

# Avoid Confusion: Witness in Truth - 1 Corinthians 14:1-25

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[ 0 : 00 ] Today we find ourselves in the text of 1 Corinthians chapter 14. We have been in the book of 1 Corinthians for some time. And most recently we've been in a section of 1 Corinthians talking about spiritual gifts that opened the subject opened in chapter 12, where Paul reminded the believers that your gifts are given for the edification of the body.

In chapter 13 we learned that it was in love that the spiritual gifts are to be ministered to, or in such love is the way that spiritual gifts are to be ministered to and edify the body.

And now we find ourselves in chapter 14 today. And there were two gifts in the church at Corinth that were both used, misused and abused.

And those two gifts you can find in chapter 12 and chapter 13 and chapter 14 especially. And those two gifts are the gifts of tongues and the gift of prophecy.

And those two gifts are going to be talked about today. And we're going to find that today that prophecy is preferred over tongues and we'll get to the reasons for that.

[ 1 : 22 ] But in order for us to understand prophecy and tongues and what is meant by that, I want to just share with you this, that likely today I will disappoint all of you, which is always a good position to be in.

But that said, why will I disappoint all of us? Because some of you will wish that today's message, when I define and describe the gift of tongues and the gift of prophecy, you will wish I will have gone farther than what I will say.

Others of you will wish that I didn't go as far as what I did say. And so with that I would ask that you give me charity today. And I have found a tool.

I'm going to do a little bit of a preamble to today's message. I found a tool that you find nuggets when you go to school and you think, whoa, that was worth my whole tuition right there.

And so because we often don't remember much in my undergraduate, it took an economics class. All I can remember is supply and demand. That's what I got. So that's the nugget.

[ 2 : 29 ] That's all I know about economics. I'm tapped out. So, but in school we often learn some things that we think that was worth its weight in gold.

And one of those things I want to share with you today is this. When I was in seminary and taking Bible classes, they encouraged us to put all Bible doctrines in one of these four categories.

That is what you die for. What is it that you will divide over? That means because this church, local church may believe in this, I love them. I believe that they are in Christ.

But that is something that my family is going to divide over. And we're going to go over here because we can't fellowship with these folks because it's just something we're going to divide over.

Then you have another category that you debate for. That is you can get a healthy, rich debate. We're in the same church. We don't agree. We can agree to disagree and we can have a healthy debate even read in the face over.

[ 3 : 29 ] But we'll choose to fellowship together. And please know I would pray that we don't get red faced in the debate. But we can choose not to divide over that doctrine.

But we can choose to disagree and still fellowship together because it's not about being right or wrong or this doctrine being true. Is that true? It's about honoring and glorifying the Lord. And then lastly are things you just decide for yourself.

Meaning wherever your conscience lies, you have freedom in Christ to do this or that. Meaning things like this. What does entertainment look like for you and your family?

Where do you draw the line of what music or movies to watch? Where do you draw the line with regard to modesty? Those kinds of things. So those are things where you have liberty in Christ and you just decide.

But how do you measure what you die for versus what you decide for? And let me share with you one of the tensions that I dislike. Sometimes people elevate that which this is my encouragement is that we keep the things we die for the things we die for.

[ 4 : 37 ] But the things that are debatable, oftentimes what we try to do is we elevate things that are really important that shouldn't necessarily be important. For example, what kind of schooling your children go to?

Do you public school? Do you private school? Private Christian school? Do you homeschool? Even if you homeschool, do you want to be in classical conversations? And what kind of camp you find yourself in?

And people get really, and we take this issue that in my mind is a deciding category. You just decide as a family what's best for you and your family where your conviction lies.

What's best for your child and that's what you decide. You have freedom in Christ in that matter. But what we try to do is we make that a die for issue and maybe a divide for if not die for issue.

And we think I can only go to a church that is only known for homeschooling. And I think why in the world would you divide over that issue? That is nothing that the Lord would ever want his believers in Christ to divide over.

