

## 1 Corinthians 14.1-25

Letter to Local church with PROBLEMS – Pride, Selfishness, Disunity

Great POTENTIAL: TALENTED & GIFTED church > Kingdom Opportunities

Paul's TONE –FRUSTRATED, Sarcastic > Loving PARENT wants their Best

I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

1 Corinthians 4.15,16

PARENT but NOT Patronizing – Does Not Coddle or Kiss-Up to Them

Treats them as MATURE Believers that THEY CLAIM to BE!

I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord. 1 Corinthians 7.35

I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. 1 Corinthians 10.15

They Wrote Questions to Paul - SPIRITUAL FATHER & APOSTLE of Jesus X

1 Corinth – Paul's REPLY, Inspired by HOLY SPIRIT – Very WORD of GOD

Unique Applic – Specific Situation, Needs, Challenges in 1<sup>st</sup> C Corinth church

SECTION began ch 12 - Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.

1 Corinthians 12.1

DIVERSTY of BODY & its GIFTS – Unity, Respect, Cooperation in SERVICE

Compare w/ other Letter's to Churches – Paul, Peter, Jude, James, John, Hebrews

NONE of them Discuss GIFT of Tongues, No Record that DID or DID Not Exist

Corinthians THINK Tongues is GREATEST Gift – Sign of their GREATNESS

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

1 Corinthians 13.1

Corinth & Some Xtians Today Surprised, SILENCE on Tongues in other Epistles

OBSERVATION Not Establish Point, Plus or Minus, Don't Argue from Silence

## 1 COR Corrective LETTER – MISUSE and MISUNDERSTANDING of GIFTS

Earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

1 Corinthians 12.31

So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13.13

COMMON GOOD > SINGLE Goal of Church/Christians = LOVE

Ch 14 – Case Study: Worship Service in the Corinthian church

Not Surprisingly – Not ORDERLY – Not EDIFYING – Selfish Displays of Gifts

vs. 33,40 God is not a God of confusion but of peace...But all things should be done decently and in order.

vs. 1-25 The Message of Christ in His Church must be Understandable

vs. 1-19 Clear, Loving, Message is Needed to Edify Believers

vs. 20-25 Clear, Loving, Message is Needed to Evangelize Unbelievers

FOCUS on TWO Gifts – Presumably Misused or Misunderstood in Corinth

PROBLEM is NOT the Gifts – GOOD Gifts from God – HOW they're USED

REAL Issue: NOT Tongues OR Prophecy > BUILDING Up the COMMUNITY

v. 1 Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.

vs. 1-5 & 20-25 Seek Prophecy More than Tongues because More Understandable

vs. 6-19 Teaching on Tongues – Unintelligible but did Bless Individuals

What is NT Prophecy?

Not an OT prophet – God's Covenant Spokesmen, Infallible, Authoritative

Jesus called his Authoritative Spokesmen APOSTLES – Not Prophets

Perhaps because by 1<sup>st</sup> C word PROPHET was Over-Used, Misunderstood?

## MORE than JUST Biblical Prophets

One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” Titus 1.12

They also blindfolded him and kept asking him, “Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?” Luke 22.64

i.e. TELL us Something that has been REVEALED to You

NT Apostles seem to be CAREFUL to NOT call themselves PROPHETS

Apostle – Sent Ones, Divine Commission to SPEAK for Lord Jesus Christ

Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus 1 Corinthians 1.1

Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? 1 Corinthians 9.1

NT Prophets / Prophecy – is NOT with Absolute, Divine Authority

Paul’s FATEFUL Journey to Jerusalem...

And having sought out the disciples, we stayed there for seven days. And through the Spirit they were telling Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. Acts 21.4

While we were staying for many days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands and said, “Thus says the Holy Spirit, ‘This is how the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.’”

When we heard this, we and the people there urged him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, “What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” And since he would not be persuaded, we ceased and said, “Let the will of the Lord be done.” Acts 21.10-14

Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil. 1 Thessalonians 5.20-22

APOSTLES said words of NT Prophets must be CAREFULLY TESTED

v. 29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said.

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1 John 4.1

By CONTRAST, Word of APOSTLES are to be ACCEPTED and OBEYED

Equivalent of OT Prophet is NT Apostle – Also spoke very Words of God

v. 37 If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.

