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Decently and in Order

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1 Corinthians 14:26-40

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Text

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.

As in all the churches of the saints, ³⁴ the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. ³⁵ If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.

³⁶ Or was it from you that the word of God came? Or are you the only ones it has reached? ³⁷ If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord. ³⁸ If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized. ³⁹ So, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. ⁴⁰ But all things should be done decently and in order.

Introduction

Have you ever thought, “I wonder what a Sunday service was like in the earliest Christian churches?” Well, today’s passage in 1 Corinthians gives us a peek into what was happening in the church of Corinth in the 50s when they gathered together. One NT scholar points out that this second half of ch. 14 gives “us the most intimate glimpse we have of the early Church at worship. Here we are able to see something of what the first Christians actually did when they assembled to worship God.”¹ It’s a fascinating look.

We can’t immediately assume that everything the Corinthians were doing was good and worthy of emulation. Some of it Paul is writing to correct. Some of it might be relevant only to that time and place. But bearing all this in mind as we read carefully to discern Paul’s intent in what he writes here, we can get a lot of guidance for what our Sunday gatherings should look and feel like today. In short, what we’re going to see today is just this: **corporate worship should not be chaotic, but compelling.**

Let’s pray...

Coming Together (v. 26)

This letter has covered a lot of things the Corinthians were dealing with, in both their personal lives and in their life as a community. Lately the author, the Apostle Paul,

has been addressing a lot about how the public gathering should be conducted. He talked about head coverings and communion in ch. 11. He talked about the use of spiritual gifts in the congregation in ch. 12. In ch. 13 he waxed eloquently about the chief virtue of love that should cover everything. But most recently in the first half of ch. 14 he's been explaining the proper use of speaking in tongues and prophesying. What setting does he have mainly in mind? Look at v. 23 – when “the whole church comes together.”

Now look at v. 26, the first verse of our section for today. “What then...?” He's pulling together and tying up all these threads. “What then, brothers?” And there's that familial language that the NT is so full of. Christians, adopted by the Father in Christ, form a family. Family rightfully brings notions of familiarity and warmth into our minds. Families aren't just connected genetically or legally while living independently (although this is often how it happens in our modern, western world). Families are expected to come together. They live under the same roof (most nuclear families still do today; back then [and in most cultures still] even extended families lived communally). And families come together regularly around the same table to eat. Paul views a local collection of Christians as a spiritual family.

“What then, brothers? When you come together...” The church is a family that comes together, congregates. In fact, the word ‘church’ is a different Greek word that means ‘assembly’. This is basic to the Christian life. Christians come together consistently with other Christians. Remember COVID days? Wasn't that awful? Online church doesn't really do it. We've got to come together, physically. This is the first point we're reminded of in this text. We must come together. Corporate worship is the essence of a church. What we're doing right now is of primary importance. We all come together.

We can come together any time we want, although not all the time. We're still supposed to disperse and go out into the world to work and be witnesses. But the core rhythm of coming together has always been every 7 days on Sunday, the first day of the week. That was the day Jesus rose from the dead and first appeared to his gathered disciples (Jn. 20:19). They were together again one week later and he appeared in their midst there (Jn. 20:26). We see in Acts that local churches were assembling on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). And we see even in this letter, in ch. 16, v. 2, that the church in Corinth was in the habit of meeting on the first day of the week, Sunday – that's when they collected their offerings. It's almost certainly what Paul is talking about here. All throughout church history, Christians have congregated in churches every Sunday to do the kind of stuff we see in 1 Corinthians 14.

First, key point: Christians come together. If you're a Christian: do you prioritize the weekly gathering of the church? Do you look forward to coming together with your family? It is fundamental to the Christian faith. Sin separates. Salvation brings us together.

Now let's keep going and see what it's supposed to be like when we come together.

Collaborative (v. 26)

It's supposed to be collaborative. **Corporate worship** services are not supposed to be spectator sports. You're not coming to watch a show, be it casual entertainment where you sit in the dark and watch what happens on the stage or formal where

everything is done for you by one or two people up front wearing robes. The NT envisions worship services that are collaborative, participatory. Everybody has a part to play.

