

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 14TH - 15TH, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

## LOVE & GIFTS (1 CORINTHIANS 14:1-5)

### "PURSUE LOVE AND DESIRE SPIRITUAL GIFTS"

After talking about love being the foundation of our faith, Paul also tells the church to pursue spiritual gifts because through the gifts, we love God and others better.

- Paul's point in this section is to **encourage the church to search out and desire the Gifts of the Spirit for the advancement of the gospel and building up the church.**

### REMEMBER, THIS IS IN THE CONTEXT OF WORSHIP

When it comes to corporate settings, not all spiritual gifts are equal because some only edify the individual, not the entire body.

- Speaking in tongues is a personal interaction with God that no one understands except God. If people use this gift in a worship setting, it is impossible to build others up because they can't understand.

### "ON THE OTHER HAND..."

Tongues is personal, but prophecy (proclaiming a message of God, similar to modern-day preaching) is for the betterment of others.

- **We're told to pursue prophecy because it bridges the Gifts of the Spirit with practical application in worship services. It also is used for "strengthening, encouragement, and consolation."**

### THE BIBLE DOES NOT DEPRECATE TONGUES

Paul says, "I wish all of you spoke in other tongues, but even more that you prophesied." Tongues without interpretation are meant for an intimate personal setting, but in the context of church, prophecy is more beneficial.

- **It is not that we neglect any gifts, but that we exercise them at the right time in the right place.**

### LOVE IS THE MISSION

The Gifts of the Spirit are given to us to better love God and others. Paul is **trying to teach an immature group of Christians that church isn't just about their consumption but for the building up of other people.**

- **In our spiritual infancy, we must consume more, but there must come a time when we learn to lovingly contribute.**

## BUILDING UP (1 CORINTHIANS 14:6-12)

### CLEAR INSTRUCTION

Paul asks a rhetorical question: "...if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you...?" He implies that the only way he can instruct them is through "a revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching."

- Simply put, **we must speak in a way others can understand if we are to disciple and teach them about Jesus.**

### THIS GOES BEYOND SPEAKING IN TONGUES

Christianity in America has created a very "churchy" culture and bubble that outsiders cannot identify with. **If we're to open the door for people to encounter Jesus, we must learn to communicate in a way that connects with outsiders.**

- **We're not called to isolate from the world but to be insulated with the Spirit.**

### WE MUST ALSO PREPARE THE TROOPS

If churches don't teach the Bible with "intelligible speech," it will be similar to failing to properly use a blade to prepare for battle.

- **Because the church in America has focused more on emotion and approval than the Word, we have not properly prepared Christians for the spiritual battle that is playing out in our society.**

### ALSO "ZEALOUS" TO BUILD-UP

Paul doesn't discourage the church from pursuing the "spiritual gifts," but he also encourages them to "seek to excel in building up the church."

- Again, **the goal is to have a love of God and others, and the spiritual gifts are just means or tools to help get to a greater depth of love.**

## HEART & HEAD (1 CORINTHIANS 14:13-19)

### THE GIFT OF INTERPRETATION

Remember, there are 3 variations of speaking in tongues in the NT (Acts 2, 1 Corinthians 13, 14). In a worship setting, speaking in tongues should be coupled with the gift of interpretation.

- Interpretation helps bridge the gap between miraculous and practical because it gives direction through overtly spiritual means.

### "WHAT THEN?"

Paul says he prays through the Spirit in tongues, but his "understanding is unfruitful." This doesn't mean this gift is useless. There are times we need the Spirit to completely take over, but this is often in a private setting.

- Romans 8:26 says, **"the Spirit helps us in our weakness because we don't know what to pray...the Spirit Himself intercedes for us."**

## THE BALANCE OF SPIRIT AND TRUTH (JOHN 4:23-24)

V15 tells us to pray and sing in the Spirit but to also pray and sing with understanding. This doesn't mean that everyone needs the gift of tongues, but that **Christians must balance their emotions and intellect.**

- **We're called to worship Jesus with our hearts and minds.** Leaning too far one way is an imbalanced approach to faith.

### BALANCE (V17-19)

We can have good intentions in our church services, but if we become only inwardly focused, non-believers and new converts will be excluded from experiencing the gospel.

- Most churches have good intentions, but a **lack of focus on teaching the Bible causes too many missed opportunities to advance the gospel.**

### IF I HAD TO CHOOSE...

"I thank God that I speak in other tongues more than all of you, yet in the church, I would rather speak five words with my understanding in order to teach...than ten thousand words in...tongue[s]." (1 Corinthians 14:18-19)

- **Church services are to build up Christians and searchers through worship and the Word. But, we must also be engaged spiritually in our private time.**

### A PROPER TIME AND PLACE

- As we mature as Christians, we're to seek the giftings of God as we're producing the fruit of His Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).
- As we build a relationship with Jesus and read the Bible, we will become more comfortable with how and when He uses us to bless others.

### DIGGING IN AND REACHING OUT

- We must disciple those in our church with **clear biblical teaching in order to equip them to live holy and loving lives.**
- Regardless of how uncomfortable or messy it may get, **this has to be a place that also welcomes anyone in who is looking for the truth.** We must dig into Christ and His Word and be reaching out.
- On a personal level, we must firmly hold onto our biblical integrity while still striving to build relationships with non-Christians. **What is your personal culture?**
- We are to not be afraid of the world and create a bubble. We are to be **insulated by the Holy Spirit, not isolated from the world** we are called to reach.

### BALANCE

- We shouldn't neglect any part of God. If we're to experience Him the way He intends, **we're to worship Him in Spirit (emotions and heart) and in truth (our minds and intellect).**
- This means we balance **worship, prayer,** and reading **the Word** so we can grow into mature and balanced followers of Christ.
- There is a grace period when new Christians are to only consume (infancy). But, there must come a time when we are still getting filled up **while also contributing back to the church and pouring into others, and making disciples (adulthood).**

### AN HONEST INVENTORY

- Are we seeking the spiritual gifts and trusting God will use us how He sees fit?
- Are we holding onto our biblical integrity as we are reaching out to and loving people who don't know God?
- Are we balanced in our relationship with Jesus through worship, prayer, and reading the Word?