



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

All Must Edify

Tuesday, 5 August 2014

RON J. BIGALKE, PASTOR/MISSIONARY, CAPITOL COMMISSION, 912.659.4212

Ron J. Bigalke, PhD / PO Box 244, Rincon, GA 31326-0244 / www.capitolcom.org / ron.bigalke@capitolcom.org

## CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY

monthly (interim) schedule

\*\*\* 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month \*\*\*

TUESDAY, 5 AUGUST 2014

12 NOON in 123 CAP

Capitol Commission (Interim) Bible Studies are held the *first* Tuesday of every month at 12 Noon. The monthly Bible study is nonpartisan and nondenominational. We are currently studying First Corinthians, chapter-by-chapter, and verse-by-verse. I pray that this study will be edifying to you. I am here *solely* to serve you and to be a resource for prayer and counsel. Please accept my study in the Word of God, as evidence of my desire to serve you.

– Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

### Capitol Commission (Interim) Bible Study

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Tuesday, 5 August 2014

### First Corinthians 14 – “All Must Edify”

When the learned, and wealthy John Selden was dying he said to Archbishop Usher. “I have surveyed most of the learning that is among the sons of men, and my study is filled with books and manuscripts (he had 8000 volumes in his library) on various subjects. But at present I cannot recollect any passage out of all my books and papers whereupon I can rest my soul, save this from the sacred Scriptures:

“The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works’ ” (Titus 2:14) [Paul Lee Tan, *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations* (Rockville, MD: Assurance, 1979) 529].

#### ALL MUST EDIFY

*First Corinthians 14 is God's revelation with regard to aspects of divine grace, and how those gracious endowments are used for the edification of believers, and for the benefit of all who have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.* Spiritual gifts are gracious endowments from the Holy Spirit, and thus they are not earned or merited. Love is to be pursued; however, spiritual gifts are to be desired (14:1; 12:31). The verb “desire” indicates fervor and zeal, yet there is also the recognition that the Holy Spirit sovereignly bestows spiritual gifts (12:11).

Enthusiasm and zeal is not expressed toward the more spectacular gifts; rather, it is concerning “the greater” or more useful ones, which would be those of greater benefit for all, and thus edify fellow

believers. Beginning with verse 2, the gifts of prophecy and tongues are compared and contrasted. Earlier in 12:28, the prophets were affirmed as “second” among the seven appointments that God chose to facilitate order and stability among his people. Prophecy is worthy “especially” (14:1) and declared to be “greater” than “one who speaks in tongues” (14:5); it is to be desired “earnestly” (14:39).

Ultimately, the primary consideration is not the actual gift; rather, it is the motivation for desiring the gifting and how the endowment is to be employed. Within the subsequent paragraphs, the gifts of prophecy and tongues are further compared. When the people of God are addressed, prophecy is greater than tongues because it accomplishes its purposeful design, which is to edify fellow believers (cf. 14:3-5, 12, 17, 19, 26, 31). God’s purpose for tongues is for use among unbelievers (cf. Acts 2:1-13).

**SCRIPTURE MANDATES AN ETHIC THAT MUST EXIST AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE FAITH IN THE LORD GOD, AND WHICH IS OBLIGATORY IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE.**

The usage of tongues is unprofitable among believers who are not able to understand them. Furthermore, the non-interpreted usage of tongues is confusing and disorderly as opposed to being edifying. Consequently, the Bible establishes certain principles not only for the use of tongues, but also for other aspects of the believer’s relationship with God and fellow Christians. The foremost precept is twofold: 1) to use God’s gifts in a manner that is “edifying” (1 Cor 14:5); and, 2) “all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner” (14:40). All that is non-edifying to fellow believers or causes disorder is avoided. Scripture mandates an ethic that must exist among those who have faith in the Lord God, and which is obligatory in all aspects of life.

The entirety of First Corinthians 14 is a refutation against confusion and disorder among believers in the Lord Jesus. God’s people must always be careful to distinguish biblical actions, and avoid distinctions that confuse the unbelieving world and undermine the clarity of the biblical message. The previous chapters of First Corinthians addressed divisions, toleration of immorality, abuses of liberty, and other crucial matters. First Corinthians 14 addresses another important issue: the misuse of tongues. By comparing and contrasting tongues with the gift of prophecy, Scripture plainly demonstrates how love is to be the motivating factor that governs every aspect of the believer’s life. Love compels consideration, which then results in edification and order.

One reason why people act in an unloving manner is because they abhor the contrast that often exists in their own life. Contrast is the measure of difference between light and darkness; therefore, light by its nature exposes darkness, so that everything hidden becomes visible. Please understand that when you encounter difficulty and opposition *for living in accordance with God’s Word*, it is often because

### Capitol Commission (Interim) Bible Study

1<sup>st</sup> Tuesdays (monthly) @ 12 Noon – 12:45pm, 123 CAP

# Capitol Commission Georgia

## All Must Edify

people love the darkness rather than the light. Jesus referred to himself as “light of the world” (John 8:12) and thus contrasted and exposed sinfulness, which is why sinful human beings sought to extinguish his very life. When you encounter someone who has fervent antipathy toward you or another, (as a Christian) you should seek discernment as to whether the light-versus-darkness-dynamic is the reason.