I'm getting this from the phrase "each one" that comes next in v. 26. "When you come together, each one..." Each member of the body is expected to do something, not just a certain class called clergy. The laity is expected to be active. Worship gatherings are not times when you are supposed to just sit back and passively take in what some professional provides for you.

Think about what happens here on a typical Sunday morning. Different people come and get the doors unlocked and chairs set up and everything ready. Those leading the music that week come in to rehearse, along with sound and slides people. We don't just have one, paid musician performing every week, but several different teams composed of different volunteers that rotate. I checked on our Signal app and the IBC Worship Team has 37 members in it.

At 9:30 AM there's a rotation of different facilitators of Prayer Meeting that guide a time where anybody can speak up and vocalize a prayer request for the church.

In the service, the Call to Worship is often done by a member of the church. Someone else usually does the Confession of Sin and Assurance of Pardon. The time of prayer is led not just by a pastor, but by different persons in the church. Someone else will read the Scripture. We have a team of Pastors and deep bench of Pastoral Apprentices that can preach. Lots of different people speak up during Announcements. There's a whole other set of people who stay up front after the Announcements to pray with people, while everybody else sticks around and talks and has conversations that care for one another and speak God's Word into each other's lives.

There's a large, diverse team of people teaching kids during Kid's Corner, and another crew that teaches older kids and youth after the service. If we have Adult Sunday School, you never know who might be leading that.

Let's not forget that we believe singing should be congregational. So, you're not listening to a band; they are facilitating you singing into your neighbor's ears. There are responsive reading parts where everyone says stuff together. Usually, you get up and come forward to receive the elements. There is a myriad of ways that this is a wide-scale, collaborative effort. So many different people are involved each week. We all come ready to contribute, not just consume. When we come together it's collaborative. So come to church gatherings with something to share!

Crafted (v. 26)

The next component of **corporate worship** that we see from this text is that it is crafted. "When you come together, each one *has*..." In other words, each person that's going to play a part in the public worship has come prepared; we're not just winging it. "When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation." One commentary I read this week in studying for this sermon put it this way – "That each one *has* one of those things seems to suggest that they bring them to the gathering rather than that they receive them during the meeting."² Can you see that? People are bringing things they have worked on ahead of time.

Church is not supposed to be an utterly unpredictable event where you try to come totally unprepared and where anything can happen. We shouldn't expect that someone's

just going to compose songs on the spot on Sunday or get zapped with some word to pass on. There should be some forethought.

I grew up in the Quaker tradition. The church I was part of was part of a branch of Quakers called “programmed,” so it had a bulletin and a general Order of Service with pre-selected hymns and a preacher and stuff like that. But it also had a slot called “Open Worship” where anything could happen. That was a hold-over from the earliest Quakers who had no plan. They just sat in silence until the Inner Light prompted someone to say something. They got the name Quaker in the 1600s because in these gatherings where anything goes they would literally quake in ecstatic experiences. There are still what’s called “un-programmed” Quaker meetings today. No structure. No pre-planning. Just let anyone do anything as they are “led.” And let me tell you: it gets real crazy. Not necessarily people-swinging-from-the-chandeliers-crazy, but saying nutso things. The Bible expects that church gatherings will be collaborative, but also that people will have done some advanced preparation.

So some people who lead us in prayer write out their prayers ahead of time. Others may pray a bit more extemporaneously, but they’ve put at least some thought in ahead of time to what they are going to say and make sure they cover important topics in the world or life of the church on this particular week. The songs we sing are not words that just pop into your mind – they are carefully crafted and curated, theologically accurate and singable and usually have passed some sort of test of time. I’ve thought a little bit about what I’m going to say before I get up here and start running at the mouth. Not that I can’t improvise in the moment and add things in. I’m always open to that. And sometimes that happens and it goes well, but actually more often than not that’s when I say things that are unhelpful and even out of my flesh.

