

Thursday, February 1, 2024

Order in the Church

“Plans are underway for the tallest building in the US” and yes it will be within driving distance, just down the road at Bricktown in Oklahoma City. When completed it will stand 1,907 feet tall in honor of the year that Oklahoma was admitted as the 46th state in the US. The tallest building currently in OKC is the Devon Tower which stands at 844 feet tall.

Can you imagine the magnitude of the blueprints for something that size? All the incredible features to build something of that magnitude. I hope it really does come to fruition because selfishly I would love to see something like that without having to travel to New York or Abu Dhabi.

As we continue to take a hard look at this section of 1 Corinthians, we conclude Paul’s discussion on spiritual gifts:

God has a design for the church:

- 1. Use your gifts to build the church up.**
 - 1Co 14:26 (ESV) What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.**
 - Rom 14:19 (ESV) So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.**
 - Rom 15:2 (ESV) Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.**
 - Eph 4:12 (ESV) to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,**
 - 1Th 5:11 (ESV) Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.**

2. **Use your gifts in an orderly way.**

- 1Co 14:27-33a (ESV) If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. [28] But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God. [29] Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. [30] If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. [31] For you can all prophesy one by one, **so that all may learn and all be encouraged**, [32] and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. [33] **For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.**

- **Tongues**

- A. **Two or at the most three speakers**
- B. **Each in turn**
- C. **Let someone interpret**
- D. **No interpreter—keep silent**
- E. **Speak to himself and to God alone**

- **Prophecy**

- A. **Two or three prophets speak**
- B. **Let the others weigh (evaluate) what is said**
- C. **If one is prophesying and another has a revelation, the first is to stop speaking (prophesy one by one)**
- D. **The spirits of the prophets are controlled**

Using your gifts according to God's order brings learning and encouragement. It also brings harmony instead of confusion.

3. **Use your gifts under the authority of the Lord.**

- 1Co 14:33b-38 (ESV) As in all the churches of the saints, [34] the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not

permitted to speak, **but should be in submission, as the Law also says.** [35] If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church. [36] Or was it from you that the word of God came? Or are you the only ones it has reached? [37] If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, **he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.** [38] If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized.

- A. We've already seen a few chapters before that women were permitted to pray and prophesy but they were to do so in the authoritative structure that God had designed.
- B. What was described as out of bounds here is the weighing or evaluation of prophesy in the corporate setting. Rather than creating a disruption in the service by usurping the authority of the leadership of the church, they were to consider their questions and to learn with their husbands at home privately.
- C. We are all subject to the command of the Lord.

1Co 14:39-40 (ESV) **So**, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. [40] **But all things should be done decently and in order.**

Will we build our lives and build the church according to God's design and in turn build our lives and the church to God's glory?

Psa 138:8 (ESV) The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.

Php 1:6 (ESV) And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Life Group Discussion Guide

- 1. Consider your spiritual gifts. How does the Lord want to use them to help build up the church?**
- 2. How can you practice focusing on others more this week, rather than focusing on yourself?**
- 3. God's order in the church brings intelligibility, understanding, learning, encouragement, harmony, and joyful submission. So, why do we push back against God's order and structure for the church?**
- 4. All of God's gifts are good, but they must be used in the way God designed. When they are used properly they build up. When they are used improperly they bring confusion. How does this truth emphasize the importance of studying and obeying God's word?**