

I Corinthians

Chapter 14:20-40

²⁰ *Brothers and sisters, **do not be children in your thinking**; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature.*

Do not be children in your thinking > (Wuest translation) stop becoming little children who need instruction in reasoning

Robertson and Plummer > "Children prefer what glitters and makes a show to what is much more valuable; and it was childish to prefer ecstatic utterance to other and far more useful gifts."

"Mature" in their thinking ... but ... "Infants" in evil

²¹ **In the Law it is written**: *"By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people, and even so they will not listen to Me," says the Lord.* ²² *So then, tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophecy is not for unbelievers, but for those who believe.*

In the Law it is written > Deuteronomy 28:49 > ⁴⁹*"The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you shall not understand*

Isaiah 28:11-12 > ¹¹*Indeed, He will speak to this people through stammering lips and a foreign tongue,* ¹²*He who said to them, "Here is rest, give rest to the weary," And, "Here is repose," but they would not listen.*

Wuest Translation > *By means of tongues of a different nature and by means of the lips of a foreigner I will speak to this people, and not even thus will they listen to me, says the Lord. So that the aforementioned tongues are for an attesting miracle, not to those who believe but to unbelievers. But the impartation of divine revelations on the part of those who receive them is not for the unbelievers but for those who believe.*

(In both passages above the foreign tongue was a predictive warning coming against Israel because of their sin. Could this passage mean that what the Corinthian church was taking as a sign of their "spirituality" might be just the opposite in their case? Like Israel of the past – they wouldn't listen to the clarity of the prophets and the Lord sent in the enemy to teach them?)

²³ *Therefore if the whole church gathers together and all the people speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are **insane**?*

Insane > (Strong's) *mainomai* > to rage, be mad

Helps Word Studies > *maínomai* (the root of the English terms, "maniac" and "mania") – to rave, full of inner rage (fury); to act as though out of one's senses

Robertson and Plummer > "It was strange that what the Corinthians specially prided themselves on was a gift which, if exercised in public, would excite the derision of unbelievers."

Morris > The section from verse 23 through the end of the chapter specifically lays down principles for order in church meetings.

It should always be remembered that true New Testament churches cannot exist today for the simple reason that the churches described in the New Testament did not yet have the New Testament to guide them. Therefore, they needed those who had the gift of apostleship, the gift of prophecy and other supernatural gifts to guide them.

²⁴ *But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an outsider enters, he is **convicted** by all, he is called to **account** by all; ²⁵ the secrets of his heart are **disclosed**; and so he will fall on his face and **worship** God, declaring that God is certainly among you.*

Convicted > (Strong's) to expose, convict, reprove

Account > (Strong's) to examine, investigate

Disclosed > (Strong's) *phaneros* > visible, manifest

Precept Austin > (Points us to **Hebrews 4:12-13** > ¹²*For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. ¹³And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.*)

Worship > (Strong's) From *pros* and a probable derivative of *kuon* (meaning to kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand); to fawn or crouch to, i.e. (literally or figuratively) prostrate oneself in homage (do reverence to, adore)

²⁶ *What is the outcome then, brothers and sisters? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. **All things are to be done for edification.***

Ryrie > Free participation in the service is indicated by this verse, but not to the point of disorder.

All things are to be done for edification > This admonition is throughout this chapter.

²⁷ *If anyone speaks in a tongue, it must be by two or at the most three, and each one in turn, and **one is to interpret**; ²⁸ but if there is no interpreter, **he is to keep silent in church**; and have him speak to himself and to God.*

One is to interpret > (MacArthur) Everything spoken in a tongue must be interpreted, and apparently by only one interpreter. In the Greek construction, "one" is in the emphatic position, indicating that a single person is involved.

He is to keep silent > (Precept Austin) Paul issues a command *he must keep silent* (present imperative) which calls for continual obedience.

²⁹ *Have two or three prophets speak, and have the others **pass judgment**.*

Pass judgment > (Constable) The Greek word means "pass judgment" (NASB) or "weigh carefully" (NIV). In 12:10 it reads "distinguish."

Precept Austin > The call to *pass judgment* means that the fact that they exercised this gift did not make them immune to accountability (Remember Luke's comment about the Berean church>)

Barnes > And if this was a duty then, it is a duty now; if it was proper even when the teachers claimed to be under divine inspiration, it is much more the duty of the people now. No minister of religion has a right to demand that all that he speaks shall be regarded as truth, unless he can give good reasons for it: no man is to be debarred from the right of canvassing freely, and comparing with the Bible, and with sound reason, all that the minister of the gospel advances.

