

## Introduction

One of the beauties of preaching through the books of the Bible is that the whole counsel of God is given. Recently, someone told me that they appreciate our church posting all my sermons on our website. They liked the fact that both the audio and the text were available. This particular person was going through a difficult situation, and a passage that I had preached on several months ago dealt with their issue. The Bible deals with these difficult matters in life, and by going through all of the various books, we can address these issues. The fact that our messages were going beyond our group on Sunday mornings was encouraging to me.

Ray Stedman, who is considered as one of the twentieth century's foremost pastors and biblical expositors, labeled 1 Corinthians as God's Epistle to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It addresses so many of the issues that we are dealing with in society, and in the church. In 1 Corinthians 1-3, Paul dealt with divisions in the church, and churches still deal with that today. Two weeks ago, a pastor emailed me to pray for him and his church, as they were facing another split in their church. Like the church in Corinth, it was over leadership in the church. In 1 Corinthians 5-7, Paul dealt with immorality in the church, and that is still a huge problem in the church today. One of the largest denominations is reeling from the immorality many of its leaders. Another of the largest denominations is going through a major split over immorality. In 1 Corinthians 7, we dealt with divorce and marriage. Depending on the statistics you read, roughly half the church has been divorced, so this is a relevant topic.

In 1 Corinthians 14, we are able to address two of the most divisive issues in the church, certain spiritual gifts and the role of women in the church. In 1 Corinthians 15, we will be addressing one of the most frequently asked questions, which pertains to what happens to us when we die. Lots of believers are unsure of what happens to us, and Paul deals with the resurrection of the dead in that chapter. It is good to preach through these issues to help both congregants and pastors to have a better understanding of all these matters.

Our passage today is about the usage of gifts in the assembly. Earlier in 1 Corinthians 14, Paul taught on the purpose of tongues and prophecy because he wanted us to know how to value the gifts so we could focus on the greater gifts in our meetings. Paul now focuses on the target audience of both of these gifts. Next, Paul gives practical guidelines for the use of these gifts. Third, Paul addresses a unique problem they were having that was creating chaos and disorder in their services. He told the women to keep silent in church and to ask their questions at home. Fourth, Paul gives some concluding exhortations about the use of gifts.

## Usage of Gifts in the Assembly

1. Target audience of the gifts (1 Cor 14:20-25)
2. Practical application of the gifts (1 Cor 14:26-33)
3. Silencing of women in the assembly (1 Cor 14:34-35)
4. Concluding exhortations (1 Cor 14:36-40)

(1 Cor 14:20-25) "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.”

(1 Cor 14:26-33) “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.”

(1 Cor 14:34-35) 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.”

(1 Cor 14:36-40) “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.”

### 1. **Target audience of the gifts** (1 Cor 14:20-25)

Paul begins with an exhortation not to be children in our thinking. He wants us to have a mature attitude about the use of gifts in the assembly. In evil, we are to be innocent like infants, but in our thinking, God wants us to be mature. The word for mature is *teleios* (Strong’s G046), which means to reach a point in the distance. Many times it is translated as perfect or finished. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught that we are to be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect. That is the same word that is used. God wants us to have a perfect and a mature mindset about the use of spiritual gifts. An immature mindset thinks only about himself. A mature person considers and is mindful of others, which is exactly what the Corinthians needed in their services. There was chaos and disorder in their services. People were talking at the same time and nobody could hear clearly what was being said. Some people were speaking in tongues, and nobody could understand what was being said, and nobody was being edified. In their culture, the women typically sat on one side and the men on the other side, and the women were talking with one another, and asking questions about this or that, and it was creating even more chaos. The meetings were totally out of order, and so Paul begins with this very needed exhortation to be mature in their thinking.

(Mt 5:48) “Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

(1 Cor 14:20) “Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature.”

Paul then begins to instruct the Corinthians on who these two gifts were intended. He said that in the Law it was written that 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.” This is a quote from Isaiah 28:11. Paul used that Scripture to teach them that tongues are a sign to unbelievers. In verse twenty-two, he wrote, “So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers.” The gift of tongues was not given as a sign to target those who already believed, but was a sign for unbelievers.

