

The Purpose of our Gathering - 1 Corinthians 14:13-25
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

If I was preaching this text in a Charismatic church I might take 3 or 4 weeks to wade through the various issues from the text. Paul is addressing a church where the gifts of tongues and prophecy seem to be prevalent, and as a result the worship service has become a free-for-all with people having these two gifts becoming warring parties. The tongues speakers start singing in tongues and speaking in tongues louder and louder, echoed by the prophecy folks grabbing the mic and starting in with the latest thing they have from God. As one side gets louder so does the other. The weekly gathering in the Corinthian church has become chaotic and worse, repulsive to outsiders. Admittedly, this is not our struggle as a church. Yet, the Word of God always has something to say to us.

One message that we have been expressing throughout this mini-series on the Spiritual Gifts from 1 Corinthians 12-14 is that we actually need a push in this direction. Often we become reactionary rather than spiritual in our approach to some things. As a result we really can become a church that rejects verse 39, "So, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophecy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues." It has been our goal in this series to remind us that all the Spiritual Gifts are available for the church and there is a command that is repeated several times that we should earnestly desire these. Each person is gifted and all the gifts are important, as are all the people who have them.

Yet, in chapter 14 Paul spends a whole chapter writing about two specific gifts, tongues and prophecy, and examining their role in the gathered worship of the church. The church is a people, a city within the city. We are a redeemed people who have been rescued from our sin, brought into a Kingdom, and made a family. We continue to be the church when we scatter to our neighborhoods and jobs. We also become smaller incarnations of the larger church when we do community in homes each week. Yet, there is something rich and valuable in the Sunday gathering as "the whole church comes together (v. 23)." We often call this time together the worship service, but I prefer to call it the worship gathering. Service implies it is something done for you, while gathering points us to the core reality, that what makes this time together each week so important is that we are together and with one voice making much of Jesus, and together experiencing His voice and the presence of the Spirit. Knowing that, every church has much to hear from this chapter even if they aren't having Giftapalooza in their gathering.

At the core, Paul knows that the problems in Corinth center on a self-centered perspective when they come together. This week's text begins with a challenge that the church be infants in evil, yet in their thinking to become mature. The problem in Corinth is that so many of them have become convinced that the thing that makes the gathering valuable is what they add to it or get from it. So the gifted people just have to get their moment in the spotlight or the event just is not all it could be. Now you have 50 people trying to get their five minutes at the mic. The service has become chaotic, and completely fails to honor the God of peace because the gathering has become chaos. Again, this expression of self-centeredness in worship is not a problem that has happened yet here. Yet, this self-centered approach to the gathering shows up in other ways. When we come as consumers, focused more on having my own needs met and basing the experience on my own feelings, well, we are expressing the same core issue as the crazy Corinthians. It is a problem when churches make their own preferences issues to fight over or people leave the church over, yet they do not grasp the core principles found in Scripture. The Sunday gathering is not about me. It is for me, but the gathering is, at the core, the redeemed people of God coming together to make much of Jesus. The expression of all of the gifts are God's way of bringing Himself in the person of the Spirit to us. So the goal is for the service to be a gathering of

Spirit-filled people whose joy is to lift their voices to the Savior and King and who come ready to experience Him and hear His voice through the Word, preaching, and even in the expression of gifts.

But we also come knowing that there are both believers and unbelievers, insiders and outsiders among us. One of Paul's concerns about tongues is that when outsiders are attending the gathering they will think the church is insane when people are spouting out unintelligible languages. His argument is that prophecy on the other hand will expose their sinfulness and cause them to cry out to God in repentance. Tongues, though, is not the only way we make the service unintelligible to outsiders. As a church we must work diligently to be welcoming to anyone who comes to Genesis. And your leaders will strive to make sure Genesis is a safe place for anyone, no matter their background and story. Those preaching will give effort to make sure we explain insider and religious language. So, it is our goal each week that our gathering be intelligible and convicting for unbelievers, building up for the church, and honoring to God.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
2 Chronicles 25	2 Chron 26	2 Chron 27	2 Chron 28	2 Chron 29	2 Chron 30	2 Chron 31

Reading from this past week: 1 Corinthians 14:20-40

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: 1 Corinthians 16:1-4

Family Worship

Song - *A Mighty Fortress*

<https://youtu.be/oNeP7bGaggg>

Gospel Project

Story: Jesus' Resurrection

Story Point: God raised Jesus from the dead to defeat sin and death.

Big Picture Question: Where is Jesus now?

Answer: Jesus ascended to heaven where He is now seated at the right hand of the Father.

Scripture: John 20

New City Catechism

Question #46: What is the Lord's Supper?

Answer: Christ commanded all Christians to eat bread and to drink from the cup in thankful remembrance of him.

Verse: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Scripture

1 Corinthians 14:20-40

*Why is the Sunday worship gathering so important for our church and for our family?

*What is your favorite thing about our coming together each Sunday?

*How can I use my Spiritual Gifts to build up the church?

Prayer

*Use Psalm 118 in your prayer this week

*Pray for those who lead our church in worship during the Sunday gathering.

*Pray that our Sunday gathering would honor God, build up the body, and lead unbelievers to believe in Jesus.