

# 1 Corinthians

## Doctrine and Judgment

### Class 11

### Chapters 13:8b thru 14:25

#### John: Doctrine or Judgment? 13:8b-13

Doctrine ....

**8b** But whether *there are prophecies, they will fail* or *vanish* (passive voice, failure from without, no longer be there, vanish); whether *there are tongues, they will cease* (middle voice, from within, as in waves ceased immediately by Jesus);

-**Carson:** One knows what force the middle voice has only by careful inspection of all occurrences of the verb being studied. In the New Testament, this verb prefers the middle; but that does not mean the subject “stops” under its own power. For instance, when Jesus rebukes the wind and raging waters, the storm stops (same verb, in the middle voice in Luke 8:24)—and certainly not under its own power.

**v.8b cont. ....** whether *there is knowledge* (via the gift of knowledge), *it will vanish away* (passive voice, happens from without).

**9** For we know in part and we prophesy in part (we exercise these gifts because we know in part, for even prophesy is partial).

#### What is that which is ‘perfect’, and when will it happen or come? Vs. 10-12

-What will be its effects when it happens or comes?

-The question is when? The answer is in v.10

**10** But when that which is perfect has come or arrived, then that which is in part (gifts of knowledge & prophesy) will be done away.

**11** When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man (perfect or mature vs. childish), I put away childish things.

-No matter how mature we may be now when Jesus comes or we come to Jesus and our knowledge is perfected and the contrast between now and then will like a babe versus a mature adult.

-That is how little, how incomplete, and mis-represented with errors and holes our knowledge is now even after 50-60-70 years of mature walking with the Lord!

**12** For now we see in a mirror, dimly (‘ainegma’ we would say enigma), but then (when that which is perfect has come) face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

-Is the ‘then’ related to when that which is perfect has come?

#### Three theories:

**1-Carson:** It has been strongly argued that “perfection that will come” refers to the maturity of the church .... The word in New Testament usage most frequently relates to some level of Christian maturity; and so (it is argued) Paul purposely chooses the term here to keep the precise point of maturity open-ended. If the Lord returned before Paul’s death, that would have brought the promised “maturity” or “perfection”; if not, the completion of the canon and all the information the believer needs for spiritual maturity would bring about this “perfection.”

**2-Carson:** It has also been strongly argued that the “perfection that will come” is the completed canon itself. Much of the impetus for this position stems from a profound concern for the finality of biblical truth. If the gift of prophecy, say, is being exercised with the same authority as it had in the hands of Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Amos, it is extremely difficult to see how, if the gift of prophecy still operates, one cannot avoid sliding into the stance of the cults. Why should not such modern prophets write down their prophecies, which in turn should be accepted as “canon” by the church?

**3-Carson:** The third and majority interpretation is that “perfection” is related to the second coming of Christ.

-The outcome of the debate over these positions is very important, because Paul writes that the ‘imperfect’ disappears when ‘perfection’ comes. In other words, the gifts of prophecy, knowledge, and tongues (and presumably by extrapolation most other charismatic gifts) will pass away at some point future to Paul’s writing, designated by him as “when perfection comes.”

-The case for #3: Among the most important factors are these:

**(1)** It is difficult to believe that Paul could have expected the Corinthians to think that by “perfection” he was alluding to the cessation or completion of the writing of Scripture.

**(2)** Most important is verse 12b **“Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known”**. Perfection entails a state where my knowledge is in some ways comparable with God’s present knowledge of me: “then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known [sc., by God].” This does not mean that Paul expects to be granted omniscience, but “that in the consummation he expects to be freed from the misconceptions and inabilities to understand (especially to understand God and his word) which are part of this present life. His knowledge will resemble God’s present knowledge of him because it will contain no false impressions and will not be limited to what is able to be perceived in this age.”

-Paul’s point is not that the charismatic gifts disappear because of their intrinsic weakness or failure. His argument is built rather “on the foundation of He who is to come.” ... When He comes or we are face to face, the purpose of such gifts as prophecy, knowledge, and tongues will have disappeared: what possible service could they still render when ‘face to face’?

-The gift of prophesy versus the writings of the Prophets is that both are ‘revelation’ but the Prophets were ‘inspired’ to write as Scripture the words given to them.