[ 5 : 40 ] Why would you do that? Keep that as a deciding issue. And what our natural tendency is to elevate everything and to where we divide over everything and we die for everything.

And I think that's not helpful for the church of Jesus Christ. I've got other thoughts, but let's just leave it at not helpful. So how do you then decide what gets elevated and what remains as something that is lesser of importance?

And I would say this, the two things that are going to flank us to help us understand that which should be elevated are the degrees of certainty. That is, how certain are we that this is true?

How do we see this theme from the Old Testament into the New Testament? Do we see this theme of truth of whatever it is that we're talking about? Do we see, can we say that from Genesis to Revelation it is absolutely clear this is true?

How many authors in the Bible wrote about this? Did Moses, did Peter, did Paul, did the Gospel writers, did they write about this? How certain can we be that this is true?

[ 6 : 50 ] And then the more certain we are, the more it elevates between we die for that or we divide for it. We debate and we decide. If we're less certain, we decide.

The other thing that the flanks, how high you elevate whatever that doctrinal thing is, is the proximity to the Gospel. That is, does that doctrine affect, we are saved by God's grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone, and He is the only hope for salvation.

So here's what I say, let me take the form of education as an example again. That is so far away from the proximity to the Gospel, whether it's someone home schools or private school, private Christian school, public school, that decision is a deciding issue.

And it's not where, nowhere clear, nowhere close to the matter of the Gospel of Jesus Christ of someone being saved. I would say it this way, the things we die for are the things you miss heaven if you don't believe.

The deity of Jesus Christ, He is fully God and fully man. If you don't believe that, you missed it. You're not going to heaven. You have to believe that Jesus is God and man fully.

[ 8 : 09 ] Otherwise, He would not have the ability to pay the price for sin. He has to be both. I'm going to die for that.

And one of the things you can do is look throughout history and you can find the martyrs who have gone before us, and they died for some things. So you just now spent, this is my seminary education, that's the nugget, that's the economic supply and demand seminary.

This is what I learned. There you got it. So you just went to seminary. The other thing I want to do before we get into this, because again, Paul is going to be talking about two gifts, prophecy and tongues, prophecy and tongues.

And so we kind of, I want to define those for us before we get into our text. Prophecy, as Eric mentioned a few Sundays ago, it talks about the foretelling of the future.

Things like the prophets did in the Old Testament of telling Israel and Judah, but if you don't repent and obey, he is going to send the Assyrian army Babylon.

[ 9 : 20 ] You're going to be taken off into captivity to a people you don't know. These things are going to happen. There was a foretelling of truth. Then there is a forth telling of truth.

That is a forth telling use of the word prophecy. That is this bold declarative truth telling of God's word in our American context.

Maybe the closest thing we could kind of come to this is if you know of a bold proclaimer of truth, who is a preacher in the preaching ministry, can be a means by which the gift of prophecy is seen and witnessed in the church.

Not exclusively, but I just want to give you that as a mental paradigm. For Paul today, he's using the second definition with regard to in our text this bold declarative truth telling of God's word.

That is the definition I want us to have when we talk about the gift of prophecy today, when Paul is writing about it. Second is the gift of tongues.

[ 10 : 24 ] The gift of tongues can be described as an ecstatic utterance or a heavenly language. It is not a human language. I want to be clear.

This is a cultural perhaps definition of this. If you grew up in an assemblies of God, a more charismatic church, a more Pentecostal church, a four square church, you may be familiar with what I'm talking about, or if you visited one of those churches, or if you were in a citywide prayer meeting, you may have heard this kind of thing.

Some would say that's the definition of the gift of tongues. But today in our text today, Paul is using the gift of tongues, meaning it is a known human language.

For example, I'm going to say something in a different language that is a tongue, if you will. For example, and there's probably, I know, one person in the room who has been to this country and she may know what I'm saying, at least in this room, but Muraho.

