

# Church - Part 5

by Ken Baird

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*Ken Baird discusses the significance of church meetings, women's roles, and the proper observance of the Lord's Supper.*

**Duration:** 59:05

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Mark 16:17, Romans 14:1, Romans 15:7, 1 Corinthians 12:4, 1 Timothy 4:14, James 5:14

**Topics:** "Spiritual Gifts", "Lord's Supper"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the topic of spiritual gifts and the importance of the remembrance of the Lord Jesus. He emphasizes that there are diversities of gifts, but they all come from the same spirit. The speaker also highlights the significance of the Lord's Supper as a time of worship and remembrance of Jesus' sacrifice. He mentions that this special meeting sets apart the remembrance of the Lord in a unique way and discusses the functions of the church, including worship, witness, and government.

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## Transcript

Shall we open our Bibles, please, to the 11th chapter of 1st Corinthians? We had two very sincere questions, really three questions, in the question box. And I think tonight we'll consider two of them because they are relevant to the subject which we closed with last night, that is, the women's head covering. And there is another question, too, in regard to Scripture and Timothy, 1st Timothy, that I think we'll not take up tonight, but rather tomorrow night.

And we'll be able to give our attention more to the subject matter we have tonight. But since this question is related to the subject of what we considered last night, I think perhaps we should consider it first. The first question, what makes up a meeting of the church? Some have said that it is when all parts of the church are represented, elders, brethren, sisters, and so forth.

Others say that it is simply when two or three are gathered together in his name. If it is the latter, does that mean that women have to keep their heads covered whenever two or three are gathered together in his name? How far should this practice be carried? Now, I have a very quick answer for that, but I'm not going to pass it off with this quick answer. But I'm going to say, if you can be assured that no angels are present, forget the head covering.

It doesn't seem to be whether or not it's a meeting of the church. It's whether or not the angels are looking on. Now, I tell you, I've not read all the question yet.

Let's read it all. Since the church is not the building, is it logical to assume that women must cover their heads at camp meetings, informal Bible discussions, chapels at a Christian college, and so forth? This is a real sincere question, and a real problem, I may say. If girls are to wear their hats in the presence of the Lord, would that mean that they would be required to wear them at every meeting gathered in his name, no matter the place? Now, this is sincere.

I wish I could answer in a positive way. There are, I think, probably differences of opinion on this, but I would say this, that we have excused these things. We have begged the question, we have bicepped the question by saying that it's not necessary for sisters to wear their hats, except at a meeting of the church.

And that, of course, permits the camp. That permits, because that is a designated age level, and therefore is not a meeting of the church. Now, for instance, if everybody there is in his team, very obviously that's not a meeting of the church.

And they have excused it in Bible colleges, that's not a meeting of the church. Well, it's not a meeting of the church. That's true.

But there is a situation in verse 5 of the 11th chapter of 1 Corinthians that we must consider. It says there, But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head, for that is all one, as if she were shaven. Now, when does a woman pray, and when does she prophesy? When the men are present? Definitely not.

Now, we read that in the 14th chapter of 1 Corinthians. We might notice that in connection with this. We get to it sooner or later, but it is in connection with this.

Verse 34 of the 14th chapter of 1 Corinthians. Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak. But they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home. And if they don't have a husband, then let them ask some other woman's husband. Well, that's my italics.

For it is a shame for women to speak in the church. What, came the word of God out from you, or came it unto you? Now, it seems that the apostle anticipated that this was going to be a moot question. So he said, what, came the word of God out from you, or came it unto you only? Did you write it? Well, I didn't write it, you know.

And I don't have to apologize for it either. I just have to teach it that's all. The spirit of God is the writer, not me.

And so the apostle anticipates an objection right here. And he's had it, hasn't he, throughout probably the most of Christendom today. This has been questioned.

I've heard an explanation that in those days the women sat on one side and the men sat on the other side. And the women would ask questions and answer them and cause a disturbance in the meeting. Now, where all this information comes from is more than I can tell.

I'm not that good a historian. And I think that perhaps they're, well, I'm not going to cast reflections on anybody's veracity, but I wonder if they've ever read it either. But nevertheless, we have a condition here where the women are not permitted to speak.

And I don't think that you have any difficulty here in this connection at all. But very obviously, it says, let your women keep silent in the churches. Now, that is very obviously a church meeting.

