

Practicing the Presence - 1 Corinthians 14:13-25
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

Our text this week is a continuation of the argument Paul is making about the purpose and role of speaking in tongues and prophecy in the church. At the core, Paul is affirming both gifts and confirming that the present voice of the Holy Spirit appears in these gifts. God has spoken clearly in His Word, and the Bible is inerrant, sufficient for our faith and practice, and clearly speaks about the main and plain truths revealed. Yet, that does not mean that God has stopped speaking to His church. These gifts are God's gracious gift of Himself in the person of the Holy Spirit. So Paul never rejects these gifts, but this chapter definitely restricts how they are to be used, especially in the context of the gathering of the church.

At Genesis, I don't think we run the risk right now of this kind of abuse. In fact, I think our text this week should push us in a completely different direction. The Corinthian church had become an example of excess and emotionalism. This danger definitely exists and churches should be careful. On the other hand, often churches will reject the present voice of the Spirit in these gifts and seek to negate emotional expression in worship. We can be guilty of worship and preaching that is very heady, filled with great truths, yet neglecting the heart aspect of our worship. We can be guilty of seeing God's presence in our intellectual pursuit while failing to draw people in with their hearts.

This chapter is primarily about the expression of gifts in the gathered worship of the church. And while the text addresses these two gifts, there is, I believe a larger issue that should catch our attention, and that is the purpose of our coming together week by week for worship. The correction is this, that speaking in tongues in the gathered worship is actually a self-centered way of approaching the moment. Since others are not edified, Paul argues that the use of this gift without an interpreter only serves the purpose of demonstrating the giftedness of the speaker. But that does not build up the church, rather, it frustrates those who believe and freaks out the outsider. Like I said, I don't think we are in danger right now of a tongues fest at the ole Genesis Church. But that does not negate the reality that we so often approach the Sunday gathering with self at the center.

We live in a consumer culture, where so many decisions are based on pleasing self. Few of us choose our shopping and dining locations based on serving others or the betterment of our community. Nope, we go to the cheapest and most convenient places. The marketing of our age knows this and promotes how each business caters specifically to you, affirming the self-focused way of living. Consumerism generally wrecked the small local businesses in our culture, and it has the threat of doing the same to church. We attend the gathering of our church no longer thinking primarily about the glory of God and how my presence builds up the body. Instead we come as consumers looking for what I can get out of the event, and then evaluating it with something like a Rotten Tomatoes scale. "Well, the singing was good, but that one guy was a bit pitchy." "Yeah, the sermon was like a 3 out of 10 in my opinion. Spent too much time telling that lame story." "It was too hot in there."

As consumers we often come as spectators rather than participants, more like watching a concert or movie. As a result, we often do not arrive ready to meet God face to face, to see His glory and our sinfulness in light of God's holiness, yet to find grace and forgiveness in the Gospel. We arrive with no desire to have our affections stirred and our eyes getting tearful at the wonder of it all.

In the text Paul speaks of the outsider and unbeliever showing up in the service and speculating what he or she will think. Of course he mentions the church where everyone is speaking in tongues knowing that the unbeliever will think the people are crazy. On the other hand, in the church where God is at work speaking in and through people the result can be that as the secrets of his heart is disclosed, "and so, falling on his face, he will

worship God and declare that God is really among you.” Notice what Paul believes should happen when someone shows up in our worship. They see and feel the presence of God in the moment leading to their repentance. This begs the question for us, if unbelievers show up will they experience the presence of God, or will they find a room full of spectators? Will they discover a people who come expecting to meet their God and experience His glorious love and grace? If people came to our service would they immediately know how much we love our Savior by the way we are responding to Him or would they find something that is dead and cold? Would they see a church willing to have their sin exposed so that they can find grace or a church who protects themselves from God meddling in their business? It is our desire during the corporate gathering to experience the presence of the Spirit and the voice of God. So we should come each week expecting this, expecting to have our emotions stirred and to approach the throne of God together in authentic worship that glorifies God and builds up the body.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
2 Chronicles 18	2 Chron 19	2 Chron 20	2 Chron 21	2 Chron 22	2 Chron 23	2 Chron 24

Reading from this past week: 1 Corinthians 14:13-25

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: 1 Corinthians 14:20-40

Family Worship

Song - *Build My Life*

https://youtu.be/QZW4_8_zCBE

Gospel Project

Story: Jesus’ Crucifixion

Story Point: Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins.

Big Picture Question: What did Jesus do to save us?

Answer: Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Scripture: Matthew 26-27

New City Catechism

Question #45: Is baptism with water the washing away of sin itself?

Answer: No, only the blood of Christ can cleanse us from sin.

Verse: Luke 3:16

Scripture

1 Corinthians 14:13-25

*What is the main reason Paul is concerned about the misuse of speaking in tongues in the gathered worship?

*What are the ways God speaks to us as a church when we are together?

*According to Paul, how should proper worship of God in the church gathering affect an outsider and unbeliever? How does this happen?

Prayer

*Pray for Our Genesis Kids leaders and workers

*Pray that we would come to the Sunday service each week expecting to experience the presence of God.