

Edification in the Church Services

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[0 : 00] Good morning. Welcome to the service this morning. It's good to be back and to fellowship together.

! It's good to be back and to fellowship together. It's good to be back and to fellowship together. We're gone. I thank you for your prayers for us as we went to minister in Bolivia. And Lord willing, next Sunday we'd like to show a few pictures and do a short report. Just give us a little more time to prepare for that. But overall, I just thought I'd share a couple things this morning.

Finally, we were truly blessed. I've had quite a few brothers ask, how was your time in Bolivia? And my answer was, fast and furious. And the time went fast and they kept us very busy.

And that was the purpose of our trip. But for us to go back, we had moved back from Bolivia in 2012.

And the mission's plan of attack, so to speak, was to progress in different communities planting churches.

[1 : 25] And we were part of the first one in the Pailon area. Well, for us to go back now and see number three and four are well on the way.

Amana Saed and Agaldulce, two different communities where there's new church plants. And for that, my heart was filled with gratitude to see that our conference mission board was on track with what the plan was.

And so, praise the Lord for that. So good to see. Another observation. Another observation. I was reminded of the simplicity of the gospel.

Sometimes we lose sight of that. The simplicity of the gospel. We are born sinners.

Jesus died for us. And desires that by faith, we accept him as the substitutionary death for us.

[2 : 48] And that we then gain his righteousness. The simplicity of that message. And it's reaching out into the Mennonites in Bolivia as well.

And so, it's good that we continue to work there, and we should continue to pray for that work as well. And sometimes here in Canada, as we mature in Christ, and as we continue to grow, we lose sight of that.

And it's that simplicity that we can share with our neighbors as well. So, Lord willing, next Sunday we'll have some more on that.

And then, just a thought here. Noticing in our bulletin, as Julius prayed through a long list of needs. Mostly needs.

And it just reminds us that every family here knows someone that's going through a struggle.

[3 : 54] Would that be accurate? We all know of people, and maybe even closer than that, maybe we're going through a struggle. And yet we are reminded that God brought salvation.

That He freed us from the penalty of sin. That we have hope, and we have destiny, which is heaven.

And secondly, He's freeing us from the power of sin, called sanctification. Each and every day, through our struggles, God is leading us on a path to overcome, to learn, to walk in the Spirit.

But ultimately, God's plan is to free us from the presence of sin. That means to take us home.

To be with Him. And it's a plan that He has for all believers where this time period, as we know it, where we're living under the curse, will come to an end.

[5 : 20] And we'll be with the Lord forevermore. And this week, Jo and Lena experienced that as her dad went to be with the Lord.

We need to keep focused on that. And to keep from being swallowed up in our circumstances. experiences, but to zoom out and to see God's bigger plan.

And thereby, thereby, we gain courage to keep going. And the hope that lies in us.

So just a few thoughts there. we have the privilege of just visiting Tychrope's, Mr. and Mrs. Tychrope, yesterday again. And I asked him, how are you doing?

And, but before I asked, I knew. His body is tired. And he looked it. And I asked him, how are you doing?

[6 : 27] And he says, well, physically, not so well. Not so well. And, you know, he says, my time is coming near.

And then, but then he proceeded to enlighten me and to, well, he even had a few jokes to crack. And so, that's him, right? But, but he's so looking forward to going and yet, yet, he's feeling still the, the presence, the effects, of the curse.

That is, that man must die. Our bodies must be shed so that we can go into his presence. And so, we need to, to live with that awareness that that is God's eternal plan for each of his children.

All right. So, back to Corinthians. Corinthians. And, perhaps, you're getting tired of chapter 14. I'm not sure. Oh, you've only been at once, right?

But the whole, from chapters 12 and on, we've talked a lot about tongues and so on. And, we'll kind of sum up this morning on, on that teaching.

[7 : 45] So, just to start, why did you come to church this morning? to worship corporately, together.