And here in the 11th chapter of 1 Corinthians, it does say in verse 5, but every woman that prayeth or propheth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head. Now, she isn't doing it in a church meeting. You can be sure of that, because that's forbidden.

She's doing it undoubtedly among a group of sisters. And even under these conditions, she's to keep her head covered. That's what the word of God says.

Now, that's all I can tell you is what the word of God says. So there it is. If every woman that prayeth or propheth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head, for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

Well, certainly here is a condition where there are no men present. And the sister is still expected to keep her head covered. Now, some have said, well, do the other sisters need to keep their heads covered? I wish I had access to the Urim and the Thummim.

But since I don't have the access to the Urim and the Thummim, about all I can do is take the the Urim and the Thummim, this one here, and that's all I can do is just rely on the word of God. Well, this is what the scriptures say. I'd not be legal about these things.

I'm glad that I don't have to decide these things. But I do say this, that if there's any doubt in a sister's mind as to whether her head should be covered or not, give the Lord the benefit of the doubt. And not those that are around you.

Now, I know that you sisters are very gregarious in your natures. You don't like to be different. And I know that in many instances, in many Christian circles, a head covering is not worn.

And you don't like to be an oddball, do you? Who wants to be an oddball? And who wants to be a person of that nature? Well, now, who are you going to please? Men don't have any trouble. I'm so glad they don't. Wherever a man is in his prance, off comes his hat.

And I don't care where he is. I don't have any trouble that way at all. Well, I say, don't I? It depends on how fast the situation arises.

If I'm driving the car, there are times that I've prayed with my hat on. But, ordinarily the men don't have any trouble with the head being uncovered at all. I'm glad for that.

I'm glad I don't have you sisters' problems in this respect. My hat comes off and that's all there is to it. A man wouldn't think of praying with his hat on.

Well, he wouldn't think of it. Certainly not in public. I don't know whether I've answered this or not.

I think that we are ruled by principles and it takes faith to apply principles. Wouldn't it be nice if we were just simply ruled by legal dictates, victims, and just say, have it specified for every situation. Have every situation covered.

Now, that can't, off or on, either way. And at this situation, this situation, this situation, wouldn't it be fine if we had something like that? We don't have it at all. But I'll tell you, you do have a sphere in which you can exercise your conscience and you have a sphere in which you can obey the Lord, to please him.

Now, there's something that disturbs me a little bit in here. If it is the latter, does that mean that women have to keep their heads covered? Now, isn't it a matter of having to keep our heads covered against perhaps our desires or our will? I don't know that that's even implied in this question at all. Must we do it? That seems to be the thought.

Must we do it? Must we do things to please the Lord? Now, that is the question. I'm not going to dictate. I'm not going to say, in this connection, I'm going to leave the Scriptures with you and I'm going to let you apply them.

That's certainly easy, isn't it, for me. But it isn't easy for you, I'll tell you that. But I'm indicating to you that it's because of the angels.

And of course, that's the easy way out. If you can be sure there aren't any angels present, your problem is solved. If they are present, isn't it nice to show the sign of authority on your head? I can't say that I'm in agreement with everything that is done in our circles, but I'm not going to disrupt, as far as I'm concerned, the word of God or the work of God because of my own convictions about these matters.

I'm not going to be a troublemaker about it. I grieve at times, I'll grant you that. But I could wish that we could just read these Scriptures just as plainly as we can and do what we do to please the Lord.

I was at a conference once. They asked me the question, or I got the question. There was a panel up there and they just passed the question on to me and I was the last one on the line.

How big should a woman's hat be? And also, how long should her hair be? I said, I refuse to be a judge of such matters. But I said, you don't want to be big enough for an angel to see. Sometimes it takes the angels to see them, I think.

This was the way we answered the question. If you're wearing your head covering to please the Lord, that head covering is bigger regardless of its geographical area that it covers. That head covering is bigger in my estimation than the sister who may be wearing one of these, you know, despising the very hat she's got on her head and despising the very act and doing it in redundancy because she's not doing it to please the Lord.

The main thing is to please the Lord. That should solve the question so easily. Please the Lord.

How long should the hair be? That's the question. Now that could be relative, you know. But I would say this in that connection, and here I'm answering questions I don't even have to answer.

