

Studies in 1 Corinthians-11 1 Cor 13

by William MacDonald

William MacDonald emphasizes the importance of love as the foundation for the use of spiritual gifts in the church, as outlined in 1 Corinthians 13.

Duration: 52:20

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 14:29

Topics: "Gifts Of Spirit", "Power Of Love"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by leading the congregation in singing a chorus called 'Remember thy Creator.' He emphasizes the importance of remembering God in our youth and throughout our lives. The speaker then discusses the significance of understanding the message being conveyed, highlighting the uselessness of speaking in tongues without interpretation. He also mentions the importance of love, describing its characteristics and stating that it never fails. The sermon concludes with the speaker discussing the temporary nature of prophecies, tongues, and knowledge, and the eventual arrival of perfection.

Transcript

Remember thy creator in the days of thy youth. How many know it? Raise your hand. Not very many.

Did you raise your hand, Don? I did. I did. I did.

I did. your creator in the days of thy youth." I admit it, but it's still a good chorus, isn't it? That was a good beginning. Now, for the dress rehearsals, ready? Remember thy creator, Jesus calls you in light, through his own word of truth, come and trust him, serve the Lord, he'll be with you, satisfy you.

I forgot the music for the other one. And if some of our capable ushers will come and pass out outlines for 1 Corinthians 13, we can be turning in our Bibles to 1 Corinthians 13. Very familiar chapter.

Everybody got one? Okay, thank you very much. 1 Corinthians 13, verse 1. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. Though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind. Love does not envy.

Love does not parade itself, is not puffed up, does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail.

Whether there are tongues, they will cease. Whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part will be done away.

When I was a child, I spoke as a child. I understood as a child. I thought as a child.

But when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as I also am known.

And now abide faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love. Last week, we mentioned that 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14 should be studied together because they all have to do with the subject of spiritual gifts. Beginning with the birthday of the church at the day of Pentecost, God gave gifts to men.

The Lord Jesus had ascended to heaven, and as reward for his magnificent work at the cross of Calvary, God gave him gifts, and he turned around and gave them to men. Some of the gifts were pretty spectacular. Some of them were very sensational.

Others were very quiet gifts of the Holy Spirit. For instance, the gift of tongues was pretty sensational because men were given the ability to stand up in the assembly and speak languages that they had never learned, never took a course in it, and yet they were given that miraculous power. And then other men in the assemblies were given the power to interpret those languages.

It says if I should stand here today and speak in Italian, and you had the power to get up and tell what I was saying, interpreting. And then there were gifts of healings. Pretty sensational, spectacular.

Then there were other quiet gifts like prophecy, where the word of God was given and people's hearts were edified by it. And these were wonderful gifts, and every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, every person who's been born again has some gift. Some people have more than one gift, but everyone has some gift, and it's a supernatural endowment.

It has nothing to do with natural talent at all. You may really have the gift of gab, but that has nothing to do with the spiritual gift of preaching the gospel, evangelism. Nothing to do with it.

In fact, we mentioned last week it's more glory to God if you don't have the gift of gab and can still get up and tell forth the glories of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. And that's really what happened. People were used of God in such a wonderful way that people had to stand back and say, well, that certainly isn't him, that Claude.

He could never do that by himself. It must be the Lord, as the Lord got the glory for it. But you know, in the use of those gifts that current abuses came in, and that's really what these three chapters have to do with.

Not so much with the use of the gift as the abuse of the gift. Paul never says anything against the gifts of the Holy Spirit, believe me, because they were gifts of the Holy Spirit. And he'd be speaking against God if he said anything against them.

He never says anything against the use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, because, once again, they're divine gifts. He speaks against the abuse of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. What were some of those abuses? For instance, men would get up and speak in a language and there was no interpretation.

No interpretation of the language. I'm going to get up and I'm going to speak in German. I don't know how many of you understand German, but not many, probably.

And Paul speaks against that, speaking in a tongue without the interpretation of it. First of all, it was prideful. Here I get up and I jabber away in French in a meeting and what I'm really saying is, without interpretation, what I'm really saying is, I hope you people are impressed.

I never studied French for one hour and here I am speaking in French. Kind of impressive. And not only that, it was selfish for me to get up and speak in a foreign language.

