

1 CORINTHIANS 14 | *Prophecy and Tongues in Church Gatherings*

1. Overview.

- a. The basic issue in 1 Co 12-14 is over what it means to be spiritual ([]).
 - (1) Paul and the Corinthians are deeply divided. The Corinthians believe it has to do with speaking in tongues, the “language of the angels,” which is sure evidence they have already entered the kingdom. For this reason they have great zeal for this activity.
- b. Paul is using rhetoric. It takes a bit of insight to follow along with what he is saying.
- c. He is dealing with the Corinthian’s pet practice, tongues, so he chooses to be gentle and conciliatory. He is trying to persuade a group of people he loves but who has gotten off track.
 - (1) Overall, though, it is clear he is not a big fan of the Corinthians’ focus on tongues. He wants to tamp tongues down. The Corinthians were overemphasising and misusing tongues.
- d. *1 Corinthians* is not necessarily the best biblical book on which to base church practice.
 - (1) Paul usually does not give precise details on how to run a church service. He is generally not a micromanager. He cares most about sound doctrine, qualified leadership, and the practice of *agape*.
 - (2) The reason he is going into more detail with the Corinthians is because they are a problem church. He doesn’t tell the Romans, Philippians, or Ephesians, for example, how to run their church services.
- e. We must avoid the form over function danger. The core functions of the local church are stated in Ac 2:42-47. There is flexibility for local churches regarding the forms in which they carry out these functions. God gives us a lot of leeway on how to carry out the functions of the local church. Function over form, not form over function.
 - (a) Elders must ensure the functions of the local church are carried out effectively.
- f. The purpose of a church gathering is edification, the true expression of *agape* for one another. So whatever the church does when gathered must be both intelligible and orderly so that the whole community may be edified. In this way it reflects the character of God.

2. Prophecy and Tongues Compared (1 Co 14:1-5).

- a. **1 Co 14:1-5** 1 Pursue (διώκω, pres.) love (τὴν ἀγάπην), and strive for (ζηλόω, pres.) the spiritual gifts (τὰ πνευματικά), especially that you may prophesy (προφητεύω, pres.). 2 For one who speaks in a [foreign] language speaks not to men [for whom that language is foreign] but to God [who knows all human languages]. For no one understands him, but he speaks mysteries in [his] spirit. 3 On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding (οἰκοδομή), encouragement (παράκλησις), and consolation (παραμυθία). 4 The one who speaks in a [foreign] language builds up (οἰκοδομέω, pres.) himself [in a prideful way], but the one who prophesies builds up (οἰκοδομέω, pres.) the church. 5 Now I want you all to speak in [foreign] languages [for the the spread of the gospel to every nation], but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in [foreign]

languages, unless someone translates (διερμηνεύω), so that the church may receive edification (οικοδομή).

- b. The Corinthians' number one pursuit is to be the pursuit of *agape* (v. 1a).
 - (1) *Agape* is permanent, while spiritual gifts are temporary. See 1 Co 13.
- c. But they are also to keep striving for (ζηλώω, pres.) the spiritual (τὰ πνευματικά), especially prophecy (προφητεύω, pres.). (v. 1b).
 - (1) Paul means type 2 prophecy, not type 1 prophecy. See *Prophecy*.
- d. The Corinthians are to strive for prophecy and not tongues because:
 - (1) Tongues speakers speak to God, not men (v. 2a), because only God can understand them.
 - (a) Paul means type 1 tongues, not type 2 or type 3 tongues. See *Speaking in Tongues*.
 - (2) Others cannot understand the foreign tongue being spoken, because the person is speaking mysteries in his human spirit (πνεύματι δὲ λαλεῖ μυστήρια) (v. 2b).
 - (a) The "spirit" here is the believer's human spirit (cf. v. 14).
 - (b) Paul is likely being a bit sarcastic. Those who speak in a tongue speak to God in the sense that only God can possibly know what is being said, if anything at all. The "mysteries" being spoken do not benefit anyone, because no one understands what is being said.
 - (3) Prophecy, by contrast, is understood by all (v. 3a) and effective for:
 - (a) Building up (οικοδομή) (v. 3b).
 - 1) οἰκοδομή: "process of building, building, construction...fig., of spiritual strengthening...*edifying, edification, building up*" (BDAG, 696).
 - 2) **Eph 4:11-13** 11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for *building up* the body of Messiah, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature adulthood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Messiah....
 - (b) Encouragement (παράκλησις) (v. 3c).
 - 1) παράκλησις: "act of emboldening another in belief or course of action, *encouragement, exhortation*...strong request, *appeal, request*...lifting of another's spirits, *comfort, consolation*" (BDAG, 766).
 - a) παράκλησις has three aspects: warning, encouragement, and comfort. All three are necessary in the life of a church.
 - (c) Consolation (παραμυθία) (v. 3d).
 - 1) παραμυθία: "that which serves as encouragement to one who is depressed or in grief, *encouragement, comfort, consolation*" (BDAG, 769).
 - 2) The implication is that tongues accomplishes none of these things, unless the content is translated.
 - (4) Tongues, if untranslated, "builds up" oneself (v. 4a), but prophecy builds up the church (v. 4b).
 - (a) This is no compliment from Paul. There is no point speaking in an untranslated tongue in church when no one understands what you are saying. The only reason one would do, apparently, is to show off. The Corinthians have a problem with showing off.