(1 Cor 14:21-22) “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.”

At Pentecost, the apostles and other believers were together in one place, and suddenly a noise came from heaven which sounded like a violent rushing wind. Everyone was filled with the Holy Spirit, and there were tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and resting on each one of them. Then they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit was giving them utterance. Luke records that there were devout men from every nation under heaven there in Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost. They also heard the noise and a crowd came together to see what was going on. They were bewildered because each of them was hearing them speak in their own language. They were amazed and astonished and asked, “how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born?” What did they hear? They were hearing of the mighty deeds of God. The gift of tongues was not given for the sake of the believers in the room; it was given for the unbelievers, which is the point that Paul is making.

(Ac 2:4–13) “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance. {5} Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. {6} And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language. {7} They were amazed and astonished, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? {8} “And how is it that we each hear *them* in our own language to which we were born? {9} “Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, {10} Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, {11} Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our *own* tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God.” {12} And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” {13} But others were mocking and saying, “They are full of sweet wine.”

We know that the gift of tongues does edify the believer. The person speaking in tongues may not know what is being said in the Spirit, but his faith is being built up, and He is being edified. We know from Romans 8:26-27 that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us according to the will of God. Even though the gift of tongues is a sign for unbelievers, there are benefits for the individual to use these gifts. The gift of tongues does edify the believer, but it is also a sign for unbelievers. That is why Paul said that he wished that everyone spoke in tongues.

(1 Co 14:2–5) “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... {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...”

(Ro 8:26–27) “In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings too deep for words; {27} and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*.”

There is a common teaching that there are different kinds of gifts of tongues. There is a gift of tongues that is a prayer language and a gift of tongues that is known languages, like the example at Pentecost. I do not see any Scriptural evidence that suggests that there were different classifications of tongues. While Paul encourages the Corinthians to pray with the mind and to pray in the Spirit, and to sing with the mind and to sing in the Spirit, that does not mean that this is a different gift of tongues. I believe that the believers that have the gift of tongues can use that gift at any time to sing, to pray, or to speak, and if it is in a church assembly, the tongues should be interpreted or the person should not speak out in tongues.

(1 Co 14:13–15) “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.”

Next, Paul said that 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? The rhetorical answer is yes, and that was the response of some at Pentecost. They accused them of being drunk, to which Peter told them that it was only the third hour of the day. The Jewish day began at 6:00 a.m. so the third hour meant 9:00 a.m. People did not drink wine in the morning, but they drank it in the evening with their evening meal, so Peter’s response was a very reasonable one.

(1 Cor 14:23) “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?”

(Ac 2:13–15) “But others were mocking and saying, “They are full of sweet wine.” {14} But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: “Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words. {15} “For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is *only* the third hour of the day;”

At the end of verse twenty-two, Paul shifts from tongues to prophesy, and said that prophecy is for a sign to those who believe. It is meant to be understood by all and it should edify, exhort, and console believers. Then, in verses twenty-four and twenty-five, he said, “But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, and he is called to account by all; 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.” Because the prophetic word is understandable by all, it can profit all. That is why it is a greater gift, and the one that should be earnestly desired.

(1 Co 14:22) “So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesy *is for a sign*, not to unbelievers but to those who believe.”

(1 Cor 14:24-25) “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.”

Mature thinking is to do things that will edify others. Mature thinking is to say things that will experience God's presence and to have the secrets of their hearts disclosed. Mature thinking is to promote activities that will cause people to fall on their face and worship God. Mature thinking will prioritize the gift of prophecy over tongues because the whole body is edified.