Nobody's understanding what I'm saying. It's really pretty selfish. I might be edifying myself and God knows what I'm saying, but nobody else does.

The gifts were given for the profit of all, not for self-profit. Paul emphasizes that in chapter 12. The gifts were given for the profit of all.

And then it was childish in a way. I mean, men were using the gifts like a toy, like a toy. That's why Paul says in chapter 13 that we read today, when I became a man, I put away childish things.

He says, in malice be children, but in understanding be men, says in chapter 14. And then it was loveless. They weren't thinking of others.

And this is the emphasis in chapter 13. If you're doing something in love, you'll be thinking of others, not of self. And speaking in tongues without interpretation is loveless.

And not only is useless, useless, a waste of time. Nobody understands what's being said. It's unedifying.

Nobody is built up in the faith. But there were other abuses. Many were speaking in tongues in the meeting.

Many were speaking, and they weren't just speaking one at a time. They were speaking together in tongues in a meeting. What confusion that was.

And then these dear people created the impression that everybody should speak in tongues. And we went over chapter 12 last week, where Paul uses the illustration of the human body. And we saw how ridiculous is if the body was all eye, or if the body was all leg, or if the body was all tongue.

It wouldn't be a body. It would be a monstrosity. So, it was a mistake for them to create the impression that everybody should speak in tongues.

He said, do all speak in tongues? And the answer implied is no. Do all interpret? And the answer implied is no. And then they looked down their noses on those who couldn't speak in tongues.

And Paul says, that's not the right way to do the body. The members of the body are interdependent. My hands need my eyes.

My hands need the rest of my body. They couldn't function without it. And that's the spirit that should prevail in the Christian church.

They felt independent and self-sufficient. I have no need of you. That was it.

But it was not only with tongues. It was with prophesying as well. Let me just say that in the primary sense in the New Testament, a prophet was a man who spoke the word of God.

And sometimes they could actually get up on what they said was the word of God. And it's preserved for us here in the Bible. Some of the things they said weren't the word of God either.

I mean, not necessarily. There were times when they spoke by inspiration. But even with the prophets, sometimes several of them were speaking at the same time.

And some kept on talking too long. In other words, they'd go on talking and somebody else would go on talking. Somebody else would get a revelation from the Lord, but he couldn't give it because this other man was up there hogging the platform.

You say, how do you know all of this? You just go to the chapters and read it into the chapters. What we call internal evidence. This is what Paul is dealing with in these chapters.

And you know from what he's saying what was going on. And then sometimes even with the prophets, there was a loss of self-control. And sometimes we have that today.

I mean, a guy goes, he's supposed to be finished at 12 o'clock and he goes till 2 o'clock. And people say, man, you went too long. And he's, well, I couldn't help it.

I was just borne along by the spirit of God. Paul says, nonsense. The spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet.

He can stop if he wants to stop. If he wants to stop. Now, we go on to chapter 13 with that background.

It helps to have the background and know what was happening. And on your outline, you'll notice that in verses 1 through 3, Paul is speaking about the worthlessness of not only tongues, but of exercising gifts without love. The worthlessness of it.

That's really amazing, too. It says that even if you give your body to be burned, die a martyr's death, and don't have love, it's worthless. But I think I mentioned here before that in the early days of the Christian

church, there was a man to be martyred for his Christian faith.

And as he was led out to the stake to be burned, another Christian dashed out to him and asked him to forgive him for some wrong that this had done to the martyr. He asked for forgiveness and the martyr waved him aside. It wouldn't have anything to do with him.

And he went to his death with an unforgiving attitude. He wasn't acting in love and his name is unknown. Nobody ever lists his name among the lists of Christian martyrs.

He was willing to give his body to be burned, but he wasn't willing to forgive a fellow believer. It's rather startling, isn't it, to read verses 1 through 3. And then verses 4 through 7, loves and thinks of others. And that's what wasn't happening in Corinth.

People weren't thinking of it. They were exercising their gifts for self, not for others. They said, well, I was edified.

I used tongues for self-edification. That's not what tongues were given for, for self-edification. They were given for the profit of all.

