SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

1 Corinthians 14

Let All Things Be Done for Edification — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-15 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

God gave His church gifts to build one another up, and love decides how every gift is used. When we gather, I bring what I have, I speak so my brother can understand and say Amen, and I let the God of peace set the order.

00 The Text

1 CORINTHIANS 14 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.

2 For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries.

3 But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.

4 One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church.

5 Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying.

6 But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongues, what will I profit you unless I speak to you either by way of revelation or of knowledge or of prophecy or of teaching?

7 Yet even lifeless things, either 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?

8 For if the bugle produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle?

9 So also you, unless you utter by the tongue speech that is clear, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.

10 There are, perhaps, a great many kinds of languages in the world, and no kind is without meaning.

11 If then I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be to the one who speaks a barbarian, and the one who speaks will be a barbarian to me.

12 So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek to abound for the edification of the church.

13 Therefore let one who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.

14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.

15 What is the outcome then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also.

16 Otherwise if you bless in the spirit only, how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the "Amen" at

your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying?

17 For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not edified.

18 I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all;

19 however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind so that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue.

20 Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature.

21 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.

22 So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophecy is for a sign, not to unbelievers but to those who believe.

23 Therefore if the whole church assembles together and all speak in tongues, and ungifted men or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad?

24 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all;

25 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.

26 What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, it should be by two or at the most three, and each in turn, and one must interpret;

28 but if there is no interpreter, he must keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God.

29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment.

30 But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, the first one must keep silent.

31 For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted;

32 and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets;

33 for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

34 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.

35 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.

36 Was it from you that the word of God first went forth? Or has it come to you only?

37 If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment.

38 But if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized.

39 Therefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak in tongues.

40 But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner.

Marked in the text

- **v1** "Pursue love" — Command / instruction
- **v1** "desire earnestly spiritual gifts" — Command / instruction
- **v2** "does not speak to men but to God" — Time / place / contrast
- **v3** "for edification and exhortation and consolation" — Promise / blessing
- **v4** "edifies himself" — Time / place / contrast
- **v8** "an indistinct sound" — Sin / warning
- **v9** "speaking into the air" — Sin / warning
- **v12** "seek to abound for the edification of the church" — Command / instruction
- **v13** "pray that he may interpret" — Command / instruction
- **v14** "my mind is unfruitful" — Sin / warning
- **v15** "I will pray with the mind also" — Command / instruction
- **v15** "I will sing with the mind also" — Command / instruction
- **v19** "five words with my mind" — Time / place / contrast
- **v19** "ten thousand words in a tongue" — Time / place / contrast
- **v20** "in evil be infants" — Command / instruction

- **v20** “in your thinking be mature” — Command / instruction
- **v21** “EVEN SO THEY WILL NOT LISTEN TO ME” — Sin / warning
- **v22** “tongues are for a sign” — Time / place / contrast
- **v23** “will they not say that you are mad?” — Sin / warning
- **v25** “the secrets of his heart are disclosed” — Sin / warning
- **v25** “God is certainly among you” — God — His character & actions
- **v26** “Let all things be done for edification” — Command / instruction
- **v27** “each in turn” — Command / instruction
- **v29** “let the others pass judgment” — Command / instruction
- **v32** “the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets” — Time / place / contrast
- **v33** “God is not a God of confusion but of peace” — God — His character & actions
- **v37** “the Lord’s commandment” — God — His character & actions
- **v39** “desire earnestly to prophesy” — Command / instruction
- **v39** “do not forbid to speak in tongues” — Command / instruction
- **v40** “all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner” — Command / instruction
- **v3** “edification” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v4** “edifies” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v5** “edifying” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v17** “edified” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v28** “keep silent” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