We also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers. 1 Thessalonians 2.13

But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jude 17

Believer RESPONSIBLE to SUBMIT to & FOLLOW Word of Apostle of Jesus

Words are COMPLETE and WRITTEN Down in N.T.

Words of APOSTLES are for WHOLE Church for ALL TIME

...household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone

Ephesians 2.20

vs. 2-4 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. On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.

	Basic Purpose	Who is Addressed?	Who is Edified?
Prophecy	upbuilding and encouragement and consolation	speaks to people	builds up the church
Tongues	mysteries in the Spirit	speaks not to men but to God	builds up himself

Prophecy: Spontaneous message from God to build up and bless His people. Not just a prepared sermon, although it can/should happen during sermons. Can be done by all believers, even women (11.5)

So EFFECTIVE to get CLEAR Message across Paul urges use of this Gift

Edification, exhortation, comfort > Divine INTENT of Prophecy

FORTHTELL Not Foretell > Message to PRESENT Situation of People of God

v. 5 Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophecy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

Conciliatory Words – Good Gift, Others should Appreciate even if Don't Have

Modesto Church Elder – What do you think about speaking in Tongues?

Never Done but “O for 1000 Tongues to Sing my Great Redeemers praise!”

Not CRITICISM of TONGUES – Criticism of UNINTERPRETED Tongues

The edifying of oneself is not a bad thing; it simply is not the point of gathered worship.  
Gordon Fee

GREATER GIFTS will EDIFY Community

Childish to think that TONGUES is Evidence of Transcendent Spirituality

I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.  
1 Corinthians 3.1

Positive Benefits of Tongues

1. Communing with God by the Spirit - NOT a Message from God
2. Mysteries spoken by the Spirit – beyond our understanding
3. Edifying to the speaker – self-edification

Contrary to the opinion of many, spiritual edification can take place in ways other than through the cortex of the brain.  
Gordon Fee

Paul's concern is NOT Private Devotion but PUBLIC WORSHIP

They are NOT to speak in Tongues in Worship WITHOUT Interpretation

Word for TONGUES = LANGUAGES – KZ “use your Language to get it Out”

Cultural Key to KZ?? NO! Woman stuck TONGUE in Son's Eye got Bug Out

1 Corinth 14 DIFFERENT than Acts / Pentecost – **chart**

Main POINT – Tongue of Men or Angels – Speaker & Hearers Not Understand

No GIFT is INHERENTLY Greater > Extent of Impact, Power to EDIFY

**(Most EDIFYING Ministry in ZGC is Set-Up – Whole Service, ALL Day!)**

INTERPRETED Tongue can EDIFY // PSALM of Praise to God

DEMOTING Tongues – When Uninterpreted in Assembly, Personally NO!

There is a tendency on the part of some Pentecostals to fall full into the Corinthian error, where a “message in tongues,” interpreted of course, is often seen as the surest evidence of the continuing work of the Spirit in a given community. Paul would scarcely agree with such an assessment. He allows tongues and interpretation; he prefers prophecy. Gordon Fee

v. 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?

Corinthians are HIGH on Tongues and LOW on Paul

He wants to come in a way that will HELP THEM the MOST

NOT CLEAR what are different elements of - revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching – Common Denominator is INTELLIGIBILITY

vs. 7-11 If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or the harp, do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is played? And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? 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. There are doubtless many different

languages in the world, and none is without meaning, but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me.

Look CAREFULLY at what we ARE DOING in Church Services

ANYTHING that Distracts and Confuses CLEAR UNDERSTANDING??

BABIES CRYING?? PHONES ring?? WHISPERING?? LOUD SNORING??

Modern PICTURE of Symphony Orchestra WARMING UP with Cacophony

KOREAN PRAYER!! – Cannot THINK Clearly, Cannot PRAY with MIND

Not that DIFFERENT Languages NOT GOOD – Wonderful!! If you Know them

ZGC work with 3 Wonderful Pastors, Beloved Brothers – Do not Attend Services

v. 12 So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.

They are ZEALOUS for the Spirit > Direct that Zeal to EDIFY the church

vs. 13-15 Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. 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.

By Means of the Holy Spirit through my spirit

The point of everything in corporate worship is not personal experience in the Spirit, but building up the church itself.