³⁰ *But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, **then the first one is to keep silent**. ³¹ For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted; ³² and the spirits of prophets **are subject** to prophets; ³³ for God is not a God of confusion, but of peace. **As in all the churches of the saints,***

Then the first one is to keep silent > (Utley) This is parallel to 1 Cor. 14:28 (where the one speaking in tongues was told to not speak if no interpreter was present). This implies that a speaker may be interrupted by another believer and that the current speaker must hear the new speaker before responding or adding to the revelation.

Are subject > (Precept Austin) (*hupotasso* from *hupó* = under + *tasso* = arrange in orderly manner) means literally to place under in an orderly fashion. The idea is to submit or to yield to governance or authority.

Wuest Translation > *And if anything is revealed to another who is seated, let the first one be keeping silence, for you all can function thus as a prophet one by one in order that all may be learning and all may be encouraged. And the spirits of those giving out a divine revelation are subject to the control of these prophets, for God is not a God of disorder but of harmony.*

As in all the churches of the saints, the saints > It appears that this phrase 'may' be part of verse 34.

Wuest Translation (for verse 34) > *As in all the local assemblies of the saints, let the women be keeping silent, for they are not permitted to be speaking, but let them be putting themselves in the place of subjection and obedience, even as also the law says.*

³⁴ (As in all the churches of the saints,) ***the women are to keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says.*** ³⁵ *If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is **improper** for a woman to speak in church.*

Precept Austin > To label this verse (verse 34) "controversial" is a gross understatement!

Keep silent > (Precept Austin) is a command in the present imperative calling for continuing obedience.

I Corinthians 11:5 > ⁵*But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head, for she is one and the same as the woman whose head is shaved.*

Acts 2:17-18 > ¹⁷ *And it shall be in the last days,' God says, 'That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and your daughters will **prophesy**, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will have dreams;* ¹⁸ *And even on My male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days, and they will **prophesy**.*

Acts 21:9 > ⁹*Now this man had four virgin daughters who were **prophetesses**.*

Improper > (Strong's) shameful

³⁶ ***Or was it from you that the word of God first went out? Or has it come to you only?***

Or was it from you ... > (Uteley) The grammatical form of the two questions in 1 Cor. 14:36 expects a "no" answer.

Jack Hunter & Albert McShane > This long section (12:1-14:40) is brought to a conclusion with the reminder of apostolic authority. The apostle is aware of the opposition his counsel will engender in those who will want to discount all that he has set before them. So he will now challenge them in relation to the word of God. When he mentioned "the law" in v. 34, he was drawing attention to it as the word of God, and to God Himself as the ultimate source of that authority which demands obedience from His people.

³⁷ *If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment.* ³⁸ *But if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized*

Recognize > (Strong's) *epiginóskó* > to know exactly, to recognize

Not recognize ... not recognized > (Strong's) *agnoeó* > to be ignorant, not to know (the source word is different than the word *recognize* in verse 37... *noeo* > to perceive, think ... with an *alpha negative*)

Jack Hunter & Albert McShane > Having stated the position according to the mind of God, Paul was not prepared to waste time disputing with such people.

Glen Spencer - If anyone will not accept follow these principles let him continue in his ignorance. Some folks simply will not accept the truth

³⁹ *Therefore, my brothers and sisters, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.*

My brothers and sisters > (Constable) "My brethren" sounds a loving note at the end of this very stern discussion

Do not forbid speaking in tongues > (Constable) Certainly if someone has the New Testament gift of tongues, he or she should observe these rules today as well. However, many Christians seriously doubt that anyone has this gift today. Nevertheless, the differences between tongues speaking as practiced today, and what took place in first century churches, has led many believers to conclude that these are very different experiences.

⁴⁰ *But all things must be done properly and in an orderly way.*

Properly > (Precept Austin) is an adjective which means pertaining to being proper in behavior. Becomingly, respectably, in a becoming manner, decently, with propriety.

Orderly way > (Precept Austin) *taxis* from *tasso* = to set or arrange in order) described the orderly array of soldiers with the line being unbroken and intact.