

The Corinthian Epistles

Chapter 14 Part 1

Prophecy and Tongues

1 Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.

- So, we last looked at the “love” chapter where charity or agape love is defined the absolute best.
 - **1 Corinthians 13:13** And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.
 - Because Christ, who is Love, is alive and exists...
 - Faith is a foundation that will not be moved.
 - Hope is not anticipation but a certain expectation.
 - Charity is the Beginning and the End of it all!
 - In chapter 12 we looked at spiritual gifts and concluded in chapter 13 that these gifts are about Christ, not the Christian.
 - The moment our gift becomes about us it ceases to be spiritual.
- Here we pick up with Paul encouraging the church to pursue charity...or pursue Christ.
 - Desire spiritual gifts, but for the sake of the gospel
 - Not for the sake of your personal salvation or sanctification
- Why? Why are we not to seek out these gifts, but seek out Christ?

2 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.

3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

- So, Paul makes a differentiation here...
 - There is speaking in an “unknown tongue”

- There is prophesying.
- The speaking in the unknown tongue is about using a language that is not known to the hearers.
- Prophesying is about telling of Christ's coming.
- The one speaking a different language is only communicating between himself and God.
 - This is not a bad thing, but the speaker is the only one benefiting from what is being said.
- The one who prophesies is speak to the edification of all those who choose to hear.

5 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.

- I feel it is at this time that we really think about what happened on the Day of Pentecost
 - **Acts 2:1** And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
 - 2** And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.
 - 3** And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.
 - 4** And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.
 - The Church was TOGETHER...UNIFIED...ONE ACCORD!
 - God moved on them with HIS SPIRIT
 - ALL were filled...remember unified!
 - ALL spake...as God gave them what to say, and how to say it
 - In no way did the speaking in tongues have anything to do with them, other than they were surrendered together to serve Christ
 - In no way did the people of the church allow who they were to get in the way of what God was doing

- What was being said (prophesying) was more important than how it was being said (tongues)
- Those that were hearing were hearing from God, no matter what their background or heritage
- God was getting ALL the glory

6 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?

7 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?

8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

9 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.

- Paul could not make it more simple to understand right here!
 - If God were to move on him and give him utterance in tongues, how would they be encouraged or edified if they didn't know what was said, so how would God be glorified?
 - If I pick up this guitar and just start whaling on it without distinction...who would enjoy that?
 - But if I start playing with distinction...
 - So, let's prophesy (say what God wants us to say the best we know how to say) so others hear from God and God gets the glory

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.

11 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.

- There are a lot of voices (people speaking different languages) in the world
 - Each one distinct in its own differences
 - No matter how much is said, if it isn't in the language I speak, it's all Greek to me
 - And no matter how much I speak, or how loud I speak it, if they don't know English...well, who looks the fool?
- Next time...praying in tongues