



Uncommon Sense 1 Corinthians
Wk. 38 Worship that Reveals God: Tongues Pt. 2
By Pastor Jody May 02/22/2026

1 Corinthians 1:25 - For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Uncommon Sense - *"God's Wisdom over man's pride through a Flawed Church."*

[CALL TO HEAR]

1 Corinthians 14:20-33 ESV

Prophecy and Tongues

²⁰ Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature. ²¹ In the Law it is written, "By people of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord." ²² Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers. ²³ If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds? ²⁴ But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, ²⁵ the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.

Orderly Worship

²⁶ 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. ²⁷ 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.

Pastor - "People of God, this is the Word of God."

People - "Thanks be to God."



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Pray

Illustration

When I was a kid, I remembered being taken to see, "***The Greatest Show on Earth***" or otherwise known as the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. As a Floridian the show would always come back south to us, before the first snows and they would service South Florida as the last show of the season before heading over to Venice, Fl. for the Winter hiatus. Thing was, when it came to town it was like Christmas! Every year I would remember seeing the commercials and I would hound my mom about taking me, so she finally surprised me and took me to see it. It really is something I wish everyone had a chance to go see at least once. Those of you who love the Hugh Jackman movie, *The Greatest Showman*, that was based off of PT Barnum of such circus, and if you remember the movie PT started the circus 10 years after his museum burnt down. The year that movie came out (2017) was the year they closed the show after 146 years.

We drove to see it and as advertised everything takes place underneath a big tent. The original was 500 ft long, and 100 ft wide, with 4 giant mast poles supporting the bulk in the middle. They would let down the sides and could make it pitch dark on the inside, so as to use spotlights to direct your gaze where they wanted. Inside there was not just one but three rings for performers in the middle. This was to always keep the show running as in when one act was concluding they would shine the spot onto the next ring with that act ready to go. Then sometimes, there were even competing acts at the same time. And you can't forget the clowns, everyone was straining their head to see what mischief they were getting into. This is where we get the saying from, "That was like a 3-Ringed Circus!" That phrase is meant to convey confusion, lack of focus, there was a lot going on, and you didn't know where to let your gaze lie because you were afraid of missing something. People use that phrase today to talk about chaotic environments.

Introduction



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I bring that up today, because long before *The Greatest Show on Earth* there was the Church of Corinth and Paul, like a conductor, was trying to get that thing under control. As you may have remembered from last week, we tackled what was turning their worship time into a circus, and that was the practice of speaking in tongues, or speaking in known rational languages, with no one to interpret, most likely copying pagan temple practices by trying to sound mystical in speech, but Paul was having none of that. The main reason was because it was not edifying to anyone, and we said last week ALL of God's spiritual gifts are to be used for the body not self, **Love is the Aim!** BUT now we learn this week by his description it wasn't like it would just happen once in a while or just by one person. It sounds like this was going on by multiple people at the same time!

²³ If, therefore, the whole church comes together and **all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds?** (That 'if' doesn't mean in case this ever happens it means since this "IS" happening!)

²⁷ 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.

So, it seems we have multiple people standing up at the same time, speaking in different languages, with no one to interpret, and my question is, if this was not planned then what was happening that was already planned? Was it time to sing, was it time to pray, was it time to preach, was it time for Sacraments, which was it!? That's what makes the gift of tongues dangerous in the hands of people who **Aim is not to Love** one another, for at any point they could believe they have something to contribute to any ministry and any age at any time, for what they have to offer is divine and who could argue with that which you don't understand? This is quite literally a free for all, a **3-Ringed Circus**, that is seeking to derail the act of a worship service, giving glory and keeping the focus on God. It is the type of environment that Paul says that the normal people in Corinth would call you all crazy, "**Lost your minds!**"

And building on the point from last week, Paul wants the church to reflect this truth:



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¹⁶ Otherwise, if you give thanks with your spirit, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say **"Amen"** to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you are saying?

The aim of worship in the church is so that **ALL truth** is understood and those inside and outside the church can **'Amen'** and approve of it. The aim of a structured and ordered service is so that the mysteries of God are explained and experienced clearly and orderly so that all may approve of what they see/hear, not just a small enthusiastic few but ALL, inside and out!

³³ For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.

MP:

God's Maturing Church Demonstrates a God of Peace.

God brings clarity to this world not confusion, and how we associate as believers should demonstrate that fact to all.

The church that will garner a reputation for portraying a God of the Bible, of peace not confusion, requires 3 core ingredients. First is takes a church willing to work at **Taming one's thoughts for maturation**; that is not letting childish desires and emotions drive how one wants to worship God in front of others. **Prophesying for the Lost's Conviction**; that as we learned last week prophesying is not just to be desired above all in the church for its' edifying traits, but that prophesying is best for those outside the church as well for it is what leads to conviction. **Ordering the Service for Edification**; THEREFORE, how you order what happens when the church meets is for the purpose then of edifying both those inside and outside the church.

