

We sound forth God's word publicly by our congregational worship and Bible study

From time to time a congregation of Christians will plan a special series of services that are intended especially to communicate the gospel to those outside the church. An out-of-town speaker is invited, topics are selected that will be of some interest to non-Christians, and the members of the congregation are urged to invite as many as possible to come and hear what is taught. In all of these efforts, it is hoped that visitors will come and that those who do come will be positively influenced in the direction of obeying the gospel. In special services like these, we are very conscious of the need to conduct ourselves in the best way possible, so that the visitor will be drawn toward Christ rather than driven away.

But really, all of our services should be conducted in such a way as to be understandable to any outsider who may be present. Paul had some rather strong words on this point in **1 Corinthians 14**, where he addressed the problems in the assembly of the Corinthian Christians and warned the brethren not to do anything that would not edify the unbelievers in their midst. The assembly was primarily for the edification of the members of that congregation, but they needed to do what they did in such a way that it would not be a hindrance to any outsiders who might be present.

Certainly, it is true that we influence others privately when we live our individual lives as we should, but it is also true that ***we sound forth God's word publicly by our congregational worship and Bible study.*** We ought not to underestimate the importance or the power of our congregational assemblies to spread the gospel.

Sometimes people argue that unbelievers can no longer be converted to Christ by hearing the gospel preached publicly. It is doubtful, however, that there will ever come a time when we will not need to do what our brethren in the New Testament did. Private, personal teaching may be very important, but we still need to emulate the example of Paul, a teacher who could say, "I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house" (**Ac. 20:20**). We must not neglect either means of teaching. It's not either/or, but both/and. Both publicly and from house to house!

Monday: Acts 26:29

Key Idea: We should be able to invite others to do as we do.

Questions for Family Growth: What did Paul say he wished for Agrippa? Did Paul's statement mean that he had a problem with pride or self-righteousness? If not, what did he mean? What is the best recommendation of Christianity we can give?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 15:10.**

Tuesday: Philippians 1:27

Key Idea: In the New Testament, Christians worked together for the faith of the gospel.

Questions for Family Growth: How can Christians “stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel” (NKJV)? More specifically, what does it mean to strive “together” for the gospel? How do we sometimes fall short of that goal?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 15:11](#).

Wednesday: 1 Thessalonians 1:8

Key Idea: In the New Testament, Christians “sounded forth” the word of God.

Questions for Family Growth: What are some practical ways the Thessalonians may have “sounded forth” the word of the Lord? In [Mt. 5:13-16](#), what did Jesus say should be true of us? What are some things that hinder us from sounding forth God’s word?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 15:12](#).

Thursday: Acts 20:20

Key Idea: In the New Testament, Christians studied God’s word publicly as well as privately.

Questions for Family Growth: What did Paul say he had not neglected to do while in Ephesus? In what two ways had he taught them? See also [Ac. 2:46,47](#) and [19:9,10](#). What are some of the special values or advantages of publicly teaching God’s word?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 15:13](#).

Friday: 1 Corinthians 14:13-19,23-25

Key Idea: The Christian assembly is to be edifying to outsiders who may be present.

Questions for Family Growth: Why was it important for the outsider to be able to say “Amen” to what is done in the Christian assembly? In [vv.24,25](#), what do we hope the unbeliever’s reaction will be to what he experiences in the assembly?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 15:14](#).

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