Paul is not commending that, as we'll see when we come to chapter 14. He was condemning that and say, look, if you have a gift, use it to help other people, not to build yourself up in any way. So it gives some of the characteristics of love in verses 4 through 7. And in all of them, you'll see that it's thinking of other people.

Others, yes, Lord, others. Let this my motto be. Help me to live for others that I may live like thee.

The Lord Jesus lived for others, didn't he? Never a selfish thought went through his mind and never a selfish act did he perform. Then it says in verses 8 through 10 that love is forever, whereas gifts are not. That's interesting, isn't it? Now, I should pause here and tell you that there are two main interpretations of these verses.

The first interpretation, and the one that has prevailed down through the history of the church, is that when that which is perfect, verse 10, means the heavenly state. And it's saying that when we get to heaven, there won't be any need for these tongues, for these gifts of the Spirit anymore. That's one interpretation of the passage.

Love never fails. Whether there are prophecies, they will fail. Whether there are tongues, they will cease.

Whether there's knowledge, it will vanish away in heaven. When Jesus comes, when that which is perfect has come, it could refer to the coming of the Lord or to the heavenly state. We know in part, and we prophesy in part during Paul's day, when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

The other interpretation is that that which is perfect refers to the completion of the New Testament in written form. In other words, these gifts had, these particular ones had a temporary purpose, and with the coming of the New Testament in written form, those gifts are not needed anymore. There are still gifts of the Holy Spirit that are needed, but these particular ones are not.

So, when you read verse 10, when that which is perfect has come, that is the New Testament, then that which is in part will be done away. Prophecies. We don't have prophecies today in the original sense in

which they're found in the New Testament.

For instance, if somebody got up here in this meeting today and said, brothers and sisters, I have a message from God. I have a revelation from God. It's not found in the Bible, but I want to give it to you.

We'd say, just sit down. We don't want to hear it, because we have in the New Testament and in the Bible, the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Is that right? Now, prophecy has a weaker meaning today, and that is when a man gets up and expounds the Word of God, he's prophesying.

That's a weaker meaning. It's not the primary meaning that's found in the New Testament. So, there you have those two interpretations of this verse.

100 years from today, I will tell you which is the right one. Fair enough? Okay. Partial revelation will give way to fuller knowledge.

And according to that second interpretation, partial revelation has given a way to fuller knowledge, and we have the complete Word of God today. And then finally, verse 13, love is the greatest of the graces. And he's saying, look, whatever gift you have, use it in love.

Think of others. Don't think about yourself. Now, admittedly, we're going over this a little bit rapidly today.

If some of you have questions, feel free to ask them. But I'd like to move on to chapter 14, and then the last two weeks in next month, we hope to finish 1 Corinthians chapters 15 and 16. That was planned pretty well.

Everybody get one? This is exactly the right amount. Now, notice verses 1 through 5. Prophesying with love is greater than tongues without interpretation. Say, why? Because tongues without interpretation, people don't understand it.

But prophesying with love, they certainly do understand it. That's the contrast that he's going to make in verses 1 through 5. Pursue love and desire spiritual gifts. That is, you as an assembly have a privilege of desiring certain spiritual gifts.

Maybe you need a gift of a teacher. Maybe you need some other gifts in the assembly. It's okay to desire it, but especially that you may prophesy.

Now, notice what it says. He who speaks in a tongue. Now, you have to provide some words here.

What? He who speaks in a tongue without interpretation. How do you know? Because it's obvious from the rest of the verse. It's obvious from the rest of the verse.

That's why I say in the outline A, tongues without interpretation are unintelligible. He who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him. Now, if there was interpretation, they would understand it.

But they don't understand it because he's just getting up and he's babbling. And nobody knows what he's saying. He who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God.

No one understands him. However, in the spirit he might speak. What he's saying might be marvelous.

I mean, it might have to do with the great mysteries of God. Nobody understands a word he's saying because he's talking a foreign language. And, you know, this has a present application.

In the will of God, I'll be going to Austria in June. If I just get up and speak in English, it won't work. A lot of them won't understand English.

So, there'll be an interpreter there and I'll say something in English and they'll say it in German. That's the way it should be. It's orderly.

