**September 22, 2022**

**BIBLE STUDY**

**Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

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**SEEK THAT YE MAY EXCEL TO**

**THE EDIFYING OF THE CHURCH**

**1 Corinthians 14:1-19**

***I Corinthians 14:1 "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual [gifts], but rather that ye may prophesy***."

Charity, again, here is love. If you love as God loves, then you will want all mankind to be saved. "Prophesy" means to foretell future events, but it, also, means to speak under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. When the Lord sent

ythe disciples out to minister, He told them, first of all, to preach the gospel to every creature. All of the other gifts are important, but the one of most importance is preaching to the lost world. By the foolishness of preaching many are saved. The miracles, healings, raising from the dead, and casting out demons were important, but not as important as saving their souls. The Lord is interested in the infirmities of our body, but He is more interested in our spirit. He wants us saved, then all the extras can come. Jesus had said, if they did not believe Him for any other reason, then believe Him because of the miracles. They should have believed Him by the Word of power that He brought.

***I Corinthians 14:2 "For he that speaketh in an [unknown] tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth [him]; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries."***

I have said before that this unknown tongue is unknown to the people in the immediate vicinity. If he wants to speak to the congregation where all of them can understand, he would speak in their native language. Perhaps, this message in the tongue is to build this man up in his most holy faith. When a person is praying for a special need for someone and runs out of words, to pray in tongues would be allowing the Spirit to pray through you. In this sense, it would be for God's ears alone. Only someone gifted with interpretation would be able to understand what he was saying. These mysteries that he is speaking, are mysteries to the speaker, as well as those listening. As we will see in the following verses, this is not a blanket policy, but is speaking of public worship. God may send a message to the entire congregation in tongues, but if He does, there will be an interpreter to bring the message in the native language of the congregation.

***I Corinthians 14:3 "But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men [to] edification, and exhortation, and comfort."***

"Prophesing" in this sense, would be preaching the good news of the gospel. "Edification" in the sense it is used here, means to build up. "Exhortation" in this particular instance, means comfort, or consolation. We see then, that preaching should not just win people to the Lord, but should build them up after they are saved. It should comfort and console them, as well. The gospel message is good news.

***I Corinthians 14:4 "He that speaketh in an [unknown] tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church."***

When a person speaks in tongues, it builds the person up who is speaking. Preaching builds up all the congregation. It continues to say unknown, because it is saying that the tongue is unknown to all in hearing distance.

***I Corinthians 14:5 "I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater [is] he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying."***

Paul is not telling them not to speak in tongues. In fact, he says, I wish you all had the evidence that the Holy Spirit had filled you with spiritual gifts. Now he says, it is better to try to win people to Christ with the spoken Word of God than to try to impress them with your spirituality. The exception to all of this, is when the person speaking is moved upon by the Spirit of God and brings the message in tongues to the body of Christ. In this case, there would always be an interpreter to tell the congregation exactly what the message is from God. Then the church is built up, when it knows the message is from God to them. There is something really personal in knowing that God has spoken to you through the tongues and interpretation.

***I Corinthians 14:6 "Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?"***

Paul is saying, here, that he will not speak to them in tongues, because they would not benefit from it. He will preach by revelation knowledge from God. He, also, speaks to them of the things he has learned. Preaching comes in several different forms, I personally believe the most effective sermons are when the speaker is overwhelmed by the Spirit of God, and God speaks through the preacher. One of my friends who has been a preacher for many years, says that when this happens to him, he marvels at what he hears himself saying. Paul, since he was trying to establish churches and have them not in error, would sometimes speak of doctrine, as well. That is great if it is God's doctrine, and not the doctrine of men which Jesus had denounced.

***I Corinthians 14:7 "And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?"***

If an instrument of music is out of tune, it would be impossible to bless anyone with the sounds it produced.

***I Corinthians 14:8 "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"***

The trumpet was used to call the people to battle when it was played a certain way. You would not know what to do, if a recognizable sound did not come from the instrument. This same trumpet was used to call the people to worship. The trumpet was silver {redemption} that was used for the gathering of the people. This is the same trumpet {silver} that will be blown to redeem the Christians from the earth. We will know the sound well and go to meet the Lord in the air.

