



“EDIFICATION & ORDER”

1 Corinthians Ch. 14

> (v1-22) EDIFICATION OF THE CHURCH

- The word “*edification*” is found three times in this chapter (v5, 12, 26); the Greek word is “*oikodome*”, meaning *the act of building, or building up; also the act of one who promotes another’s growth in Christian wisdom, piety, happiness and holiness*. Each reference is used for the edification for the whole church.

(v1) First things first — “*Pursue love*” – *Pursue* means *to seek eagerly* God’s agape love!

(v2-4) - Notice the direction of the “*gift of tongues*” it is speaking to God, not men; it is speaking in “*mysteries*” and this gift *edifies* oneself. Whereas, the “*gift of prophecy*”, which is spoken in the language of that culture (English for us), brings *edification* (see definition above), *exhortation and comfort*. Observe the direction of prophecy it is God speaking through man for the benefit of the Church. *Exhortation* is to admonish, exhort, to urge one to pursue some course of conduct (always prospective, looking to the future), in contrast to the meaning of *comfort*, which is retrospective, having to do with a trial experienced.

(v5) **Prophecy is a greater gift for the church than tongues**, however if one has the *gift of interpretation* then the church can receive understanding.

(v6-19) This passage is an explanation for examination that results in edification! Notice that the church is edified through **revelation, knowledge, prophesying, or teaching** (v6); the church **seeks to EXCEL** when it desires **edification through teaching** (v12, 19).

(v20-22) **Verses 20-21** are quite interesting, Warren Wiersbe writes, “Paul quoted Isaiah 28:11-12 a reference to the invading Assyrian army whose “barbaric” language the Jews would not understand. The presence of this “tongue” was evidence of God’s judgment on the nation. God would rather speak to His people in clear language they could understand, but their repeated sins made this impossible. He *had* spoken to them through His messengers in their own tongue, and the nation would not repent. Now He had to speak in a foreign tongue, and this meant judgment.” **Verse 22** unfolds further insight, Wiersbe continues with an excellent explanation, “As a nation, the Jews were always seeking a **sign** (Matthew 12:38; 1 Corinthians 1:22). At Pentecost, the fact that the Apostles spoke in tongues was a sign to the unbelieving Jews who were there celebrating the *Feast of Pentecost*. The miracle of tongues aroused their interest, but it did not convict their hearts. It took Peter’s preaching (in Aramaic, which the people all understood) to bring them to the place of **conviction and conversion**.” (Acts ch. 2)

> (v23-40) ORDER IN THE CHURCH

(v23-25) When the church gathers prophecy is to be used not tongues, especially when the *unbelievers and the uninformed are present*.

(v26) This verse tells us that carnal Corinthians had entered a spiritual egotistical competition, instead of discerning and developing church order and edification.

(v27-28) Instructions for operation of the gift of tongues: If tongues are spoken it is by two or at most three, then the interpretation. If there is no interpretation, then remain silent and keep it to yourself.

(v29-33) Instructions for the operation of the gift of prophecy: Regarding the prophets, by two or three then the others judge. Let us recognize the purpose, *“that all may learn and all may be encouraged”*

(v31) The church is to function without craziness and confusion.

(v34-36) We must remember that Paul is dealing with a variety of issues that were brought to his attention within the Corinthian church. He has been addressing and correcting these concerns throughout this letter. There must have been some very vocal women within the congregation, probably trying to take over and control the church services, thus Paul makes the correction and gives instruction. Let me remind you that women were allowed to pray and prophesy according to 1 Corinthians 11:5. However, men are to lead the church according to 1 Timothy ch. 3, Titus ch. 1; Jesus chose men to be His apostles and we see men leading the church in the Book of Acts.

(v37-40) Prophecy and tongues are still available today, but the conclusion is *“Let all things be done decently and in order.”*