Whereas, now he contrasts prophecy. He who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. Why? Because he's talking in their language.

He's talking in a language that they understand. This verse is not a definition of prophecy. It's free result of speaking in the language of the people.

That's what it is. Free result of speaking in the language of the people. He who speaks in a tongue supply the word without interpretation.

You have to supply that. Tongues without interpretation edify self. Whereas, prophesying edifies the church.

Tongues without interpretation edify self. What does that mean? It means that, sure, you may get built up through the marvelous teachings that you're giving. Nobody else is going to get built up because they don't understand a word you're saying.

You see, this verse is used today to justify speaking in tongues for self-edification. That's not what Paul is saying here. He's not saying that that's a good use of tongues.

He's saying you should use it for self. You should use it for the good of others. And he had already said that in chapter 12 where, in verse 7, it says, The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.

For the good of others, not for yourself. It's self out of the picture. Verse 5. I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied.

For he who prophesied is greater than he who speaks with tongues unless he interprets. Unless he interprets that the church may receive edification. You can see what Paul is emphasizing.

Now, let me say a word about that. Unless indeed he interprets. That word he could just as well be translated one or someone.

It would be very unusual for the person who speaks in tongues to be the interpreter. There'd be no use of his speaking in a tongue if he was going to interpret it. Say it in my language, bud.

But supply the word one or someone and it makes good sense. Unless indeed someone interprets. That the church may receive edification.

That is a great goal. That the saints of God be built up in their most holy faith. Now, in verses 6 through 12, he emphasizes the importance of the message being understood.

Now, brethren, verse 6. If I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching? That is, unless I speak to you in a language you understand producing these results. It makes very good sense. Of course, it makes sense.

But you really do have to supply this idea of tongues with interpretation. Otherwise, they're useless and worthless. Then he goes on to speak of musical instruments and he says even things without life, whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sound, how will it be known what is pipe or plate? Here's an army, let's say, and they're ready to go forth into battle and somebody gets up and he gives a on the trumpet, you know.

Oh, what was that? They just sit and polish their rifles. Is that the call to arms? Well, you'd never know it. It's a black like that.

It has to be intelligible. It has to have distinct notes. Then people will understand and the soldiers will jump into action.

If the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, verse 8, who will prepare himself for battle? Exactly right. And tongues without interpretation are an uncertain sound, aren't they? So, likewise, you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how will it be known what is spoken? You'll be speaking into the air. What's he talking about? Talking about tongues without interpretation.

You know, down through the years until the second Vatican council, the mass in the Catholic Church was said in Latin without interpretation. It was a violation of these scriptures, wasn't it? A violation of these scriptures. Now, that's not true anymore.

I think in many churches the priesthood speaks in the language of the people. At least they understand that. The audience must know what is spoken, verse 9. And then in verses, in verse 10, he's speaking even about the communications among creatures.

There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance. Now, here it's not just human languages he's speaking about. It's wider than that.

You know, here's a deer out at Lake Chabot, and it has a little one. And the deer wants to warn the little one of danger. Well, I can't imitate the sound of a deer warning its little one of danger, but it has an intelligible sound, and the little one knows what that sound means.

And this is true of animals, and of birds, and of most creatures in the world today that can make sounds. They are intelligible sounds. And although we might not understand them, the rest of their creatures do.

There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance. Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to him who speaks, and he who speaks will be a foreigner to me. And I want to tell you something today, that that's a very frustrating experience.

It's frustrating to go to a country where another language is spoken, and you sit there, and everybody at the table is talking this other language, and you don't know a word that's being said. You really feel on the outside, unless that person next to you is gracious and kindly, and tells you what is being spoken. I always appreciate that.

And, you know, maybe that'll be a problem for us here sometime at Calvary Bible Chapel. Maybe somebody will come here that doesn't speak English. It'd be a nice courtesy to allow somebody else to sit next to them and just, in a subdued voice, interpret for them.

When I go over to Parkside, there are people there that speak Spanish, but they don't speak English. And I always ask Brother Owen if he'll just go and sit with them. And then I tell the people, now, don't be disturbed if you hear a little buzz of conversation while I'm speaking.

It's somebody interpreting. I will say that over in Europe and other countries, people are very mindful of that. And make provision for interpretation.

