

1 Corinthians 14:26-40, “Worship Inside the Church”

11.15.20

For many years I worked in an industry that was all about construction. I really enjoyed it. I loved being on job sites as new homes were coming out of the ground... Like this house...



Well, no, it's not a house yet...but, it's going to be. Because what goes in first when building a house? The foundation. And that's what you see there...a foundation. The reason I bring this up is because of the Greek word that the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to write when talking to the Corinthian church 2000 years ago. The Greek word He uses over and over is this one:

OikOH-doe-may

Oikodome: (the act of) building, building up; edification

That word is a verb that comes from two words: “oikos” which means: “house,” and “dome,” which means, “to build.” Therefore, the word literally means: “housebuilder.” In the spiritual sense it means to build up, like a builder would start with a foundation and build a house. Now, the reason Paul has been talking about this so much is that he is trying to help this church get back to the foundation...the fundamentals of what it means to be a church. Why is this necessary? Because this church was a colossal mess. Everything was out of order.

The title of today's message is “Worship Inside the Church,” and we're going to see, yet again, why the church at Corinth was struggling so mightily. You see, their meeting...or church services were a disaster. There was no order, no structure; and thus, chaos reigned. Yet, the goal for the gathering of the church is for worshipping Jesus and to build up one another. And that's why the word OikOH-doe-may...was used... The Church is to be built up, the body is be built up. The problem (in Corinth) was that the church members had become all about Exhibition (showing off) versus Edification (building up). Look at verse 26 in your Bibles and we'll begin to see this.

1 Corinthians 14:26

²⁶What 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.

And that reminds us of verse 40...the last verse of the chapter...the summary verse of the chapter and goes right along with verse 26.

1 Corinthians 14:40

⁴⁰But all things should be done decently and in order.

Church family, quite simply, the church in Corinth had become a dysfunctional mess. Walking into one of their church services felt more like you were walking into three-ring circus... Everyone was

talking...speaking in different languages... Remember, when they celebrated communion, people were getting drunk and being disruptive and disorderly in the most egregious ways. Yet, Romans 15:2 reminds us of this...

Romans 15:2-3a

² Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. ³ For Christ did not please himself.

We all know this: Jesus came to serve...not to be served...and He calls us to do the same...and that includes when we're together...LIKE THIS...have a church service... We have a responsibility before God to edify each other...to build up one another...and Paul begins to lay this out. See verse 26 again...

1 Corinthians 14:26

²⁶ 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.

Now let's think about what their meeting...their Ecclesia...gathering...or what we would call, the "worship service" looked like. We know it was chaotic, disorderly and disruptive. There was no structure. They didn't start on time (we learned that in Chapter 11) and they all talked at the same time. It was a mess. So, Paul (through the Holy Spirit) gives instructions on how to shore up the foundation...

So, he says, "Yes, when you come together, sing..." Someone wants to sing a hymn. And we know the hymns were mainly the Psalms of David...and they would sing them. Paul told the Ephesian church...

Ephesians 5:19

¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart.

That's what we were doing earlier this morning...singing "Goodness of God." ALL MY LIFE YOU HAVE BEEN FAITHFUL...it's so wonderful to sing that truth together! But, let me ask you this...what if...right in the middle of that song...someone randomly runs up on stage...grabs a mic and starts singing something else? Can you imagine? That would be...well, rude, unkind, unloving, and OH YEAH...that was chapter 13. You know...love is patient, love is kind, it doesn't envy, it doesn't boast, it is not rude. Corinth was the antithesis of chapter 13. They weren't showing love...they were rude!

Not only was this happening with the singing...it was happening when the Elders were teaching... See it again...

1 Corinthians 14:26

²⁶ 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.

Listen, the Corinthian church was a prideful church, they all wanted to be heard. They thought what they had to say was more important than everybody else. They refused to be respectful in their services and they refused to submit to any order. They just stood up and took over! What a mess!

And the dangerous part of all of this...was the fact that many were saying they had a REVELATION from the Lord. In other words, they were saying they had heard from God and "Here's what He said," That's so dangerous folks! The doctrine of the church can be undermined

and destroyed in a flash...if there's false teaching. Not everybody who comes to church is qualified to teach! It can be dangerous!

Church, tell me: **What's our standard? What's our authority that we go by?** The Word of God...NOT what someone thinks! The Word of God is our objective standard by which we live.

