

## *God's Purpose For an Assembly*

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**Introduction:** Paul has attempted to get the Corinthians to see what is really valuable.

- A. One way to test value is to see how long something will last!
  - 1. Would you buy a car for a good price if you knew it would last only one month?
  - 2. We must be thinking about things that will last an eternity!
  - 3. This is Paul's argument about spiritual gifts verses love. **(1 Cor 13:8-13)**
- B. There are some points to remember from chapter 13.
  - 1. While only 3 spiritual gifts are named, these three represent the whole.  
**(1 Cor 12:8-10)** In speech this is called an ellipsis.
  - 2. That which is "perfect" replaces the "partial."
    - a. Manhood replaces childhood
    - b. clarity replaces dimness
    - c. That which is perfect is the word of God. **(Jas 1:25)**
  - 3. The second coming of Christ could not be "that which is perfect". **(13:13)**
    - a. Hope will end here, it will not abide. **(Rom 8:24)**
    - b. Faith will end here, it is now sight. **(2 Cor 4:5)**
    - c. That which is perfect will come before the second coming of Christ.
- C. The Corinthians needed to know how to properly conduct an assembly.
  - 1. They already had problems regarding a common meal. **(1 Cor 11:17-34)**
  - 2. Their main problem was they failed to value things that are spiritual. Why did they place such a value upon tongues?

### ***I. What do the things we do accomplish in our assembly? (14:1-5)***

- A. Which has a greater value: tongues or prophecy?
  - 1. All coveting is not wrong! Let our will line up with God's will.
  - 2. Upon what basis do we determine what is important?
  - 3. I often ask myself the question: "Are people understanding what I am teaching?"
- B. When we see ourselves as giving rather than receiving we will do a greater work in the Lord's church. **(Luke 22:26-27)**

### ***II. When are tongues profitable to the church? (14:6-25)***

- A. Tongue must be for "profit" not for personal pleasure. **(14:6)**
  - 1. How does one know?
  - 2. The bottom line is what are the hearers learning. Do we think like this?
- B. God wants clarity in our teaching. **(14:7-8)**
  - 1. Laws of music - cadence, modulation, and harmony - It is clear!
  - 2. When an army is warned to fight no doubt should be present.
  - 3. Good lesson for the kind of teaching that "profits." Ex. Bill Hall: Exclamation or question mark?
- C. We must think of others in our service to God.
  - 1. What if others do not understand? **(14:9)**
  - 2. While every tongue has a meaning, not everyone would understand. **(14:10-12)**
  - 3. How could one come to service and enjoy not understanding?

4. Misplaced zeal can cause us not to think! **(14:12; Rom 10:1-3)**
- D. Both the speaker and the hearer need to understand. **(14:13-20)**
1. When the one with the gift of tongues has the right priorities he then will pray for what is best. Do you pray like this?
  2. These principles are not unique to spiritual gifts. Singing along with any activity we do in an assembly should have the edification of others as a priority.
  3. We learn when a prayer is led that the others are to hear with understanding.
  4. We also learn that an appropriate way to express approval is “amen.”
- E. Where does God place the value?
1. Paul leaves no doubt concerning what accomplishes the will of God. **(14:18-19)**
  2. We must choose what we will excel in. Notice the two choices:
    - a. Understanding – How do you show this priority?
    - b. Malice - **κακία** kakia - malice 6, maliciousness 2, evil 1, wickedness 1, naughtiness 1;1) malignity, malice, ill-will, desire to injure 2) wickedness, depravity 2a) wickedness that is not ashamed to break laws.
    - c. The key to our choice? Maturity. (NASV)
- F. How God uses these gifts towards unbelievers. **(14:22-25)**
1. Tongues are a sign without meaning if used alone. **(Isa 28:11-13)**
  2. Prophecy will give the unbeliever what he needs...teaching!
  3. Our teaching must allow the hearer to have the “secrets of his heart” revealed.
- II. Regulations for an assembly**
- A. The bottom line is “edification.” **(14:26)**
1. Only 2 or 3 to speak in a tongue and there must be an interpreter. **(14:27-28)**
  2. Only 2 to 3 prophets are to speak and other to judge.
  3. There would be only one speaker at a time. **(14:29-31)**
  4. God gives the gifts but men could control their spirits and thus when they spoke!
- B. Women are forbidden to address the assembly. **(14:33-35)**
1. Silence - **σιγάω** - hold (one's) peace 4, keep silence 3, keep close 1, keep secret 1; 9 1) to keep silence, hold one's peace 2) to be kept in silence, be concealed.
  2. Women as well as some men were not to address the assembly! **(14:28,30)**
  3. The issue of role and submission is raised again here. **(1 Cor 11:2-5; 1 Tim 2:8-14)**
- C. We can obey or be willingly ignorant. **(14:36-38)**
1. There is no room for discussion here! **(1 Cor 11:16)**
  2. Some questions to consider:
    1. Is this an issue unique to spiritual gifts?
    2. Is this an issue unique to the Corinthians?
    3. Is this a social custom applicable only under special circumstances?
    4. May women speak if men give them permission to?
    5. What about Bible classes?
- D. God wants an orderly assembly that will build up those who attend. **(14:39-40)**
- Conclusion:** Are there things we could do to improve our assemblies?