In fact, every aspect of the service has been prayerfully planned ahead of time. The Call to Worship is intentionally picked to fit with some theme of the service, as with the Confession and Assurance and Benediction. The songs and readings contribute to an overall flow and arc of the service. The Sunday School classes are following a curriculum. The Prayer Meeting has a thought-through structure. When we come together it’s collaborative, but it’s also crafted. We often think that Spirit-led means we need to come as a blank slate and wait for something to happen impromptu in the moment, as if the Spirit can’t give us insights throughout the week and help us hone them as we process and reflect and make them more useful.

Content-Based (v. 26)

The next component of **corporate worship** we see here is that it should be content-based. “When you come together... each one... has... a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation.” Let’s just notice that all these examples that Paul lists that members of the church are coming to the service with involve some kind of word-ministry. He doesn’t say, “Each one comes with an interpretive dance, an instrumental solo, a chocolate cake, or a craft or game.” I’m not saying that all of those things would always be wrong, I’m just pointing out that church is not just hanging out. It’s not just being together. It’s content-based. There should be propositional substance to the **corporate worship** gathering.

A hymn is the word for psalm – carefully crafted content that could be sung. A lesson is the word for teaching. Teaching involves words that communicate truth. A

revelation is, I believe, divinely disclosed information. It's probably another way of talking about prophecy. A tongue is a message in a different language. And an interpretation is a translation of this message so that those who don't speak that language can understand it. All of these items mentioned here contain content.

Content takes concentration. It requires thinking. So many people don't want to do that. They prefer entertainment and experience. And so it's tempting to water down church services, appeal almost entirely to the emotions. Create an atmosphere makes people feel spiritual, but it's superficial. Content doesn't have to be boring, especially when it's about the infinitely interesting God and what he's said. But it's not fluffy.

Common Good (v. 26)

When we come together it should be collaborative, crafted, content-based, and for the common good. Look how v. 26 ends – “Let all things be done for building up.” Edification. When Christians come together, they are not looking for a place to express themselves. They are not just looking for a place to be spoon fed themselves. They are looking for a place where they can be part of a group construction project – the building up of the body. The church service should encourage and equip everyone, so that together we “all attain to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God” (cf. Eph. 4:13).

There are all kinds of different elements to the service, but the overarching rule is – “Let all things be done for building up.” If it doesn't build others up, it doesn't belong in the **corporate worship** service. This excludes activities that may wow or attract attention, but don't actually point people to Christ and help them grow in him.

But it also excludes making the service a place to have your own, private experience. As one person has said, “[If t]he building up of the community is the basic reason for corporate settings of worship[, t]hey should probably not be turned into a corporate gathering for a thousand individual experiences of worship.”³ Or in our case 100. The point is that you don't come to **corporate worship** to get your own personal preferences met. It should be carefully constructed so that the body as a whole is all built up, everybody is edified, collectively growing together. When we come together it's for the common good.

Controlled (vv. 27-32)

The next point comes from vv. 27-32 and it's that when covenanted members of a church come together it should be controlled. **Corporate worship should not be chaotic**. This seems to have been a problem in Corinth. They were a little out of control, crazy. Even during the celebration of the Lord's Table, some people were gobbling up the bread and getting tipsy on the wine, not waiting for others (cf. 11:20ff). It was like a classroom of unruly kindergartners. Paul introduces more policy and protocol.

First, he addresses speaking in tongues. He says, “If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God.” As we saw last week, Paul saw a limited role for speaking in tongues in the **corporate worship** service. It easily degenerated into a fixation with the spectacular that puffed up the person doing it and benefitted a limited number of people. Assuming that speaking in tongues was a supernatural ability to talk a different language, then it is only

useful when people are present who speak that language – people that can understand and be edified and/or people who could translate so that the rest of the people could understand what is being said. If not, then it shouldn't be done at all in the public gathering. Maybe you could talk to God in your own head in a foreign language, but it's not beneficial to the whole body. Just "keep silent."

The other key phrase here is "each in turn." Paul doesn't want people blurting things out when someone else is talking or people shouting over each other. Have you ever been in a situation where several people are trying to talk at once? It's **chaotic**. The use of the gift of tongues must be controlled. "This shows us that we must not think of 'tongues' as being the result of an irresistible impulse of the Spirit, driving the man willy-nilly into ecstatic speech."⁴ It can be controlled.