## 2. **Practical application of the gifts** (1 Cor 14:26-33)

Paul does not leave the Corinthians with knowledge and understanding about the gifts, he gives them practical applications for the use of the gifts in their assemblies. He begins with "What is the outcome then, brethren?" How are we to apply this in our meetings? The first thing that he says is "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." Here are three key take-aways from this. First, believers are to assemble together. It is not if we assemble, but when we assemble. In Hebrews 10:24-25 we are exhorted not to forsake the assembling of ourselves, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another. Ray Stedman was correct about the book of Corinthians being for this generation. In my life I have never seen anything like we are seeing right now. It seems as if Covid gave people the long-desired excuse of not going to church. I regularly meet people claiming to be Christians, and they do not go assemble themselves any longer. Most tell me that they watch it online. This past week I saw something that really did not set well with me. I saw a post by a pastor's wife with a picture of them at a Golden Corral restaurant on Sunday, and she said, "Our first among the many Sundays out of any congregation for a while." It was like she was celebrating the fact that they did not have to assemble with the saints for a while. God wants His people to assemble together. We need to look forward to assembling together. It should be a highlight in our week.

(1 Cor 14:26) "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."

(Heb 10:24-25) "and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, {25} not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near."

The second take-away from this verse is that the body is supposed to participate. One has a psalm, and another has a teaching. Someone else has a revelation, and others have a tongue and an interpretation. In our modern assemblies, the pastor has a teaching, the choir and/or worship team has a set of songs, and the church sits back and listens. What a contrast to what Paul says about our assembling. We are all to come ready to share. We should come prepared with a psalm of thanksgiving or praise, or with a teaching, or with a revelation.

The third take-away is that all things should be done for edification. When we come with a teaching or prophecy for others, they get edified. Not everyone teaches or prophesies, but that does not mean that you cannot come and build up others. In Hebrews, we are taught to give some thought or consideration about how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds so that when we assemble, we can build up one another. My daughter, Kathleen, used to write prophetic words of encouragement to people and hand them to the people when we assembled on Sundays. Many people have told me how much that encouraged and blessed them.

Today church has become, "What can I get out of this?" rather than "Who can I encourage today?" The body of Christ needs to make three adjustments. We need to adjust our thinking

about the priority of assembling together. Second, we need to adjust our thinking about our role and participation when we assemble. Third, we need to adjust our meeting structures so that people can participate.

Next, we get the practical application of tongues and prophecy in our gatherings. Paul begins with the gift of tongues. “If anyone speaks in a tongue, it should be by two or at the most three.” That “if” is important. In verse nineteen Paul shared that he would rather speak five words with his mind so that he could instruct others rather than ten thousand words in a tongue. God wants us to emphasize the greater gifts so that the whole body is edified. If there are tongues, there should be a limit of two or three that are given. The second guideline that Paul gave is that if a tongue is given, it must be interpreted. Without an interpretation, no one gets edified, and the goal is for the church to be edified. The third guideline is that if there is no interpreter, a word in tongues must not be given. The person can speak to himself and to God. He can pray in tongues silently, or he can wait until he is by himself and speak in tongues.

(1 Cor 14:27-28) “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.”

(1 Co 14:19) “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.

Next, Paul gave the rules for prophecy in the church. The first guideline is that it should be done by two or three. Again, there is a limit on the number of prophetic words given. Second, prophecy is to be judged; the other must pass judgment. In many of the places where prophetic words have been given, there has been no judgment of those prophecies. When I have been the pastor in a church, I have seen to it that prophecies were judged. Where I have been in attendance at a service where prophetic words were given, I have brought any corrections to the attention of the pastor in charge. In nearly every case where I have brought false prophecies to the attention of another pastor, my word of correction has been disregarded. I believe that most pastors have not known what to do, and so they did nothing. Pastors need some equipping in this area. My friend, Joe Warner, who is himself a prophet, equips churches in prophetic ministry, and he gives excellent guidelines for churches to use.

(1 Cor 14:29-32) “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;”

One day a lady gave a prophetic word to our body, and it did not line up with God’s word. Rather than publicly correct her and possibly humiliate her, I gently corrected her after the service. I told her that she should run words by Karen, myself, or one of the other elders before giving a word. I encouraged her by letting her know that I saw a prophetic gifting, and to keep prophesying. In this particular case, even though I was gentle, the woman did not appreciate being corrected, and left the church.