- e. Paul's "wish" is for all the Corinthians to speak in foreign tongues (for legitimate purposes), but even more to prophesy (v. 5a).
 - (1) This won't happen, however, as Paul says earlier.
 - (a) **1 Co 12:29-30** 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30 Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?
- f. Prophecy is superior to tongues, unless someone translates (v. 5b).
 - (1) διαρμηνεύω: "to translate from one language to another, *translate*...to clarify someth. so as to make it understandable, *explain, interpret*" (BDAG, 244).
- g. Only if a tongue is translated is the church edified (v. 5c).
 - (1) Tongues, here, is public, not private.

3. Clear Speech that Edifies the Church (1 Co 14:6-12).

- a. **1 Co 14:6-12** 6 But now, brothers and sisters, if I [Paul] come to you (pl.) [Corinthians] speaking in [foreign] tongues (γλώσσας), what will I benefit (ώφελέω, pres.) you unless I speak to you either by [intelligible] revelation (ἀποκάλυψις), by knowledge (γνώσις), by prophecy (προφητεία), or by teaching (διδασχία)? 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 give (δίδωμι) speech through the tongue (διὰ τῆς γλώσσης) that is clear (εὐσημος), how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air [not a good thing]. 10 There are, perhaps, a great many kinds of languages (γένη φωνῶν) in the world, and none is without meaning (ἄφωνος). 11 If then I do not know the meaning (δύναμις) of the sound (φωνή), I will be to the one who speaks (λαλέω) a barbarian, and the one who speaks will be a barbarian to me. 12 So also you, because you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek to abound for the edification (οἰκοδομή) of the church.
- b. If Paul speaks in foreign tongues, there will be no benefit (ώφελέω) to the Corinthians (v. 6a).
- c. By contrast, Paul will benefit them if he speaks in well-understood language by:
 - (1) Revelation (ἀποκάλυψις) (v. 6b).
 - (a) Revelation: speaking new special revelation received through a vision, etc
 - (2) Knowledge (γνώσις) (v. 6c).
 - (a) Knowledge: speaking the content of already revealed special revelation (i.e., systematic theology).
 - (3) Prophecy (προφητεία) (v. 6d).
 - (a) Prophecy: speaking to exhort, encourage, or comfort the church (i.e., preaching).
 - (4) Teaching (διδασχία) (v. 6e).
 - (a) Teaching: speaking didactically to instruct believers what the Bible says and means (i.e., verse by verse exegesis).
 - (5) Note: these categories overlap and, in the context of Paul's ministry, are always spoken in common, everyday language believers can understand.
- d. As illustrations:
 - (1) A flute or harp must produce distinct tones for the melody to be recognised (v. 7).
 - (a) Consider John Cage's "Water Walk."