Verse 12. Even so, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel. You know, it's so easy for a man to be tremendously gifted of the Holy Spirit of God, and to make it a matter of pride, and not use it for the church.

One of the most gifted Bible teachers I ever knew. And yet, at the end of the meeting, when people wanted to talk to him, he'd wave them aside and rush off to his hotel. Is that exercising a gift in love? Others are tremendously gifted of the Lord, and they have a price.

They put a price on their gift. I'll come and preach at your church, but these are the terms. Just see my agent.

You say, that doesn't go on. Of course it goes on. It goes on all the time, and the price is pretty steep.

More than Calvary could ever pay. If I have a gift, I should use it to benefit other people and build them up in their most holy faith. Number three on the outline.

Instruction concerning the use of tongues. Verses 13 through 25. First of all, the speaker should pray for an interpretation.

And once again, you can supply the word one or someone instead of he, and I think it makes much better sense if you do. Therefore, let him who speaks in a tongue pray that someone may interpret. This man has this marvelous gift of speaking in a language, and he can magnify God.

And incidentally, that's how tongues were used on the day of Pentecost. They were used to declare the wonderful works of God, weren't they? And that's wonderful, and I want to hear it. But I want to understand what's being said.

So, let him pray that somebody in the meeting will be able to interpret for him. If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. Now, that's difficult.

It almost sounds as if he doesn't know what he's saying, doesn't it? How could he edify himself if he doesn't understand anything? My understanding is unfruitful. There are two ways of understanding that. My understanding may be what I understand, but that expression, my understanding, may mean the understanding of me by others.

That's what it means. It isn't what I understand. It's what others understand through my speaking.

Now, I wonder, are you following me? Let me give you an illustration. I don't want to go into the technicalities of the genitive case. There are what is known as the subjective genitive, I understand.

The objective genitive, the understanding of me. Let me give you an illustration from Isaiah 53. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.

By his knowledge. Now, does that mean what Jesus knows, or does it mean when I come to know Jesus? Does he justify many by what he knows, or does he justify them when they come and put their faith and trust in him? Of course, the second one is the right one, isn't it? To know him is life eternal. And that's what is known as the objective genitive.

You can live a normal life and not know that one. I'm just explaining it to you. And when it says here, my understanding is unprovable, it doesn't mean what I understand.

It means what people understand what I'm saying. The understanding of me by others. Okay.

Verse 15. What is the result then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding. That is, pray so as to be understood.

I will pray so as to be understood. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing so as to be understood. I'm not used to me getting up and singing a solo to you in Gaelic today.

Nobody would understand a word I was saying. Nobody. Maybe Tom would.

Maybe Don would. They know three words in Gaelic. So, it's worthless.

Absolutely worthless. I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing so as to be understood. You say, how do you know, MacDonald, that what you're saying is right? The next verse proves it.

Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say amen, if you're giving a prayer, since he does not understand what you say? What's amen all about? Well, amen is that a person gets up, a man gets up in a meeting, and he prays. When he prays, I am making that prayer my own, and at the end, I say amen. That means I have made that prayer my own, right? Now, how can I do that if I don't understand what he's saying? I can't.

It's foolish for me to say amen at the end of a prayer in Romanian. I don't know what he said. Maybe he was talking heresy in his prayer.

I have to understand it. So, you really do have to supply words here in chapter 14 of 1 Corinthians, and the context shows you what words to supply. You're not doing violence to the scripture.

You're not adding to the word of God. You're trying to understand what Paul is saying here. Verse 17, you indeed give thanks, but the other is not edified.

Well, I didn't understand what you were saying. You were praying in the tongue without interpretation. Ridiculous.

Paul says, I thank my God that I speak in tongues more than you all. And I believe that. I believe that Paul had the miraculous power to speak in many different languages.

I believe that. But I like what he says next. In the church, I'd rather say five words with my understanding.

Here it is again. Five words and be understood. It doesn't mean that he doesn't know what he's saying.

It means that other people don't know what he's saying. I would rather speak five words and be understood, that I may teach others also. You see, it all fits together.

Than 10,000 words in a foreign language. Sometimes I tell our interns this. Every year they're asked to go out and speak at Bethesda.

