**Adult Sunday School**October 28, 2007

**Follow after for His Excellence**

1Cor. 14:1—**Follow after charity**, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.

1. **“Follow after Charity”** is above all things.
2. **Gifts** are to be desired, especially prophecy but not above your love for the Glory of God.
3. But Love is to be pursued above all else in life.
   1. Gifts, abilities, and service are important, but they are insignificant in comparison with love to the Glory of God.

Love is the greatest need and the supreme answer to all the needs of men.

It is when we love a person that we meet the needs of a person to the Glory of God.

1. The word "follow" (*diōkete*) means to pursue, to persist, to continue on and on, never giving up until our love is to the praise of the Glory of God’s Grace.

Eph 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

1. **“Desire Spiritual Gifts”**
2. Spiritual gifts are to be desired.

We are to pursue love first, but this does not mean we are not to seek the spiritual gifts of God.

* + 1. The more we love God and people, the more we covet gifts of God, so we can minister and help people more effectively

1. The word "desire" (*zēloute*) means to covet earnestly; to be zealous and ambitious for.
2. **“But Rather that ye may Prophesy”**
3. Prophecy is not to be preferred above love or charity; but above spiritual gifts which prophecy is the most valuable.

1Co 13:2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

* 1. Prophecy is necessary above the gifts of tongues, not without them.

1. The word “prophesy <propheteuo> foretell events, divine, speak under inspiration, (forewarnings - foretelling more and more).

Christian Character—God’s love,

God’s Grace for Christian Character

There has to be a new nature,

A Reflective nature, Illuminating life

Keep your zeal.

The important gifts are those that are needed the most right now that build up faith for Christ.

* Spiritual Gifts – God made – God built

1Co 14:1 ¶ Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.

* Returning to Love
  + “Follow after charity”
    - 1. To pursue
      2. To press forward
      3. Keep your eyes on Jesus

1. The greatest of these is charity (Love to God’s Glory) *(1Cor.13:13)*
   1. *The Love of God is above faith and Hope.*
2. Thegreatest of all love, is love for Him and His Holiness
   1. Holiness *is before all, Love is before you with faith and Hope,*
      1. Love is *set before you as chief to Follow*
      2. Love is *set before you as principal to Follow*

We ought to **love Him**

We ought to **love His Holiness**

Our service is to be properly motivated if it is to be consistent. We must recognize our service to our fellow man is in reality service to Christ. A motivation to serve Christ will outlast a motivation to simply help people.

*Mal 2:11 Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. {loved: or ought to love}*

**1Tim. 2:15** *“continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety”*

**1Tim. 6:11** *But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and* ***follow*** *after righteousness, godliness, faith****, love****, patience, meekness.*

**Faith and Love** working together produces the **Righteousness of God.**

1Thes. 5:8*—But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the* ***breastplate of faith and love****; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.*

Eph 6:14*—Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the* ***breastplate of righteousness****;*

Luke 1:75*—In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life*

* *No matter how weak spiritually one may be, all can follow after Love, but you must follow on to His perfect Holiness.*

2Cor. 13:11*—Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.*

* 1. “Desire spiritual gifts “
     1. Desire
        1. To covet earnestly
        2. Have warmth of feeling for
        3. To be ambitious, zealous
  2. “rather that ye may Prophesy”
     1. Prophesy
        1. foretell events
        2. Speaking His Divine Will
        3. Speak under inspiration,
        4. Exercise the prophetic office

Tongues

Tongues are a sign to warn unbelievers; prophecy is a gift to edify believers.

To Prophesy—The gift of speaking under the inspiration of God's Spirit both *prediction and proclamation*

*1Co 14:22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.*

1Co 14:3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

* + 1. Edification
       1. Building
       2. Building by faith a great structure
    2. Exhortation
       1. Comfort- intreaty-standing close beside
       2. Plead
    3. Comfort
       1. Consolation-consoling until they are consoled

2Co 1:4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

2—For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.

4—He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

14—For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.

18—I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:

19—Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.

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Romans 6:19*—I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.*

Eph 4:24*—And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*