

Verse 21,22—

In the law it is written. Paul is quoting from Isaiah 28:11,12. Paul uses the word **law**. We think of the Law of Moses, but the entire O.T. is often called “the law,” or the “the law and the Prophets,” or, “The law, the Prophets, and the Psalms.” We have to keep in mind this church was divided, 1 Corinthians 1:10; 3:3; 11:18. Remember the purpose of speaking in **other tongues** was to convince the nation of Israel to repent. That was God’s warning in Isaiah passage, judgment was at hand by the Assyrians if Israel would not repent. And the nation would not hear (or comply). God had offered them rest and refreshing, but they would not hear. Therefore, Paul is using this O.T. passage to show that the manifestation of speaking in **tongues are for a sign judgment to them that believe not**, the unbelieving Jewish nation. Tongues was a sign to the unbelieving Jew—the Jew who did not believe Jesus was Messiah. Therefore, when tongues were spoken, they announced the praise for the marvelous works of God which was the sending of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Paul is not referencing salvation by grace through faith. There is no repentance needed in the dispensation of grace (Ephesians 2:8,9). We are saved by grace through faith and not of yourselves (anything you do).

Rather, the nation needed to repent and prepare themselves for the kingdom. They failed and as a consequence the judgment fell, Jerusalem was destroyed, the Temple burned, and the nation scattered throughout the whole earth—therefore tongues ceased—it lost its meaning and purpose. Tongues has absolutely nothing to do with being a *worship language for believers* (this is one of the many problems and misinterpretations that arise when we do not rightly divide the word of truth. Thinking every passage is about you leads to faulty theology that has been perpetuated).

Verse 23—

If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak...will they not say that ye are mad? At first glance it seems to contradict what Paul just said in verse 22. He just said tongues were for *the unbelieving Jews*, and yet in this verse the unbelieving Jews are the ones saying **ye are mad**. I think the point is the *way the speaking is being done*. **The whole assembly is come together, and all speak with tongues.** Imagine the cacophony of confusion that would have been taking place. In fact, in verse 27 we find that was exactly the problem.

Verse 24—

This would have been a very vocal congregation. **Prophecy** although for the believers, because it is clear and can be understood, a residual effect for an unbeliever coming into the assembly would be convicted, or become aware of his unbelief in Jesus as Messiah.

Verse 25—

Secrets of his heart made manifest. This is the unbeliever. And the **secrets of this heart** could refer to his conversion and testimony. Prophesying in the church, done correctly, in the power of the Holy Spirit, pierced the heart and produced a worshipper of God.

Verse 26—

Paul calls for order among the **brethren** in the church. Every member has something to say. These are manifestations of the Spirit used by God for communication of His word; **a psalm...doctrine.... tongue...revelation...interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.** Everything done in the church was for building up of the body of Christ.

Verse 27-31—

These verses are all procedural for the church in Corinth. They are not intended as a model for churches today (although many Charismatic churches make application, but they are misguided and their actions are meaningless). We have seen from previous studies that the manifestations of the Spirit have ceased today (1 Corinthians 13:10).

Verse 32—

Spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. This could mean, 1) No prophets could contradict the O.T. prophets. 2) If while one was speaking the spirit gave a revelation, the speaker was to sit down so the other prophet might communicate the revelation. 3) The receiver of the revelation should wait until the other prophet had ceased speaking before communicating it to the church. The bottom line is we cannot make a doctrine from this, and if one does, he is just making stuff up.

Verse 33—

For God is not the author of confusion. Here is Paul’s point; there cannot be confusion in the church because any confusion does not come from God. The Spirit will not work against Himself. Rather God is the author of **peace**.

As in all the churches of the saints. Most likely should be joined with and begin verse 34.

Verse 34—

As in all the churches of the saints, let your women keep silence in the churches. The word translated as **churches** is *ekklesia* in the Greek and it means assembly. It is an assembly of people. It could be said “There is an *ekklesia* or assembly of rioters in front of City Hall.” Whenever we read the word in the NT we should not always think of the word **churches** in our 21st century context. **All churches of the saints** very well means a Jewish assembly. They were believers in Jesus as Messiah, but had not fully left the doctrine of Peter which was kingdom doctrine. That this was not an assembly of grace believers is clear from the last sentence **to be under obedience, as also saith the law.**

Paul says, *in these Jewish assemblies let your women keep silence...for it is not permitted unto them to speak.* Paul is speaking to men who had wives. We know from our study in 1 Corinthians 11:5 that women were permitted to pray and prophesy as long as they had their *covering*, that is, their husband who had Christ as his covering. In other words, Paul is admonishing the women to cooperate with the Jewish assemblies by keeping silent.

This is not a place to develop a doctrine for determining the role of women in the church. There are other passages that do so. One was 1 Corinthians 11:5, and the other is 1 Timothy 2:11-12 (keeping in mind the context of those passages). The Timothy passage teaches that a woman is not to usurp authority over a man in the church. In that context, Paul goes on to teach that the office of bishop or *episkopos* in the Greek has been reserved by God as a male role. A woman is not to be a pastor.

Verse 35—

In the Jewish assemblies, women are to be instructed by **asking their husbands at home.** This in not way is intended for the church today in that a woman cannot ask questions. **For it is a shame for women to speak in the church,** that is, in the Jewish assembly. (Remember Paul’s statement in 9:22 “I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”)

Verse 36—

Came the word of God out of you? Or came it unto you only? The gospel message did not originate at Corinth, nor did it reach Corinth only. They could not set themselves up as legislators in matters of Church order. The things we do are twofold, 1) To win some to Christ, 2) To edify the body of Christ.

Verses 37,38—

He continues addressing men, **If any man think himself a prophet, or spiritual,** then they will **acknowledge** that **the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.** He is declaring that he wrote by inspiration, and that he was aware he was doing so. Paul’s gospel was given to him by revelation from Jesus Christ himself (Ephesians 3:1-19; 2 Peter 3:15). But if any man denied Paul’s inspiration through his own *ignorance*, then Paul just left him to **be ignorant.** He refused to dispute with him.

Verse 39—

Covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. We saw in chapter 13:8 these manifestations of the Spirit are no longer necessary, needed, or given since we have the complete word of God. We have to rightly divide here and put this passage in its correct dispensation.

Verse 40—

This is the summary statement for the use of all the manifestations of the Spirit: **Let all things be done decently and in order.** It is also a carryover principle we can heed today.