- (2) A bugle must produce a distinct sound for the army to prepare for battle (v. 8).
- (3) In the same way, if (ἔάν) the Corinthians utter through the tongue speech that is not clear (εὐσημος), no one will know what is spoken (v. 9a).
 - (a) εὐσημος: “readily recognizable, *clear, distinct*” (BDAG, 413).
- (4) The Corinthians will be speaking into the air [for no purpose] (v. 9b).
 - (a) **1 Co 9:26** 26 So I do not run aimlessly. I do not box as one beating the air.
- (5) There are many kinds of languages (γένη φωνῶν) in the world, and none is without meaning (ἄφωνος) (v. 10).
 - (a) This strongly suggests Paul is speaking in the entire chapter about real human languages.
- (6) If we don’t know the meaning of the language, we and the speaker will be barbarians (βάρβαρος) to one another (v. 11).
 - (a) βάρβαρος: “gener. pert. to what is foreign (esp. from the perspective of one who knows Greek and is familiar w. Hellenic culture; the components ‘foreign in language’ and ‘foreign in culture’ are ordinarily linked) ‘non-Hellenic’...w. focus on strangeness of language: pert. to using a language that is unintelligible to outsiders, *foreign-speaking, of foreign tongue*...w. focus on non-Hellenic association: pert. to not speaking Greek or participating in Gk. culture...adj. *not Hellenic*...subst. a non-Hellene, foreigner” (BDAG, 166).
 - 1) The word βάρβαρος is onomatopoeic, meaning the foreigner’s language sounded like so much “bar bar bar” to the Greek.
- e. The Corinthians are to engage in spiritual activities that edify the church (v. 12).
 - (1) Tongues, without translation, obviously does not edify the church.
 - (2) The church is edified only when speakers are understood.
 - (3) As an application, this means clarity of thought and speech is absolutely essential in the church. It is not enough to speak English. We must speak clear, well-articulated, well-organised, easily-understood English.
 - (a) Whoever speaks at our church must endeavor to connect with his or her audience. A meeting of the minds must take place.
 - (4) The purpose of spiritual gifts is to edify the church, not the self.
 - (a) **1 Co 12:7** 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

4. Speaking with our Spirit and Mind (1 Co 14:13-19).

- a. **1 Co 14:13-19** 13 Therefore, one who speaks in a [foreign] tongue should pray that he may translate (διερμηνεύω). 14 For if I pray in a [foreign] tongue (γλῶσσα), my spirit prays but my mind (νοῦς) is unfruitful (ἄκαρπος). 15 What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit (πνεῦμα), but I will pray with my mind (νοῦς) also. I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also. 16 Otherwise, if you give thanks (εὐλογέω) [in a foreign tongue] with your spirit, how can anyone in the position of an outsider (ιδιώτης) say amen to your thanksgiving (εὐχαριστία) when he does not know what you are saying? 17 For you may be giving thanks [in a foreign tongue] well enough, but the other person is not being built up (οἰκοδομέω, pres.). 18 I thank God that I speak in [foreign] tongues (γλώσσαις) more than all of you [for the purpose of spreading the gospel]. 19 Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a [foreign] tongue (γλῶσσα).
- b. If one speaks in a foreign tongue, one should pray for the ability to translate (v. 13).
 - (1) Again this suggests Paul is speaking of real human languages.
- c. If one prays in a foreign tongue, his spirit apparently prays, but his mind is unproductive (v. 14). This is unacceptable (v. 15a).
 - (1) ἄκαρπος: “fig. pert. to being useless, *useless, unproductive*” (BDAG, 35).
 - (2) See Francis Schaeffer on modern man’s tendency to leap into the irrational for meaning and value.
- d. The solution is to pray or sing with the spirit *and* with mind (v. 15b).
 - (1) The Christian’s mind must *always* be engaged.
 - (2) This is why mind-altering substances and mind-altering entertainment is a no go for Christians. Beware of anything that involves “passive renunciation of wilful control.”
- e. As an example, if one gives thanks in a foreign language, an “outsider” cannot say “amen” because he doesn’t understand what is being said (v. 16)?
- f. The one may be giving thanks in a foreign tongue, but the other is not being edified, because he or she doesn’t understand (v. 17).
 - (1) If we cannot confirm a person is saying “Jesus is Lord,” how can we say amen?
 - (2) **1 Co 12:3** 3 Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says Jesus is accursed! and no one can say Jesus is Lord except in the Holy Spirit.
- g. On his missionary journeys, Paul speaks in foreign tongues more than anyone (to spread the gospel message) (v. 18).
 - (1) Paul was an extremely gifted, intelligent, well-travelled man who was in the business of speaking to a wide diversity of people. He spoke in several foreign languages. We should not assume he is talking about a miraculous gift here.
- h. However, in church, Paul would rather speak a few easily understandable words with everyone’s mind engaged than 10,000 words in a foreign tongue (v. 19).