And some of the dear folks at Bethesda have hearing problems. Not uncommon. And I tell the interns, look, better to speak five words.

Christ died for the ungodly and let people understand. A lot of our fellows, you know, they have a very gentle, reverential, dulcet tone to their voice. Hard to hear.

So they're wasting their time. They might as well be speaking in a foreign language. You young men here in the meeting, when you get up to speak, speak so as to be heard.

Don't be afraid to project your voice. The rest of the people will love you forever. In any audience, there are always people who are hard of hearing.

They don't have any trouble hearing me. Whenever I go to Bethesda, they say, oh, Bill McDonald is here. You can hear me down the corridor.

But that's what Paul is saying here. I thank God I speak with tongues more than you all. Yet in the church, I'd rather speak five words with my understanding.

Five words and be understood than speak 10,000 words in a foreign tongue. It's so obvious, isn't it, on the face of it. When you see it this way, you understand what Paul is saying.

Otherwise, it sounds as if Paul's getting up and talking in a language he doesn't know what he's saying. That's not of God. That's not of God.

I think that does go on with demonism, where people actually speak and say blasphemous things, and they might not even know what they're saying. Now he says, brethren, do not be children in understanding, and malice be children, be babe, but in understanding, be mature. What is he saying there? I think he's saying, look, God has given you a wonderful gift.

Don't use it like a child uses a toy. That's what they were doing. They were using it like a child uses a toy.

In the law it is written, with men of other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people, and yet for all that they will not hear me, says the Lord. Now this goes back to the book of Isaiah, chapter 26. And Israel had been disobedient to the Lord, and Israel had gone after idols, and been unfaithful to the covenant-keeping God.

And God says, okay, I'm going to send in a foreign invader, and people all around you are going to be speaking Assyrian, and you won't understand. But it's a sign of my judgment on you. And so when it says here, with men of other tongues, he's speaking about the Assyrian tongues, the invasion of the Assyrians, and they took off the northern ten tribes.

The sign to the nation of Israel at that time. And he says, therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to unbelievers. They were given at the day of Pentecost.

And they were really, among other things, this is not the only purpose of tongues, but they were given as a sign to the nation of Israel, a sign of God's judgment on a nation that had turned its back on Jehovah. Prophet Zion is not for unbelievers, but for those who believe. Prophet Zion was a gift to be used in the church to teach the word of God, to build up the saints, to mature them in the things of God.

Therefore, if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those who are uninformed or unbelievers, will they not see that you are out of your mind? In other words, people come into a church, and everybody is talking at the same time. Over on this side, people are talking tongues, and over on this side, and you have German and Italian and Romanian and Bulgarian and Russian. What is going on? I mean, somebody coming in from the outside, what kind of a mad confusion is this? The I on your outline, three letter I. Tongues without interpretation cause visitors to think that behavior is madness, whereas prophesying, because understood, produces positive spiritual results.

They come in and hear a man explaining the word of God and teaching the word of God and making application of the word of God. I not agree with what I'm hearing, but it's certainly orderly. If all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he's convinced by all, he's judged by all, and thus the secrets of his heart are revealed.

Though falling down in his faith, he'll worship God and report that God is truly among them. Why? Because he understands the prophecy. He didn't understand the tongues.

Anyway, people are all talking at once. He couldn't tell which one to listen to, even if he could understand it. So, Paul says, now look, there have been abuses of the use of the gifts, especially tongues and prophecy, in the church in Corinth.

And by inspiration of the spirit of God, I'm going to lay down some control. And that's what you have in the rest of the chapter, verses 26 through 40, controls on the use of tongues and prophesying. Number one, the first control is any message must be edifying.

Verse 26, let all things be done for edification. The last part of verse 26, you see it? And this should be still true. And all the meetings of the local assembly, whatever takes place, should take place to build up people in their most holy faith.

Second control, no more than three may speak in tongues in any one meeting. There's a control. You say, I thought you believed in the priesthood of all believers.

We do believe in the priesthood of all believers, but the spirit of God who set up the priesthood of all believers puts controls on the public exercise of that priesthood. And here are the controls. Some of them, not all of them.