Amakuru, nimesa. Now that is an expression in another language on earth, and that is the proper understanding of the word tongues. Muraho, amakuru, nimesa.

[ 11 : 44 ] And I'll come back to that time and time and time again throughout the message to illustrate this. You say, Scott, how come we use this word tongue? It's a matter of English.

So for example, if you were to go to, in America we ask, is English your first language? And we have classes English as the second language. And we use language as the word for tongue.

For example, if we go to Britain and if you were to ask them in British English, but you were an American and you go there and you say, excuse me, is English your first tongue? They'll go, ah, you're an American.

Why? Because in Britain you ask the same question in a different way. They would say, is English your mother tongue? Is English your mother tongue?

That's what they would say. And so tongue and language are used interchangeably even in the English language from British English to American English. But in our context today, Paul is using it in the terms of it is a known human language.

[ 12 : 49 ] Also, if you would turn to the book of Acts chapter two, I want to illustrate where this gift of tongues was first given to the church.

This gift of languages was given to the church. And why do I say that in that way? Because in our text today, I may interchangeably use the word tongues and I may use the word language, but I'm using them interchangeably.

I mean the same thing. Let me jump back to some history that I mentioned last week. But God created Adam and Eve and they multiplied on the face of the earth.

And in the garden, they were removed after sin, but they had children. And while the population of the earth grew as did pride.

And they came to this tower of Babel. They were in the process, all the people were building this tower of Babel. And God was displeased with the arrogance and the pride in which they were building this tower.

[ 13 : 59 ] And so God confounded the languages and he confused the languages. And I believe that's the beginning of all the nations. And so people began to scatter over the face of the earth in common language groups because they could understand each other and they went.

You come to the book of Acts and you see God wants the peoples of the world to know about Jesus Christ and what he has done in his sinless life, his death for sin and his resurrection, overcoming sin and death.

And so you see in chapter 2, the disciples have been told to wait until the Holy Spirit comes. So we see in chapter 2, when the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place, chapter 2, verse 1.

And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind and it filled the entire house where they were sitting and divided tongues as a fire appeared to them and resting on each one of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues. There's this word again and the Spirit gave them utterance. Verse 5, now there was dwelling in Jerusalem, Jews and devout men from every nation under heaven.

[ 15 : 15 ] And at the sound of the multitude that came together, they were bewildered because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and astonished saying, are not these all those who speak Galileans?

And how is it that we hear each of us in our own native language? Parthians and Medes, Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia, Panphilia, Egypt and all the parts of Libya belonged to Cyrene and visitors from Rome.

Both Jews and Prostyates, Cretians and Arabians, we hear them telling in our own tongue the mighty works of God. And they were all amazed and perplexed saying to one another, what does this mean?

And others were mocking as if they were filled with new wine. So get this event. At the Tower of Babel you have the confusion of language and God wants to everyone to know the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

And so the Holy Spirit comes and for some of the disciples they begin to declare the word of God in languages that were unknown to them but were known to the hearer and people heard the gospel of Jesus Christ in their own language.

[ 16 : 35 ] And so in this text you could see and they thought, how is it that these Galileans know what our language is? And Galileans just to help you frame that, it's like referring to them as country bumpkins.

In that in Judea around Jerusalem, that's where they educated, that's where the spiritual elite were. In Galilee, those people were the uneducated people. In fact today I found it interesting when my wife and I had the opportunity to go to Israel.

They have in archaeological digs, they have unearthed stones that have Greek words on them.

And yet what's funny is that these words are misspelled and they're Galileans. And so these are the uneducated people. And so can you imagine, I don't mind misspelling something on my paper that I know is going to be destroyed.

But can you imagine you're misspelling being preserved for thousands of years and everyone now laughs at you because you're a Galilean and you're uneducated? And so all that to say, the Galileans were known as the country bumpkins, the uneducated.

[ 17 : 41 ] And so they're perplexed. How is it that these people, these uneducated people are able to speak in my language and I'm able to hear and understand what they're saying, the gospel of Jesus Christ.