5. Thinking about Foreign Languages and Prophecy (1 Co 14:20-25).

- a. **1 Co 14:20-25** 20 Brothers and sisters, do not become children in your thinking (φρήν). Be infants in evil, but in your thinking (φρήν) be mature (τέλειος). 21 In the Law it is written, By other tongues (ἐν ἑτερογλώσσοις) and by other lips (ἐν χεῖλεσιν

ἑτέρων) will I speak to this people [Israel], and even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord. 22 Thus [foreign] tongues are a sign not for believers (τοῖς πιστεύουσιν) but for [Jewish] unbelievers (τοῖς ἀπίστοις), while prophecy (ἡ... προφητεία) is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers. 23 If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in [foreign] tongues, and outsiders (ιδιώται) or unbelievers (ἄπιστοι) enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds (μαίνομαι)? 24 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted (ἐλέγχω) by all, he is called to account (ἀνακρίνω) 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 truly among you.

- b. In their thinking (φρήν), the Corinthians are to be mature and not become more childish (v. 20).
 - (1) φρήν: “the process of careful consideration, *thinking, understanding*” (BDAG, 1065).
 - (2) A facilitation with or stress on tongues evidences immaturity, not maturity.
 - (3) Children gravitate to things that are exciting and make a lot of noise (e.g., noise toys, video games, smartphones, and television).
- c. When it comes to evil, however, the Corinthians are to be infants (v. 20b).
- d. The Old Testament says God will speak to Israel in foreign tongues (ἑτερογλώσσοις), but Israel won’t listen (v. 21).
 - (1) **Is 28:11-12** 11 For by people of strange lips and with a foreign tongue Yahweh will speak to this people, 12 to whom he has said, This is rest. Give rest to the weary. And this is repose, yet they would not hear.
 - (2) ἑτερογλώσσοις: “Aq Ps 113:1 and Is 33:19...*speaking a foreign language ἐν ἑτερογλώσσοις λαλεῖν speak through people who use strange languages* 1 Cor 14:21 (after Is 28:11, where Aq. seems to have written ἑτερόγλ)...” (BDAG, 398).
- e. The purpose of tongues was to warn Jewish unbelievers prior to ad 70 (v. 22a).
 - (1) This is not what my co-evangelist did one time in Dunedin.
 - (2) *1 Corinthians* (c. ad 55), and *Acts* (c. ad 62) were both written before ad 70.
 - (3) Foreign languages being spoken in Israel is an Old Testament theme.
 - (a) **Dt 28:49** 49 Yahweh will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, swooping down like the eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand....
 - (d) Tongues were a follow-on from the warning Jesus had given about ad 70.
 - (a) **Lk 21:20** 20 But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near.
 - (e) In Acts, Jews are present each time tongues is mentioned, and shortly after each occurrence, Jewish opposition is noted by Luke,
 - (f) Corinth was a thriving commercial center where when many Jews lived, especially after the edict of Claudius.
 - (a) **Ac 18:2** 2 And [Paul] found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome.
 - (g) There was considerable Jewish opposition to the Christians at Corinth.
 - (a) **Ac 18:4-8** 4 And [Paul] reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks. 5 When Silas and Timothy arrived from

Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Messiah was Jesus. 6 And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles. 7 And he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. His house was next door to the synagogue. 8 Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord [Jesus], together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptised

- f. Prophecy is a “sign” for believers (v. 22b).
- g. If everyone in the church speaks foreign tongues, outsiders and unbelievers who visit will understandably think Christians are out of their minds (v. 23).
 - (1) μαίνομαι: “*be mad, be out of one’s mind beside δαιμόνιον ἔχειν and as a result of it: have no control over oneself*” (BDAG, 610).
- h. By contrast, if everyone prophesies (using clear speech), those same unbelievers and outsiders will be convicted and called to account by all (v. 24).
 - (1) ἐλέγχω: “*to bring a pers. to the point of recognizing wrongdoing, convict, convince someone of someth., point someth. out to someone*” (BDAG, 315).
 - (2) ἀνακρίνω: “*to examine with a view to finding fault, judge, call to account, discern*” (BDAG, 66).
- i. The secrets of visitors’ hearts will be disclosed, and they will respect and worship the God of the Christians (v. 25).