1. Taming our thoughts for Maturation.

²⁰ Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature.



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Alright point 1 comes from just one verse of our text that's because it works as a hinge verse again between what we talked about last week and what we are talking about this week. This one point must happen if we want people to see that God is a God not of Confusion but of Peace (33). Paul wants this church, all churches, to behave this way so that they may become places where people inside the church, are edified/build up by the Truth and people on the outside are edified/convicted by the Truth. The Truth is THE paramount thing that needs to be communicated and how we conduct ourselves is what keeps this from happening. So, folks this loving chastisement, is done with all seriousness.

"Brothers, do not be children in your thinking"

After all the problems, after all the confusion, after all the sin, Paul still calls them **'brothers'**. You see family, this is what makes Christianity hard? We cannot get hung up on what each other says and does for in the end similarities are not what makes us strong, but it is the acceptance of differences that demonstrates the love of Christ. I didn't say 'sin', NO Paul is trying to correct that, but he doesn't throw his love for them out the window even when they cause him an ongoing headache. It takes an adult Christian to do that for each other, is that you? He says to his loved ones, **don't be children in your thinking**, or don't just settle (because that's what children do, they don't own their actions) for not 'understanding' how you should be. This is the hard talk of an Apostle telling these people he loves; it is time to grow up. You know that is one of the callings of the church, we could preach for years and sometimes you know what needs to be said, stop acting like you just got saved yesterday, you know the truth now go do it.

"Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature"

This is Paul's call to repentance: be infants in evil; **stop pursuing** now all the things we have talked about, of which now speaking in tongues for recognition to be viewed like the pagan oracles, don't progress in that anymore, **don't grow in the knowledge of evil**. How do you do that? Embrace thinking/understanding that is mature. They have to embrace that all the things they have been doing is trying to take all the things they like in this



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world and add it to the Gospel. The approach to life has been wrong. Paul is like, “now, now”, we have now been corrected so embrace this mature thinking, have the mind of Christ, and do what is right for all. The way the church matures into the image of Christ is they must mature in their love for others; **what is best for oneself IS what is best for others in the church.** That is the maturing of one’s thoughts at work here.

God’s maturing church demonstrates God’s Peace, because in the church where everyone is out for what is best for their neighbor is displaying a body that knows how to live with each other. That edifies those inside and it convicts people on the outside, this is good. (Taming our thoughts for Maturation)

2. Prophesying for the Lost’s Conviction.

²¹In the Law it is written, “By people of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord.” ²²Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers.

Ok v. 21 is a quote of Isaiah 28:11. So to understand the picture here that Paul is creating let’s look at the original text:

Isaiah 28:11 ESV

¹¹For by people of strange lips
and with a foreign tongue
the LORD will speak to this people,

The People of strange lips are the **Assyrians**, and what Isaiah is saying is that since Israel would not listen, repent and turn from sin, as preached by their own prophets, God would speak to the Jews in a foreign tongue they could not understand to get the message across. The words of their conquerors would now fill their ears to remind them they broke the covenant so now they have been turned over to their rule.



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Paul then in v.22 says, *tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers*, what he is saying is that the continual and unrepentant use of it shows they have been conquered by the evil in themselves. It shows God's judgment, not blessing, upon them. *While prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believer*, Prophecy is the true sign for believers, that which build us up, he's been saying this all along! **But now**, something new here, prophesy becomes the thing that not only blesses the believer edification/building up of the body, but it becomes **the gift that also helps the Lost the MOST!**

²³ If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds? ²⁴ But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, ²⁵ the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.

Proclaiming Truth, about God in worship service edifies everyone, even the Lost person that comes in to hear! **This is edification/conviction of sin.** What gets to him is that **'ALL'** are doing the same thing, they are 'Amening' the same truths, they are singing the same truths, they are praying the same truths, and all people of all different status' are blessed by the same truths. The testimony of the 'ALL' has gotten to him.

Convicted (24) – The Lost is made known of their error and they now lie exposed to how they have been living.

Account (24) – Means they are called to learn or be reprov'd/judged, they are presented with a new truth of which they cannot run from.

Disclosed (25) – That which only God knows, the person's heart, is exposed to the person and to others, it drives them to their knees.

This is when that person declares that God is real because He saw Him in the **AGREEMENT of the TEACHING** in the people in that church.

In Acts 2 Peter preached in a known tongue, with the gift of prophesy, after the gift of tongues was displayed rightly, to call the crowd together, and that crowd was convicted, reprov'd, and broken, by the teaching that ALL the Apostles were their believing in, and then they were saved! So please above



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all let us desire prophesy, the teaching of God's Word, the whole of it, poured out so that not only may the church be edified, but that the Lost may be convicted!

