

Love In Expression

Hope Chapel Tokorozawa

1Corinthians 14:1-12

“Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.” (1Corinthians 14:5, ESV)

Introduction

May I give you two things to think about when considering Paul’s instructions here regarding the use of spiritual gifts? First, Paul may well consider the church to be the helpmeet for Christ (Ge2:18-25, Ep2:8-10 and 5:22-33) and second, that Paul sees the role of those who are gifted and equipped to operate those gifts in love as that of equipping and encouraging others to do and not merely performing and serving others (Ep4:11-16). So as you “pursue love” don’t forget to “earnestly desire the spiritual gifts” and to put them to use.

1. Pursue love and earnestly desire spiritual gifts. (vv.1-4)

- a) To abide in love is to abide in God, the pursuit of God is the pursuit of love.
- b) We are not to love others with all of our strength, but with the strength God provides.

2. “Now I want you all to speak in tongues....” (v.5)

- a) Paul encourages prophesy because it is a direct source of encouragement to the listener.
- b) But Paul does not describe the gift of tongues or the speaker of tongues as inferior.

3. Meaningful words, relationships and manifestations of the Spirit. (vv.6-12)

- a) What is our responsibility to make God’s words understood by others?
- b) “Strive to excel in building up the church.”

Conclusion

Spiritual gifts have nothing to do with the worth of an individual believer, but rather, they are how God helps us to love our neighbors and value one another’s contributions.

For our prayerful study, discussion and application

- 1) Read verses 1-4. Why does Paul encourage prophesy more than tongues here?
- 2) Read verse 5. What is Paul saying about the value of the speaker and their words?
- 3) Read verse 12. How does the Holy Spirit manifest Himself through you in the church?

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