I say this, it would be nice if you had the opportunity of washing the Lord's feet with your tears and drying them with the hairs of your head that you'd have enough hair to dry his feet. Not too sure. I think that'd be nice, don't you? If you had that opportunity to lay your glory at his feet.

I'm not going to set down any number of inches. I know better than that. And I'm not going to be the judge of these matters.

But do what you do to please the Lord. Do it with a single eye to his glory. And don't chafe under the clear commands of scripture.

Don't chafe under them. Do what you do to please the Lord. He'll be pleased, I'm sure.

He so appreciates anything that we do do for him. Now I don't know whether I've answered this or not. I probably haven't given you the answer.

You probably wanted me to give you an answer so you could dismiss it like that. Say, Ken Baird said it. That settles it.

And that doesn't settle it. You be sure to please the Lord. There's a second question on here, a very sincere question.

And don't think that we have dismissed this first question lightly either. I've answered it advisedly. I've gone just about as far as I can in answering the question.

And I trust that this will help the questioner to really settle the matter in his own mind. The second question on this sheet. If a stranger enters the chapel on Sunday morning without a letter but professes to be saved, should he be allowed to participate in the Lord's Supper? Now this is a question that has been a great trial.

It has been a great question, it's a moot question. It's been a great question to even to the point of dividing the people of God in certain places. Now I would say this, that we cannot be legal in any answer in this area, because there are times when you might be disposed to receive a stranger something about his testimony that really rings true.

His church background might have something to do with that, because you could tell by his church background as to how much teaching he had and what he stood for. There might be something to, for instance, if he came in late, came in the door late, and he just said, I'm a Christian, and we'll say now he doesn't ask to remember the Lord. Are you going to say, well just come right on and remember the Lord with us, and act on behalf of the whole oversight? I don't want that responsibility myself.

It's the meeting that receives to the Lord's table, not a brother. Perhaps time won't be given for the oversight to come together on the matter. I would say, if it could be done without a fan, that you ask them, tell them now we're going to remember the Lord.

Would you like to observe? Would you like to watch us? Have you ever observed a meeting like this? Would you like to watch us? Now, the way that the person comes in, if he's coming in expecting to remember the Lord, if he knows something about the history of the meeting, then that would have a bearing on it. But we just can't build a chute and then just shove everybody through that chute. Even here we must be dependent upon the Lord for his leading and guidance.

We should act in faith. Now, I will say, I will add this, that that scripture that says lay hands on no man suddenly is not a verse for reception. That is a verse for commendation to the work of the Lord.

Now, it does say, as we noticed in Romans chapter 14, let's look at that, please. Him that is weak in the faith receive you, but not to doubtful disputation. See, if he's weak in the faith and it seems to be a matter of reception, receive you, but not to doubtful disputation.

Now, there are other verses. I thought I could look right at it, but I don't seem to see it at the moment. Verse 7 of chapter 15.

Wherefore, receive ye one another, as Christ also received us for the glory of God. Receive ye one another. Now, I have not answered the question.

I will say this. Offense has been given, and I think the Christians have been stumbled because they were not received. Some fear that if he is received, you may be importing false doctrine into your assembly.

Well, I say this. If he is received, and you find out he has false doctrine, straighten him out on it. And if he isn't, won't be straightened out on it, then treat him just like anybody else of those false doctrines.

He must be denied fellowship. It's not irrevocable to receive a person into your meeting and find out you haven't got what you thought you had. This happened in Boulder.

A man and his wife came in, and we found out that they were ultra-dispensationalists after they were received into the assembly. We had some discussions about it, and they decided that they could not propagate their doctrine there, and they left quite voluntarily. And our problem was solved.

But it's not irrevocable. It's not irreversible. And these scriptures to me would indicate him that is weak in the faith, receive ye, but not with doubtful disputation.

Not with reservations either. Extend your love to him. I would say that if he came to you knowing what you held and wanted fellowship, I don't see him, and he says he saved and gives a good, clear testimony from what you were able to talk with him, and you find that he has no false doctrine, how can you do anything else but receive him? If he belongs to Christ, how can you do anything else? Must you tell him, no, you can't come here.

And yet at the same time, this is not a matter, this is not a matter that can be settled the same way for everybody that comes in the door. It's a matter of faith, it's a matter of prayer, it's a matter of wisdom, and I think that God will guide. You know, God has an interest in his assembly, and if we look to him, surely he will have something to do in shaking the certain stances of those who do come into fellowship, pardon me.