Second, Paul takes up the practice of prophecy in the public gathering. This is Paul's preferred gift for the Corinthian church at this time. It's a divinely inspired message in the ordinary language of the congregation. Tongues was limited to "two or at most three" people and unless certain conditions were met it should be zero; prophecy on the other hand was expected every week by Paul. He wants two or even three prophets to speak, and then for a group of people to weigh their message to see if it truly is from God. That's what it says in v. 29. We'll come back to the weighing concept in a moment. Again, these could be messages that had been received earlier in the week and held on to until Sunday. Maybe there were a couple prophets who had reserved a slot to speak on Sunday ahead of time.

Verse 30 envisions that while one of the planned prophets is speaking, another sitting there receives an impromptu revelation. He shouldn't just blurt it out and interrupt the first prophet while he's speaking. He should raise his hand or something and the first guy should pause his prepared remarks and let the other guy go. Look at v. 31 – "For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged." The point is clear: Paul doesn't want a cacophony of people selfishly speaking over each other. He wants order. One person talking at a time. As v. 32 puts it – "the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets." "[P]rophets do not lose control in some ecstatic trance or as though possessed by some foreign spirit."⁵ They keep their composure. **Corporate worship** should be familial, but not an unruly free for all. It's inappropriate to be disruptive and distracting. When we come together we should be controlled.

Coherent (v. 33a)

Next: coherent. The first part of v. 33 is an elegant theological argument – "For God is not a God of confusion but of peace." The Holy Trinity is not chaotic, each person jockeying for power, seeking to overrule the other and draw attention to himself. Within the Godhead there is harmony, consistency, perfect agreement. If God had a house, it would be clean, not cluttered. In creation he brought order out of chaos and made a beautiful world. He's not a nutty professor. He is interesting. He is lively. He is vibrant. But he is not haphazard, erratic, unpredictable, schizophrenic, or contradictory. Satan brings confusion and discombobulation. God brings clarity and cohesiveness. And so therefore the gatherings of his people should be coherent. Insiders and outsiders alike should be able to understand what is going on. This is extremely **compelling**.

Catholic (v. 33b)

So we're looking at what the second half of 1 Corinthians 14 says about when Christians come together. What should a worship service be like? We've seen that it should be collaborative, well-crafted, content-based, for the common good, controlled, coherent, and now catholic. That's a lower 'c' catholic. That word just means 'universal'. It's the idea that local churches should not be idiosyncratic. They should conform to a universal pattern. There should be some continuity between all true churches everywhere, such that you could go to a Christian church in Africa while there would certainly be cultural particularities, you would also detect that you were part of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

Where am I getting that from? Look at the second half of v. 33. "As in all the churches of the saints..." We've seen this concept before in this letter. Paul has an expectation that will Corinth was in some ways unique from Ephesus or Thessalonica or Philippi, there should also be a great commonality. Ordering our services according to God's Word (e.g. the Regulative Principle) with a sensitivity to the Great Tradition helps to guard us against doing weird stuff. This is catholicity in the best sense.

Complementarian (vv. 34-35)

Next in vv. 34 and 35 we see that **corporate worship** should be complementarian. Complementarianism is big word that describes the Bible's beautiful vision of how the two God-given genders are completely equal in value and worth and yet not interchangeable in role and function. Men and women have the same inherent value as image-bearers of God, but are not the same. Complementarianism should be reflected somehow in the **corporate worship** of the church.

Look at what Paul writes – "[T]he women should keep silent in the churches." Wait! What!? He goes on – "For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says." 'The Law' here is a reference to the OT Scriptures, usually referring to the first 5 books of the Bible. Where in those books does it say that women should be in submission? There's not a chapter and verse, but "he probably alludes to the order and purpose of creation in Genesis 2, just as he did in 11:8-9."⁶ In the early chapters of Genesis we see men and women created as complementary counterparts, with Adam bearing the headship responsibilities and Eve being his helper – an ordered equality.