So that's the initial gift of the Holy Spirit. And along with the gift of the Holy Spirit was this a gift to speak in other languages. Okay, now let's turn to 1 Corinthians 14 and get into our text for today.

By the way, I miss the opportunity to share something. Why did I share with you the die divide debate decide graph?

Because here's what I would want you to know. If you're here today, I recognize that this subject is a kind of a touchy subject in the church today. If you were alive in the 1970s, if you were an adult in the 1970s, you are keenly aware in the late 60s all through the decade of the 70s into the early 80s.

The church in America was dividing all the time. Churches truly split over this doctrine of tongues because it was a divide for issue for the church in the 70s.

[ 19 : 02 ] And what I want to share with you is today I'm asking that we consider this a debatable issue. And the reason why I share that with you is in our doctrinal statement, we don't specify specifically what it is that we believe about tongues.

And so whether you're in disagreement with me today, there is charity to be able to debate about this and I would welcome a conversation. Okay. Onto our text today. Historically, I would read the whole text, but for today's purposes, I won't do that.

But here's what we'll find. Paul is going to say, prophecy is preferred over tongues. That's the main theme of this entire chapter, prophecy, the foretelling of truths, the declarative truth telling of God's word is preferred over different languages.

And the reasons will be given and we'll find these. And there's going to be four of them today, so you can be listening for these four reasons. They're spelled out on the screen, but we will look at them one by one as we go through the text today.

Prophecy is preferred over tongues. First, we come to recognize, well, how do you even make that statement, Scott? Read with me in verses one and two.

[ 20 : 17 ] Pursue love. Remember, we just came out of the love chapter. All spiritual gifts are to be done in love and this is a command. This is not a suggestion. He says, pursue love.

It's an imperative verb. Pursue it. It's a command. And earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. There's his preference. Pursue love.

Earnestly desire all the gifts, but especially that of prophecy. And why does he say that? Languages, he's going to make the argument, languages are unintelligible to others.

For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to man, but to God. For no one understands him, but utters mysteries in the spirit. No one is engaged in a private communion with God. No one understands him in verse two.

No one is able to interpret this foreign language. It is quite unknowable to all people. So languages are unintelligible to others. For example, except for perhaps a very few, none of you know what I'm saying when I say, I'm a guru, it's unintelligible.

[ 21 : 30 ] That's one of the first argument that Paul makes. Second, prophecy builds each other up. So why is prophecy preferred? On the other hand, Paul says, verses three and four, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding, for their encouragement, for their consolation.

The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but no one prophesies builds, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. Do you see the distinction? Why is he saying that prophecy is to be preferred over tongues or over other languages?

In verse three, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding, for their encouragement, for their consolation. What's the purpose of the gifts to be the building up of the church?

And so he says, here's three ways that specifically this powerful, bold, declaring, truth-telling gift, the prophecy is used. It is for the upbuilding.

It is for everyone's encouragement. It is for everyone's consolation. If someone is grieving, it's for your comfort. It's for your consolation. But why is it, and then look at how it's contrasted with the gift of languages, but the one who speaks in a language builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.

[ 22 : 47 ] The building up of the church is more highly esteemed than just something that is for one's own benefit. Thirdly, languages commonly edify the individual.

We've said that in verse four. And then unless interpreted, tongues only build up the speaker. So then he gives him some encouragement in verse five. Now I want you all to speak in tongues.

I love how Paul does not speak derogatorily of the gift of languages or the gift of tongues. Now I want you all to speak, but even more to prophesy. If you will, if I had my preference, I would hope that you would all prophesy.

If I had my druthers, the one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets. And so he says, his concern is, listen, if you say, Marajo, Amakuru, Nimesa, it does no one any good.

Because no one is interpreting what I just said that could be of encouragement to you. So unless somebody interprets that, don't. That's why prophecy is better, is because I'm going to declare the truth of God's word in a language you understand, and it can encourage you.