Now I'm not trying to hedge on this question, I say receive him if you have a reasonable assurance that he belongs to the Lord and that he doesn't hold false doctrine. A few questions can help in this matter. Turns out that he has false doctrine, turns out that he's morally wrong, you can correct that.

You can correct it in a hurry, the Oversight Brethren can take care of that matter in a hurry. Not irreversible at all. Now I trust that I have not cast a snare on anybody, and I've not given you, well I have given you my opinion, very obviously, but I hope that those opinions are based on the word of God.

May God help us ever and always to help a weak Christian, especially a young Christian. Now, tonight, with the help of the Lord, in the 11th chapter of 1 Corinthians, we want to consider that lovely meeting of the church, the worship meeting. We read in the 11th chapter of 1 Corinthians, verse 17, now in this I declare unto you, I praise you not, that ye come together, not for the better, but for the worse.

For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When ye come together, therefore, into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper.

For in eating, every one taketh before his own supper, and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What have ye not houses to eat and drink in? Or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread.

When he had given thanks, he breaketh and said, Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup. When he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, this do ye, as often as ye drink it in remembrance of me.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till ye come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. To this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat it whole, that ye come not together under condemnation.

And the rest will I set in order when I come." This meaning that the Lord's Supper is brought before us because of certain irregularities at Corinth. They were making a love feast out of the Lord's Supper. And they were making a literal feast out of it.

And it's not to be a literal feast at all. It's all celebrated in the presence of the Lord. He says in verse 34, If any man hunger, let him eat it whole.

Now very obviously when we come together for the Lord's Supper, we don't come to take sizable portions of the bread or sizable drinks of the cup. If a man hunger, let him eat it whole. That ye come not together under condemnation.

And the rest will I set in order when I come. It's a token feast. Therefore, we just take a pinch of the bread and a sip of the cup.

If you're hungry, well, eat it whole. But they weren't doing that. They were making a love feast out of it.

Which meant, of course, that some of the Christians didn't have anything to eat and others were gorging. Even to the point of getting drunk. They were drinking to the point of getting drunk.

This makes it difficult for those people who hold that the contents must be unfermented grape juice. It's a difficult portion for them. Because these people were getting drunk on it.

Now, the Lord speaks of the, the Apostle speaks of this as having been given to him of the Lord. I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread. Isn't it lovely that our Lord Jesus gave this to the Apostle Paul by a very special revelation? Because I think it's a very special meeting.

It's a meeting where we're just gathered together to remember the Lord only. And to pour out our hearts in worship. Now, he doesn't say, worship me.

He says, just do this in remembrance of me. But how can we call to mind the death of our Lord Jesus for us? The love that led him to that death. How can we call to mind those precious scenes and not worship? To me, it's so lovely that the Lord doesn't demand our worship.

He just says, do this in remembrance of me. Just do it in remembrance. And is that asking too much? To just remember him? But of course, when we remember him, the worship comes forth.

Now, this certainly is a gathering in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I think it's our most holy spot on earth when the saints are gathered together around the Lord Jesus, the emblems reminding us of his love, of his broken body and his outpoured blood. It's the nearest spot to heaven.

We're gathered around heaven's center. We are heaven's people engaged in heaven's occupation. Worship.

Now, only the thin veil of time and sense separates us from heaven. And that thin veil of time and sense means nothing to our Lord Jesus as far as he's concerned we're there. And I think sometimes as far as we're concerned we're there.

I don't think it's going to be too much difference when we are in heaven than when we meet around the blessed feet of our Lord Jesus in the remembrance feast. It's the most precious meeting of all. I have said, and I'll say it again, that if everything else and fundamental Christianity were equal, which I'm afraid it is not, but if everything else and fundamental Christianity were equal, I'd still be where I am, ecclesiastically speaking.

If it were for nothing else than the remembrance feast, that alone would keep me where I am. It's a precious, precious time. It's a misunderstood time.

Sometimes the accent in fundamental Christianity many times is on service. God bless their service. It's on evangelization.

God bless their evangelization. But you know, God puts emphasis in his word on worship. God's portion must come first.

I can't quite understand why, in fundamental circles today, that that feast doesn't hold the place that it does in the assembly. Now, I trust I'm not being sectarian by employing language like that. I don't mean to be.