***I Corinthians 14:9 "So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? For ye shall speak into the air."***

To speak in tongues and no one interpret would be of no use to the winning of souls at all. I, also, believe music played in the church so loudly that you can not understand the words is of no advantage, as well. The message in the song is what softens up hearts to receive the Lord. Speaking in tongues in public should not be done without an interpreter.

***I Corinthians 14:10 "There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them [is] without signification."***

The only thing that seems explainable here, is the fact that there are many different languages in the world. "Signification", in this instance, means voiceless. This just means that the hundreds of languages in the world are all spoken languages. In World War 2, the Navaho language was used for sending messages by runners, because it had never been written down. It would have been very difficult to intercept the message, because of this. All languages have a voice though.

***I Corinthians 14:11 "Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh [shall be] a barbarian unto me."***

This is just saying that there can be no understanding between two people who speak different languages, unless there be an interpreter. They are barbarian to each other, because they cannot communicate their thoughts to each other. That is what language is, a way to communicate thoughts with words.

***I Corinthians 14:12 "Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual [gifts], seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church."***

We all want to be able to minister more effectively in the church. The various gifts of the Spirit are for that very purpose. Paul is saying here, seek the gifts that will do the most good to build the church up.

***I Corinthians 14:13 "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an [unknown] tongue pray that he may interpret."***

Many who speak in tongues, also have the gift of interpretation. That is one way that you would know for sure that the message in tongues would be understood by all in the church. Paul is saying pray for the gift of interpretation to go with your gift of tongues.

***I Corinthians 14:14 "For if I pray in an [unknown] tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful."***

This is very true. The Holy Spirit prays through you when you pray in tongues. Perhaps, it is not important to know what you are praying for. In the verse above, Paul had said to pray for the gift of interpretation, so that you will know what the prayer in tongues is saying.

***I Corinthians 14:15 "What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."***

Paul has both gifts. He prays as the Spirit gives him utterance, and then he speaks in his native language to God, as well. This would be worshipping in the Spirit in both instances. This would not matter whether it was just for God's ears, or for the congregation, because he would interpret his own tongues.

***I Corinthians 14:16 "Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?"***

The interpretation would be so that the people around you would be able to praise God with you. Amen means so be it. How in the world could they agree, if they did not know what you were saying? We know the importance of agreeing in prayer, and this is saying that it is also proper to agree in praise.

***I Corinthians 14:17 "For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified."***

With your own private worship, it would not be so important to know the exact meaning of the tongues in praise or prayer, as it would be in public. The public would not be built up by praise they did not understand the meaning of.

***I Corinthians 14:18 "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:"***

Paul, in all of this, is not speaking against tongues. He is just explaining the proper use of tongues. Paul is not ashamed that he has the evidence of speaking in tongues and that he is filled with the Holy Spirit. He just wants to explain not to run people who do not understand off from the church.

***I Corinthians 14:19 "Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that [by my voice] I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an [unknown] tongue."***

Paul is just explaining the importance of the church being built up by the things that are said. Understand that Paul is saying, think of other's understanding whenever you minister.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Follow after charity, and desire \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ gifts.

2. What will you want, if you love as God loves?

3. What does "prophesy" mean in verse 1?

4. What is the most important gift?

5. What is the Lord more interested in, than in the body?  
6. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaks to whom?  
7. Who would be the only one, besides God, that would understand the unknown tongue?

8. He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to what 3 things?

9. What is "prophesieth" in verse, 3 meaning?

10. The gospel message is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_.

11. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

12. Why is it using the word unknown?

13. What is the exception in verse 5?

14. What is speaking in tongues evidence of?

15. Name the different ways that Paul ministered to the congregation.

16. Why will Paul not speak to them in tongues?

17. Did Paul speak in tongues?

18. What does the author believe to be the most effective preaching?

19. Why did Paul speak on doctrine?

20. If an instrument of music is out of tune, it would be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

to bless anyone with the sound it produced.  
21. What instrument was used to call them to battle?  
22. What is the trumpet of assembly made of?  
23. What would be wrong in speaking in tongues with no interpreter?

24. What is verse 10 speaking of?  
25. People who can not speak the same language think of each other as a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

26. What spiritual gift should those seek who are zealous to receive spiritual gifts?

27. Those who speak in an unknown tongue should pray for what?

28. What prays through you when you pray in tongues?

29. What does Amen mean?

30. Paul said he would rather speak 5 words with his understanding than what?