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**PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTY AND OPPOSITION FOR LIVING IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOD’S WORD, IT IS OFTEN BECAUSE PEOPLE LOVE THE DARKNESS RATHER THAN THE LIGHT.**

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Scripture does not command one to pursue spiritual gifts – even the greater ones – yet the Bible does demand the pursuit of love. Spiritual gifts are to be desired, especially prophecy. Merely speaking in another language (tongue) does not communicate, “for one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God” (1 Cor 14:2). One who prophesies speaks to others and thus edifies those listening (14:4). Romans 15:14 references a threefold purpose of the Bible, which is the same as the gift of prophecy, and thus indicates that prophecy is a type of (special) revelation from God.

Speaking in a foreign language may selfishly edify (if you can also interpret); yet no others are edified, and thus the person is boastful. One who prophesies, however, edifies all believers (1 Cor 14:4). God gave the gift of tongues speaking, thus it cannot be wrong to use; however, it can be misused. “But now,” if a choice is to be made, prophecy is always greater than tongues because it is more important for fellow believers (14:6), unless the foreign language is interpreted.

Communicating truth in a meaningful manner – regardless of the mode one employs – is most essential (14:6). Even musical instruments must be played in a manner that communicates, as opposed to making noise (14:7-8). Someone merely speaks “into the air” when not communicating intelligibly (14:9).

Diverse types of sounds are used in various speeches throughout the world, and they are meaningful to those who understand the language (14:10). However, if someone exclaims, “*l’chaim*,” and the other person does not understand Hebrew, the expression will be meaningless (14:11). “So also you” may be zealous for spiritual gifts, then desire those which edify God’s people (14:12).

If someone has the ability to speak in a foreign tongue, he/she is to pray for the ability to interpret (14:13), which will benefit all believers. Moreover, it is not beneficial to “pray in a tongue,” unless one understands what he/she is saying (14:14). One is to pray and sing “with the mind” (i.e. with understanding) (14:15). If someone prays a blessing with “the ungifted” (i.e. someone who cannot understand the language in which the prayer is offered), the individual will be unable to give assent, or say “Amen” (14:16). The giving of thanks may have been “well enough,” yet is no benefit to others (14:17).

Certainly, it is wonderful to speak with a variety of foreign tongues; however, it is better “to speak five words” – with

understanding – when God’s people gather together (14:18-19). Not speaking with understanding is childish (14:20).

The prophet Isaiah referenced foreign tongues when warning how God would exile his rebellious people to a place where He would use “strange tongues” and “lips of strangers” to speak to this people (14:21). Tongues are “for a sign” to unbelievers (within all linguistic contexts) because God designed them to convey the gospel (of saving faith in Jesus Christ), in addition to conveying biblical teaching. Prophecy, however, is for believers (14:22).

The goal in all communication is to be understood, and this is especially true regarding the biblical message so that conviction occurs (as necessary) and God is truly worshipped (14:23-25). The intelligible proclamation of God’s Word is the means for redeeming society, and transformed hearts is the biblical means to impact the nation. When people have a variety of goals, if not expressed properly, the result will be disorder. Therefore, all things must be done for edification and with order (14:26-33).

The instruction to “pass judgment” when “prophets speak” (14:29) elicited a question regarding women. How should wives honor their husbands who prophesy and yet “pass judgment” when they spoke? Three times the answer is to remain quiet in public and rather make inquires to their husbands privately (14:34-35). The basic reason is not to cause public humiliation by challenging the words spoken. Even accountability within the marriage relationship must be orderly.

No believer is a law to themselves, and thus every Christian is to heed the Apostolic word, which is now Scripture (14:36-38). In all things, believers are to demonstrate concern and love in their obedience (14:39-40). All things must be done orderly and properly.

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**THE INTELLIGIBLE PROCLAMATION OF GOD’S WORD IS THE MEANS FOR REDEEMING SOCIETY, AND TRANSFORMED HEARTS IS THE BIBLICAL MEANS TO IMPACT THE NATION.**

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First Corinthians 14 teaches two profound principles based upon the nature of God, and which are applicable in dealing with others and worship of God. *All believers must edify!* Actions and speech that do not edify are forbidden, and thus we must consider others and how we can contribute to their spiritual maturity. Secondly, the nature of God abhors confusion and disorder, which has relevance to our home life, our life patterns, schedules, and work. God’s essential nature affects our own lives, and thus the application of the Bible is unlimited.

*Thank you for allowing Capitol Commission the honor to provide Bible studies to you. If you have any questions, please talk with us, or contact by email or phone.*

### About Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission state ministers teach ongoing verse-by-verse Bible studies for the entire Capitol community, and also meet personally with many government leaders (and their staff) to proclaim God’s grace, to encourage our leaders, pray with them, and provide biblical counsel. Capitol Commission is a charitable and religious nonprofit corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Capitol Commission is supported by the generous gifts of businesses, churches, and individuals. Capitol Commission is not state-funded; rather, those with a heart for the Capitol community fund it. *Please join us in this ministry!*



**NEXT CAPITOL COMMISSION (INTERIM) BIBLE STUDY:  
TUESDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER @ 12 NOON in 123 CAP  
(always the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month, during interim)**