-Plus the prophet listeners in the church age are to judge what those having the gift of prophesy say (see 14:29). Not so with the OT Prophets.

**(3)** Scarcely less important is verse 12a. **“For now we see in a mirror, dimly”** or we see a poor reflection of ourselves: the expression suggests unclear or still indistinct illumination of divine revelation; but then, when perfection comes, “we shall see face to face”— a formula that in the Septuagint suggests a theophany or an appearance of Christ in the OT...

**(4)** Verse 11 also draws a sharp contrast. It reads: **“When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”** Although the infant/adult contrast is a standard rhetorical device in the ancient world, its specific application here demands a considerable leap forward from infancy to manhood. To argue that the spiritual experience and maturity of the early church before the canon’s completion are to the experience of maturity of the post-canonical church just what the experience of an infant’s talk and understanding is to that of an adult is historical nonsense.

**13 And right now (versus then of v.12?) abide (sgl.) faith, hope, love, these three (acting together as a unit, 3 yet one unit); but the greatest of these is love.**

-Take away anyone now, and we would be less equipped for this world.

-In John 15 we are to abide in the vine .... and we are to see to it that these three abide in us.

**-What remains in eternity of these three?**

**1)** Many understand the words ‘For now’ or ‘And now’ (Nuni de) as temporary: now, during this age, only three virtues abide, faith, hope, and love; but if the greatest of these is love, presumably it outstrips the others because it alone goes into eternity. This, it is argued, is supported by the fact that faith and sight can be contrasted (as in 2 Cor. 5:7): now we walk by faith, then we shall walk by sight. Further, hope is swallowed up in realization and attainment (Rom. 8:24–25). So love alone is permanent.

**2)** It has also been argued that these three words collectively sum up, the triad of faith, hope, and love, so that collectively they serve as a standard of comparison for something new: greater than this collective entity in us on earth is the love (sc., of God). Whether our faith and our hope and our love carry on into eternity is a matter of relative indifference; the ultimate value we must recognize is God’s love for

us.

**3) God is in His core essence Spirit, Light, and Love (faith and hope He gives but they are not a part of who He is in His unmanifested essence) ... love therefore will abide as long as God abides, because He is Love.**

### **Joey: Doctrine or Judgment? 14:1-5**

Judgment ...

**14:1 Pursue (persecute after) love, and desire (be zealous for) the spirituals gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.**

-The first half of this verse seems to sum up chapter 12 (gifts and their body functions) and chapter 13, love is the better way of exercising these gifts in the body of Christ.

**2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for or and no one understands him; however, in the spirit (a synonymic statement for speaking in tongues) he speaks mysteries (an unknown message to God).**

-Verses referencing our 'speaking' and the 'Spirit' of God: See Matt. 10:20 (note here the Spirit speaks in you then you speak out loud to others), Mark 13:11, John 6:63 of Jesus, Acts 2:4 (tongues), Acts 10:44 (tongues), Acts 11:15 (recalling 10:44), 1Cor. 12:3 (tongues?), 1Cor. 14:2 (tongues in the Spirit),

-Verses that reference Prayer and the Spirit: Rom. 8:26, 1Cor. 14:14, 15, Jude 20.

**3 But he who prophesies speaks edification (oikodome) and exhortation (paraklesis) and comfort (paramythia, speaking, 'mythia'), closely, thus tenderly, 'para') to men.**

-Prophesy speaks three things to men, not to God but from Him

**4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.**

-Two verbal gifts different 'edify-ees'

-Tongues the only gift that edifies the speaker, but it will edify the audience if it is translated

Judgment ....

**5 I wish you all spoke with tongues,**

-No contradiction here versus 12:30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

-12:30 is in the context of body function and ministry.

-Or as he says in 14:19: 'yet in the church', when it is gathered

-Not everyone in a body gathering will speak with tongues and interpret.

-In v.27 of this chapter no more than 2 or at the most three are speak in tongues and not without interpretation.

**v. 5 cont. ... but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.**

### **John: Doctrine or Judgment? 14:6-9**

Doctrine ....

**6 But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues (which are to god and not man, v.2), what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching?**

-Tongues has no profit for the church, has no edification for the church unless interpreted,

## Let me give you an illustration ....

**7** Even things ~~without~~ *with no life*, whether flute or harp (*man-made and lifeless*), when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is piped or played?

