

1 Corinthians 14:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

Analysis

How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation—Paul describes Corinthian worship's participatory chaos. Each person brings something: psalmon (ψαλμόν, "psalm"), didachēn (διδασχὴν, "teaching"), glōssan (γλῶσσαν, "tongue"), apokalypsin (ἀποκάλυψιν, "revelation"), hermēneian (ἐρμηνείαν, "interpretation").

Let all things be done unto edifying—the governing principle: panta pros oikodomēn ginesthō (πάντα πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν γινέσθω, "let all things be done for edification"). Paul doesn't forbid diversity or spontaneity; he subordinates all expression to the edification test. Every contribution—song, teaching, tongue, revelation, interpretation—must pass this test: does it build up the body?

Historical Context

Corinthian worship was participatory but chaotic, with multiple people contributing simultaneously. Paul affirms participation but insists on order guided by the edification principle.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's description of worship balance spontaneity with order?
2. What would it look like to apply 'let all things be done unto edifying' to modern worship?
3. How can we preserve participatory worship while maintaining order?

Interlinear Text

Τί	οὖν	ἐστιν	ἀδελφοί	ὅταν	συνέρχησθε	ἕκαστος	ὑμῶν
How	then	is it	brethren	when	ye come together	every one	of you
G5101	G3767	G2076	G80	G3752	G4905	G1538	G5216
ψαλμὸν	ἔχει·	διδαχὴν	ἔχει·	γλῶσσαν	ἔχει·	ἀποκάλυψιν	
a psalm	hath	a doctrine	hath	a tongue	hath	a revelation	
G5568	G2192	G1322	G2192	G1100	G2192	G602	
ἔχει·	ἐρμηνείαν	ἔχει·	πάντα	πρὸς	οἰκοδομὴν	γενέσθω	
hath	an interpretation	hath	all things	unto	edifying	Let	
G2192	G2058	G2192	G3956	G4314	G3619	G1096	

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 5:19 (Parallel theme): Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

Romans 14:19 (Parallel theme): Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (Parallel theme): Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

Ephesians 4:16 (Parallel theme): From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:29 (Parallel theme): Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

1 Corinthians 14:40 (Parallel theme): Let all things be done decently and in order.

2 Corinthians 13:10 (Parallel theme): Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

Ephesians 4:12 (Parallel theme): For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

2 Corinthians 12:19 (Parallel theme): Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ: but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.

1 Corinthians 14:27 (Parallel theme): If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.