Verse 35 – "If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church." Now what in the world does this mean. Is Paul here gagging women in church? Can they not open their mouths at all in the **corporate worship** setting? If we're good readers we know that obviously that cannot be what Paul means here. Why? Because he indicated earlier in 11:5 that women could pray and prophesy in the church setting, as long as they had their heads covered. You can go back and read or listen to that sermon on our website if you weren't here for it. But the point is that Paul does not prohibit women from opening their mouths in church. He expects that they will even prophesy in the assembly – speak a word from the Lord!

So what is he talking about here in ch. 14 when he says that women should remain silent? He's said in ch. 11 that women can prophesy. So what's the context for the prohibition here? And I think this is where the weighing of prophecy mentioned in v. 29 comes in. "Let two or three prophets speak [we know this could have included

women], and let the others weigh what is said.” I believe that it is in this time of deliberation and testing (e.g. 1Jn. 4:1) where Paul says that women are to control their tongues and let a group of qualified men confer and confirm that this was indeed of God and therefore apply it to the church. This involved women, allowed them to have a voice, while also portraying and encouraging male headship. It also fits with the overall theme that **corporate worship should not be chaotic**, but people are exercising self-control and maintaining order and not demanding to be heard.

So when we come together, it should be clear that we’re complementarian. What would that look like in our church today if prophecy isn’t a thing? Women are clearly valued and integrated and involved in our worship service. But so are men; they are not given a pass to be passive. And while women have all kinds of speaking parts from leading the singing, to praying, to reading Scripture, etc... the one activity that is reserved for qualified men is the pulpit, this part, preaching. We’re not receiving new revelation today, but the place where the meaning of the inspired text is ratified and brought to bear on the congregation should be done by men.

1 Corinthians is one of Paul’s earliest letters. One of his later ones is 1 Timothy, where he says that “I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet” (1Tim. 2:12). Again, that doesn’t mean an absolute ban on speaking, but there is a kind of teaching and exercising of authority that is not fitting for her to exercise such that full equality in worth is demonstrated and also distinction in role. In the family of God, men are to have modeled for them godly, masculine responsibility and protection; not domination, but loving leadership.

Consistent with Scripture (vv. 36-38)

Wow, there’s a lot here! So far we’ve seen that Christians should come together. And when they do those times should be collaborative, crafted, content-based, focused on the common good, controlled, coherent, lower case ‘c’ catholic, complementarian, and finally and most importantly consistent with Scripture. This next section here in vv. 36-38 is profound... probably the most important part of the whole sermon.

Paul starts off with a bit of sarcasm – “Or was it from you that the word of God came? Or are you the only ones it has reached?” He’s poking at their pride. He’s reminding them that they are not the originators of revelation or the only ones to whom God has spoken. There’s the OT revelation of course. But there is also forming a final installment of the canon.

Listen carefully to what Paul says here – “If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.” Do you understand what he’s saying? As one scholarly observer has put it – “No higher claim could possibly be made. The bearing of this on the question of the way the New Testament writers viewed their inspiration should not be overlooked. Paul maintains not only that he has written the ‘commandment’... of the Lord, but that anyone who is a *prophet, or spiritual* should acknowledge this. Some of the Corinthians thought they had spiritual discernment. Let them show it by recognizing inspiration when they s[ee] it!”⁷

Yes, God was speaking through prophets in the church in Corinth. But he was also speaking through Paul, specifically Paul’s *writing*. Paul is claiming divine inspiration for his letter so that it bears the authority of holy writ. If anyone claimed to

prophecy it has to be weighed against what God had already spoken in the OT and now what Paul is writing. This is a profound verse for our doctrine of Scripture! All the implications can't be fully unpacked here, but just let the significance of what he's saying sit with you – "Your perceived prophetic revelations must not contradict and must be consistent with what I'm writing with pen and paper."

In fact, the Corinthians had to recognize the voice of God in Paul's inspired letter, or they did not know God. He says in v. 38 – "If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized." This seems to be referring to being recognized before God at the final judgment. To those who deny Scripture as God's voice, God will deny them on the Last Day. Jesus said, "On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name...?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me'" (Mt. 7:22-23). We must take Scripture with the utmost seriousness and reverence!