Okay, some other thoughts? To be encouraged and to meet God.

Okay. To be refreshed. to fellowship. Okay.

So, to be edified or built up, right? By the word of God. Absolutely. And, and that is the purpose of the gathering of the church is to be built up, strengthened, encouraged, so that we can go out to face life for another week.

and, and so it is, it is very necessary and, and very effective for doing just that. And, and so, therefore, it is necessary, as Paul will bring out in this passage, that all things be done in order, that we be edified.

[9 : 08] to allow God to speak to us, either directly through his word or from each other.

And, and so that, that takes clarity, not confusion. Edification always involves clarity.

And, I think that's Paul's central point here, as he writes chapter 14, is that, that the church gathers to be built up.

Not, for myself to be built up, as in, as in, lifting myself up, but that we're built up in the Lord. And, is, This morning we're going to look at a few principles governing tongues, and then we'll proceed to the next point, which is that tongues are given as a sign.

And so we'll do the rest of chapter 14 today and next Sunday, Lord willing. We'll finish off the chapter. And so thank you for reading the passage for us.

[10 : 33] All right, so a few thoughts, a few principles that govern tongues from what we've learned so far. So are tongues languages or are they static utterances or gibberish?

You say languages? Languages, we need to be clear. From Scripture, when we talk about tongues, what's it talking about?

Okay, and I think through Pastor Henry's message last Sunday as well, very clearly Paul is talking about languages.

And he brought out the fact that on Pentecost, they heard each in his own language.

They heard the gospel very clearly that he's talking about languages. And just to emphasize that, in verse 2, he says, For he who speaks in a tongue, and I'll just stop there.

[11 : 53] The word speaks is the word laleo, and it means to verbally speak. And the word tongue there is the word glossa, and it means language.

If you'll go back to the Greeks, Greek words there. So to speak in a language. And as well, in verse 10 and 11, it's also going back to what was covered last Sunday.

He says, So very clear, the overall context that we're talking about different languages.

And we know that when God disperses the languages, there's confusion. And so this morning, how many different languages are present here this morning?

Anybody in high German? Few? Few? In Plotich. Quite a few.

[13 : 27] In fact, probably the majority know a bit of it. How about Ukrainian? There's a few. Russian? French?

We have one. English? Can't forget. Should be everybody pretty much. And did I forget? How about Spanish?

Okay. Did I forget any language? Is there any other language here? So just in this gathering, we had how many?

Six or eight different languages mentioned here. And yet we come together to unify and to edify. And so we don't pick on a language that we don't understand.

Or that the majority of us will not be fed. So that's the key that Paul is bringing out here. So when he talks about tongues, it's in a language.

[14 : 37] The second principle, is the gift of tongues still given today? Any thoughts?

Yes. Okay.

Okay. What would you base it on? Okay. Okay.

So, yeah, the gifts in the biblical context was God, through His Spirit, instilled in them a new language instantly.

That would be the context here. And so, my understanding, I'm going to just clarify where I come from, from Scripture, is that the answer is no.

[15 : 54] It does not happen in that manner anymore. God does gift people to learn easily, and so on, and yet we do not hear, throughout church history, that there are free languages that God instills.

And I would not go as far as to say that it has not happened in some instant. But as a whole, these things are not recorded.

And in chapter 13, verse 8, it said that tongues, where there are tongues, they will cease.

And church history, church history reveals to us that after about the year 55, we have no more recordings of the gift of tongues being given.

In fact, Corinthians is the third letter that Paul wrote, 1 and 2 Thessalonians being the first two. And in all his writings after, and the other writers, this gifting is not mentioned again.

[17 : 19] It's silent. And then when we go to early church father writings, they are silent on the gift of tongues.

There's no mention anywhere anywhere that this gift is present. And so we see then that historically, it has stopped.

And by our experience, today, we don't interact with people who have been given the gift of tongues.