But would the God that it were such! I wish they knew the pleasure of sitting down in the presence of the Lord Jesus and pouring out one's heart just to be occupied with what he has done. Just to be occupied with his sweetness, the sweetness of his love, and to fellowship with the saints of God. To me, it's heaven on earth.

I don't think that that feast can be duplicated. Now, there is a special significance to this feast, and the Corinthians were finding that out. And this is the significance, the special significance of this feast.

Many of them were coming into the presence of the Lord Jesus. Now, he says, where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Now, the Lord Jesus is certainly keeping that promise at the feast of the Lord's Supper.

These Corinthians were seeming to forget that, and they were bringing unconfessed sin into the presence of the Lord. And the judgment of God was visited upon them. Now, all sin is done in the presence of the Lord for his omniscience.

But bringing that sin to the Lord's table, it seems that God sets that table apart in his own precious thoughts to the extent that to do it, to bring unconfessed sin, and you know what happens if you bring unconfessed sin into the presence of the Lord, there's only one thing you can do with it, and that's judge it. God can't do anything else with unconfessed sin that's brought into his presence. He's got to judge it.

These Corinthians were not judging themselves before they came to remember the Lord, and the Lord had to do it. Now, he says very, very plainly, for this cause many are weakly and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

I remember of a servant of the Lord, and I think it was right here in Omaha, the city of Omaha, that I heard him say this many, many years ago. Thirty years ago at least. And he said, he said, my mother used to tell me, now Charlie, C.W. Ross, I want you to wash and mind behind the ears.

Because she said, if you don't get clean, I'll have to do the job. He said, I knew what that meant. I meant that was a mess.

In her left hand a great big soapy rag, and she'd get me behind the nap of the neck, and when she got through with me, I'd be clean. But she gave me the opportunity to do it first. And God gives us the opportunity of judging sin.

We won't do it. He will do it. And those Corinthians were finding out that it was very, very dangerous, shall I say, to bring unconfessed sin into the presence of the Lord.

At this meeting especially. This is the only time that it's mentioned. Now I'm not inferring by this.

Don't, please don't put two and two together and say that I said, or infer that I said, that this is the only meeting where the Lord is in the midst of his people. He says, where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. But I do say it is mentioned in connection with this meeting, and we better take notice.

That when we come into the presence of the Lord, on this special holy occasion, it seems to me that it sets apart the remembrance of the Lord Jesus in that simple manner of his. It sets it apart in a very, very special way. Because this is the only time that I can recall that this truth is brought before us in connection with a remembrance feast.

Now, I want to talk more about this, perhaps tomorrow evening, when we talk about the functions of the church. That is, the worship, and the witness, and the government of the church. So I think that, in the mind of, I think in the will of the Lord, we'll just pass on now.

Now, in the 12th chapter of 1 Corinthians, we have the gift mentioned. He says, in the first verse of that chapter, Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Then he goes on to say, in verse 4, Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

There are differences of administration, but the same Lord. There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the ministration of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge. By the same Spirit to another faith by the same Spirit. To another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit.

To another the working of miracles. To another prophecy. To another discerning of spirits.

To another diverse kinds of tongues. To another the interpretation of tongues. But all these worketh that one and selfsame Spirit dividing to every man severally as he will.

That is, as the Spirit will. The Spirit is absolutely sovereign in these gifts. Now notice, please, Romans chapter 12.

Verse 6. Having been gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, and the Spirit of God gives that grace, whether prophecy let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith, or ministry let us wait on our ministering, or he that teacheth on teaching, or he that exhorteth on exhortation, or he that giveth let him do it with simplicity, or he that ruleth with diligence, he that showeth mercy with cheerfulness. Now God wants us to keep within our sphere of gifts. He has given each of us individually.

He has given us generously gifts to be used for Him. Now there's no Christian that does not have gifts. I don't know what it is in many instances.

But every Christian has been given a gift by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Now perhaps He gives some more of the gift of, well, the ostentatious, the showy. The gift that we can see.

And we think of that as being superior to the gift perhaps of faith, or the gift of giving. No, God's gifts I don't think can be greater. They're all from His gracious hands.

And I don't distinguish in any order of them whatsoever. God has given to His people liberally. What is our gift? What does He want us to do in the Church of God? We do have something to do.