**8** For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle?

**9** So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words *easy or clear* to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.

-In a body or church setting when speaking in tongues interpretation and clarity are essential or let no one speak in tongues.

## Joey: Doctrine or Judgment? 14:10-19

### Another illustration .....

**10** There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance.

-Significance to who? Those who speak it and understand it and those who listen and are given understanding thru interpretation.

### So What does all of this mean relative to tongues when used in the church?

#### Five Applications ...

**#1-11** **Therefore**, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to him who speaks, and he who speaks will be a foreigner to me.

**12** Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual *gifts*, let it be for the edification of the church *that all of you seek to excel or abound.*

**#2-13** **Therefore** let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.

-Don't assume someone else will do so, take the responsibility to seek interpretation for you are the one who spoke out loud in a foreign language

**14** For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.

-This I believe is a primary personal, but not church use for tongues: prayer

-My spirit praying in the Spirit

-This I believe is what Jude in **Jude 1:20**

**20** But you, beloved, building yourselves up (self-edification) on your most holy faith, and praying (*common word for prayer*) in the Holy Spirit,

-Two ways per Jude to build self up: On doctrine, sound teaching and praying in the Spirit. Paul would say that he or she who prays or speaks in tongues edifies or builds themselves up.

**#3-15** What is *the conclusion* then? I will pray (*common word for prayer*) with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding (*especially if I am not alone when praying in tongues*).

-Pray in tongues and pray with the interpretation and I will pray in my native tongue in with the Spirit as well

*v.15 cont. ....* I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.

-Twice I have heard singing in the Spirit and then the interpretation was sung as well.

-Here are the words to a sung interpretation:

Oh Jehovah thou art my need

The blood of the lamb is covering me

He died in my place that I might be free

From sin and self and flame

**#4-16** Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say?

**17** For you indeed give thanks well (*another indicator that we are speaking to God and not men*), but the other is not edified.

**#5-18** I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all;

-Wow! Who would have ever thought this to be so.

- We have no other indicators from Scripture of Paul speaking in tongues, let alone more than a church that is obsessed with speaking in tongues
- My inclination is that Paul did more speaking by himself in his prayer practice than he did in a corporate setting.... why do I say that? Because of the next verse ...
- 19 yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.**
- Teaching here has a simple formula: Speaking Words + (or with) understanding = teaching

### **John: Doctrine or Judgment? 14:20-25**

Doctrine ....

**20 Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.**

- Carson:** The Corinthians thought of themselves as mature; Paul for his part has already had occasion in this epistle to tell them he considers them so infantile they have not even attained the place where they can consume solid foods (3:2)... what he is correcting here in 14 are indicators of another area of immaturity.
- It is as if he was saying: "Overconcentration on tongues is a mark of immaturity. There is indeed a right way for Christians to be childlike—in their freedom from guile ...; but in their 'intelligent speak' they ought to be mature, edifying in love.."

-Here in v.21 Paul builds on his remarks from vs.10-11 **10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance. 11 Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner (barbarous) to him who speaks, and he who speaks will be a foreigner (barbarous) to me. ..**

**21 In the law it is written:**

-'In the Law': used in a strict sense to refer to the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament attributed to Moses. It was also used in a wider sense, as here, to refer to Scripture as a whole (Matt. 5:18; Luke 10:26; 16:17; John 7:49; 10:34; 12:34; 15:25; Rom. 3:19). Here Paul uses it in the latter sense to refer to a passage from **Isaiah 28:11-12** .....

**v.21 cont. ....** "With men of other tongues and other lips (we might call them 'foreigners' as in v.11) I will speak to this people; (in Is. a direct fulfillment of curse of Deut. 28:49-50, v.49 reads: *The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand.*)  
v.12 from Is. 28:12 not quoted here.... "To whom He said, "This is the rest with which You may cause the weary to rest,"  
And, "This is the refreshing";  
**v.21 of 1Cor. 14** finishes with the end of Is. 28:12 only.... **And yet, for all that, they will not hear Me,**  
**says the Lord.**