I have yet to run into someone in my life that has received that gift. So even by experience, it's not there. Now, I did a little bit of research on this.

The tongue movement surfaced in the late 1700s. And there was a brief following.

[18 : 29] And it wasn't languages. It was in the form of gibberish. Or static utterances. Or static utterances. And that died. And then later, in the 1800s, it revived again.

And it's been present in churches ever since. So it gives you a bit of history on where and how this has come to be where it's at today.

But in the biblical context, tongues are languages. And as a gift of the Holy Spirit, they ceased to be given with the apostolic era.

And real life backs that up. History backs that up. And then, a third principle, and that's going to be a point I'm going to be making a little bit later here, is tongues were given for a purpose.

And that is, they were given as a sign to unbelievers. believers. And so in about ten minutes, we're going to explore that third principle there.

[19 : 51] In what language do you communicate with God? Do you ever think of that?

what's your thought language? And it can vary, right? Whether it's English or German or Russian or whatever, French, it doesn't matter what it is, but the point I'm making is that when we pray to God in our consciousness, it's in our language of thought.

it's in a clearness of a language. And it's not some jumble that we don't ourselves understand.

It's always in clarity and it's in the language that we think of. you know, just to illustrate, going on almost twelve years ago, and many of you have probably not heard the beginning of when we came here, but we had come back from the mission field and the conference assigned me to look into the Grand Prairie Church and either see if it was viable, if we needed to shut the doors because they were struggling, or whether we needed to find a pastor that could take over.

And that was my assignment, and so I made repeated trips to Grand Prairie and we were meeting in the Claremont Hall back then, some of you will remember, and I know a few trips in, and I was, we were driving back and it was a Sunday afternoon and my wife was having a snooze in the passenger seat, and I was deep in thought with the Lord, saying, Lord, show me what is your plan here and who would you will that would come?

[22 : 14] And then, then I heard, and to me, it was like an audible voice, and the voice said, how about you?

That simple. Three words. And I remember, I looked at my wife to see if she had heard that or if she had spoken, but she was snoozing.

And I don't know whether it was an audible voice, but in my mind it was. It was that clear and it was in a language. And so God does speak to us, but always with clarity, with, with, with the intent of edifying that we understand communications.

And, and so that's very important that we, that we grasp that. So, we're going to work through some, some verses here, starting in verse 13.

So, it's a follow through of what Pastor Henry started last week. So, verses 13 through 20. is the next section here. And, let's read starting in verse 13.

[23 : 39] Therefore, let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret. So, what he's saying here? If, if you're going to speak in a foreign language, pray that there will be an interpreter, that this can be interpreted so that the congregation is edified, is built up.

For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. And, the next two verses are somewhat unclear, and, if taken isolated, will often lead to misunderstanding.

understanding. But, in the whole context of this chapter, they become clear to us. So, I'm going to read verse 15 as well. What is the conclusion then?

I will pray with the spirit, I will also pray with the understanding, I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding. And then verse 16, Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say, Amen, at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say?

So, working through these three verses, going back to 14, if I pray in a tongue, so if I pray or speak in a tongue, my spirit prays, and I believe this is a reference to the gifting of tongues that the spirit has provided.

[25 : 29] My spirit prays, but my understanding, my being understood, is unfruitful. And if God gave me the tongue of a Chinese language, and I started to speak that this morning, it would be very unfruitful.

And I think after about 30 seconds, you would all tune out. Right? We would not be edified.

And if you came back next Sunday and I did the same thing, maybe some of you would give my head a shake, or you would maybe look for a different church, because it would be unfruitful.

That's what he is saying there. So if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding, my being understood, is unfruitful. What is the conclusion then?

I will pray with the spirit, so with the tongue, and I will also pray with the understanding, with being understood. Because otherwise, it brings about confusion, and a departure of being unfulfilled.

[26 : 57] He says, I will sing with the spirit, I will also sing with the understanding. Even in song, and if we would sing foreign language songs here, we couldn't sing along.