[ 23 : 59 ] It can console you. It can build you up. So there are reasons why prophecy is preferred.

What is the problem with languages? Now we move on to verses six through twelve. Look with me in verse six. Now, brothers, if any of you speaking in languages, how will I benefit you unless I bring some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching?

So in verse six, the issue is on this. What is the benefit? What is the benefit of speaking in a foreign language that is foreign to the hearers in the audience?

What is the benefit of that? Because, notice he says, how will I benefit you? How will that benefit you if I do that? If I bring some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching, that is going to be far better for you.

No one benefits from that which he does not understand. That's the point of verse six. And then he uses some metaphors or he uses some illustrations. There's going to be three of them to help them understand.

[ 25 : 20 ] Uninterpreted languages are forbidden in public worship. Look with me how he illustrates this point. Unless there's an interpreter, don't do that. In verse seven he says, even if lifeless instruments such as the flute or the harp do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is being played?

So the first metaphor that is used or the first illustration is that indistinct notes of an instrument do not make a beautiful sound. Or you don't know what it's communicating.

First, the second metaphor, the second illustration is a bugle. Look with me in verse eight. And if a bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? A bugle was like a trumpet, if you will.

That was blared. That would then signal to the soldiers, go into battle. But can you imagine if a bugle did not, wasn't a clear sound, a call to take arms and go into battle and to rush?

No one would know it. What was that? Was that the bugle? Was he just warming up? Who knows? It's like that in this. It's like tongues in that it will fail to produce the appropriate action.

[ 26 : 35 ] What does prophecy do, this foretelling of truth that is declarative? It's for your consolation, it's for your building up, it's for your encouragement. It's clear you should take action.

This is what your response is desired from you. But a gift of a foreign language that nobody can understand that's without interpretation, nobody knows what to do with that.

It's like the bugle. And then the third illustration he uses in verses 10 and 11. There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning.

But if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker, a foreigner to me. And you experience that when I say, I'm a foreigner to you, you're a foreigner to me.

You don't know what that is. So an unknown foreign language helps us understand, listen, an uninterpreted language is forbidden from public service and from the public worship service.

[ 27 : 37 ] So when the church gathers, unless that gift is interpreted, it's useless. It doesn't have its intended effect.

So the conclusion is in verse 12. So with yourself, since you are eager for manifestations of the spirit, strive to excel in the building up of the church.

I love this theme. You see it in verse three. What does the building up of the church look like? Upbuilding, encouragement, consolation. And I appreciate what Paul, he commends them.

So with yourself, since you are eager for the manifestations of the spirit, what I appreciate is that we are in the process of building up the church.

And I appreciate what Paul, he commends them. So with yourself, since you are eager for the manifestations of the spirit, what I appreciate is that Paul is saying, I appreciate that you are eager for that.

[ 28 : 45 ] In fact, in the second letter of the church to the church at Corinth, he commends them for being eager for the spirit. He commends them for that. But notice how he qualifies that.

But strive to excel in building up of the church. And if the gift of tongues is uninterpreted, it doesn't have its intended effect. It should be to build up to the church.

So don't. Languages are to be intelligible and accessible.

Languages, this is the third point. Languages are to be intelligible and accessible. Paul then lays out a solution for them.

Okay, I see that you eagerly desire this gift. I see that you are practicing this gift of speaking in tongues in your foreign languages, in your worship service. I see that.

[ 29 : 44 ] And we know that that alone doesn't, if it's uninterpreted, doesn't edify the body. So let me offer you a solution. And so he moves into 13 with a solution. Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret.

So, okay, you speak in a tongue. So now you speak in a foreign language. So now would you pray that you would be able to interpret that word from the Lord that he was given to you by the Spirit, that the church may in the language that they understand be able to be edified.

So pray that you would be able to interpret that language. That's his solution. That he offers them. Ask for this additional gift, not only the gift of tongues, but the interpretation of tongues, if you will.

