

Paul’s Vision – The Church as a Well-Built House

Two key observations

Paul has been dealing primarily with issues of speech since chapter 11.

Paul wants everything to be done for the purpose of building up. (Verses 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 17, 19, 26, 31, 35)

The Greek word is oikodome, from two parts, oikos which means “house” and “dome” which means “build.” They put this in a verb form, literally, “to build a house.” Everything should serve this purpose!

We Must Be a “Building Up” Church

A picture of the Corinthian church

“When you come together, each one has a hymn, a tongue, a revelation, or an interpretation.”

“The spirits of the prophets are subject to prophets.”

“God is not a God of confusion but of peace.”

“As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silent in the churches.”

This church was loud and crazy, and Paul is trying to calm it down!

SIDEBAR: What do we do with the comment about women being silent?

- ➔ Certainly this means wives, not women, as it is in parallel with husbands, vs. 35.
- ➔ We know from 1 Cor. 11 that some of the married women were disrupting the church, probably speaking over their husbands and not in submission.
- ➔ We also know that women prophesied in the service from 1 Cor. 11:4.
- ➔ Paul alludes to the established practice, throughout all of the existing churches, that the **weighing of prophecy** (v. 29) was for the male eldership of the church.
- ➔ Conclusion: The authoritative rule of the church was for the male officers of the church. This was not an absolute rule for all women to be silent.

Building up with speech

Bad speech will destroy the church’s culture of encouragement.

Below is from our “ministry practices” document that we use as staff and leadership:

Encouragement, encouragement, encouragement. We will strive to build each other up with:

- a. More encouragement than expectations.**
- b. More compliments than criticisms.**
- c. More gratitude than gripes.**

Four helpful questions:

Is it true?

Is it kind?

Is it useful?

Do I need to say this right now?

We Must Be a Church of Peace

An atmosphere of peace

Connected to our words!

1 Peter 3:10-11 “Whoever desires to love life and see good days,
let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit;
let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it.”

We Must Be Under God’s Authority

Apostolic Authority

Vv. 37-38 – “If anyone thinks he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord. If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized.”

Beware self-proclaimed “apostles!”

A Well-Built Church – Made of People With Well Built Lives

Matthew 7:24-27 “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

Questions for Further Study and Application

1. How do you build up others with your words and actions?
2. What is a place that you consider peaceful? What is it like, and why is it a blessing to you?
3. How do our words create an atmosphere of peace or destroy it?
4. How is the authority of the apostolic word the basis of a church that is peaceful and positive?