- Why did Paul thru the H.S. leave out the first part of Is. 28:12?
- Because it had nothing to do with this discussion on tongues as a foreign language, and not hearing.
- They will not hear of it because they do not believe in the gift of tongues, nor of the requisite gift of interpretation

**22 Therefore tongues are for a sign (an indicator), not to those who believe in tongues speaking but to unbelievers and those who don't believe in them, whether saved or unsaved;**

- On the Day of Pentecost this was very evident regarding being for unbelievers.
- Jews from other countries were in Jerusalem for Pentecost spoke natively the languages the Apostles were speaking which were naturally foreign to the Apostles, and what the visitors were hearing was a sign to them, and it got their attention enough so that they listened to Peter's explanation that's these

men were not drunk, but this is what Joel was speaking about. And followed Peter's salvation message and three thousand were saved

**v.22 cont. .... but prophesying** (*which serves as a clear communication*) **is a sign not for unbelievers but for those who believe** (*for it is primarily a gift to edify the church*).

-Understand Corinthians this is the way tongues and prophesy should work together, especially if the unbelievers and the uninformed are there or come in to the assembly....

**23 Therefore** if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak *at once* with tongues, and there come in *those who* are uninformed (*same as in v.16*) or unbelievers, will they not say that you are out of your mind?

-This mass confusion does not help to win unbelievers over to Christ or win the uninformed or misinformed regarding tongues speaking.

-**Carson:** When uninformed or unbelievers come into a Christian assembly where everyone is speaking in tongues, it will not be surprising if they simply conclude that the believers are possessed (which is probably what the word *μαίνεσθε* [mainesthe] means, translated: '*out of your mind*').

-But one person speaking and then one person interpreting would not draw a conclusion that they all were crazy. It would be a sign, and create curiosity.

**24 But if all prophesy**, (*and here is one reason I would rather you prophesy*) **and an unbeliever** (*not believing in these supernatural gifts, or a non-Christian*) **or an uninformed** (*not properly trained*) **person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted** (*anakrino, examined carefully*) **by all thru prophetic messages about them.**

-Question? Can believers have unbelief or be unbelievers in certain areas of doctrine? Yes ... **See** John 20:27, Matt. 17:20, Mark 9:24, Mark 16:14, Heb. 3:12

-Was there unbelief and mis-information and therefore those who were 'uninformed' in Corinth regarding tongues? **See** 12:1-3

**A prophesy may be given that speaks to them directly and they are humbled....**

**25 And thus the secrets of his heart** (*things only known by him or her*) **are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.**

# 1 Corinthians

## Doctrine and Judgment

Class 11

Chapter 13:8b – Chapter 14:25

**John:** Doctrine or Judgment?

8b But whether *there are* prophecies, they will fail; whether *there are* tongues, they will cease; whether *there is* knowledge, it will vanish away.

9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

– Partial understanding this side of heaven

In Heaven, we will have full knowledge of God

**What remains...The conclusion**

13 And now abide

**faith**, Trust in God...

**hope**, earnest expectation of coming good

**love**, outpouring from in-pouring

**these three; but the greatest of these is love.**

What do you think will matter at the end of your live?

– How you loved God and loved others.

○ That's what will remain

## Joey: Doctrine or Judgment?

Chapter 13 serves as a transition from chapter 12 (regarding the gifts of the Spirit) to chapter 14 (focusing on the abuse of one particular gift, the gift of tongues).

- Paul expounds on the statement he made back in 12:31: “But eagerly desire the greater gifts.”

### What to pursue and why...

**14:1** Paul starts out the chapter with a command **Pursue love**, *strive after; chase*  
*Louw-Nida: to do something with intense effort and with definite purpose or goal*

- *Go after it...* why do you come to church? Why do interact with people?
  - Are you pursuing love as the goal?