God's Maturing Church Demonstrates a God of Peace.

When we grow up in our understanding of how God wants to rescue the Lost, we will stop getting in the way of the Ministry of God's Word, and we all will do all we can to ensure that becomes the most important thing in the church, to bring Peace to the Lost. Because only belief in the Gospel can do something about God's wrath.

So, to build this church that **Demonstrates God's Peace** we have to **tame our thoughts for maturation**, and **prophesy for the Lost's conviction**, and this brings us to our third and last point.

3. Ordering the Service for Edification.

Orderly Worship

²⁶What 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.

Ok just to point out there is more that happens in a worship service than just preaching, for the body will have gifts to contribute in different ways. There's a gift of music, a gift of teaching, a gift of another language meant to reach an outsider there but still accompanied with an interpretation (that is not currently happening). All of that, was to be done with the emphasis to build up! Check, we have been saying that since last week.

²⁷If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret.

So, Paul cuts the legs out of the desire for this gift, going from the perception that everyone should and could do this all the time (23) to the most ever should



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be 3 during a gathering and only with interpretation. But Paul is also closing the noose on his trap even tighter.

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.

Last week Paul had illustrated what was the purpose of speaking in tongues: “how will I benefit you unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching?” (6) and Paul should know because he speaks tongues better/more than anyone else (18), and so now he gives the qualifying statement whether tongues is anything at all for these people in Corinth. **You must have someone interpret and since tongues is to reveal hidden knowledge, then have people judge the interpretation.** So, if the tongue rambling doesn’t jive with church doctrine, **Apostolic Teachings**, then the person shows himself to be false, stop letting him speak. Which means over time this person would get the invite, unless they repented, to leave - expulsion.

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.

All can learn by prophesy/teaching, in an order, by first the checking of it by those who would understand the Apostolic teaching, by those first who are committed to order not chaos, who understand God is not about confusion but peace. Now there is one more section on and orderly service which we are going to hold off to next week where Paul is going to explain if women should be speaking out publicly in church, brand new situation but having the same effect as confusion, that there will get its own service.

You know what is funny about the modern church over the last few decades? We have changed the way we have corporately worshipped, and we have slowly added in a ton of stuff into our services that take the focus off of building each other up and puts it into the display of the gift! Is it coincidence that with the



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rise of liberal theology, post WWII, that we had the rise in soloists, dramatic presentations, dance, and set building to the point that our church auditoriums had to be built like theatrical stages to support light productions, stacked speakers, and drum cages?

1 Corinthians 14 is one of the main areas that our forefathers built a strategy to protect the church; by building on what God's Word says is appropriate for worship, a principle called the **Regulative Principle of Worship**.¹

The **Regulative Principle of Worship** - is a protestant, particularly reformed doctrine stating that corporate worship must be authorized by explicit commands or biblical examples in Scripture and was developed and championed by people like:

John Calvin - "God disapproves of all modes of worship not expressly sanctioned by his Word". - *The Necessity of Reforming the Church*

Later solidified by documents like the LBCF 1689 22.1 *Religious Worship and the Lord's Day*

But the acceptable way to worship the true God is instituted by him,² and it is delimited by his own revealed will. Thus, he may not be worshipped according to human imagination or inventions or the suggestions of Satan, nor through any visible representations, nor in any other way that is not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures.³

¹[Jeremiah 10:7](#); [Mark 12:33](#). ²[Deuteronomy 12:32](#). ³[Exodus 20:4-6](#).

What is the result of this principle how does it play out for us now?

Reading the Bible

Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. - 1 Tim 4:13

¹ <https://learn.ligonier.org/articles/regulative-principle-worship>



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Preaching the Bible

preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. – 2 Tim 4:2

Singing the Bible

addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, – Eph 5:19

Prayer

He said to them, "It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers." – Mat 21:13

Sacraments

Lord's Supper – 1 Cor 11:23-26

Baptism – Col 2:11-12

From here we can all start with the thought and right guidance; here is what God has said we can do, so whatever we are doing, does it fit into the prescriptions of what God has given (RPW)?

This principle protects us from:

Pragmatic church leadership that are more concerned about numbers in the seats.

Protects us from ego centric worship leaders that may use the stage to highlight skills.

Protects church budgets from being manipulated and based on production values and not evangelistic/discipleship efforts.

Protects us from high overhead costs of always bigger buildings and maintenance of such buildings.

Protects us from tainting the gospel with ornaments since people are to come to conviction based on teaching not exhibition.

