### 1 Corinthians

## Chapter 14

1Therefore, we should [all be] pursuing love, as we also zealously seek the [gifts] of the Spirit… And I prefer that you prophesy.  
  
2For those who speak in tongues aren’t talking to men but to God, since nobody else is listening… So by the Spirit they’re speaking mysteries. 3On the other hand, those who prophesy are building up, encouraging, and bringing comfort to others.  
  
4So while the one who speaks in tongues builds himself up, the one who prophesies builds up [the whole] congregation.  
  
5While I would like all of you to [be able to] speak in tongues, I’d prefer that you prophesy, because the one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues… Unless he can also translate, so the whole congregation can be built up.  
  
6Brothers, if I were to come to you right now and speak to you in a foreign tongue... What good would it do if I didn’t also speak to you with a revelation? Or with knowledge? Or with a prophecy? Or with something that I can teach you?  
  
7It’s the same as with inanimate things that make sounds, like flutes or harps. If you can’t distinguish the difference between the notes, how can you tell what’s being played? 8If a trumpet blows an unrecognizable signal, who’ll prepare for war?  
  
9So unless you use your tongues to say things that are easily understood, how will anyone know what you’re saying?  
  
You will, for a fact, just be speaking into the air!  
  
10There are many kinds of vocalizations in the world, and they all mean something. 11However, if I don’t understand the meaning of the sound, I’m a foreigner to the one who’s speaking, and the one who’s speaking will be a foreigner to me.  
  
12Therefore, if you have a zeal for the Spirit, use it in ways to build up the congregation, so that everyone can prosper… 13Let the one who speaks in tongues pray that he can also translate! 14For when I pray in a foreign language, although my spirit may be praying, my mind isn’t receiving any benefit.  
  
15Then, what should we do?  
  
If I pray by the Spirit, I’ll also pray in my mind. And if I sing praises by the Spirit, I’ll sing praises in my mind.  
  
16For if we’re only offering praise by the Spirit, how will any ordinary man who’s there and doesn’t understand us say, ‘May it be so,’ when we’re giving thanks? 17For even though it may be true that we’re giving thanks in a fine way, this person isn’t being built up.  
  
18I thank God that I can speak more languages than all of you.  
  
19However, I’d rather speak 5 words using my mind so that I can teach others when I’m in a congregation, than 10,000 words in a foreign language.  
  
20Brothers, don’t be like children when it comes to [using] the power of your minds… Be babies when it comes to badness, as you perfect your abilities to reason!  
  
21For it’s written in the Law:  
  
 ‘‘Even though I speak to these people in other tongues and with other lips... They still won’t listen to me,’ says Jehovah.’ [Isaiah 28:11-12]  
  
22Understand that speaking in a foreign tongue isn’t a sign to unbelievers, but to believers, while prophesying isn’t for believers, it’s for unbelievers. [see translator note]  
  
23[For example:] If the whole congregation is speaking in tongues when some ordinary person or unbeliever comes into your meeting place, won’t he just think you’re crazy?  
  
24However, if everyone is prophesying when an unbeliever or ordinary person enters, he’s corrected and judged by them all. 25Then, as the secrets in his heart are revealed, he will fall to his face before God and say:  
  
 ‘God is truly among you!’  
  
26Therefore, what should happen, brothers?  
  
When you’re meeting, one should have a psalm, another should have a teaching, another should have a revelation, and another should speak in a foreign language… That is, as long as someone else interprets it. Because, everything that’s done there should be for [the purpose of] building up!  
  
27So if some are speaking in tongues, limit it to two or three at the most, and do it in turns, and then have someone do the translating.  
  
28However, if no one can translate it, such people should be silent in the congregation, speaking just to themselves and to God.  
  
29Let two or three prophets speak instead, and allow the rest to judge the meaning of what they’re saying.  
  
30Then if someone else has a revelation while he’s sitting there, the first one should [yield to him]. 31This way, when each of them prophesy in turns, everyone can learn and be encouraged.  
  
32For the breaths of the prophets should be controlled by the prophets [themselves], 33because God doesn’t send us confusion, [He sends] peace, as in all the congregations of Holy Ones.  
  
34The women should remain silent in the congregation… They shouldn’t be allowed to speak out. Rather (as the Law says), they should be submissive. 35And if they wish to know something, let them ask their men [when they get] home; for it’s disgraceful for a woman to speak out in a congregation. [likely spurious]  
  
36Or [do you think that] the Word of God is coming from just you, and that you’re the only one who understands it?  
  
37Well, if someone thinks he’s a prophet and that he’s under the influence of [God’s] Spirit, then he should agree with these things that I’m writing to you, because these are the Lord’s commandments!  
  
38However, if there are those who choose to be ignorant, let them remain ignorant.  
  
39My brothers, keep on zealously seeking the [gift of] prophesying, but don’t forbid the speaking in tongues. 40Just make sure that everything is conducted in a tasteful and orderly way.