Now here's the situation in Corinth... They had a very limited amount of Scripture. Yes, they had the Old Testament, and most likely Paul had left them a copy of Matthew's Gospel. Outside of that...the NT was still being written. In fact, the letter we're reading...is part of the the NT, right... So, let's watch this play out...here comes the structure...the order...and he begins by addressing the "tongue speakers," because it appears they were the ring-leaders of the chaos.

1 Corinthians 14:27-31

²⁷ If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. ²⁸ But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God. ²⁹ Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. ³⁰ If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. ³¹ For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged.

Do you see the order there? There's structure, there's courtesy, there's love. Don't forget verse 40...

1 Corinthians 14:40

⁴⁰ But all things should be done decently and in order.

Everything should be done decently and in order so that "all may learn and be encouraged." That's the goal! The edification of the church is the issue. Listen...nobody gets edified, built up, with an environment of disorder and chaos. And that's first part of verse 33.

1 Corinthians 14:33a

³³ For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.

Church family, this (**circle your hand**) ought to be a place of peace. You should be able to come in here and find a place of solace, peace, comfort. Yes, there will be times where we hear the Word of God and we're convicted and challenged...but, even in that...there's peace. Like when you pull out a splinter...you know it's going to hurt...but when you address the splinter...peace is coming.

Peace. That's not what they had in Corinth...and Paul had to point back to the leaders...the prophets... Look back at verse 32.

1 Corinthians 14:32

³² and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets.

You say, "Who are these prophets." Well, remember these NT prophets, were not like the OT prophets...Jeremiah, Isaiah, Daniel, etc. These men were really the precursors to what we know as Elders in many ways. You see, AGAIN...the NT is being written and so the "Prophets of the NT" who are mentioned here...are no longer, in my mind, in existence. There are no prophets today, because once the NT canon was completed...the need to have prophets who heard from God, in a prophetic sense, ceased to be necessary. You have Elders who lead the Church. That's how Paul instructed Timothy when he was in Ephesus. In 1 Timothy 3, we find there are just two offices in the NT church going forward...Elders and Deacons.

So, here's the point...the Corinthian church, just us like us, or any church, needs to be discerning as to what is being said and taught in the church. Paul gave the Thessalonian church this same instruction:

1 Thessalonians 5:19-21

¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast what is good.

Turn in your Bibles to 2 Corinthians chapter 11. Now remember, we'll ultimately get here--to Paul's second letter to the Corinthian Church, and we'll find that there were corrupt men in that church in Corinth. And I believe these men were in the church at the writing of this first letter and were part of the problem for all the chaos that was taking place. I believe these were men were going to see here in a moment...were false teachers, deceivers mixed in the church at Corinth. And so, Paul (here in his 2nd letter to the Corinthians) will have to assert his Apostolic authority over those men, who wanted to rise up and question/challenge his credentials, his authority and his ministry. **Watch this in verses 12-15.**

2 Corinthians 11:12-15

¹² And what I am doing I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do. ¹³ For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵ So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

That's some strong words, folks! And that should tell you about why this church had such terrible problems. Do you know what we have to do? Test the spirits. That's what he Apostle John said:

1 John 4:1

¹ Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Listen carefully, the leadership in Corinth were not testing the spirits. They were allowing false teachers to stand up and speak, and church family, I've said it a million times...if you have bad leadership...it will eventually sink the ship. Church, we are to be Bereans...See this map...



Thessalonica? Look right below it. That's Berea...one of the churches of Macedonia...another church in Macedonia is Philippi (top right). Did you know that the Bereans studied the Scriptures daily so they could discern the truth of what was being taught?

Acts 17:10-11

¹⁰The brothers^[b] immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

Do you know the Bible well enough to know if you are being taught the truth, or could you be tricked? Most Christians today don't know the Bible well enough to pass a simple doctrine test. It's sad. **Read your Bibles. It's our duty to know God's glorious Word...** It is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Don't walk in darkness. Read it in the morning! Will you? Read it as families? Will you? If you choose not to...you'll likely go astray. Don't let that be you. Listen...

2 Timothy 2:15

¹⁵Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

So, this brings us to the second half of verse 33...and the two wonderful verses in 34 and 35.

1 Corinthians 14:33b-35

^{33b}As in all the churches of the saints, ³⁴the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. ³⁵If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.

Now...don't throw tomatoes...I don't write the mail, I just deliver it. Now listen carefully, this section of Scripture, in my opinion, is one of the most misinterpreted passages in the NT. Church, what is the context of these three verses? Chaos in the church, right...disorder in the church. That's what was happening in the church and it's readily apparent, there were ladies in that church who were part of this disruption and were an outright challenge to authority.