Now we have some special gifts there in the 10th verse of the 12th chapter of 1 Corinthians that I don't want you to think that I'm going to ignore the diverse kinds of tongues and to another the interpretation of tongues. We'll get to it in due course of time. We're not going to ignore it.

It is not faith to be afraid of the Word of God. And it isn't faith to take your Bible and turn fast past a certain portion either. You don't have to do it.

You don't have to just get past that portion as soon as you can. Understand it. And seek the knowledge from the Lord.

And it isn't faith to get through the 12th and the 14th chapter of 1 Corinthians as fast as you can either. We don't have to, we don't have to skip them. We don't need to be afraid of them either.

Now God gives these gifts. And they are for the purpose of the edification of the assembly. Now we've mentioned them and that's all we've done is just mention them.

But I do encourage us in each and every instance to think of what our gift is. Now it's not what we choose to excel in. It's what the Spirit of God has given us.

And it's our business to get before the Lord and find out what that gift is. You say, I don't know what it is. Well many times I think the people of God sometimes will recognize gifts that are within us that perhaps

we don't even see ourselves.

Now they're not spiritually ignorant, the people of God are not. And often times they can see what is our gift better than perhaps we can ourselves. I do think that gifts should be encouraged where we find it.

But I think that with a little introspection and a little prayer we can see what our own gift is. But I say this, don't ever say that God hasn't given you a gift. He has.

That's for you to determine. If I see it, perhaps I'll even mention it. But be sure that you get before the Lord in the matter of gifts.

Because he has given gifts to all of those that are in the church. There is another verse that I may want to, let me check on it just a moment. I don't know whether it fits at this particular moment or not.

I think perhaps it would. Ephesians 4, 7. I'll just refer to it and then we'll pass on quickly. Ephesians 4 and 7. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

It's unto every one of us. Now, there are some specialized gifts in verse 11. And they are persons.

But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. And, of course, the Spirit himself is the giver of those gifts. Christ working through the Spirit.

Now, in the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians we have the love chapter. It's to be the very atmosphere of the church. We have the gifts of the church.

In chapter 12 we have the body of the church, which we've already considered in the latter part of the chapter. But in verse 13 we have the very atmosphere of the church itself. And he says, Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

And I'm sure that we could do without that, couldn't we? To have somebody in here with a couple of great big cymbals slamming them together. Well, one might as well do that as to speak in the most gifted way without his motive being love. And though I have the gift of prophecy, certainly exercised within the framework of the church, and understood all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith so that I can remove mountains and have not love, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned and have not love, it prompts me nothing. Love suffereth long in its kind. Love envieth not.

Love vomit not itself is not up. We have this lovely, lovely chapter. The very atmosphere of the church is to be love.

And when love is the atmosphere of the church, everything will be in order. Everything will be peaceable. Because love does not behave itself unseemly.

It won't give offense. It is not self-seeking. It's not easily provoked.

It doesn't put the worst construction upon things. It puts the best construction upon things. And it rejoices when the truth is spoken.

It bears all things. It believes all things. Certainly, this is to be the atmosphere of the church.

And now the 14th chapter of Corinthians. Those gifts of speaking in tongues, which have been such a trouble to some Christian circles in this day and age. Now, in this matter of speaking in tongues in our day and age, I think if we read the 14th chapter of 1 Corinthians, it would settle the whole matter within the limits of the chapter itself.

But certainly, we can bring other verses to bear on it later. Why was the gift of tongues given? It was given as Pentecost. And the Jews heard in the language of the nations where they were born from whence they came.

They heard the wonderful story of the gospel at Pentecost told out in their own language. I couldn't think of a thing that would be more definitely miraculous than for me to start out right now. And we're going to do it.

Start right now talking in German. If I could just start reeling off German right at this moment, I'd say it was a miracle. And I think you'd say it was a miracle, too.

Think of what happened there at Pentecost. Galileans, speaking in all the various languages of all those people that had come up to Jerusalem at that time. It was a miracle.

And they recognized it as a miracle. And I don't think anything would be easier to recognize than a miracle as a miracle than this very thing that took place. But it had a very definite purpose.

It connoted to these people. It brought the message of the gospel to these people. In their own language.

Better understood. Now, God tells us in the 14th chapter of 1 Corinthians why the gift of tongues was given. It says, well, let's read verse 18 of the 14th chapter of 1 Corinthians.