Verse 15, in 14 and 15, For if I pray in a tongue and my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful, what am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray also with my mind.

I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing praise with my mind. That, what is he saying? That the spiritual exercise of gift of languages will be complimented by a rational interpretation that communicates to others and produces fruit.

[ 31 : 03 ] That's his point. And if it doesn't have an interpreter, look what he says in verse 16. Otherwise, if you give thanks in your spirit, how can anyone in a position of an outsider say amen to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you are saying?

So he is saying that without an interpretation in verse 16, nobody can understand you.

He's been making this argument the whole time. Therefore, what's the problem with no one understanding you? The church cannot be edified. And so he says, if you give thanks in verse 16 in your spirit, and there is someone in the church that is an outsider, and they have come, and how is it that they can say amen?

And amen is like a hearty assent to what you have been saying, so an agreement. And so how can they, if you say, here's an example, if I say, I'm a guru, a maize, how is it that anyone can say, yes, I give hearty agreement to that? Amen.

Because you don't understand. So Paul is after this corporate agreement of what the spirit is doing in the midst of the church, and he says, how can they do that? And they're an outsider.

[ 32 : 27 ] It's impossible for no one can understand. Without interpretation, nobody can understand. And then he also gives in verse 17, no one is being built up.

Again, what's his big problem? The church is not edified or built up. For one, verse 17, for one may be giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not being built up.



That's the problem. They don't understand, and they have the inability to be built up because they don't understand the language you're speaking. And then last, few fruitful words are better than many unintelligible words.

I love verse 18. I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you, Paul says to the church at Corinth. Paul understands, he appreciates, he has experienced this gift himself.

But what is this concern in verse 19? Nevertheless, I in the church, I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct the others than 10,000 words in the tongue.

[ 33 : 46 ] The word 10,000 in the Greek is the largest number in the Greek language. And so it's myriad. So he's making a hyperbole example.

I would rather speak what he's saying is I would rather speak a very few words that everyone understands that with the very few words, maybe even five, that the church would be built up with five words than speak a bazillion words that nobody understands.

That's what he's saying. And last, for public worship, prophecy is preferred over uninterpreted languages.

This is his last point, verse 20. Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants and evil, but in your thinking, be mature.

I love that Paul uses this child language, but he uses it in two ways. One, he, it's a critical way, and one, it's an upbuilding, encouraging way.

[ 34 : 54 ] For example, in relating to tongues, though, do not be childish in your thinking. So with regard to this uninterpreted tongue that you're using, this uninterpreted language that doesn't edify anyone, nobody understands, don't be childish in your thinking.

But the second image of a child is, but be infants and evil, but in your thinking, be mature.

So as a child's mind is innocent, it's naive, it's unspoiled in the wicked ways of the world, he is, if you will, speaking to the church at Corinth St. But you have an ethical lapse in your congregation.

Your wicked attitudes have been creating divisions over the improper use of the languages, how this gift of tongues that you've had in your church. And he calls them then to maturity, but in your thinking, be mature.

Verse 21. This is probably his crowning argument against uninterpreted languages and a public worship service to the church at Corinth.

[ 36 : 06 ] He quotes Isaiah 28 verses 11 and 12, but here's what it reads in verse 21 in our text. In the law it is written, by people of strange tongues and by lips of foreigners, I will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord.

In Isaiah's text, so he pulled this from Isaiah chapter 28, in Isaiah 28, Isaiah is pronouncing a judgment against Israel, and since Israel refused to heed what God had spoken to them through their prophet Isaiah, and he has made it plain in an understandable language through the prophet Isaiah to Israel, God will now approach them by the means of a foreign language, meaning the Assyrian army that's going to come and invade them, because they do not know the language of the Assyrians, it will sound as if it is babble to them.

And that is what he is communicating in verse 21, so he's emphasizing the need for an interpreter to understand this gift of language.

In verse 22, in 23, thus tongues are assigned not for believers, but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers, but for believers.

