

## **1 Corinthians 14 New American Standard Bible**

### **Prophecy a Superior Gift**

Pursue love, yet earnestly desire spiritual *gifts*, but especially that you may prophesy. <sup>2</sup> For the one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people, but to God; for no one understands, but in *his* spirit he speaks mysteries. <sup>3</sup> But the one who prophesies speaks to people *for* edification, exhortation, and consolation. <sup>4</sup> The one who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but the one who prophesies edifies the church. <sup>5</sup> Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but rather that you would prophesy; and greater is the one who prophesies than the one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edification.

<sup>6</sup> But now, brothers *and sisters*, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of knowledge, or of prophecy, or of teaching? <sup>7</sup> Yet *even* lifeless *instruments*, whether flute or harp, in producing a sound, if they do not produce a distinction in the tones, how will it be known what is played on the flute or on the harp? <sup>8</sup> For if the trumpet produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle? <sup>9</sup> So you too, unless you produce intelligible speech by the tongue, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will *just* be talking to the air. <sup>10</sup> There are, perhaps, a great many kinds of languages in the world, and none is incapable of meaning. <sup>11</sup> So if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be unintelligible to the one who speaks, and the one who speaks will be unintelligible to me. <sup>12</sup> So you too, since you are eager to possess spiritual *gifts*, strive to excel for the edification of the church.

<sup>13</sup> Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue is to pray that he may interpret. <sup>14</sup> For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unproductive. <sup>15</sup> What is *the outcome* then? I will pray with the spirit, but I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit, but I will sing with the mind also. <sup>16</sup> For otherwise, if you bless *God* in the spirit *only*, how will the one who occupies the place of the outsider *know* to say the “Amen” at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you are saying? <sup>17</sup> For you are giving thanks well *enough*, but the other person is not edified. <sup>18</sup> I thank God,

I speak in tongues more than you all; <sup>19</sup> nevertheless, in church I prefer to speak five words with my mind so that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue.

### **Instruction for the Church**

<sup>20</sup> Brothers *and sisters*, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature. <sup>21</sup> In the Law it is written: “By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people, and even so they will not listen to Me,” says the Lord. <sup>22</sup> So then, tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophecy is not for unbelievers, but for those who believe. <sup>23</sup> Therefore if the whole church gathers together and all *the people* speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are insane? <sup>24</sup> But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all; <sup>25</sup> the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you.

<sup>26</sup> What is *the outcome* then, brothers *and sisters*? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. All things are to be done for edification. <sup>27</sup> If anyone speaks in a tongue, *it must be* by two or at the most three, and *each one* in turn, and one is to interpret; <sup>28</sup> but if there is no interpreter, he is to keep silent in church; and have him speak to himself and to God. <sup>29</sup> Have two or three prophets speak, and have the others pass judgment. <sup>30</sup> But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, then the first one is to keep silent. <sup>31</sup> For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted; <sup>32</sup> and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets; <sup>33</sup> for God is not *a God* of confusion, but of peace.

As in all the churches of the saints, <sup>34</sup> the women are to keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says. <sup>35</sup> If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church. <sup>36</sup> Or was it from you that the word of God *first* went out? Or has it come to you only?

<sup>37</sup> If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord’s

commandment. <sup>38</sup> But if anyone does not recognize *this*, he is not recognized.

<sup>39</sup> Therefore, my brothers *and sisters*, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. <sup>40</sup> But all things must be done properly and in an orderly way.

**We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions**

What questions were provoked within you?

Did anything confuse you?

Did anything move you emotionally?

Did God instruct you to do something?

Did you gain any insight into God's character?

1. Having given the encouragement to use gifts when the church gathered, Paul brings some instructive principles to manage the use of the gifts.
2. He focusses on tongues to make a number of points.
3. When speaking in tongues it is our spirit that is speaking to God.
4. Our spirit is speaking mysteries and deep insights to God.
5. But the one who is prophesying is speaking to men, they are using their understanding to communicate what is in their mind and their intellect, a prophesy is coming from the soul aspect of who they are.
6. The prophetic content given has clear objectives for edification of the hearers in the church for consolation – meaning comfort the hurting - and exultation – meaning the equipping of the saints for effective service.
7. The tongue speaker edifies himself – ‘the himself’ means who he really is in his spirit, both now and in eternity.
8. The prophetic speaker edifies the gathered community, that is the body, the gathered church.
9. For Paul to ‘wish’ is not thinking with magic or wishful thinking, but an expression of desire, because Paul knows what benefit speaking in tongues will bring to the Christians individual spirit.
10. But when the body gathers it is more beneficial to communicate to the soul being edified, and prophecy is the best means of doing this.

11. Because everybody will be able to understand the revelation being brought by the prophet.
12. A third consideration Paul reveals, is how interpretation of tongues reveal the deep mysteries spoken about God.
13. That is the revelation to one spirit and the benefit now explained, brings revelation to the gathered body not just the individual speaking in tongues.
14. Bringing the good things of God to the church comes when the body is able to gain understanding in order to benefit them. If this is not happening Paul is saying it is pointless and better that the individual speaks to himself.
15. The point of languages is for communication, to gain insight and understanding, if this is not happening then there is no point in gathering.
16. Paul saw this church's desire to grow in spiritual expression, which is a good thing, but for all the church to benefit there has to be order not chaos.
17. Paul is not saying don't speak in tongues, but make full use of the gift by gaining the interpretation so that all can benefit.
18. In tongue speaking your spirit is engaged but your mind is not. In fact your mind will often try and stop tongue speaking from happening because it will not like the loss of control.
19. Unless of course it has been renewed by the truth and has learnt to trust in the benefit speaking in tongues brings. Remember Proverbs 3 – lean not on your own understanding.
20. Praying and praising with your mind has great benefits to your spiritual journey and praying and praising with your spirit has great benefits too.
21. People who are disengaged cannot join in your prayers and your praising if they don't know what you are saying.
22. Paul saw better to advance the church in their understanding than for them to be disengaged and left in the dark.
23. Paul uses the term in evil be young. It means to be innocent of practice of anything that is wrong or bad, avoid doing what is not right.
24. He encourages the church to think in the right way, feel the right way and the right thing.

25. He says tongues is a sign for unbelievers and prophesy is a sign for believers. Why?
26. One aspect of prophesy and revelation is God declaring the sins of the heart of those who have gathered.
27. A word of knowledge is God declaring wrong in the heart of believers just like Nathan did with David.
28. When you as a Christian know that God knows what you have been up to and then he reveals it through a prophet in a meeting, it is mercy that has motivated God to deliver you from your bondage.
29. We do church wrong, most people come to church and expect to receive from God through the service, but it should be that we all come to church to bring a contribution to the service.
30. So Paul says 'let all things be done' it means to give room in the service to contribute to serving the body and the Lord.
31. Paul makes a suggestion of structure as to how a service should be conducted, primarily He is talking about order and balance, inappropriate focus when the body gathers will bring confusion.
32. For the spirit of prophesy, being subject to the prophet, is to be in control as to when and where the prophet prophesies.
33. It is inappropriate to say 'I could not stop myself'. It is the devil who brings confusion and disorder.
34. Paul suggests women should not speak in church. This statement has caused one or two issues in churches.
35. There is the historic cultural consideration at work here, relevant to that social time in history. I personally don't believe it applies today in the same way that it applied then.
36. Paul is still closely operating out of his cultural understanding of the law that he has known all of his life.
37. Paul brings a warning for any who should reject his teachings, it is important to say that if you don't align yourself with Gods word you will of lost your anointing. All things must be done – means with the right heart in an orderly way.