

A Model for Worship

1 Corinthians 14:26-33 Amplified Bible (AMP)

²⁶ What then, brethren, is [the right course]? When you meet together, each* one has** a hymn***, a teaching+, a disclosure of special knowledge *or* information++, an utterance in a [strange] tongue+++, or an interpretation of it++++. [But] let everything be constructive *and* edifying *and* for the good of all.

²⁷ If some speak in a [strange] tongue, let the number be limited to two or at the most three, and each one [taking his] turn, and let one interpret *and* explain [what is said]. ²⁸ But if there is no one to do the interpreting, let each of them keep still in church and talk to himself and to God.

²⁹ So let two or three prophets speak [those inspired to preach or teach], while the rest pay attention *and* weigh *and* discern what is said. ³⁰ But if an inspired revelation comes to another who is sitting by, then let the first one be silent. ³¹ For in this way you can give testimony [prophesying and thus interpreting the divine will and purpose] one by one, so that all may be instructed and all may be stimulated *and* encouraged; ³² For the spirits of the prophets (the speakers in tongues) are under the speaker's control [and subject to being silenced as may be necessary],

³³ For He [Who is the source of their prophesying] is not a God of confusion *and* disorder but of peace *and* order. As [is the practice] in all the churches of the saints (God's people),

**Each* - This word means each or every. The use of this word indicates that every person is responsible for bringing something that the Lord has given him/her to contribute to worship.

***Has* – To have in one's hands, to hold in the hand. Here, in the sense of, to have at hand, to have ready.

****A hymn* – Literally, a "psalm." It "primarily denoted a striking or twitching with the fingers on musical strings, then a sacred song, sung to musical accompaniment. It is [also] used of the Old Testament Book of Psalms. Refers to a song which took its general character from the Old Testament Psalms and is usually accompanied by some musical instrument, although not restricted to them. The Psalms were often prayers or songs of praise.

+A teaching, A disclosure of special knowledge or information – Either that which is taught, or the act of teaching. A Spirit-inspired utterance that took the form of instruction.

++A disclosure of special knowledge or information – Literally, a revelation, the disclosure of divine mysteries, either about the nature of the gospel (2:10), or perhaps about things otherwise hidden to the natural man. It depicts the progressive and immediate unveiling of the otherwise unknown and unknowable God to His church.

+++A tongue – The tongue, as an organ of speech. By implication, a language, specifically one naturally unaquired. The supernatural gift of speaking in another language without its having been learned.

++++Interpretation – To translate or explain the meaning of an utterance spoken in tongues.

Comments

The above passage is taken from Paul's first letter to the Corinthian church. In this passage, Paul describes a type of worship in which each (every) person brings something from the Lord to contribute "for the good of all." Our western "modern" style of worship tends to focus on the contributions of several "professional" persons, and to exclude or minimize the participation of most of the members of the Body of Christ. This "modern" way seems to me to be at odds with what Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 14:26-33, and it tends to create too many passive listeners and too few active participants. And, it limits the participation of the Holy Spirit, who lives in every Christian, not just a few Christian "leaders."

If we were to attempt to carry out the type of worship that Paul is describing above, how would we go about this? Here are a few ideas:

- Pray every day for the Lord to give you something to bring and contribute to our worship together.
- Here are some examples of what the Lord might ask you to bring. The scripture above mentions:
 - A Psalm – A hymn or song (you could sing a solo or lead or accompany singing, or play a song from a CD), or simply read a Psalm or other scripture that you believe the Holy Spirit has given you to share to build up the Body.
 - A teaching – Share a verse or passage of Scripture, and perhaps its meaning and application to our lives.
 - A revelation – The disclosure of something from God that would otherwise be unknowable. A word of knowledge or word of wisdom to the church or to someone in the church.
 - A tongue – Speaking in tongues should only be done in worship when there is someone there who can translate or give the meaning of the tongues (1 Corinthians 14:27-28).
- Other examples of what the Lord might ask you to bring:
 - A testimony about what the Lord has done for you recently, or how He has changed your life for the better since you've known Him.
 - A poem, or devotion, or reading that speaks to you in a powerful way. It could be shared before the offering or communion, where ever it is appropriate.

- Bake some bread for communion, or cookies or pastry to share.
- Offer up a prayer for someone or something the Lord has put on your heart in the past week, or ask the worship leader to do so. (Prayers for healing, guidance, wisdom, provision, or opening someone's heart to the Gospel as in Acts 16:14.)
- Share a word of encouragement to someone you appreciate. This could be done publicly during worship or just between the two of you before or after worship.
- Bring something that the Lord has blessed you with that others might need (i.e., vegetables, fruit, a good Christian book, etc.), and be alert to hear what others need that you might be able to provide. Always ask the Lord before you give it.
- An offering or tithe of money, time, or talents.
- Offer someone a ride to or from worship.
- A praise or an answer to prayer that you have received.
- A request or need that you or someone else has. (We're commanded in Philippians 4:6 not to worry about anything, but instead, in every situation, to bring our requests before the Lord with thanksgiving.)
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I'm sure you've noticed that we already do some of the things listed above in a sort of haphazard way. The difference is that we can make the choice to ask the Lord what He wants us to bring all during the week before we gather for worship, not just decide by ourselves if we will bring anything. For example,

"Lord, do You want me to bring an offering to church, and what type of offering do you want me to give?" "Please Lord, place someone in my path this week who needs something that I have to give."

Try praying each day something like the following:

Father, Your Word says that "each one brings a Psalm, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation." Lord, show me what I am to bring as I gather with my brothers and sisters on Sunday which will edify and be for the good of all.

1 Corinthians 14:26-33

What is it then, brothers?

When you come together,

each one of **F** you has a psalm,

has a teaching,

has a revelation,

has another language,

Has an interpretation.

Let all things be done to build each other up.

— 1 Corinthians 14:26 WEB
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