knowledge and understanding of God

**I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.**

{1 Corinthians 14:5}

- **"I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied:"**
  - Paul desires more that they all prophesied - Moses has the same desire (Num. 11)
- **"for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues"**
  - Due to the edification that prophesy provides
- **"except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying."**
  - The interpreter essentially functions in prophesy when he interprets the tongue
  - The interpreter of the tongue is then able to edify the church
- **Paul's illustrations**
  - v6 - when he comes to them - "a sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

**Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?**  
{1 Corinthians 14:6}

- **"Now brethren,"** - illustrations
- **"if I come unto you speaking with tongues,"**
  - **"what shall I profit you"** - no profit for the Corinthians if Paul speaks in tongues (although it would be a manifestation)
  - **"except I shall speak to you either"**
    - **"by revelation"** - something new
    - **"by knowledge"** - in part
    - **"by prophesying"** - communication of the word of God
    - **"by doctrine"** - teaching of the communication of the word, that which is in part, or some new revelation

**And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?**  
{1 Corinthians 14:7-8}

- v7 - instruments
- **"And even things without life giving sound"**
  - Words give life - that which comes from the soul (heart)
  - **"whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds"**
    - The tongue needs to be known to the hearer so that distinction profits

- **"how shall it be known what is piped or harped?"**
  - There is meaning when instruments give distinction in the sounds
- **"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"**
  - Example of the distinction of the sound for preparation to the battle

**So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.**  
**{1 Corinthians 14:9}**

- **"So likewise ye,"** - drawing upon the illustrations of Paul coming and the instruments
- **"except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood"**
  - A known tongue, a known language
- **"how shall it be known what is spoken?"**
  - **"for ye shall speak into the air."** - make no impact upon the hearer - becomes like a non-life giving sound

**There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.**  
**{1 Corinthians 14:10}**

- The fundamentals of speech and the meaning of voice
- **"There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world"**
  - Kinds of voices are or are the fruit of the confounding of the language in Genesis 11
- **"and none of them is without signification."**
  - Matter of fact - they all have significance
  - Use the voice that is significant in your church

**Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me.**  
**{1 Corinthians 14:11}**

- **"Therefore if I know not the meaning the of the voice,"**
  - If Paul doesn't understand the meaning of the voice
  - **"I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian,"**
    - The one speaking isn't profiting the hearer
  - **"and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me."**
    - Because Paul doesn't know the meaning of the voice

Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.  
{1 Corinthians 14:12}

- **"Even so ye,"** - if true for Paul so it would be in the church
- **"forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts"**
  - 1 Cor. 12:31 - "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."
  - 1 Cor. 14:1 - "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy."
- **"seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church."**
  - Profit others, build up the church - use the spiritual gifts to excel to building the church
- Don't desire spiritual gifts to excel in being barbarians toward one another, but rather engage in "meaning", "life giving sound", "significance" toward others.

#### IV. Conclusion: