



18 July 2021

Chapter 14:1–25

Verse of the Day:

Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. (1 Corinthians 14:1)

Review: Who, What, When, Where, Why?

What's Going On Here?

Paul would prefer that worship leaders and participants prophesy, that is, speak the Word of God in language that all can understand. But because he recognizes speaking in tongues as a gift of the Holy Spirit, Paul does not forbid its use in the church. However, he does feel it necessary to point out the limitations of such speaking and to outline the condition necessary for orderly worship. Peace and good order will prevail in public worship when Christians make the love of God's Word and for one another their aim.¹

Prophecy and Tongues

14 Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. ² For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit. ³ On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. ⁴ The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. ⁵ Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

⁶ Now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? ⁷ If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or the harp, do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is played? ⁸ And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? ⁹ So with yourselves, if with your tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is said? For you will be speaking into the air. ¹⁰ There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning, ¹¹ but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be

v1: pursue → persecute, chase, hunt, seek, run after...
earnestly desire → (intense) jealous, desire, envy

v1-4: Summarize Paul's argument for why he considers prophecy the more desirable spiritual gift:

v4: Considering the gift of tongues in a positive light, how does it build up oneself (c.f. v13-18)?

v7-8: Paul compares this spiritual gift to music, why is this an appropriate metaphor?

v10: c.f. v 2, how do these descriptions help us understand this gift of tongues (also consider 1 Cor 13:1)?

¹ Engfehr, Lois M. (1997). *God's Word for Today: 1 Corinthians* (p. 63). St. Louis: Concordia Pub. House. Reproducible by purchaser only. © 2009 Concordia Publishing House.

a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me.¹² So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.

¹³ Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret.¹⁴ For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful.¹⁵ What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also.¹⁶ Otherwise, if you give thanks with your spirit, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say "Amen" to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you are saying?¹⁷ For you may be giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not being built up.¹⁸ I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.¹⁹ Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

²⁰ Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature.²¹ In the Law it is written, "By people of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to me," says the Lord.²² Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers.²³ If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds?²⁴ But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all,²⁵ the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.

v12: eager → same word as v1 “earnestly desire”

v15: Considering the idea of body & spirit, what does this verse imply about how we are to worship?

v16: What does “Amen,” mean?

v19: Every Pastors’ (and church members’) dream!!!!
Instruct → *katecheo*

v20: What’s the biggest difference between being a child and being an adult when you consider that we are the same in that we are both human?

v22: what is the purpose of a “sign” (also consider John 2:11 & 20:30–31)?

What is a believer what is an unbeliever? Compare the two at Pentecost in Acts 2:1-41?

v25: c.f. John 4:26–30

V1-25: Consider what Paul says in these verses (and Ch 12), What are Paul’s two main concerns regarding the gift of tongues?

Worship Wars: What is the primary purpose of worship? Should worship be primarily for edifying those who are already church members (and who presumably are Christian believers), or should worship be designed to attract and recruit outsiders (marginally Christian “seekers” and also unbelievers)?²

² Lockwood, G. J. (2000). *1 Corinthians* (p. 493). Saint Louis: Concordia Pub. House.