We couldn't say amen to any of it, because we don't understand. And so verse 16 kind of brings it into context. Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say amen if he does not understand?

So that's the context here, is that that I will pray with my understanding, being understood that the church is edified.

And so taken in context, this is what Paul is teaching here. Verse 17, for you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified.

I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all. And we're unclear. Paul, likely in his training and so on, learned quite a few languages, but we're never told that the gift of languages, that Paul was given extra languages.

[28 : 30] Very likely he was. Because he says here, I speak with tongues more than you all. In other words, I can probably outdo all of you.

But, then he qualifies that, yet in church, I would rather speak five words with my understanding, with my being understood, that I may teach others also than ten thousand words in a tongue.

in a foreign language. Okay? So the whole purpose is, why do we come together? It's to be edified.

And Corinth, being a city, a port city, where many, many travelers harbored overnight, the ships would harbor over winter, I said overnight before, sorry, over winter, and you would have many, many foreigners harboring in Corinth over the winter months, waiting for better weather to travel on.

And we know Paul's story and acts of his shipwreck, they should have overwintered, and they didn't, and they got in trouble. So that background naturally lends itself to, at any given gathering of believers, there will be multiple languages present.

[30 : 09] Multiple. And without a commonality of one language. So here, here our commonality is the English language.

language. And most of us know it well, others are learning it, but that's become our commonality.

In years past, we've offered German services for those that were struggling with English, that had a German background, for that purpose, for edification, so we can be built up.

And so in Corinth, because there was no commonality of language, they would allow people to come and speak up in a foreign language, but there had to be an interpreter.

And Paul says, if there isn't, be silent. You are forbidden to share, because you're only edifying yourself.

[31 : 14] So this is, this is what Paul is kind of bringing out here, very clearly. So he says, I would rather share five words that are understood, than ten thousand that are not.

Brethren, do not be children in understanding, however in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.

With this, this whole topic of spiritual giftings, he says, I want you to act with maturity, to understand the purpose of giftings, whether it's the gifting to prophesy, or to speak in tongues, or to interpret.

What is God's purpose? And he's calling them to maturity, to rise above some of the issues in Corinth. And very likely, they vibrated those issues in lifting up self.

Look, look at the languages I can speak, and so on. And Paul says, mature, understand God's purpose here, but in malice, be like children, like babes, in evil intent.

[32 : 41] Be like little children who don't have that. But in spiritual maturity regarding gifts, yes, you need to be there. That then brings us to our last point here, our next point, is that tongues are for a sign for unbelievers.

So let's read on in verse 21, in the law it is written, with men of other tongues and other lips, I will speak to this people, yet for all that they will not hear me, says the Lord.

And that's a quote out of Isaiah, Isaiah 28, and I'm going to turn there in a bit. Verse 22, therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to unbelievers, but prophesying is not for unbelievers, but for those who believe.

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 say that you're out of your mind?

But if all prophesy and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all. And so he's showing the difference between the two.

[34 : 07] So let's go back to the tongues as a sign to unbelievers, and let's turn to Isaiah 28. 28. Isaiah 28. Isaiah 28. Isaiah 28. Isaiah 28. Isaiah 28. Isaiah 28. Isaiah 28. Isaiah 28. 28. 28.

In Isaiah 28 and following chapters, it's prophecy about the coming destruction of Israel for their refusal to listen to the Word of God, to repent.

Verse 10, For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little.

For with stammering lips and another tongue he will speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest with which you may cause the weary to rest, and this is the refreshing, yet they would not hear.

But the word of the Lord was to them, precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little, that they might go and fall backward and be broken.

[35 : 41] and snared and caught. This is prophetic of their refusal to hear the prophets, to turn to God, and God said, I will break you.

I will take you to a foreign country, as in captivity, and there I will speak to you through a tongue.

