

1 Corinthians Glossolalia

Interpreting the Text:

1. Professors Attridge and Bartlett discuss the more literal, communal focus of the famous description of love in 13:4-7. While we often hear these verses stand alone in wedding liturgies, how do they change when heard in the context of the larger chapter or letter? What is Paul primarily concerned with?
2. Some believe that 14:33b-26 regarding women in the church are not written by Paul. How does this change how we read this portion of chapter 14? Why might someone have added these verses into Paul's letter?
3. Much of Paul's language in these chapters has been extrapolated as metaphoric. How do you read Paul's words here? How are his teachings different if allegorical or literal?

Applying the Text:

1. Are there spiritual practices or behaviors that cause difficulty within your community? Are they related to social standing within the community? How does your community deal with them?
2. Paul's description of the church as the body of Christ in chapter 12 is often a helpful tool for naming and differentiating gifts. How does or might your church use this passage to help build up and shape your own church community?
3. Paul strikes a balance between the personal, or emotional, dimension of religious life and the communal, or rational, one. Are there similar balances to be struck in contemporary Christianity? What does that look like?