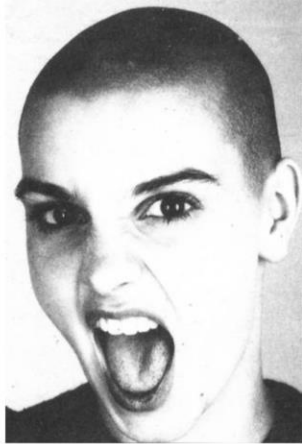
Turn back in your Bibles to 1 Corinthians chapter 11. We were there a couple of months ago and you'll remember how we saw that it was perfectly fine for ladies to stand up in the church and offer a prayer or a word of testimony.

1 Corinthians 11:3-5

³But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife^[a] is her husband,^[b] and the head of Christ is God. ⁴Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, ⁵but every wife^[c] who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, since it is the same as if her head were shaven.

Do you remember this picture that I showed you when we went through that passage...

I am Woman

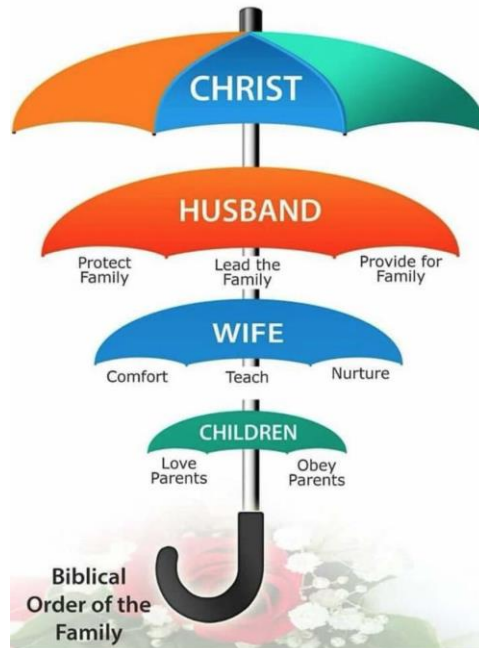


Hear me ROAR

That's how the women coming out of the Temple of Aphrodite (as prostitutes shaved their heads)...and yet, thankfully, many of these women were being saved out of their life of prostitution. Remember, they signified they were prostitutes by how they wore their hair...well they didn't...they shaved their heads. And this let everyone know they were a prostitute.

Remember what we learned? Some of these women, who came from these brazen, pagan lifestyles, had gotten saved and then married...but, were still struggling with their brazen and arrogant pasts. Thus, it seems many of these women were standing up right in the middle of service, while someone was sharing the Word of God and interrupting and literally asking questions that were totally disruptive. So, Paul in essence says, "Ladies, you are showing a blatant lack of respect when the Word is being administered and you need to stop...you need to show deference to the leadership in the church and even to your husbands by simply asking some of these questions at home so as not to disrupt the service."

Do you remember the umbrellas we talked about that Sunday?



Christ is Lord of all, and protects the church, His bride, the husband protects and leads and provides for the wife and the children. That's God's Divine Design from the Garden of Eden. God made Adam from the dirt and then Eve from Adam. The great Bible Commentator Matthew Henry said this:

“In the public meetings in Corinth it seemed many of the women were seeking to exercise authority and control, while the men were being disgraceful in their lack of leadership and by remaining silent and complicit in the uncontrolled abuse of authority in those meetings.”

Matthew Henry, Bible Commentator

But, Church family, I get it. We live in a day where there is severe abuse on both sides. You've got men who are dictators and jerks in the home and then you have women who refuse any godly leadership outside of their own desires. Both are dead wrong!

Listen please...God designed order for the home and the church and it looks the same. I know this may be hard to hear...I know it's 2020, but the Bible doesn't change, because God doesn't change...men are to lead...to protect...to carry the umbrella, get up in the middle of the night when there's a bang in the den at 2 am. That's how God designed it from the Garden of Eden! Men are to lead in the home and the church. And we're directed to this understanding in 1 Timothy 3:2. See it...

1 Timothy 3:2

² Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife.

Now I get it...there was a Deaconess...her name was Phoebe...

Romans 16:1

¹ I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant^[a] of the church at Cenchreae,

Yes, Phoebe could have been described as a deaconess, (servant)...but, she's the only one listed in Scripture. One. That's it. That means it's not normative...It's the normal practice in the church. But, I get it...women lead when men don't or won't. And there's a lot of men not leading today...particularly when it comes to spiritual thing. Sir, are you leading your home, or is she? If she is...it's most likely because you won't! Be a man...lead! That's God's order in the HOME and the Church... Paul told Timothy...