Pursuing love requires work...it takes **intense efforts; definite purpose**

- It's not natural...you don't have pursue with intense effort things that come natural to you. This requires work...
- I was irritated on Tuesday...everything was rubbing me the wrong way.
  - How did I handle it? I remembered this verse specifically
  - I talked to myself ...non-audibly (internally)
    - Although my flesh was aggravated on the inside, I prayed and asked The Lord to help me, so that my flesh wouldn't manifest itself badly on the outside.
    - What would that have looked like?
      - Blowing up angrily
      - Diarrhea from the mouth

Our prayer: Lord, I need to display outwardly the evidence of your great love

Paul used the word to refer to spiritual effort”

- “*persecute*” used 29 times of the 44 occurrences
- “*pursue*” used 9 times of the 44 occurrences
  - All have something to do with “righteousness” or “peace”
- “*suffer persecution*” used 2 times of the 44 occurrences
- “*follow*”... “*given*”... “*press*”... “*press on*”... each used one time

## 2 Timothy 2:22

Flee also youthful lusts *stop chasing after those things; chase these things instead* but **pursue** righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Does this require work on our part? **intense efforts; definite purpose**

## Hebrews 12:14

Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

- How about that? Pursuing peace and holiness

## Philippians 3:12 Pressing Toward the Goal (header in your bible)

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I **press on** (pursue) , that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

- Is there work involved in pressing on?

and continually **desire spirituals** (command)...*gifts is not in the original manuscripts*

“**desire**” means to be jealous, strive for, seek after, aspire to.”

BDAG: “*you are eager to possess*”...*in that state already*

- The verb tense implies continuous action, so it could read, “keep on desiring.”

Honestly...Do you desire spiritual gifts or do they freak you out a bit?

- Baptist background...they freaked me out a bit at first

but especially that you may prophesy.

- *Say that a specified thing will happen in the future. A foretelling of the future*
  - Paul mentions it 10 times in this chapter

Why should we strive for, seek after, be eager to possess the gift of prophesying?

**2 For he who speaks in a spiritual tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.** (an unknown message to God).

The believer is talking to God, not to other people. Talking to God primarily involves prayer and praise. The speaker is speaking by the power of the Spirit, but the words cannot be understood by the person doing the speaking. What they are saying is a mystery to them, but it is building them up.

As wonderful as this gift is, Paul wanted the Corinthian believers, in particular, to stop overemphasizing it. They needed to keep its value in perspective

NOW...If we are in an afterglow and someone says, Thus sayeth the Lord, get prepared, there is going to be difficult times ahead and suffering because God is judging the United States. Is that the gift of tongues? NO! Why not?

- A spiritual tongue is directed towards God; not men

Would this be a word of knowledge? I don't think so...Why not?

- Word of knowledge is about something that is presently happening; not about something that is going to happen

Could it be prophesying?

- It could be, we would have to test it.

Who is prophesy directed to and what purpose does it serve?

**3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.**

Prophesy speaks three things to men, not to God, but it does come from Him

GUZIK:

1. **Edification**... “building up.” It is a construction term, and speaks of our being “built up” in the Lord. A word of prophecy will *build someone up*, not tear him or her down.
2. **Exhortation**... is encouragement. It is like the speech from the coach in the locker room before the big game, rallying the team to go out and perform as they were trained to perform. A word of prophecy will *encourage* someone, not discourage him or her.
3. **Comfort...consolation (relief in affliction)** has the idea of not only consoling, but also *strengthening*. It doesn't just cry with someone hurting, it puts its arms around them and strengthens them to carry the load. A word of prophecy will *strengthen*, not weaken someone.

The test of prophesying...it's 3 activities

- Does it BUILD UP, STIR UP or CHEER UP?

The reason for the gift of tongues...

**4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.**

- a tongue edifies himself

- Your spirit is built up even though you don't know what is being said
  - for *self*-edification, not *church* edification.
- **prophesies edifies the church**
  - What's being said is edifying, exhorting and comforting the body of Christ

How do both of these gifts manifest themselves though us? Through what sense of ours? Hearing...both of them are verbal gifts

- Two verbal gifts with two different edifyees

Paul is making a case for something that he's going to get into in the next verse and build on in the next section.

**5 I wish** (want or desire) **you all spoke with tongues,**

- Do we see this gift as a good thing? A gift to be desired

You may be thinking...

- It's so foreign to me and I've seen it abused
  - I don't know if I would want it to be a part of my life
  - What do unbelievers think when they hear it?

**but even more** *to a greater degree and in a public assembly* **that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues** *as a stand-alone gift,*

“**tongues**” – The Spirit speaking to God in heavenly language to edify one person

“**prophesied**” – God speaking to us in our own language to edify others

Is that person that speaks in tongues a 2<sup>nd</sup> class citizen to the person who prophesies? NO!