6. Orderly Worship (1 Co 14:26-33).

- a. **1 Co 14:26-33** 26 What then, brothers and sisters (ἀδελφοί)? When you come together, each one has a hymn (ψαλμός), a teaching (διδασχία), a revelation (ἀποκάλυψις), a [foreign] tongue (γλῶσσα), or a translation (ἐρμηνεία). Let all things be done for building up [the church as a whole]. 27 If any speak in a [foreign] tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone translate. 28 But if there is no one to translate, let each of them keep silent (σιγάω) in church and speak to himself and to God (ἑαυτῷ...καὶ τῷ θεῷ). 29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others evaluate (διακρίνω) what is said. 30 If a revelation (ἀποκάλυψις) is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. 31 For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn (μανθάνω) and all be encouraged (παρακαλέω). 32 And the spirits (pl.) of prophets (προφήτης) are subject to prophets. 33 For God is not a God of disorder (ἀκαταστασία) but of harmony (εἰρήνη).
- b. When the Corinthian church gathers (v. 26a), various members are to present:
 - (1) A hymn (v. 26b).
 - (2) A teaching (v. 26c).
 - (3) A revelation (v. 26d).
 - (4) A foreign language statement (v. 26e).
 - (5) A translation of the foreign language statement (v. 26f).
 - (a) Church services should be highly participatory. Many believers can and should contribute to the general spiritual welfare of the congregation.
 - (b) Possibly women could participate in these activities, provided their head was covered.

- 1) **1 Co 11:4-5** 4 Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonours his head, 5 but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonours her head, because it is the same as if her head were shaven.
- c. The primary criterion is whether the activity builds up the church (v. 26g).
 - (1) These activities are not for self-development or self-display. They are for the edification of the entire body. A church gathering is not the venue for “expressing our authentic selves.”
- d. Procedures for foreign tongues in church gatherings at Corinth are:
 - (1) Tongues are optional and not required (v. 27a).
 - (2) No more than two or three are to speak in tongues (v. 27b).
 - (3) The two or three must take turns (v. 27c).
 - (4) Translation is required (v. 27d).
 - (5) If there is no translator, tongues speakers must keep silent (v. 28a).
 - (a) *σιγάω*: “say nothing, keep still, keep silent” (*BDAG*, 922).
 - (6) Tongues speakers may, if they like, speak to themselves and to God (v. 28b).
 - (a) This verse shows “public” tongues and “private” tongues are dealing with the same activity, namely speaking in real human languages.
- e. Procedures for type 2 prophecy in church gatherings at Corinth are:
 - (1) At most two or three are to speak (v. 29a).
 - (2) Others must evaluate what is said (against already received sound doctrine)(v. 29b).
 - (a) *διακρίνω*: “to evaluate by paying careful attention to, *evaluate, judge*” (*BDAG*, 231).
 - (3) If special revelation comes to another, the first speaker must stop (v. 30).
 - (4) Those prophesying must take turns (v. 31a).
 - (5) Learning and encouragement must take place (v. 31b).
 - (6) Those prophesying must submit themselves to already revealed orthodoxy (v. 32).
 - (a) This is the “safeguard” of type 2 prophecy, so that it doesn’t get out of control.
 - (b) There was obviously a flexibility about early church gatherings which is now totally lacking in many churches today.
 - (c) The larger a church gets, the more important it is to “guard the mic.”
- f. The basis for these procedures is God’s character of harmony and order (v. 33).
 - (1) *ἀκαταστασία*: “unsettled state of affairs, *disturbance, tumult*... opposition to established authority, *disorder, unruliness*” (*BDAG*, 35).
 - (2) The character of one’s god is reflected in the character of one’s worship.
 - (3) Confusion and disorder in church gatherings are not in keeping with the character of God, and such conditions dishonor him.

7. Disruptive Women to Keep Silent (1 Co 14:33-35).

- a. **1 Co 14:33-36** 33 As in all the churches of the saints, 34 the women should keep silent (*σιγάω*) in the churches. For they are not permitted (*ἐπιτρέπω*) to speak (*λαλέω*, pres.), but should be in submission (*ὑποτάσσω*), as the Law also says. 35 If there is anything they desire to learn (*μανθάνω*), let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful (*αἰσχρὸς*) for a woman to speak (*λαλέω*) in church.
- b. There are four views about this paragraph:

