

Precision

Long Beach Alliance Church • February 14th, 2010 • Pastor Chris Lankford

*...for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.
...but all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner.*

~1st Corinthians 14:33 & 40 (NASB)

1) Thinking Maturely About Our Purpose

- A) Encouraging maturity among those in the church (1st Corinthians 14:20), Paul educates the local assembly about the purpose of their spiritual actions, with a special emphasis on public tongues and prophecy (cf. 14:1-19).
- B) Utilizing a quote from Isaiah 28:11-12, Paul notes that the purpose of the spiritual gift of the public ministry of tongues is meant as a “sign” for newbies and unbelievers, not for those who already believe (14:21-22).
- C) Paul even goes so far as to say that uninterpreted tongues in the assembly will repulse a newbie/unbeliever and appear as chaotic madness, or “charismania” (14:23).
- D) However, the public spiritual gift/ministry of prophecy, which is for the believer (14:22), can actually produce deep probing conviction in a newbie/unbeliever from the Holy Spirit which can even lead to salvation (14:24-25)!
- E) The purpose is clear! Uninterpreted tongues have no place in public worship services! Prefer prophecy! Even though prophecy is primarily meant for the believer, it can have fruitful outcomes amongst unbelieving guests!

2) The Ministries Of The Church Should Build Up & Make Sense

- A) In order to assure clarity, peace, and consistency (14:33), Paul provides guidelines for public worship gatherings which emphasize edification (14:26).
- B) The ministry/gift of tongues should only occur in public worship when there is an interpreter (so that all can be edified, cf. 14:5), one person at a time, and only two to three people should speak/interpret tongues (14:27-28)
- C) The same orderly guidelines are established for the gift/ministry of prophecy (14:29-32), followed with an “evaluation” of the prophetic statements by others who were also prophetically gifted.
- D) These evaluation periods were both to assure precision and accuracy. They were times of public teaching which occurred in the assembly and were led by teachers with the greatest background and knowledge of the Scriptures.

3) What Is Up With The Silence Of Women?

- A) We already know that women participated in public worship services through ministries of prayer and prophecy (cf. 11:5). The limitation of women is not related to most aspects of public worship.
- B) These verses (14:34-36) are applicable to (1) married women who were challenging their husbands (“shameful”), or, most probably, (2) the forbidding of women to assert authority over men in public teaching (cf. 1st Timothy 2:11-13).
- C) In an appeal to the creation order (Genesis 2:20-24; cf. 1st Corinthians 11:8), the public teaching of Scripture expresses authority of “headship,” and is properly administered through male headship, reflecting God’s design (14:37-38).

4) Public Worship Assemblies Should Reflect Godly Precision

- A) These guidelines for worship remind us to allow the Spirit of God free reign, in an orderly and understandable manner which reflects precision in our worship (14:39-40).