The Regulative Principle of Worship gives guiderails to worship while at the same time, never prohibits people from getting better in their own modes of worship. Since the Bible commands us all to sing, pray, and teach the Bible then all of God's people are called to do that, not a paid staff. Family you are



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responsible for how you worship; this is not a leadership problem to solve it is a family calling we all need to embrace.

That type of Maturing church demonstrates that God's peace can be found with that body.

[CALL TO OBEY]

Pursue mature minds and infant hearts toward evil. - Repent specifically of childish thinking and worldly loves. What is there in you that you know comes between you and loving this particular body better, that is the evil you need to stop doing. What is the thing you need to gain more understanding on? Theology, money matters, family matters, is there a person you need to contact or a relationship you need to build to gain wisdom in an area, that if you would just mature, not only is it good for you, but good for the body.

We have been reading proverbs let me ask you, does it force you to learn or is it something that you are to pursue?

Prize intelligible prophecy over foolish talk. - Family you may spend a lot of time listening to the news and being upset; but as much as I hear and get annoyed there is always a part of me that is seeing the world get upset and attack everything right now, because friends, things ARE starting to change. How you look at the world though sometimes needs to be bolstered by what you listen to and read. You might not be consuming a full rounded diet. Being a reformed thinker requires you to read more than people of the past century. Our forefathers saw worst days than we did, and yet for the most part they were more optimistic than we are.

Promote the Sunday Gathering in your home as the best part of the week! - Heads of home you want to raise your kids in the tradition that will preserve worship, that will preserve your kids in the years to come, then promote a heart that loves to worship with God's people more than anything else!
Ben Sasse - "One thing I tell my kids a lot is, 'Man, I wish I'd taken the Lord's Day more seriously more in my life, because it's a really good antidote to all those idolatries."



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MP:

God's Maturing Church Demonstrates a God of Peace.

Family, it is not easy, but we have the tremendous privilege to represent the peace of God among this body. AND it gives us a tremendous call to display that peace to the people of our community for their conviction unto their Salvation. Would you pray with me and ask God for His continued Grace towards us in the effort.

Prayer

Communion

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 ESV

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Today when you eat of the bread remember the life of Jesus which was lived for us. Jesus grew in His understanding and put away worldly temptations, He sacrificed His comfort in a life of teaching and modeling a life of worship, and he always promoted forgiveness and love towards one's neighbor and even one's enemies. Praise be to our King who loved perfectly according to the commands of the Father, Edifying us with His true **Agapē love.**

Today when you drink the juice remember the cost of our sin displayed by His blood for the new covenant poured out for us. When we refused to grow up and become mature in mind and soul, He absorbed that sin. When we used our blessings for our own building up, He took the wrath stored up for us. When we had nothing good to offer in our lives He imputed His righteousness



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to us. All of this provided by His once and for all sacrifice for our sins.
Thanks be to God for His **Agapē love!**"

[CONFESSION OF FAITH]

* The Congregation will stand

Elder – **"Christians, what do we believe?"** Congregation – recites:

LBCF 1689 Chapter 22 Of Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day
Paragraph 1. Worship Should Be According to What God Has Revealed

The light of nature shows that there is a God who has lordship and sovereignty over all. He is just, good, and does good to all. Therefore, he should be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served with all one's heart, soul, and might. 1 The acceptable way of worshipping the true God is what he himself has instituted. 2 Worship is limited by his own revealed will. This means that he should not be worshipped

- according to human imagination and inventions
- the suggestions of Satan
- using any visible representations
- or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures 3

1. Jeremiah 10:7; Mark 12:33

2. Deuteronomy 12:32

3. Exodus 20:4-6

[OFFERING+LAST SONG] "We Will Feast in the House of Zion"

[BENEDICTION]

Go in the name of the Father, who endures with us while we grow in our faith, and displays His tremendous Love in the Satisfying Gift of His Son.



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Go in the name of the Son, who has truly worked every bit of our Salvation by His mighty effort, so that we can come to know true peace in His Father's house.

Go in the name of and power of the HS, that has opened our eyes to the call of orderly and proper worship so that the witness of our life may call the world to conviction, bringing many sons to glory.

[FELLOWSHIP CONVERSATIONS]

1) Grow Up, Be Innocent: Where do you need to "be infants in evil" and "mature in thinking" (v. 20)? Name one concrete step you'll take this week to repent of a childish pattern and pursue maturity for the good of the body.

2) Clear Word, Clear 'Amen': What parts of our speech in worship (prayers, songs, explanations) might be unclear to outsiders? Identify one term or practice you will explain better next Lord's Day so that an unbeliever could understand and say "Amen" (vv. 24-25).

3) Peace, Not Confusion: Looking at our gathering, what is one way we can order things more clearly "for building up" (v. 26) and reflect that God is a God of peace (v. 33)? What will you personally do—speak briefly and in turn, invite a guest, submit your contribution to be weighed—to help?



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