

Elder Bobby Willis



Worship Collectively, Not Just Individually

The manner in which many Christians worship has become more centered on individuals in the church rather than on God. The New Testament does not contain authority for highlighting individuals in the church assembly. For example, congregational singing should involve everyone that desires to lift up their voice in praise. Often times, First Corinthians 14:26 is cited as proof that it is “okay” to feature individuals. Keeping this verse in context, 1 Corinthians 14:26 offers no such support. The apostle asks: **“What is it then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, has a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.”**

Paul’s question here, along with his corresponding answer, comes in the middle of a rebuke to the church at Corinth, who were abusing spiritual gifts when they came together in a church assembly. The question then could be asked, *‘Is it rightly dividing to seek biblical authority in a rebuke?’* The apostle had admonished them because **“every one”** (individually) were ‘doing their own thing’ in the congregation and all at the same time. Why would anyone use I Corinthians 14:26 to prove authority for individualism in the church service when it is being taught by Paul as a rebuke against the manner in which they had changed the worship? The answer is plain; the authority is not found anywhere in the scriptures.

We have the best example of true worship in Jesus Christ Himself. He would sit down with the disciples and preach (teach) His gospel to them. He was the only one speaking at the time. Further down in this 14th chapter in verse 33, we find Paul saying, **“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”** It would stand to reason, that if the apostle was stating (and he was) that it was wrong for all of the activities of chapter 14, verse 26 to be done at the same time; that the end result had been confusion of which God was not the author. Notice again verse 33! We are to have peace, not confusion, in all the churches of the saints. Sing songs together, pray in our hearts together as

prayer is offered, and listen together to the preached word of the gospel. Let us seek peace, honoring God in our worship services together, and not seek any individualism which would bring glory or honor to anyone other than God. ***Think About It!***