The next guideline is that the prophecies should be given one by one, not at the same time. If someone is giving a revelation, the others must keep silent. Everyone can prophesy one by one. The reason for doing it one by one is so that everyone can hear, learn, and be exhorted. If two or more are prophesying at the same time, there is confusion, chaos, and nobody is edified. Paul

said that the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. That means that they have control over when and how the prophetic word is released. God may give a picture or word to them, and they can patiently wait until the right time to release it. Just because the Spirit gives something to us, it does not mean that it must be shared right that moment. When the Spirit gives a word, we should determine if this is a public word, or one that would be best to share privately. Second, we should determine whether this word is for us to pray more effectively about something, or if it is something that is to be released. Third, we should consider the best time to share it. The particular word may not fit in with everything else going on, and so the time may not be right. The spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet so these other considerations should be made.

The last thing that Paul shared is that God is not a God of confusion but of peace. When two or three people speak in tongues, it brings confusion. When people speak in tongues without an interpretation, it brings confusion. When two or three prophets speak at the same time, it brings confusion. God is a God of peace and order, not confusion, and our services need to be conducted in orderly and peaceful ways.

(1 Cor 14:33) “for God is not a *God* of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.”

### 3. Silencing of women in the assembly (1 Cor 14:34-36)

One of the things that was creating chaos and confusion was the women speaking in church. It was common for the women to sit on one side of the room, and the men to sit on the other. When prophetic words or other things were shared in the meetings, the women were talking about it and asking questions to one another. Their voices and sharing were disrupting everything else that was going on. Therefore, Paul addressed this problem and said, “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.” Earlier, he said that if someone was giving a revelation, the first person should keep silent. He also said that the spirit of a prophet is subject to the prophet. Now, he uses the same instructions for women. They were to keep silent and were not to speak, and they were to subject themselves to their husbands. If they had questions, they could ask their own husbands at home.

(1 Cor 14:34-35) 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.”

This passage has caused many controversies. There are those that teach that women can not teach, preach, prophesy, or make any sounds in church; they are to remain silent. They combine this with what Paul shared in 1 Timothy 2:11-12, where Paul said that women must receive instruction with entire submissiveness, and they were not allowed to teach or to exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. I want to take a minute to address the issue of women speaking in church.

(1 Ti 2:11–12) “A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. {12} But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.”

In 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, it is clear from the context that Paul was dealing with the chaos and confusion in the church services that were caused by many people speaking in tongues or

prophesying at the same time. It is clear that the women had questions, and the context tells us they were talking and asking one another in the services, which brought even more chaos and confusion. God wants our services orderly so the women needed to save their questions for later, when they could ask their husbands. It did not mean they could not sign, pray, prophesy, or otherwise participate in the services. This is what Ray Stedman said about the passage.

*“No, the problem here is not a woman ministering in the church at all. That was proper, despite the traditional interpretation of these events in the last two centuries. No, the problem was still, as the context makes clear, one of disorder and confusion.”*

Notice what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:5. Women were to have their heads covered while praying or prophesying. Women need to be under authority, as their hair represents a spiritual covering. If women were not allowed to pray or prophesy, this verse and this instruction would not have been necessary. Women can pray, prophesy, sing, and participate in the services. Paul said we can ALL prophesy, one by one, including women.

(1 Co 11:5) “But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head, for she is one and the same as the woman whose head is shaved.”

The issue of authority is important. Women were to be under proper authority when they prayed or prophesied. That is also important in teaching. In 1 Timothy 2:11-12, women were to receive instruction with entire submissiveness. We want men to receive instruction with submissiveness also. In Hebrews 13:17 we are taught to obey and submit to our leaders. The normal word for submit is *hupotasso*, which means to be under proper order and arrangement. The word that is used here is *hypeiko* (Strong’s G5226), which means to be weak, to yield, to surrender, or submit. All of us are to yield and submit to our authorities. In James 1:21, we are to receive the word with humility. God wants us to receive instruction with humility and submissiveness, and that is not just for women. Paul also said that he did not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. The word in the Greek for exercise authority is *authenteo* (Strong’s G831), and it means to usurp authority. Paul did not allow women to usurp authority over men. Though not mentioned, leaders are not to allow men to usurp authority and teach either. This is not a statement barring women from teaching, and silencing them in church. It is a statement about the attitude that women are to have, which is submissiveness, and that principle applies to men also.

