



1 CORINTHIANS

STEWARDS *of the* GOSPEL

Sermon Series

Order in Worship

1 Corinthians 14: 26-40

- The gathering of the church is really the highlight of the week for me. I know it is for many others as well. It's an encouraging time of seeing your brothers or sisters in Christ, singing, and praying. If I miss a Sunday, I feel like something is really missing from my week.
- That weekly rhythm has been in place throughout the 2,000-year history of the church. And, of course, the weekly Sabbath was in place for thousands of years before that.
- When we gather – we're not doing it without purpose. We're not gathering just for the sake of gathering. This is well worth your time because it's beneficial spiritually. The

writer of Hebrews speaks to that directly in Chapter 10 when he says, "Don't forsake the assembling of yourselves together."

- This may not be the best time to preach this message because we will be in the summer months very soon. I know that you have plans, and lots of people are on the move throughout the summer. Maybe you look at your plans and see how you can prioritize worship in the midst of all that.
- This passage in chapter 13 is closely linked with what Paul said in chapter 11 concerning the Lord's Supper. Gathering for worship in the right way is an important part of our Christian witness and being good stewards of the Gospel.

Main Point: Our gathering is an opportunity to glorify God and share the Gospel.

- The focal point of our worship is to honor and glorify God. Worship is really all about Him. Since worship is about God, we should listen to what God says on how to worship. This is what's known as the regulative principle. Worship is not dictated by trends or fads. It's dictated by God's Word.

I. The building up of the church

- a. VERSE 26 – Let all things be done for edification. For the building up of the church.
- b. Here was the problem – when the Corinthian church gathered it seemed like everyone had an opportunity to speak and sing. They had different people speaking in tongues and it became chaotic. When Paul references what types of songs were being sung, many scholars believe that he is saying that many people in the church would take turns singing songs that they had written themselves.
- c. Now, you could imagine how quickly that would get out of hand.

- d. What he was telling them was this – there needs to be substance to what is said and done in your worship services.
 - i. There should be substance. Couple of temptations here.
 - ii. Some modern worship that is hinged on a feeling or emotion. Some songs may be fine for Christian radio but not for worship because they lack substance, and they fail in edifying the body of Christ.
 - iii. This isn't just with modern worship. This is also with some areas of traditional worship. In some places I would preach years ago, they would criticize my use of notes while I'm preaching. In their view, sermons should be spontaneous and loud. The louder you got, the more spirit-led you were.
 - iv. What benefit is there for our personal discipleship or our corporate

II. Our role in worship

- a. Paul spends some time addressing specific groups in the church. We have to remember this is an occasional letter. So, there are some things written specifically for the occasion. And other things are principles that can be applied to all circumstances.
 - i. For instance, I mentioned last week that I believe the gift of tongues had ceased to exist with the apostles. So, there are some things here that would not apply to us.
- b. The principle of one person speaking at a time is applicable. It is rooted in what Paul says that things should be done decently and in order.

- c. In essence, there shouldn't be multiple people preaching at the same time. The worship gathering shouldn't be chaotic or out of control.
- d. There is a specific reference here for women. There are some today who would be tempted in preaching right over that passage as if it wasn't there because this goes against the cultural norms of our day.
- e. Couple of things – there seems to be a particular group of women that Paul was addressing here. They were causing lots of issues in the gathering of the church.
- f. Also, we have to keep in context what Paul references in 1 Corinthians 11 concerning praying. It seems that women were allowed to pray publicly. But there are limits on that.
- g. *Two things can be true at the same time* – men and women are both equal in value before God. Men and women are both different and have different roles to exercise in the work of the church.
- h. That includes preaching, of course. That's what Paul addresses in 1 Timothy – the public teaching of God's Word.

III. The effect on others

- a. There are aspects of worship that are meant to build up certain groups of people. Speaking in tongues was meant as a sign to unbelievers that they might hear and understand the message of the Gospel.
- b. Prophecy was meant for believers. This was both telling the future and telling the truth. When we talk of prophecy today, we are talking about preaching the truth of God's Word. There is no need for a new Word when God's Word is final.

- c. VERSE 40 – Everything is to be done decently and in order. WHY? So that others may be able to understand.
- d. VERSE 16 – How can they say amen if they don't know what you're saying?
- e. The gathering of God's people should bring this to us:
 - i. Clarity
 - ii. Understanding
 - iii. Growth
 - iv. Substance
 - v. Order