

When Church Becomes Messy: First Corinthians

23 – THE EXERCISE OF GIFTS (1 CORINTHIANS 14:26-40)

I. Guidelines for the Exercise of Gifts (1 Corinthians 14:26-33)

A. The Freedom of Participation (1 Corinthians 14:26a)

- Each one has something to offer for worship of the church.

B. The Controlling Principle (1 Corinthians 14:26b)

- All must be done for the edification of the church as a whole.

C. Guidelines for Tongues (1 Corinthians 14:27-28)

- Paul limits the number who can speak in tongues in the assembly.
- Paul states that there must be an interpreter for those who speak in tongues.
- If there is no interpreter, those who speak in tongues must remain silent.
- Without an interpreter for the assembly, tongues must remain personal.

D. Guidelines for Prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:29-32)

1. The Number of Prophets (1 Corinthians 14:29)

- Paul limits the number of people who can share a prophecy with the assembly.

2. Deference to Others (1 Corinthians 14:30)

- So that no one person dominates a gathering, they were to defer to one another.

3. The Guiding Principle (1 Corinthians 14:31)

- The orderly proclamation of the prophecies would benefit all.

4. Self-Control (1 Corinthians 14:32)

- Unlike the gift of tongues, the one who prophecies is in control of his actions.

E. The Nature of God (1 Corinthians 14:33)

- God by nature is not the author of confusion in churches.

II. The Role of Women in Worship (1 Corinthians 14:34-36)

A. Silence in Worship (1 Corinthians 14:34a)

When Church Becomes Messy: First Corinthians

- Women were not to openly question the teaching in church.
- Greek culture did not allow women to speak openly in public gatherings.
- Some of the Corinthian women felt that their freedom in Christ allowed them to do so.

B. Submission to Husbands (1 Corinthians 14:34b-35)

- Paul instructs these women to discuss these issues with their husbands at home.

C. Universal Standard (1 Corinthians 14:36)

- Paul stresses that this standard was held by all of the churches.

III. Final Thoughts (1 Corinthians 14:37-40)

A. Submission to Paul's Teaching (1 Corinthians 14:37-38)

- If anyone is spiritually mature, let them recognize the authority of Paul's teaching.
- Those who are ignorant, let them remain ignorant.

B. The Encouragement (1 Corinthians 14:39)

- Paul encourages them to seek the gift of prophecy.
- They are not to forbid the use of tongues.

C. The Overall Principle (1 Corinthians 14:40)

- All gifts must be exercised in a decent and orderly manner.