We're going to skip a lot of ground here. I thank my God I speak with tongues more than ye all. Now, if it weren't for this verse of the New Testament, you'd never know that the Apostle Paul spoke in tongues.

He certainly didn't make much of it. But he says, I thank my God I speak with tongues more than ye all. Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding that by my voice I might teach others also.

And the thought of ministry in the church of God is edification ever and always. And it was not to be done unless edification was the result. He said, yet in the church I'd rather speak five words with my understanding that by my voice I might teach others also than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.

Well, I fancy that some people would rather speak ten thousand words in an unknown tongue than five words with their own understanding. That's just turning around the word of God. Now, I can speak five words with my own understanding, thank God.

Now, he says, brethren, be not children in understanding. Howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. I think the reason he says this was because they were taking a childish delight in this gift.

And Paul says, don't be children. If you want to be children, be children in the matter of malice, because children don't hold malice. You can be children that way.

But don't be children in this respect. And then he goes on to say, In the law it is written, with men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people. And yet for all that they will not hear me, saith the

Lord.

Why, tongues have been prophesied in the Old Testament. It's an actual fact. In the Old Testament, God prophesied that people would be speaking with tongues.

And then he goes on to say, Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not. But prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe. Now this is to be a sign to whom? To Israel.

Because it says, with men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people. And the prophecy was made to Israel. So tongues was a sign, and the Jews require a sign.

They require it, and God says, I'm going to give it to you. And he gave them a sign in these tongues. And this was prophesied in the Old Testament.

That God would speak to them in this matter. All right, are tongues for today? Are they for our day and age? I heard of a man saying, Now these are the gifts of the Spirit. So the one is given by the Spirit a word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another the gift of healing by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another diverse kinds of tongues, to another interpretation of tongues.

Now these are the gifts of the Spirit. Now which shall we arbitrarily rule out? Shall we say, well, let's rule out the tongues. Throw them out.

Well, that's quite an argument, isn't it? Which are you going to arbitrarily dismiss? The tongues? Well, that might give you a little trouble if you thought very long on it. But I would counter by referring them to the 16th chapter of Mark. Notice it with me, please.

Mark chapter 16. And verse 17. These signs shall follow them that believe.

Mark 16, 17. In my name shall they cast out devils. They shall speak with new tongues.

They shall take up serpents. And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them. They shall lay hands on the sick.

They shall recover. These signs shall follow them that believe. Now, if they insist that I keep the category in the 12th chapter of 1 Corinthians intact without throwing anything out, I'm going to insist that they keep the list in Mark 16 without throwing anything out.

And they're going to have trouble with those snakes and with that poison. That's going to give them a little bit of trouble. I'm not picking up any cobras.

And I don't think they are either. But God did act in a wonderful way at the beginning of this dispensation. And Paul was bitten by one of these vipers.

And it had no effect on him. I don't know about the poison. I don't know if there's any historical instances in it or not.

Are tongues for today? Tongues were given. Tongues were given as a special sign to the Jews. And in the early days of the church, it was composed of Jew and Gentile, but it's largely Gentile today.

And even if it were for our day and age, I still wouldn't be interested. I say if. Don't misunderstand me.

If it were for this day and age, I still would not be interested because I still can speak the English language and I can still make myself understood through the Lord. I can praise Him with the one language that I do know and I can communicate with you. Now those that really believe that they have the gift of tongues, I suppose that this means that if they go to the mission field, they don't have to go to language school.

Oh, let's not bring that up. Let's not bring that up. As a matter of fact, they do.

They have to go to language school. Whether they've got the gift of tongues or not, I don't believe it. I'm not interested in it, in the gift of tongues, because I can still speak those five words with my own understanding.

And Paul says I'd rather speak five words with my own understanding than 10,000 words in an unknown tongue. I could talk on them indefinitely, but I'll say this, that those people that I have seen take up this practice are highly subjective in character and in the end, if you really will analyze the thing, they are occupied with their own experience rather than with the Lord. They take a childish delight in something that the Apostle Paul warned the Corinthians about.

Now don't be like children in understanding. Be like children in battle. But don't take a childish delight in something like that.

Now, we could possibly say more, but our time is up and we want to observe the time for the sake of those who are, have young people here tonight. So may God bless these few considerations for His glory. Mr. Raymond Rogers, would you please close the work session?

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