(1 Ti 2:11–12) “A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. {12} But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.”

(Heb 13:17) “Obey your leaders and submit *to them*, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.”

(Jas 1:21) “Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and *all* that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.”

#### 4. **Concluding Exhortations** (1 Cor 14:36-40)

In Paul’s first concluding remark, he wanted them to acknowledge God’s authority, and he uses some satire to get his point across. He asked, “Was it from you that the word of God first went forth? Or has it come to you only?” The word of God had come to the Corinthians through Paul,

but it did not originate from them. The Corinthians also thought they had something special, some special revelation that others did not have. They needed to recognize that God's word was being taught everywhere, and prophecies were being given in all the churches. What the Corinthians had was special, but it was not unique to them.

(1 Cor 14:36-38) "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."

Second, the instructions that Paul gave them were the Lord's commandment, and they needed to submit to God's instructions. He said that those who are prophets or spiritual should recognize that what Paul has instructed them is the Lord's commandment. Those that do not recognize this are not to be recognized. In setting things in order, people need to submit to authority, and in particular, to the word of God. It is our final authority in all matters of doctrine and practice. Those that do not recognize, know, or understand this are not to be recognized.

Paul's third remark pertained to prophecy and tongues. First, he exhorted them to desire earnestly to prophesy. He had given some guidelines to bring order to their services, but it was not intended to pour water on the fire. He wanted them to be zealous for spiritual gifts, and especially prophecy. Second, he told them not to forbid people to speak in tongues. Tongues and prophecy are both excellent gifts, and should be used. However, they need to be prioritized with the emphasis being given to the greater gifts, where the whole body would be edified. Our assemblies are about corporate edification.

(1 Cor 14:39) "Therefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak in tongues."

In many churches today, the use of prophecy or tongues is strictly forbidden. The guidelines that Paul gave, which were the Lord's commandments, are disregarded because they believe these gifts have ceased and are not for today. Their doctrinal positions are contrary to God's clear instructions – that we are to earnestly desire to prophesy, and we are not to forbid speaking in tongues. Each church will have to work out their meeting structure so prophecy and tongues can be incorporated. It is sometimes easier to incorporate prophecy and tongues in small group settings, but the principles can be applied in all group sizes.

Paul's final remark is that all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner. All of the guidelines were given to promote order. They were not intended to hinder or prevent the gifts, but to eliminate the chaos and confusion, and to have them done where people were edified, and things were done properly and in an orderly manner.

(1 Cor 14:40) "But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner."

### **Concluding Prayer**

Father God, give us an earnest desire for spiritual gifts, and especially prophecy. Holy Spirit, we ask for a fresh outpouring. Father, Your Spirit is like a river, and we ask You to let the river flow. Paul gave some banks to this river so that it would flow in an orderly manner. Help us to prioritize the greater gifts so that the body will be edified. Help us to be patient and considerate in the use of gifts so that things are done in an orderly manner, and You are glorified. Amen.

**Usage of Gifts in Assemblies (1 Cor 14:20-40)**

**Introduction (1 Cor 14:20-40)**

1. **Target audience of the gifts** (1 Cor 14:20-25, Mt 5:48, Ac 2:4-13, 1 Cor 14:2-5, Ro 8:26-27, 1 Cor 14:13-15, Ac 2:13-15)
2. **Practical application of the gifts** (1 Cor 14:26-33, Heb 10:24-25, 1 Co 14:19, 14:33)
3. **Silencing of women in the assembly** (1 Cor 14:34-36, 1 Ti 2:11-12, 1 Co 11:5, Heb 13:17, Jas 1:21)
4. **Concluding Exhortations** (1 Cor 14:36-40)