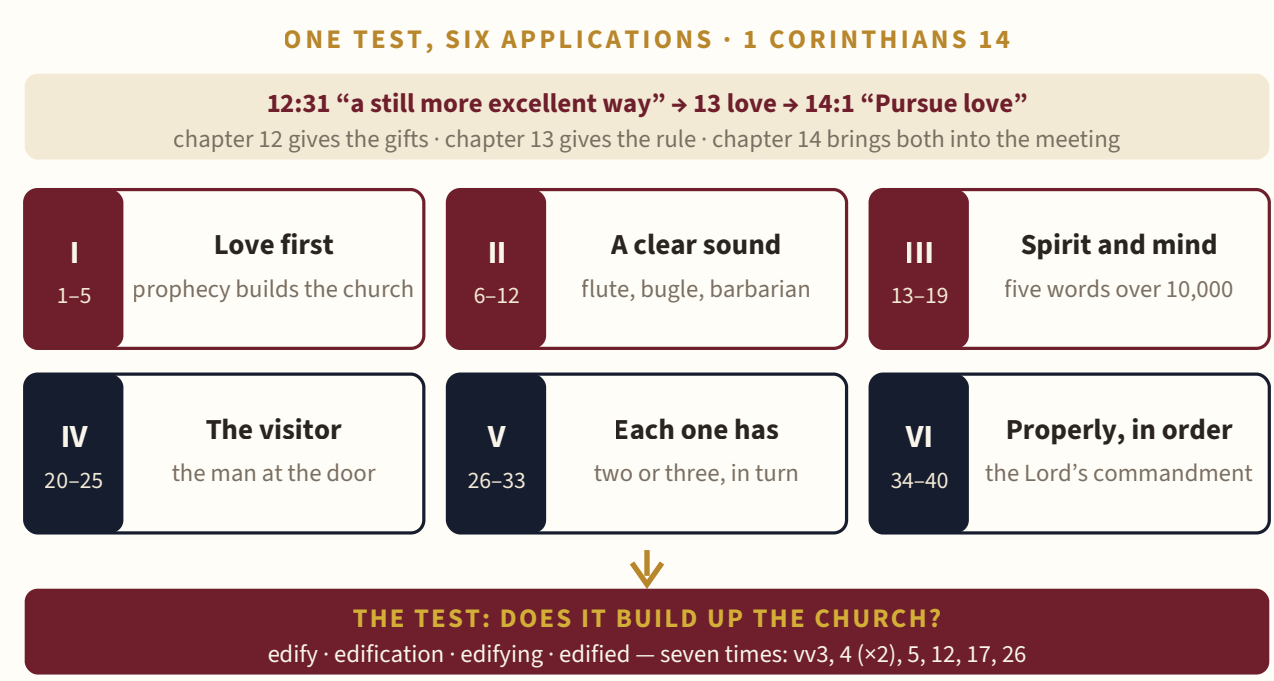
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · 1 CORINTHIANS 14:3

"But one who prophesies speaks to men ☆ for edification and exhortation and consolation."

FIGURE · ONE TEST, SIX APPLICATIONS



Follow the six movements in order and notice that every one of them answers the same question Paul asks seven times: does it build up the church?

Setting. 1 Corinthians 14 finishes the section on spiritual gifts that began at 12:1 ("Now concerning spiritual gifts"). Chapter 12 gave the body and its members; chapter 13 gave love as "a still more excellent way" (12:31); chapter 14 takes both into the Corinthian gathering, where uninterpreted tongues, prophets speaking over one another and disorder had turned worship into display. Paul writes from Ephesus (16:8).

Structure:

- vv1–5 — **love first, then the gift that builds:** pursue love, desire gifts, especially prophecy. The tongue-speaker speaks to God and edifies himself; the prophet speaks to men "for edification and exhortation and consolation" and edifies the church — unless the tongue is interpreted.
- vv6–12 — **a clear sound:** what will I profit you without revelation, knowledge, prophecy or teaching? Flute and harp, the bugle, an unknown language — sound without meaning; "you will be speaking into the air." So "seek to abound for the edification of the church."

- vv13–19 — **spirit and mind:** pray to interpret; "my mind is unfruitful"; "I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also"; the ungifted cannot say the Amen; Paul speaks in tongues more than all, yet in church prefers five words with his mind to ten thousand in a tongue.
- vv20–25 — **the visitor:** be infants in evil, mature in thinking; Isaiah 28:11–12 quoted; tongues a sign to unbelievers, prophecy to believers; an outsider hearing all speak in tongues says "you are mad"; hearing prophecy, he is convicted, his secrets disclosed, and he worships: "God is certainly among you."
- vv26–33 — **each one has:** a psalm, teaching, revelation, tongue, interpretation — all for edification. Tongues: two or three, in turn, interpreted, else silent. Prophets: two or three, others judge, the first yields, all one by one. The spirits of prophets are subject to prophets; God is a God of peace.
- vv34–40 — **in order:** the women to keep silent in the churches, ask husbands at home; did the word of God start with you? the Lord's commandment; desire to prophesy, do not forbid tongues; all things properly and in order.

