

- A great example of what Paul is getting at is in Acts 2 and the event on Pentecost. Acts 2:12, 14, 37-38

14:27-33 - Rules for an orderly service

- “Not everything that was inherently good was necessarily good for the gathered assembly.”
- V27-28 – only 2-3 people should speak in tongues at any gathering – and only if there is an interpreter; otherwise, keep between yourself and God.
- V29 – only 2-3 prophets can speak, and when they do – let what they say be weighed by the rest who are gathered. 1 Cor. 2:13-15; 1 Thess. 5:20-22; Deut. 18:20-22
- V30-33 – Let each take their turn, don’t talk over one another. You have control over yourself. God himself is orderly.

14:34-35 – Women’s roles in the church

- Women prophets: **Miriam**, Aaron’s sister (Ex. 15:20); **Deborah**, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth and a judge of Israel (Judges 4:4); **Huldah** (2 Kings 22:16-20); **Anna** (Luke 2:36); **Philip’s virgin daughters** (Acts 21:9)
- 1 Corinthians 11:5 presumes women were involved in prophesying and prayer in public worship.
- “Paul’s goal in the passage is to reestablish order in worship, not to demean the honor of women or devalue their worship of God.”
- Craig Keener, IVP Bible Background Commentary: NT, p.483, “Informed listeners customarily asked questions during lectures, but it was considered rude for the ignorant to do so. Although by modern standards literacy was generally low in antiquity (less so in cities), women were far less trained in the scriptures and public reasoning than men were. Paul does not expect these uneducated women to refrain from learning. Instead he provides the most progressive model of his day: their husbands are to respect their intellectual capabilities and give them private instruction. He wants them to stop interrupting the teaching period of the church service, however, because until they know more, they are distracting everyone and disrupting church order.”

Why does all this matter? Understanding the use and theology of gifts helps us to avoid heresy, as well as misleading, suppressive, or incomplete theology. Know your Bible, let scripture be the highest authority.

I Understand why you believe what you believe

1 CORINTHIANS 14 – ORDERLY WORSHIP EDIFIES THE CHURCH AND GLORIFIES GOD

14:1-5 – Gifts are meant to edify the body of Christ

- “Spiritual gifts are supernatural empowerments given by the Holy Spirit to the followers of Christ so that they can do the work of building up the body of Christ, that is, the church, and extend the Kingdom of God throughout the world.¹⁷”
- “The value of gifts must be judged by their utility in any given setting; intelligible speech profits others in public worship, whereas unintelligible speech, no matter how inspired, is profitable only privately or if interpreted.¹⁷”
- “gifts should be used to exalt the individual or to feed an immature desire for attention¹⁷”

14:6-19 - Speaking in tongues is useless without interpretation

- v6–12 – Common Examples
 - 1) Musical instruments like the flute and harp.
 - 2) The trumpet which sounds the call for battle.
 - 3) Spoken languages. People must understand what is being said (vv. 10–11). These things only bring confusion unless they are understandable to the listener.
- V11 – Barbarian – one who did not speak Greek.
- V12, “seek to abound for the edification of the church.”
- V14 – “Without an interpretation, the speaker does not benefit intellectually, and neither does anyone else.¹⁷”
- V16-19 – Tongues aren’t taboo, there simply needs to be an interpretation so others can be built up in their faith.

14:20-25 – Tongues and prophecy act as signs

- V21 – Isaiah 28:11, “in context it refers to a sign of judgement by the invading Assyrian army.” “The point of the quotation is that if Israel would not hear the Lord through the prophets, they would not hear even when he spoke in foreign languages to them through foreign people.”
- V22 – Tongues are a sign for unbelievers; prophecy is a sign for believers. While tongues can be evidence of God, prophecy more regularly and natural will point people to repentance and believe in him.