Three, they must speak one at a time. If anyone speaks in the tongue, let it be two or at the most three, each in turn. Each in turn.

They must speak one at a time, not all together. Next control, there must be an interpreter. Let one interpret.

Notice it doesn't say let him interpret. It says let one interpret. That's the thought.

It doesn't have to be the man who speaks in tongues who does the interpretation. Let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silent in the church and let him speak to himself in God.

If he wants to talk in the tongue, let him talk in the tongue to himself. God will understand him. Nobody else would without an interpretation.

Next control, prophesying are limited to no more than three in any one meeting. It says let two or three prophets speak and let the others judge. Then it says, verse 30, a prophet should give way to another who has a fresh revelation.

And that shows that not everything the prophet said was necessarily an inspired word of God. You say, what application would a verse like that have for us today? Well, I wasn't there at the time, but I heard of a conference where they had three speakers speaking at this conference. And one of the men got up and he started to minister the word of God.

And he said, I'm sorry, brethren and sisters, I'm not getting help from the Lord. And he sat down. I think that's pretty good, don't you? A man who had the humility, didn't do a thing for his pride, I'm telling you, said, I'm sorry, brothers and sisters, I'm not getting help from the Lord.

He sat down. Well, it's possible that somebody can be up talking and not getting help from the Lord and still go on talking. And this says, no, he should sit down.

Maybe this other man has a revelation from the Lord. You can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged. And then I suggested to you that there may have been a loss of self-control among the prophets.

It doesn't say, I can't tell you what that loss of self-control was. It says the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. That's a wonderful thing, that you can be under the control of the Holy Spirit and not lose self-control.

The fruit of the Spirit is self-control. We read in Galatians chapter 5. Very wonderful. And this is to curb wild confusion in the local church.

For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. Verses 34 and 35, women are to remain silent. Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they're not permitted to speak.

They're to be submissive, as the law also says. They want to learn something, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is shameful for women to speak in church. Say, what does that mean? What does that mean in this age of feminism, when it's completely disregarded by evangelical churches everywhere? What does that mean? It means exactly what it says.

No use trying to tone it down. I never want to stand up before you and try to tone down the scriptures and adapt them to cultures. Let the truth stand.

Let God be true, and every man a liar. And these verses mean exactly what they say. And this is what we practice here in Calvary Bible Chapel.

And our sisters are happy, and they're fulfilled, and they're glad to be obedient to the word of God. Then verses 36 through 30. Oh, people might quarrel with that.

Paul anticipates the fact that that might raise hackles, you know. He says, if anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or a spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write unto you are what? The commandment of the Lord. People say, oh, Paul was a bachelor.

Paul was a woman hater. Paul was, listen, Paul, listen. What Paul is saying here are the commandments of the Lord.

And people who try to go against them are going against, not the word of Paul, but the word of the Lord. If anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant still. Paul says in verse 38, then prophecy is to be desired.

Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues. Prophecy is to be desired. Tongues are not to be forbidden.

And then the final control, everything must be done decently and in order. You say, well, how about that? Tongues are not to be forgiven. No, the controls are to be followed.

And I want to tell you, if those controls were followed, there wouldn't be a tongues movement today. They're not followed. So I say, let the scriptures stand, be obedient to the scripture, and all will be well.

The will of God, as I say, will try to finish 1 Corinthians 15 and 16. I won't be here the next two weeks, but the last two weeks in March, Lord willing, we'll try to finish. So I went very quickly over this.

You have the outlines. And if you have any questions, please feel free to come up afterwards and ask them. OK, I think we'll sing our chorus again for the boys and the girls.

Remember thy creator. And then Matt, would you come up and close in prayer, please? Remember thy, what is the number again? 645. Remember thy creator.

Good chorus for the boys and girls, too. So no one for us as well. Ready? Remember thy creator in the days of thine.

Jesus calls you in life's morning through his own word of truth. OK, you just weren't getting enough air in your lungs. So let's stand and tune up the volume.

And we'll just sing it once again and just remain standing for closing prayer. Ready? Remember. Sing it out.

Good. Jesus calls you through his own word of truth. Come and trust him.

Earn the Lord faithfully. He'll be with you. Satisfy you.

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