Repeated words, with counts (NASB95, counted in the text):

- "tongue(s)" ×16 — vv2, 4, 5 (×2), 6, 9, 13, 14, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 39 (v9 is the physical tongue; v21 is Isaiah's "strange tongues").
- "speak / speaks / speaking / spoken" ×23 — vv2 (×3), 3, 4, 5, 6 (×2), 9 (×2), 11 (×2), 13, 18, 19, 21, 23, 27, 28, 29, 34, 35, 39.
- "prophesy / prophesies / prophecy / prophet(s)" ×14 — vv1, 3, 4, 5 (×2), 6, 22, 24, 29, 31, 32 (×2), 37, 39.
- "all" ×12 — vv5, 18, 23, 24 (×3), 26, 31 (×3), 33, 40.
- "church(es)" ×9 — vv4, 5, 12, 19, 23, 28, 33, 34, 35.
- "God" ×8 — vv2, 18, 25 (×2), 28, 33 (×2), 36.
- "edify / edification / edifying / edified" ×7 — vv3, 4 (×2), 5, 12, 17, 26.
- "spirit(s)" ×6 — vv2, 14, 15 (×2), 16, 32; "interpret(s) / interpretation / interpreter" ×5 — vv5, 13, 26, 27, 28; "pray / prays" ×5 — vv13, 14 (×2), 15 (×2).
- "mind" ×4 — vv14, 15 (×2), 19; "unbeliever(s)" ×4 — vv22 (×2), 23, 24; "ungifted" ×3 — vv16, 23, 24; "keep silent" ×3 — vv28, 30, 34; "revelation" ×3 — vv6, 26, 30; "brethren" ×3 — vv6, 26, 39; "What is the outcome then?" ×2 — vv15, 26.

Commands: pursue love; desire earnestly spiritual gifts (vv1, 39); seek to abound for edification (v12); pray to interpret (v13); do not be children in your thinking (v20); let all things be done for edification (v26); two or three, in turn, interpreted (vv27–29); keep silent (vv28, 30, 34); let him recognize the Lord's commandment (v37); do not forbid to speak in tongues (v39); all things properly and in order (v40).

Contrasts: to God / to men (vv2–3); edifies himself / edifies the church (v4); distinct / indistinct (vv7–8); spirit / mind (vv14–15); five words / ten thousand (v19); children / mature, infants in evil (v20); "you are mad" / "God is certainly among you" (vv23–25); confusion / peace (v33); do not forbid / properly and in order (vv39–40).

Shape of the chapter: one test applied six times — to the gifts, to sound, to prayer, to the visitor, to the order of the meeting, and to the authority of the apostle's word. It opens with love (v1), closes with order (v40), and turns on v26.

Chapter theme (my words): Love takes every gift into the room and asks, "Will this build my brother?" So the meeting must be understood, taken in turn, weighed by the Word, and shaped like the God of peace.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · 1 CORINTHIANS 14:15

"What is the outcome then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also."

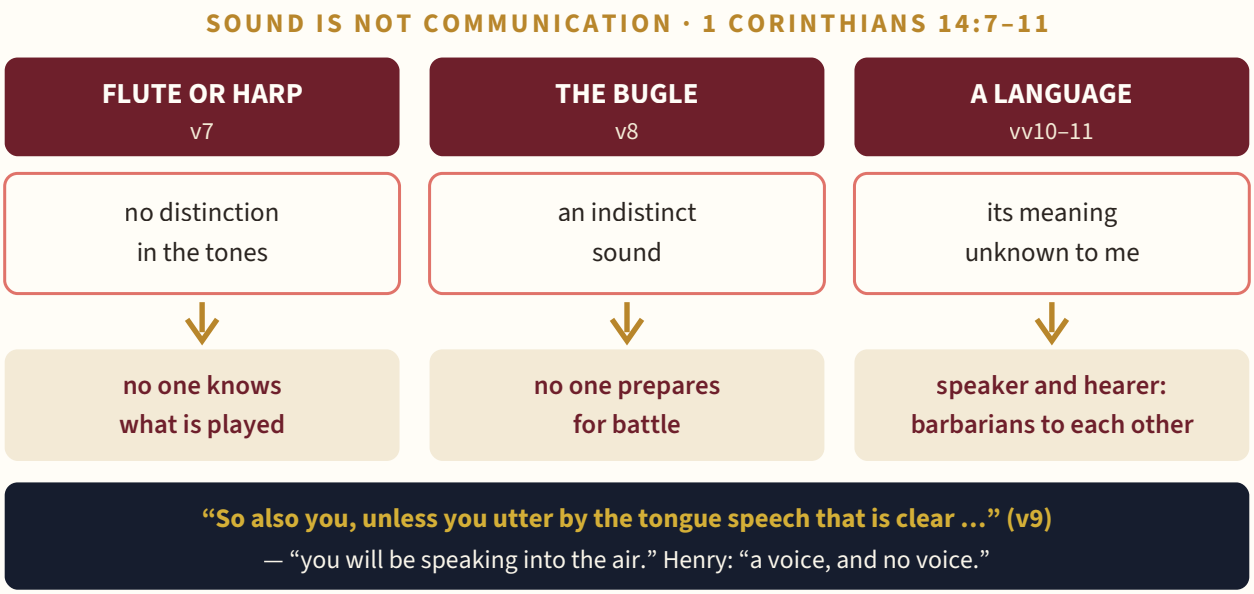
FIGURE · A TONGUE AND PROPHECY IN THE MEETING

