

Someone has written:

The goal of coming together as a church is not to be entertained, nor even to be "pleased" with a "blessing." We gather for edification, for the spiritual building up we need to live lives that glorify Jesus Christ outside the walls of the church It doesn't mean, "let everything be done for my edification." It means, "let everyone come to church with a heart to build up someone else."

You are called to be involved. You are not just a spectator. You are needed! You are important! You are an essential part of what God's Holy Spirit wants to do each week in the hearts and lives and minds of the people that He brings to us! Come to worship with something for others, even if its just a smile, a hug, or a sincere "welcome!" Go out of your way and your normal circle of friends to see a person that no one else seems to see who probably needs exactly what the Lord has told you to bring today.

LOVE
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Verb.

A suggested prayer to pray before coming to worship each time:

Father, this is the day that You have made! What should I bring to worship with me today that will feed and build up my brothers or sisters? Please fill me with Your Holy Spirit, and give me opportunities to bless the person/people You have chosen. Bring to my mind what You want to do or say through me, for I ask this in the name of Jesus, my Lord and Savior. Amen.



"What Should I Bring?"

How many times have you asked yourself that question before attending a potluck supper?

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 14:26 that we should ask ourselves, "What should I bring?" every time before we come to worship. Or rather, we should ask God, "What should I bring to worship that You've given me during the week that will help feed and build up my brothers and sisters?"

1 Corinthians 14:26 reads:

What is it [that I'm saying] then, brothers? When you come together, each one of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has another language [tongues], has an interpretation. Let all things be done to build each other up. (World English Bible)

Or another version puts it this way:

So here's what I want you to do. When you gather for worship, each one of you be prepared with something that will be useful for all: Sing a hymn, teach a lesson, tell a story, lead a prayer, provide an insight. (The Message)

The way Paul describes worship here in this verse, it sounds a lot like a potluck supper, doesn't it? The difference is that if God's Holy Spirit tells each of us what to bring, then it won't be a random hodge-podge, but all the various parts will work together to build up each and every person there. Maybe what God tells you to bring will be used during the worship service, and maybe it will be used to build up a brother or sister in the 15 minutes before or after worship when you are just talking with them. It doesn't matter. God has a plan, and He wants to use you and me in His plan every time we gather for worship. So we need to ask Him, "What should I bring?" before coming to worship, and then be open to however He wants to use us before, during, and after worship.

How might God's Holy Spirit want to use you and me to build up our brothers and sisters? Paul gives some examples in our verse from 1 Corinthians 14:26 and we can think of other ways:

- Read a psalm or another Bible verse that the Spirit brings to your mind.
- Sing a psalm or a song, or play a musical instrument.
- Bring a favorite Christian song on CD to play before, during, or after worship, or suggest a song or hymn.
- Share a truth or an insight that you believe the Lord has taught you that might help a brother or sister.
- Tell a story or a personal experience about how God has helped you or someone else.
- Teach whatever God has shown you is in His heart and mind.
- When someone tells you about a concern or a praise, offer to pray with them.

- If you have the gift of speaking in tongues (God-language) or in another human language, be ready to use it if the Holy Spirit leads you to do so.
- If you have the gift of understanding tongues (God-language) or other human languages (Spanish, for example), then be ready to translate what is said as the Spirit leads.
- Sit with a guest, get them a bulletin and a cup of coffee, and help them to feel comfortable and at home with us.
- Be on the look out for opportunities to meet people, encourage people, help people (we have Bibles, food and clothing here at the center), pray with people, and help people experience the power of Jesus' love.

As you can see from the above, Paul sees the gathering of the church for worship as a time when everyone comes to participate and to give to each other, not just to sit as part of an audience and receive. We should think, "I am coming to worship, but not only to receive a blessing. I am coming to give a blessing to someone, and I am asking God for an opportunity to bless the person/people that He has chosen."

So, we should each spend some time before coming to worship asking God, "what should I bring?" If we will take the time and effort to do this each time, then "everybody will share something with someone else." And when all is said and done, everybody has shared and everybody has received.

One problem though. What if I don't show up for worship? Very likely, the people that God wanted to use me to build up will miss out on something God wanted them to have.