- **greater** *means superior in importance*
- *More prominent because of certain advantages*

**unless** (an exception to what was just said) **indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.**

The gift of prophecy should be desired more than the gift of tongues because the ability to speak in tongues does not help other people since they won't be able to understand what you are saying.

Paul does not prefer prophecy over tongues because he possesses one gift but not the other. Paul possessed and exercised both gifts.

His preference for prophecy over uninterpreted tongues is simple. Prophecy edifies. It exhorts and comforts the church. Uninterpreted tongues do not. Paul makes the point by contrasting prophecy and tongues (14:2–4) and concludes that the person who prophesies is greater than the person who speaks in tongues, unless there is interpretation (14:5).

**John:** Doctrine or Judgment?

6 But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching?

- Tongues benefits me, but has no value to you
  - It better for me to speak to you **by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching** so you understand and are built up by it

Two relatable examples from your normal physical life

7 Even things without life,

Listening to music...

whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is piped or played?

- We couldn't sing along to someone banging on the piano, because we wouldn't know what was being played and therefore we wouldn't be able to sing along with what was being played.

Military life...

8 For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle?

- Back then, a trumpet was used to call men into battle by using a certain sound through the trumpet.
  - If the person playing the trumpet doesn't make a sound they can understand, the army won't know what to do

9 So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.

- Wasting your breathe

**Joey:** Doctrine or Judgment?

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance. 11 Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to him who speaks, and he who speaks *will be* a foreigner to me.

- My son and daughter-in-law just got back from their honey moon
  - They went to Paris first...
  - They were both **foreigner's**. Guess what language they didn't speak?
    - Because they didn't speak it, is the French language of no significance?
      - Not to people who speak French...they understand each other just fine most of the time.
    - Christian and McKenna heard people speaking in French, but it was no value to them because they did not understand what they were saying.
    - It may have sounded beautiful ...no comprehension
    - If the people they tried to speak with didn't understand English
      - They **will be speaking into the air...** Wasting their breathe

Just because someone doesn't understand a certain language doesn't mean that the language has no meaning. There are all sorts of languages in this world and all of them have meaning, but when two people who speak different languages attempt to communicate, one is not be able to understand the meaning of what the other is trying to say. They are foreigners to each other. Paul is saying, So it is with you, concluded Paul. Just as two foreigners cannot understand each other's language, so those speaking in tongues cannot be understood by the congregation. Thus, their speaking is not beneficial to the church as a stand-alone gift.

12 **Even so you** (plural...speaking to the church),

Paul is speaking to the church as a whole, not to one individual

**since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek** (*desire - command*) **to excel.**

**“excel” ... be in abundance; abound**

What did they have an abundance of other than problems?

- They came come short in no gift. They had an abundance of them.
- What was their problem?
  - They used them incorrected and with the wrong motive

You want to excel Corinthian believers or believers in general, desire the gifts that build up the body of Christ

The Corinthians believers had been *eager to have spiritual gifts*, Paul admonished them *to excel in gifts that build up the church* (see Ephesians 4:7-16). Paul was speaking to the church as a whole, not to individuals. The literal translation of 14:12 is, “since zealots you are of spiritual things, be zealous that you may abound in the edification of the church.” The church as a whole should strive to have the gifts that build up its members. God does not give us these gifts for private, selfish use. Like they were toys that we can pick and choose and fight over who gets what. The gifts are for helping others.

**13 Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray** (command) **that he or someone else may interpret.** **14 For if I pray in a spiritual tongue out loud, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.** (*useless or unproductive*)

It is possible that a man who has the gift of tongues might also have the gift of interpretation, but that would be the exception rather than the rule. The analogy that we talked about last week of the human body suggests different functions for different members.

Paul had been explaining that the gift of speaking in tongues was of no value to the congregation as a whole, only to the person who speaks to God in the unknown tongue. But if the person also has the gift of interpretation, the tongue could be used in public worship if the one praying (or someone else with the gift of interpretation) would then interpret *in order to tell people plainly what has been said*. That way, the entire church would be edified by this gift.