1 COR 14:1–31	A TONGUE, UNINTERPRETED	PROPHECY
SPEAKS TO	God, not men (v2)	men (v3)
WHO UNDERSTANDS	no one — "mysteries" (v2)	the hearers: edification, exhortation, consolation (v3)
WHO IS BUILT UP	himself (v4)	the church (v4)
THE MIND	"my mind is unfruitful" (v14)	"that I may instruct others also" (v19)
THE OUTSIDER	"will they not say that you are mad?" (v23)	convicted, falls on his face: "God is certainly among you" (v25)
IN THE MEETING	only with an interpreter; else silent (vv5, 13, 27–28)	two or three, in turn; the others judge (vv29–31)

Not good against bad, but good against better — in the meeting (v19: "in the church").

Read across each row: Paul does not call one gift good and the other bad; he asks what each does for the people in the room.

FIGURE · THREE SOUNDS WITHOUT MEANING



Each of Paul's pictures fails the same way — the sound is made but nothing is communicated — and verse 9 applies all three to the church.

Why does chapter 14 begin with "Pursue love"? Because every rule in it is chapter 13 applied. Love "does not seek its own" (13:5), and a gift that builds only its owner is seeking its own. Guzik: the Corinthians "made a godly desire into an obsessive pursuit." Henry: gifts are to be desired "in subordination to grace and charity." Sproul, in *What Is Love?*, says Corinth had "the spectacular gifts of the Spirit, but there was no love there."

Why is prophecy "greater" (v5)? Not because it is holier but because it builds the church — the hearers understand it. Sproul: "he is comparing the good and the better, not the good and the bad." Notice the exception Paul writes in: "unless he interprets." An interpreted tongue builds the church too.

What were tongues — and do they continue? (contested). Our teachers differ, and each should be heard in his own terms. *Guzik* holds that tongues are addressed to God, not to men (v2), that they may sound like nonsense "because it was never intended for human ears," that they edify the speaker as a devotional prayer gift, and that they continue today under Paul's rules. *Sproul* sought the gift and prayed in tongues himself, but "found no great edification from it," saw interpretations and prophecies teach false doctrine and fail, and concluded that the modern practice "is not a supernatural event and is not the same as what was experienced in the early church" — while still delighting in his charismatic friends' love for prayer. *Henry* takes tongues as real foreign languages, given "for the conviction and conversion of infidels" and necessary to spread the gospel, and so out of place in an assembly of believers unless interpreted. Spurgeon's view of the gift was not found in the sources for this study. All of them agree Paul says "do not forbid" (v39) and "all things … properly and in an orderly manner" (v40).

Spirit and mind (vv14–19). In a tongue "my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful." Paul's answer is both: pray and sing with the spirit and with the mind also. Guzik thanks God for a way to relate to Him beyond intellect, while placing Paul's tongues in his private devotion. Henry: "Public worship should be performed so as to be understood." Sproul: "the way to the heart is through the mind." Every teacher agrees on the meeting: five words with the mind over ten thousand in a tongue.

Tongues "for a sign … to unbelievers" (vv21–22). Guzik calls this "one of the most difficult passages in the New Testament," since vv23–25 seem to say the reverse. Options he lists: tongues as a sign of judgment (Isaiah 28 — the Assyrian tongue that came on a people who would not listen), or J.B. Phillips' view that a scribe reversed the word order. His rule: read the hard by the plain — whatever v22 means, tongues do not draw the unbeliever to God. Henry: as the Corinthians used them, tongues were "rather a token of judgment from God than mercy," while the gift itself was meant to convince outsiders.