- (1) Paul said it, and the message is universal (Lenski, William Barclay, Harry Ironside).
 - (a) **1 Ti 2:11-14** 11 Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. 12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man. Rather, she is to remain quiet. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.
 - 1) However, these verses speak specifically about teaching and authority, not other forms of speaking in a church gathering.
 - (b) **1 Co 11:5** 5 ...But every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonours her head, because it is the same as if her head were shaven.
 - 1) It seems women are permitted to pray or prophesy in church gatherings, provided they cover their head.
- (2) Paul said it, and the message is culture-bound (G. Campbell Morgan, David Lowery).
 - (a) Paul was silencing: (1) prophetesses in the Corinthian church who were imitating pagan prophetesses and disrupting the church with outbursts of glossolalia; or (2) women who were interrupting the gathering by asking untimely, unedifying questions.
- (3) Paul didn't say it (C. K. Barrett, Gordon Fee).
- (4) The imperatives are actually permissive imperatives ([]).
 - (a) "Women, as they prefer, are to continue to remain silent, continue to submit, and continue to ask questions of their family."
- (5) "The most common view is that Paul forbade some form of inappropriate speech, but not all speech. The second most popular interpretation is that Paul forbade some form of inspired speech other than prophecy, perhaps speech contradicting the prophets or speaking in tongues."¹
- c. (Disruptive) women are to keep silent during church gatherings (v. 34a-b).
- d. This accords with the general truth in the Law that women should be in submission (v. 34c-d).
 - (1) ὑποτάσσω: "*subject oneself, be subjected or subordinated, obey* abs.... Of submission involving recognition of an ordered structure, w. dat. of the entity to whom/which appropriate respect is shown" (BDAG, 1042).
- e. Assuming (εἰ) a woman desires to learn (and she should), she is to ask her husband or father at home (v. 35a).
 - (1) Rather than calling out a question in the middle of a prophetic message, women were to wait and ask their own husband or father at home.
- f. It is shameful for a woman, in a church gathering, to speak in a disrespectful or disruptive manner (v. 35b).
 - (1) αἰσχρός: "in var. senses from 'ugly' in an external sense to 'base' as in moral deformity.... A term esp. significant in honor-shame oriented society; gener. in ref. to that which fails to meet expected moral and cultural standards [opp. καλός]) pert. to being socially or morally unacceptable, *shameful, base*" (BDAG, 29).

¹ Thomas Constable, *Notes on 1 Corinthians*.

8. Paul's Command Is Jesus' Command (1 Co 14:36-40).

- a. **1 Co 14:36-40** 36 Or was it from you that the word of God came? Or are you the only ones it has reached? 37 If anyone thinks that he is a prophet (προφήτης) or spiritual (πνευματικός), he should acknowledge (ἐπιγινώσκω, pres.) that the things I am writing to you are a command (ἐντολή) of the Lord [Jesus]. 38 If anyone ignores (ἀγνοέω, pres.) this, he is to be ignored (ἀγνοέω, pres.). 39 So then, my brothers and sisters (ἀδελφοί), earnestly desire (ζηλόω) to prophesy, and do not forbid (κωλύω) speaking in [foreign] tongues. 40 But all things should be done decently (εὐσχημόνως) and according to order (κατὰ τάξιν).
 - (1) In other words, the Corinthians aren't special. They don't get to play by their own rules. They don't get to set their own standards for spirituality.
- b. The gospel did not originate with the Corinthians, nor is Corinth the only place the gospel has reached (v. 36).
 - (1) Note: only apostles can issue commands with the authority of Jesus.
 - (2) Scripture trumps type 2 prophesy and certainly foreign tongues.
 - (3) Submission to the apostles and their teaching is an expression of submission to the Jesus himself.
 - (a) **1 Co 7:10** 10 To the married I give this charge (not I, but the Lord [Jesus]): the wife should not separate from her husband.
 - (b) **1 Co 7:25** 25 Now concerning the betrothed, I have no command [passed down verbally] from the Lord [Jesus], but I give my judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy [as an apostle].
- c. Those who are truly prophets or truly spiritual will acknowledge Paul's written instructions are Jesus' own command (v. 37).
 - (1) ἀγνοέω: "to pay little or no attention to, not to recognize, disregard, ignore" (BDAG, 13).
 - (2) The Corinthians must not allow to prophesy anyone who refuses to acknowledge Paul's authority and the instructions he has given.
 - (3) Unfortunately, some members of the Corinthian church continued to resist Paul's apostolic authority, as *2 Corinthians* makes clear.
- d. In summary, the Corinthians are to earnestly desire to prophesy (v. 39a).
 - (1) ζηλόω: "be positively and intensely interested in someth., strive, desire, exert oneself earnestly, be dedicated" (BDAG, 427).
- e. Speaking in foreign tongues is not to be forbidden (v. 39b).
 - (1) This rule will apply until tongues cease of themselves around ad 70.
 - (a) **1 Co 13:8** 8 As for prophecies, they will be done away with. As for [foreign] tongues, they will cease of themselves....
- f. All things should be done decently and according to order (v. 40).
 - (1) εὐσχημόνως: "pert. to being proper in behavior, *decently, becomingly*" (BDAG, 414).
 - (2) τάξις: "a state of good order, order, proper procedure" (BDAG, 989).

9. Application.