And therefore the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders and unbelievers enter, they will not understand, they will say that you are out of your minds.

[ 37 : 44 ] They will hear someone talking in a language that is foreign to them, and an outsider and unbeliever were to come and sit among us, they would think, you guys are out of your minds, you guys are out of your minds.

What is this about? And that's why prophecy, the fourth telling of truth that causes repentance, convicts the heart is better than the gift of tongues, is preferred than the gift of tongues, not better, but is preferred over the gift of tongues unless it is interpreted.

Verse 24 and 25 conclude, and we will be done. But if all prophecy and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all.

He is called to account by all. The secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.

So if you speak and you declare the word of God, you share the gospel, notice what that does. And who is doing it? The person with the gift of prophecy, this powerful four telling of truth, but notice it's not just the one speaking because it says, an unbeliever and outsider, and if he is convicted by all, and he is called into account by all.

[ 39 : 11 ] All of us are powerfully proclaiming the word of truth, the gospel of Jesus Christ, and what is having its effect? The secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so falling on his face, he worships God and declares, God is really among you.

The outsider comes in, he were speaking in a language that he understands, and he thinks, oh, the word of God, it is a discerners of the thoughts and the intents of the heart.

It is living and active, this powerful word that's been proclaimed, and some of the things that I've been harboring in my heart that nobody else knows, it's been as if it has been late pair, and I know and recognize I am a sinner, and I'm in need of Jesus, and I fall on my face, and I say, I need you.

This is the response of the gift of prophecy and the public gathering and why it is preferred over the gift of tongues that is uninterpreted.

So you say, Scott, okay, what does this have to do with us today at fourth? When the church gathers, I would gather.

[ 40 : 28 ] And you say, Scott, why do you say that? Because this context is about when the church gathers what happens.

And notice, it's only mentioning one gift there alone, it's the gift of prophecy when it says, look with me in verse three. On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding, for their encouragement, for their consolation.

My question is this, where else can you find that? I want to position myself when the church gathers to be encouraged.

Perhaps it's been a hard week, perhaps you're grieving, and you say, I need to be comforted, there's consolation for you. When the church gathers, gather. I would rather be no other place.

On Wednesday, we had our prayer and praise service. And I was just encouraged by the testimony of three individuals who are going to go out and serve on mission.

[ 41 : 30 ] And how my heart was bolstered with courage to say, serve the Lord with your whole life. Look at these individuals who are going. I may not be called a gov'n, but boy, I'm encouraged when the church gathers, gather.

I don't want you to miss out on anything that the Lord has for any of us. Second, the gifts of edification.

Gifts are for edification, not for self-glorification. One of the problems with the gift of languages in this text is that it builds up the person speaking without an interpreter.

And so there's a chance that gifts, but this is not just for the gift of languages. All gifts can be used in this way. All gifts can be used with a fleshly motivation.

And so my encouragement is gifts are for the edification of the body of Christ, not for self-glorification. So no matter what your gift is, use it for the upbuilding of the church.

[ 42 : 40 ] We're all needed. I'm grateful for Pastor Eric's message in chapter 12. We're all necessary. We're all needed. All of our gifts are to be used for the edification of the self, or edification of the body, not for self.

And I appreciate how this passage begins. Pursue love. It's an imperative command. All of this is to be done in love, motivated by love. Let's pray.

Father, thank you so much for this day. Thank you so much for the privilege it is to gather and for you to do the work that you intend in the lives of others.

Thank you for the privilege to gather to up build one another, to build up each other, to encourage one another, to provide comfort and consolation to those who are hurting and grieving.

I pray your word and we would do that well among us. Lord, you're to be glorified chiefly. And it's in your name, Jesus, we pray. Amen.

[ 43 : 56 ] By the way, Morajo Amokuru Nimesa is the Akindra-Wandan language of the people of Rwanda. And I just simply said, hello, how are you? I'm fine.