The visitor (vv23–25). Paul measures the meeting by the man at the door. Henry: an outsider hearing confusion would think them "a parcel of wild fanatics," but plain truth "has a marvellous aptness to awaken the conscience." Sproul warns the other way too: the motive to reach the lost is righteous, but we must not "tailor our strategy and our method to their tastes and their preferences." The outsider needs understandable truth, not entertainment.

"The spirits of prophets are subject to prophets" (v32). No gift is uncontrollable. Guzik: "The Holy Spirit does not take control like a demon does in demonic possession!" Henry: "The man inspired by the Spirit of God may still act the man." Henry also holds a minority reading of v30 — that the newly inspired prophet waits for the first to finish.

Judging prophecy (v29). "Let the others pass judgment." Guzik: judge by Scripture and by the agreement of the leaders present; never let prophecy eclipse the Word, and don't brand a sincere brother a false prophet. Sproul's experience is the warning: "The more interpretations of tongues-speaking and prophecies I heard, the more false doctrine and false prophecy I heard." Henry: the true prophets discern pretenders.

"The women are to keep silent in the churches" (vv34–35) — contested. The question is how this fits 11:5, where women pray and prophesy. *Guzik:* because Paul assumed that right, "keep silent" here probably means women are not to join in judging prophecy (which he reserves to the church's male leadership) and not to disrupt the meeting with questions; citing Redpath, *laleō* here is talk, questioning, chatter — "It has nothing to do with prophecy or prayer." *Henry:* the silence is broad — "they must not ask questions" in the church, and they must not "set up for teachers" (1 Tim 2:11–12); he notes 11:5 and that some allow speech on extraordinary occasions, since "praying, and uttering hymns inspired, were not teaching"; and he lays a matching duty on husbands to be able to answer at home. No treatment of these verses by Sproul or Spurgeon was found for this study. "As the Law also says" (v34) is not tied by Paul to a single verse, and readers differ on what he means. I hold my convictions on this humbly and let the text, read with 11:5, speak.

The Lord's commandment (vv36–38). Paul claims Christ's authority for what he writes, and makes it the test of every "prophet or spiritual" man. Henry: "The Spirit of Christ can never contradict itself." Guzik: if we are really spiritual, "we will stick to the Word of God." Sproul: "the Spirit never works against the Word but always with it and through it."

Word study (Greek):

- **pursue — *diōkō* (G1377):** to chase, hunt down; the same verb as "persecute" (15:9) and "press on" (Phil 3:12).
- **desire earnestly — *zēloō* (G2206):** burn with zeal; what love does not do selfishly (13:4); commanded toward gifts (vv1, 39).
- **zealous — *zēlōtēs* (G2207):** a zealot; Corinth's zeal aimed at edification (v12).
- **spiritual gifts / spiritual — *pneumatikos* (G4152):** "spiritual things," the word of 12:1, 14:1 and 14:37.
- **prophesy — *prophēteuō* (G4395):** speak forth what God gives; with the noun *prophēteia* (G4394) and *prophētēs* (G4396), fourteen times in the chapter.
- **tongue — *glōssa* (G1100):** tongue, language; sixteen times in the NASB.