College Classmate – Ass't Pastor in Ft. Lauderdale Florida – ELDERLY Church

Did not LIKE any of Ancient Songs – Members sang with Deep Devotion

vs. 16-18 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? For you may be giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not being built up. I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.

SURPRISING Statement for Corinthians AND Modern Evangelical church  
 For PAUL Tongues - Regular Practice of DEVOTION and WORSHIP  
 Both DEFENDS his Right Use of Tongues and REJECTS their Misuse of Them  
 Today EVERY Religion has TONGUES Speakers – Buddhists, Muslims, Jews

Their MISUSE of the GIFT is NOT reason to REJECT the Gift

There are MANY BAD PREACHERS! But I still keep PREACHING!!

v. 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.

For the SAKE of others I will NOT SPREAD Confusion

For SPEAKER – TONGUES is a Positive Experience – to be done in PRIVATE

Buddhist Meditation > EMPTY Your Mind

Christians are to MEDITATE on a Message > Ponder TRUTH of Scripture

My S/spirit prays – John 4.24

INTERPRETATION of Tongues – IN PRIVATE – NOT always Necessary

Nothing about NEEDING Special Activity to RECEIVE Gift of Tongues

Did NONE of that for ANY OTHER gift

Vs. 20-25 Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature. 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.” Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers. 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? But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, 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.



Unbelievers attended these Meetings – their Conversion was a Focus – some would have been UNCONVERTED SPOUSES and FAMILY Members

Uninterpreted TONGUES was seen as MADNESS like Corinth Mystery Cults

Many Somewhere between UNBELIEVERS and FULL-FLEDGED Christians

Those who refused to heed the prophet Isaiah were punished by hearing speech that was not intelligible to them – they were attacked by foreign armies. Those who would not believe would hear unintelligible tongues, but be quite unable to understand their wonderful meaning... The effect of a massive display of ‘tongues’ on non-Christians, whether inquirers or rank unbelievers, will be to convince them that Christians are crazy. Leon Morris

STRANGE Tongues showed they were FAR from GOD

PROPHECY is SIGN to believers that God loves them and speaks to them.

HEBREW Tongue was used for INSTRUCTION, WORSHIP, and PRAISE

Foreign Tongues/Nations/Armies DROVE them AWAY from Presence of God

Now is ERA of GRACE – Unbelievers NEED to HEAR Clear Gospel Message

What does ch 14 say to NT church that has COMPLETE Bible, Closed Canon?

If a message is the result of conscious reflection on the text of Scripture, including interpretation and application of the text, then it is a teaching. But if a message is the report of something God brings suddenly to mind, it is a prophecy. So, the prophecy has less authority than ‘teaching,’ and prophecies in the church are always to be tested by the authoritative teaching of Scripture.

Wayne Grudem

NT churches NOT Lead by PROPHETS but by Teachers: ex. Timothy, Titus

PASTORAL Letters –

Much about HOLDING On to and FAITHFULLY Teaching Word of God

Command and teach these things. Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I

come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. 1 Timothy 4.11-14

NOT Dead Orthodoxy – or COLD Doctrine – Life, Changing WORD of God

FINAL Letters of Paul and Peter

Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you. 2 Timothy 1.13,14

And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1.19-21

I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. Jude 3

Tongues in Acts 2	Tongues in 1 Corinthians 14
To Man: v. 11 ...we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!	To God: v. 2 For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God...
Understood: v. 6 each one heard them speaking in his own language	Unintelligible: v. 2 ...Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit.
Evidence: vs. 7-8 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language?"	Edification: v. 4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself
Once by All: v. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues	Continuously by Some: v. 27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, two-or at the most three-should speak...

1 Corinthians 14:<sup>1</sup> Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. <sup>4</sup>The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>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? <sup>7</sup>If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or the harp, do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is played? <sup>8</sup>And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? <sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning, <sup>11</sup>but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me. <sup>12</sup>So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church. <sup>13</sup>Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. <sup>14</sup>For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. <sup>15</sup>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. <sup>16</sup>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? <sup>17</sup>For you may be giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not being built up. <sup>18</sup>I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. <sup>19</sup>Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue. <sup>20</sup>Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature. <sup>21</sup>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." <sup>22</sup>Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers. <sup>23</sup>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? <sup>24</sup>But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or 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, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.