1 Timothy 2:11-12

¹¹ Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. ¹² I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet.

Men are to lead in the church as the Elders...teaching the Word of God...that job was not given to the ladies! **Please don't throw tomatoes.** What I'm sharing with you is the eternal Word of God. You see, if we accept John 3:16 For God so loved the world. And we accept, Romans 10:13, "whoever calls on the name of the Lord, shall be saved." If that's the timeless word of God, so is this. We don't get to pick and choose what to obey & follow. We're not the authority, the Word of God is.

So, don't be frustrated ladies...because God designed you to be protected. The man is supposed to bear the weight of the home and to lead...that was never meant for you and the same is true in the leadership of the church. But, many women have to lead out of necessity...because the men aren't! Men, do your job! Lead! Be the spiritual leader in your home! No dictator...but, a servant leader. You lead the family in devotions...you bear the weight of making certain your home is following the Lord!

Now go back with me to 1 Corinthians 14 and we'll watch how the Holy Spirit begins to summarize this chapter.

1 Corinthians 14:36

³⁶ Or was it from you that the word of God came? Or are you the only ones it has reached?

Oh, the sarcasm! Verse 36 is dripping with sarcasm. It seems that Paul has gotten wind that there are those who have been saying, "We don't care what Paul said...we've got the Spirit of God and He'll tell us what's right and wrong...He speaks to us...we can have our own revelations from God." Hmm...again...we saw this a moment ago...this is so dangerous... These false teachers had wormed their way in and were questioning Paul's Apostolic authority.

Now church...again...what's our authority? The Word of God. We don't decide what is right and wrong and we're to allow the Word of God to have the authority over our lives. In essence, Paul was saying, "The Word of God did not originate with you or your congregation! The Word of God didn't come from you. You don't have a monopoly on Scripture!"

1 Corinthians 14:37-38

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

Do you understand what Paul was doing? He's calling out the false prophets. He's saying, "If their revelations contradict mine, then they do not come from the same Spirit of God; because either I'm telling you the truth or they are, but because they're contradicting what I'm saying, we can't both be right."

Why was Paul right? Why should we believe him? Hey Church, have you read the NT...1/2 of it's from him...have you seen the miracles Paul was involved in. Did you know Paul raised the dead. Did you know Paul healed the sick? Did you know he survived being stoned to death, beaten with rods and bitten by a poisonous snake? All of these miracles proved Paul was anointed of God and appointed as an Apostle of Jesus...hand-picked by Jesus on the road to Damascus. Don't you dare think that Paul is being pompous here... He's no different than a parent who has to say to an unruly child... "I'm the parent, you're the child." Paul was an Apostle of Christ...no one in Corinth could make that claim.

And so, finally...we're back to where we started...

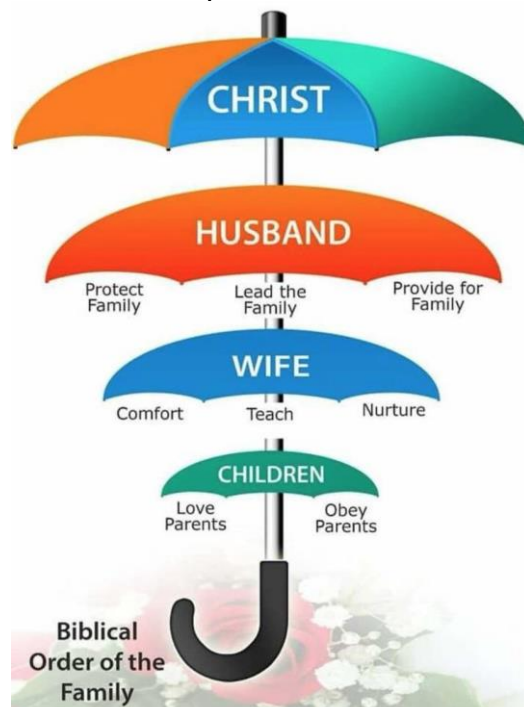
1 Corinthians 14:39-40

39 So, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. 40 But all things should be done decently and in order.

And did you know...the word, “decently,” in the Greek, means: “beautiful harmony.” Church, that’s what Jesus wants! That’s what He wants for us! He wants us to KNOW PEACE. Because you see, when He leads our lives there is harmony and beauty, there is order, structure and design... Because He is the cornerstone...in our foundation...the foundation our lives...like this...



Everything rises and falls from that foundation...Jesus Christ. You see, for your to be orderly and have harmony, you’ve got to get under the top umbrella. That’s Jesus...



Have you?