- **mysteries — *mystērion* (G3466):** things hidden from the hearer, known to God (v2).
- **edification / edify — *oikodomē* (G3619) / *oikodomeō* (G3618):** house-building; seven times; the test of the chapter.
- **exhortation — *paraklēsis* (G3874):** a calling alongside; verb *parakaleō* (G3870) in v31.
- **consolation — *paramythia* (G3889):** steadying comfort; only here in the NT.
- **interpret — *diermēneuō* (G1329):** carry the meaning through (Luke 24:27); interpreter *diermēneutēs* (G1328), interpretation *hermēneia* (G2058).
- **distinction — *diastolē* (G1293):** the gaps between the notes (v7).
- **indistinct — *adēlos* (G82):** not plain; only here and Luke 11:44.
- **bugle — *salpinx* (G4536):** the war trumpet; also the last trumpet (15:52).
- **clear — *eusēmos* (G2154):** well-marked, easily recognized; only here in the NT.
- **air — *aēr* (G109):** speaking into the air (v9; compare 9:26).
- **without meaning — *aphōnos* (G880):** voiceless; Henry's "a voice, and no voice."
- **barbarian — *barbaros* (G915):** foreigner whose speech is unintelligible (Acts 28:2; Rom 1:14).
- **mind — *nous* (G3563):** the understanding; four times (vv14, 15, 19).
- **unfruitful — *akarpos* (G175):** fruitless (Matt 13:22).
- **sing — *psallō* (G5567):** sing praise; root of *psalmos*, psalm (G5568, v26).
- **ungifted — *idiōtēs* (G2399):** the ordinary person without the gift; vv16, 23, 24 (Acts 4:13).
- **Amen — *amēn* (G281):** "so be it," the congregation's response (v16).
- **thinking — *phrēn* (G5424):** the judging mind; only in v20 (twice).
- **be infants — *nēpiazō* (G3515):** only here in the NT; be a baby in evil.
- **mature — *teleios* (G5046):** full-grown (2:6; 13:10).
- **evil — *kakia* (G2549):** malice, bad will.
- **strange tongues — *heteroglōssos* (G2084):** "other-tongued"; only here (Isa 28:11).
- **sign — *sēmeion* (G4592):** a pointer, an indicator (v22).
- **mad — *mainomai* (G3105):** out of one's mind (Acts 26:24).
- **convicted — *elenchō* (G1651):** exposed and convicted (John 16:8).
- **called to account — *anakrinō* (G350):** examined closely (2:15).
- **secrets — *kryptos* (G2927):** hidden things brought to light (4:5).
- **pass judgment — *diakrinō* (G1252):** sift, discern (11:29; 12:10).
- **keep silent — *sigaō* (G4601):** three times — vv28, 30, 34.
- **subject — *hypotassō* (G5293):** arrange under; vv32 and 34.
- **confusion — *akatastasia* (G181):** disorder, unrest (James 3:16).
- **peace — *eirēnē* (G1515):** wholeness; God's character (v33).
- **improper — *aischros* (G150):** shameful by the standards of the setting (v35; 11:6).
- **commandment — *entolē* (G1785):** the Lord's command (v37).
- **is not recognized — *agnoeō* (G50):** NASB passive "he is not recognized"; KJV "let him be ignorant" (v38).
- **forbid — *kōlyō* (G2967):** hinder; Jesus' "Do not hinder him" (Mark 9:39).

- **properly — *euschēmonōs* (G2156):** becomingly (Rom 13:13; 1 Thess 4:12).
- **orderly manner — *taxis* (G5010):** rank, order, sequence (Col 2:5).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **The chapter begins with love** — every rule that follows is love applied to a meeting (14:1).
2. **Edification is the test** — seven times in the NASB; which gift builds the house?
3. **Paul regulates; he does not forbid** (vv5, 18, 39). Sproul: "he does not outlaw their use."
4. **Sound is not communication** — flute, bugle, barbarian; "a voice, and no voice" (Henry).
5. **The mind is never bypassed in the meeting** — with the spirit and with the mind also (v15).
6. **Five words over ten thousand** — Paul came to bless, not to be blessed (Guzik).
7. **Paul watches the door** — the goal is "God is certainly among you" (v25).
8. **The Spirit does not overwhelm** — the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets (v32).
9. **Every word is weighed** — let the others pass judgment (v29), by the written Word.
10. **Freedom and order belong together** — do not forbid; properly and in order (vv39–40).

Cross-references: Gen 3:16; Num 10:9; 11:29; Deut 27:15–26; 28:49; Neh 8:6; Isa 28:9–12; Joel 2:28; Matt 13:22; 22:37; Mark 9:38–39; Luke 11:11–13; 24:27; John 14:16; 16:8; Acts 2:4–11; 4:13; 10:46; 19:6; 26:24; 28:2; Rom 1:14; 12:2; 14:19; 15:2; 1 Cor 2:6, 15; 3:1, 9; 8:1; 10:23; 11:5–6, 29; 12:3, 7, 10, 31; 13:1, 4–5, 10–13; 15:52; 2 Cor 11:6; Gal 1:8; Eph 2:20; 4:12, 16, 29; 5:19; Phil 3:12–14; Col 2:5; 3:16; 1 Thess 4:12, 16; 5:11, 19–21; 1 Tim 2:11–12; Heb 5:14; 10:25; James 3:16; 1 John 4:1.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · 1 CORINTHIANS 14:40

"But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner."

