

October 14, 2018

DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL!
1Corinthians 14:1-19

READ: 1Corinthians 14:1-19 (NLT)

Paul has 3 purposes in this chapter or segment of his letter:

1) Pursue love = “pursue” love before you “desire” gifts

*diókō – aggressively chase, a hunter pursuing a catch (prize),
Doggedly determined to achieve loving edification of church!*

2) Desire SG’s; especially 2 that communicate God’s truths

-“desire” spiritual gifts of Prophecy & Tongues

-a God-injected zeal to explain divine purpose/plans

-These are communicative gifts that reveal God’s truths

-Each is aimed at a different audience to glorify God

-Both gain notoriety “for” vessels that can falsely exalt

3) Public Worship must be orderly & clearly understandable

The first two purposes are detailed in 14:1-19. The third we’ll examine next week when we finish this chapter. Remember, Paul interrupts his own explanation of spiritual gifts in 12 & 14 w/ an admonition to let Love be our motive (*reason*) & mode (*manner*) in fruitful ministries. No Love = No-thing!

It seems that the Corinthians were preoccupied with the ecstatic gifts of prophecy & tongues. Whether they were using them correctly or abusing them is not entirely clear. Perhaps the best that can be said is that they needed to be reminded that Loving one another thru the SG’s – *rather than competing with one another for the SG’s* – is most critical; that the glory for any spiritual gift belongs to God, and that the church as a whole, not individuals of it, must be the beneficiaries of love’s edification.

God’s done the same thing with us! Galatians before SHAPE!

READ: 1Corinthians 14:1-4, 12-19 (NLT)

1-4) Prophecy = Superior SG b/c the entire church benefits

Tongues = Less useful b/c publically it’s a sign to unbelievers

-Worship involves believers (those born-again of Spirit)

-Unbelievers cannot worship. *Why?* Not born of Spirit!

Should you invite Unbelievers to worship? Of course! But they will be simply eavesdropping until they trust Jesus to save them!

Further, because I am not speaking in a tongue, but

proclaiming in a common language, those who hear can understand as Spirit gives comprehension – even unbelievers (@ sin!)

So, it stands to reason that, because unbelievers generally do not attend worship services, the SG of Tongues may be of greater benefit outside of worship; in evangelistic meetings or witnessing situations between believers & unbelievers.

ILLUS - witnessing to an unbeliever on a plane!

Interestingly, Pentecost is the best example of the use of ecstatic gift of tongues. In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit shows Himself visibly & audibly: tongues of fire overheads and a might rushing wind. Then, when the devout Jews from all over the Roman empire celebrating the Feast of First Fruits in Jerusalem are drawn together by the Spirit’s commotion, they hear the acts of God in their own dialects by men who haven’t studied the language! Result? They respond in faith! Tongues are a miraculous sign of the presence of God to unbelievers! ***Unbelievers? How were these Jews unbelievers?*** They did not yet believe in God’s Messiah, Jesus, ***“no one comes to the Father except thru Him”***

12) Seek SG’s that edify the whole church (not individuals)

-Zealously desiring – again; boiling over, bubbling out

13-14) Adina summed up the difference between Spiritual Fruit and Spiritual Gifts this way: ***All Christians possess the fruit of the Spirit; but Spiritual Gifts possess all Christians!***

-SG of Tongues is separate from Interpretation

-Tongues only effective for church if interpreted

15-19) The goal of SG is building up the body of Christ in love

-Love = motive & mode by which all is done in church

I know some Christians that are afraid of the ecstatic gifts – Tongues, Interpretation, Miracles, Healings... But there is no reason to fear the work of the Holy Spirit in us individually and collectively as the church. ***God’s perfect love casts out all fear!***

INVITATION:

- 1) Pursue Love with all whom God loves: believers/unbelievers
- 2) Desire the Gifts of the Spirit to benefit the church you’re in

MEDITATION: 1Peter 4:10-11

10) "God has given each of you a gift from His great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. 11) Do you have the gift of speaking (prophecy or tongues)? Then speak as though God Himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All Glory and power to Him forever and ever! Amen."

The purpose of all spiritual gifts is to glorify God and edify the church. As we minister with each other thru the SHAPE God has given us, there should be no individuals that capture the attention or accolade due God. We are parts of one another in Christ: each incomplete without all the others – each insufficient to display the manifold glory of God without all the others – each merely a player on a glorious team! No one wins apart from the team; therefore, each of us must deeply desire to help all the others in our earthly ministry & mission.

SERMON in a SENTENCE: Desire to be Helpful!