**15 What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.**

Paul will do both—he will *pray* and *sing* in tongues with his spirit, and he will pray and sing in his own language so as to also engage his *mind*. Praying in tongues was, for Paul, a practice that edified him even if he did not understand what he was saying. Praying with the spirit (see “**spiritual songs,**” **Ephesians 5:19**) may be charismatic singing in the Spirit or singing spontaneously to previously composed songs.

In addition to that, however, he would pray and sing with his intellect and understanding in his own language—this would edify both himself and others. In praying and singing, both the mind and the spirit are to be fully engaged. When believers sing, they should also think about the meaning of the words.

#### 4 “I will’s”

- Control over it
  - Not out of control at all or at any moment

16 Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say “Amen” at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say?

Paul just stated that he intended to continue to pray and sing in tongues (privately) and in his own language (publicly). The believers in Corinth should do the same. Those with the gift of tongues could continue to speak in tongues privately, but they needed to focus more on praying and singing in their own language in corporate worship. Why? If they were praising God with their spirits (meaning in an unknown tongue), how can someone there say “Amen” to their thanksgiving?

In other words...

How can someone agree with something they don’t understand?

“Amen” means... “so be it”!

17 For you indeed give thanks (*show gratitude*) well (correctly) , but the other is not edified.

- Are people getting built up with how you are using spiritual gifts?
  - Use them in the appropriate place, time and way

18 I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all;

- You think you have abundance in this gift...I speak in tongues more than you do
  - The difference...I don’t do it around you in public as a rule or out of order

- It would be the exception and not the rule. The rule is Paul does it privately and personally in his worship of God.
- Paul was not discouraging the use of tongues, he was setting order to it where they had not been using it in order just like people still do today.
  - Aka...barking uncontrollably in the spirit (**little “s” spirit**)
  - Speaking tongues audibly in a public setting and not silently waiting for an interpretation

19 yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

Paul pointed them back to the issue at hand—what was happening in the assembly. Paul understood the limitations of the gift of tongues when it came to edifying the body of believers. Instead of impressing people with the gift of tongues that he, like many of them, had received, Paul said that he *would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue* because only words that are understood can instruct. The implication is that he wanted the Corinthians believers in Corinth who were gifted with tongues to do the same.

**John:** Doctrine or Judgment?

20 Brethren, do not be children (command) in understanding; however, in malice be babes (command), but in understanding be mature. (command)

Paul next exhorts the Corinthians against immature thinking. Children prefer amusement to usefulness, flashy things to stable ones. Paul is saying, “Don’t take a childish delight in these spectacular gifts which you use for self-display. There is one sense in which you should be childlike, and that is in the matter of malice or evil. But in other matters, you should think with the maturity of men.”

21 In the law it is written:

“With men of other tongues and other lips  
I will speak to this people;  
And yet, for all that, they will not hear Me,”  
says the Lord.

- Quoting Isaiah 28:11–12

22 Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.

23 Therefore if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in *those who* are uninformed or unbelievers, will they not say that you are out of your mind?

Paul's point in quoting this passage was to set up his conclusion in 14:23. The people in Isaiah's time did not listen to the prophets who spoke in their language, and when people of other languages spoke to the Jews, they still did not listen. So Paul was saying that speaking in tongues will convince no one. Unbelievers who might enter and hear the Corinthian believers speaking in tongues (with no one to explain the meaning) would think that the Christians were crazy. That reaction would fulfill the Old Testament words that tongues will not draw unbelievers into the church. On the contrary, it will turn them away and leave them to judgment. Unbelievers need the gospel message spoken clearly and intelligibly, not tongues.

24 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted *or convinced* by all.

If strangers enter a meeting where the Christians are prophesying rather than speaking in tongues, the visitors hear and understand what is being said and they are convinced by all and convicted by all. What the apostle is emphasizing here is that no real conviction of sin is produced unless the listeners understand what is being said. When tongues are being used with no interpretation, then obviously visitors are not helped at all. Those who prophesy would, of course, do it in the language in current use in that area, and as a result listeners would be impressed by what they heard.

25 And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on *his* face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.

The listener feels that the speaker is addressing him directly. The Spirit of God brings conviction to their soul. **And so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among** these people.

And so Paul's point in verses 22–25 is that tongues without interpretation produce no conviction among unbelievers, whereas prophecy does.