FIGURE · THE ORDERLY MEETING

"WHEN YOU ASSEMBLE, EACH ONE HAS …" · 1 CORINTHIANS 14:26–33

a psalm | a teaching | a revelation | a tongue | an interpretation

"Let all things be done for edification" (v26)

TONGUES · vv27–28	PROPHETS · vv29–31
two, or at the most three	two or three
each in turn	the others pass judgment
one must interpret	revelation to another →
no interpreter → keep silent;	the first keeps silent
speak to himself and to God	all, one by one

WHY THE RULES — THREE REASONS IN THE TEXT

The goal: "so that all may learn and all may be exhorted" (v31)

The gift: "the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets" (v32)

The God: "not a God of confusion but of peace" — in all the churches (v33)

Every member brings something; the limits on tongues and prophecy serve the goal, and the goal reflects the character of God.

Command to obey — "Let all things be done for edification." Paul says "each one has," and I don't get to come to the table only to receive. On Thursday nights I want to walk in asking God for one man to build — one word, one prayer, one question that helps a brother stand. If I've got nothing that builds, Spurgeon's line is for me: better to hold my tongue.

Sin to confess — spiritual self-indulgence. Guzik quotes Spurgeon: "Spiritual self indulgence is a monstrous evil; yet we see it all around." I've done it — measured a meeting by how it made me feel, used a story or a testimony to look good, talked over a brother because I had something "better." The Corinthians had big gifts and little love. I confess the times my zeal was about me.

Command to obey — pray with the mind also. Some of the men I walk with pray like they're reading a script; some don't pray out loud at all because they think they don't have the words. Paul wants prayer the man next to me can

follow and say Amen to. Five plain words — "Lord, help my brother tonight" — are worth more in the room than ten thousand that impress.

Example to follow — the visitor at the door. Paul keeps asking how the meeting sounds to the man who just walked in. In recovery and in the prison chapel that man is always there: guarded, skeptical, sure church is not for him. I want what he hears to be clear enough to reach the secrets of his heart — not noise, not insider talk, but the truth about sin and Jesus, plain enough that he says, "God is certainly among you."

Truth to live in — "the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets." I can't say "I couldn't help it." The Spirit does not make a man lose control; He gives self-control (Gal 5:23). That covers my temper, my tongue, my urges. Disorder is not a sign of the Spirit; peace is, because that's what my God is like.

Humility on hard texts. Good, godly teachers read tongues today and verses 34–35 differently. I want to hold my convictions, open my Bible with the man who disagrees, weigh every word by the Lord's commandment, and keep the peace — because "God is not a God of confusion but of peace."

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. When I bring something to our Thursday table — a word, a prayer, a story — do I first ask whom it will build? (14:1, 26; 13:5) *"Let all things be done for edification." Love does not seek its own (13:5).*
2. Where am I zealous for God in a way that is really about being seen? How would I aim that zeal at building the house? (14:12; 8:1) *Paul does not quench the Corinthians' zeal; he aims it (v12).*
3. Do I pray with my mind engaged, or on autopilot? What would it look like this week to say, "I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also"? (14:14–15; Rom 12:2) *The mind unfruitful is the problem Paul names (v14).*
4. Think of the last man who walked into our group for the first time. What did he understand — and what would it take for him to say "God is certainly among you"? (14:23–25) *Plain truth reaches the secrets of the heart (vv24–25).*
5. Where am I tempted to say "I couldn't help it" — in anger, in talk, in an outburst I call spiritual? (14:32–33; Gal 5:22–23) *"The spirits of prophets are subject to prophets." No gift, and no Spirit-led man, is out of control.*
6. Our teachers disagree about tongues today and about verses 34–35. How do I hold a conviction on a disputed text and still keep peace with a brother who reads it differently? (14:33, 37–40) *Weigh every word by Scripture, love the brother, and remember the God of peace (v33).*

Worship. My God is not a God of confusion but of peace. He gave His church gifts so that we would build one another, He gave us minds to understand and say Amen, and He is so present among His people that an outsider can fall on his face and say it out loud: God is certainly among you.

Prayer. Father, teach me to pursue love before I reach for anything else. Make me a man who builds the brother beside me. Let my words be clear, my prayers honest, my zeal aimed at Your house and not at my name. Give me self-control by Your Spirit, humility on the hard texts, and a heart that wants the man at the door to meet You. Let all things in our gatherings be done properly and in order, for the glory of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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