As John Murray put it – "Scripture... is the only revelation of the mind and will of God available to us [today]."⁸ I believe that prophecy has ceased. We've tried to make that case in the last few sermons. Therefore, when we come together, everything we say and do must be in conformity with the clear, objective, written revelation of God we find in the Bible. Scripture is the Word of God! And so in **corporate worship** it should be read, preached, prayed, sung, seen. Our services should be soaked in Scripture!

Conclusion (vv. 39-40)

Collaborative, crafted, content-based, common good, controlled, coherent, catholic, complementarian, consistent with Scripture... now for the conclusion – vv. 39-40. "So, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues." This sums up what he's been saying in ch. 14 about tongues and prophecy. "While tongues are not to be forbidden, prophecy is essential."⁹ We absolutely need a clear, revelation from God! And praise God we have it, translated into our tongue!

And then v. 40, the last verse – "But all things should be done decently and in order." A succinct statement to guide every aspect of our coming together – decently and in order. Every element should be thoughtful and seemly. There should be decorum, not bedlam. **Corporate worship should not be chaotic, but compelling.**

This does not mean cold. Worship should not be sterile and rote. As Tom Schreiner says, "Vibrancy and order are not enemies but friends."¹⁰ Paul's not trying to stifle them. He's lauding an ordered freedom, which is the best kind. You don't want anarchy. Another commentator put it this way – "The Spirit of ardor is also the Spirit of order. [The Corinthians'] ardor for spiritual manifestations has destroyed the order of their assembly."¹¹ Paul is calling for something that is edifying, not a platform for expressive individualism. Something that is constrained by Scripture, not creative and innovative.

Here's how someone else has concluded the main thrust of this passage – "Paul's instructions in this chapter have all been intended to guide the Corinthians to a more orderly and fitting approach to the use of spiritual gifts in worship so as to better reflect the glory of God. It is God's glory which is to be our preoccupation in worship, and that can be honored only when we maintain an atmosphere that does not distract people from his glory. Some Corinthians had manifested attitudes and behaviors which has drawn

attention to themselves rather than to God, and which reflected a greater concern for self... than the edification of others.”¹²

A **corporate worship** service that is sober and serious, not flippant and yet joyful and vibrant... a service that is thoughtful and careful and not superficial or sloppy... a service that is God-centered and not man-centered... is **compelling**. It can grip you with a voice from outside of you, the discernible, intelligible voice of the living God. Edifies the saints and evangelizes the lost. What Paul describes at the end of last week’s section – vv. 24-25 – can happen: an unbeliever can enter our assembly and be convicted and called to account and the secrets of his heart can be disclosed and he can fall on his face and worship God and know that God is really among us! When the voice of God is clear and **compelling** then we are confronted with our sin, our prideful disposition to be first and the center of the universe, but then told of the grace of God in providing a sin-bearing substitute to take our judgment on the Cross so that we could be recognized on the Last Day by him as one of his (see Mt. 10:32)...

The Lord’s Table

Benediction

“And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified” (Acts 20:32).

This sermon was addressed originally to the people at Immanuel Baptist Church, Chicago, Illinois, by Pastor Nathan Carter on Sunday morning, February 15, 2026. It is not meant to be a polished essay, but was written to be delivered orally. The mission of Immanuel is to be a multiplying community that enjoys and proclaims the Good News of Christ in the great city of Chicago.

End Notes:

¹ Leon Morris, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975 [1958]), 198-99.

² Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 710.

³ Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 667.

⁴ Morris, 199-200.

⁵ Ciampa and Rosner, 717.

⁶ Craig Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 282.

⁷ Morris, 202.

⁸ John Murray, “The Finality and Sufficiency of Scripture,” in *Collected Writings* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1976), I.19.

⁹ Ciampa and Rosner, 714.

¹⁰ Thomas R. Schreiner, *1 Corinthians*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2018), 296.

¹¹ David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 674.

¹² Ciampa and Rosner, 735.