And we know church history, that they went, they went to Babylon, and I'm not sure the exact language would have been spoken, but the Assyrians would have used their own languages there.

And God used that to break through to his people. A foreign language, a foreign culture, everything foreign, different than they were used to.

And it caught their attention. And sending all the prophets didn't, but this did. And so, as we fast forward now, to the coming of Jesus Christ, Israel has come back, or Israel, the Jews have come back into Israel.

[37 : 10] They've rebuilt Jerusalem. They've been back for roughly 500 years, and are going right back into their old ways.

And when the promised Messiah, that Moses spoke about, God will raise up a prophet like me, him you will listen to, him here, it's in Deuteronomy, Jesus Christ, the fulfillment of that, came, and the Jewish people did not hear.

They did not hear. They rejected the voice of God. They rejected the voice of John the Baptist.

The voice of Jesus Christ himself. And what happened? We nailed him to a cross. Let's kill the Son of God.

Let's do away with this. When Jesus died and rose out of the grave and ascended back into heaven, upon his ascension, he promised the gift of the Holy Spirit.

[38 : 38] tongues, and on that Pentecost, what was one of the signs of the Spirit? Tongues, languages.

And God spoke to the Jewish nation and said, you have rejected my son, you killed him, you refused to listen, and he spoke to them in foreign languages as a sign to their unbelief.

And again, as a follow-up of that, follow-through, the Jewish nation was destroyed in 70 A.D. and scattered throughout the whole world.

Foreign languages, everywhere they went. spirit. This is why God brought in a tongue, the gift of the tongue, the gift of the Spirit, a spiritual gift, for that purpose, to speak to the unbelievers.

And if we turn back to our passage, in verse 22 and 23, I'll reread this. Therefore tongues are for a sign not to those who believe, but to unbelievers.

[40 : 01] But prophesying or preaching, teaching the Word, is not for unbelievers, but for those who believe. And so it's talking about the church gathering and we need prophecy or the New Testament term is to speak forth the Word.

We need that to be edified and to be built up. We don't need tongues, foreign languages. Those are for those that refuse to believe, who've rejected God.

Therefore, if the whole church comes together in one place and all speak with tongues and there comes and those who are uninformed or unbelievers, will they not say you are out of your mind?

Can we say amen to that? If an unbeliever would come in and we're all speaking in tongues and nobody understands, they will say, you guys are wacky.

Like this is, this is a cult. this does not edify. Verse 24, but if all prophecy and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all and convicted by a clear message.

[41 : 27] This is God's intent. The Word of God goes forward in clarity. And so tongues were given for a season and for a purpose to catch the attention of the unbeliever, the rejection of Jesus Christ.

I'll do a few more verses. And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed. That's the unbeliever coming in and hearing the Word. Thus the secrets of his heart are revealed and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.

And salvation comes through that. How is it then, brethren, whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation, let all things be done for edification.

And so, he's acknowledging that we all have something to bring, to share, to edify, to build one another up, but let it be done for the purpose of exactly that, edification.

So, kind of just summing up this whole topic of tongues and spiritual gifts, and the last portion of this chapter speaks of order in church.

[42 : 56] And we'll focus on that, Lord willing, next Sunday. So, I trust because there is so much confusion out there in the world, a lot of emotionalism regarding tongues, we need to know what does the scripture teach that we don't get caught up in something that is not of the Holy Spirit.

Let's pray. Amen. Father, thank you for for being a God that communicates very clearly with us.

In fact, you're the ultimate example of communications. We often fail, but you don't. And throughout all of scripture, Lord, you've communicated clearly to your people.

And so, as we went through this, Lord, this teaching on tongues, just pray, Lord, that we're able to understand and to go deeper with this to realize that, that, Lord, languages are for a purpose but not to lift myself up.

And it's to speak to people of a different nationality. So, Lord, may you be glorified through this teaching. In Jesus' name, Amen.