

Key Points on Why God Chose Tongues as the Sign of Spirit Baptism

God's Sovereignty in Choosing Tongues

1. **Sovereignty of God:** God is sovereign and can establish His plans without needing to explain His reasons to humanity.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Corinthians 1:25).
2. **Use of Unusual Means:** God often uses unusual, foolish, or despised things in the eyes of men to accomplish His will.
 - **Examples:**
 - Water baptism for the remission of sins.
 - Prayer to the invisible God.

Historical Use of Outward Signs

1. **Acceptance of God's Choice:** We must accept speaking in tongues as the sign of Spirit baptism because God chose it.
2. **Outward, Physical Signs:** God has historically used outward, physical signs to accompany His covenants with man and the promised blessings under those covenants.
 - **Examples:**
 - The rainbow as a sign to Noah (Genesis 9:13).
 - Circumcision as a sign to Abraham (Genesis 17:11).

Divine Ordination of Tongues

1. **God's Ordination:** Tongues were not invented by humans in a desperate or faithless search for a tangible sign of salvation.
 - **Divine Plan:** God Himself ordained tongues for the church, and we accept His plan by faith.
2. **Confirmation of Faith:** Tongues serve as the confirmation of faith, not a substitute for faith in the Christian's walk with God.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues" (Mark 16:17).

Summary

1. **God's Wisdom:** The foolishness of God is wiser than men, emphasizing the divine wisdom in choosing tongues as a sign.
2. **Faith and Acceptance:** Believers are called to accept God's choice by faith, recognizing tongues as a divinely ordained confirmation of receiving the Holy Spirit.

Key Points on Reasons Why God Chose Tongues as the Initial Sign of Spirit Baptism

Controlling the Tongue

1. **Difficulty in Control:** The tongue is one of the most difficult parts of the body to control.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body" (James 3:2).
2. **Power of the Tongue:** It can direct, control, and defile the whole body.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell" (James 3:6).
3. **Unruly and Evil:** The tongue is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison" (James 3:8).
4. **Significance in Religion:** If a man cannot control his tongue, his religion is vain; if he can control his tongue, he can control his whole body.
 - **Scriptural References:** "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (James 1:26). "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body" (James 3:2).

Surrender and Control

1. **Complete Surrender:** Before receiving the Holy Ghost, one must surrender their entire being to God, with the tongue often being the last member surrendered.
2. **God's Control:** When God takes control of the tongue, it signifies His Lordship over the entire person, including the center of consciousness, reasoning, and will.
 - **Symbol of Control:** Using the tongue for His glory demonstrates that God has taken control of the whole person.

Unity of the Church

1. **Symbol of Unity:** Speaking in tongues symbolizes the unity of the church.
2. **Reversal of Babel:** After the flood, God confused human languages at the Tower of Babel to stop their disobedience and scatter them (Genesis 11:1-9).
3. **Pentecost Reversal:** At Pentecost, God reversed this process by uniting people from many nations into one spiritual family through the sign of tongues.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).

4. **Spiritual Citizenship:** The church includes people from every tribe, nation, and tongue, unified through the language of the Spirit.
 - **New Language:** Speaking in tongues is the new language associated with citizenship in the kingdom of God.

Universality of Tongues

1. **Universal Application:** Speaking in tongues is a universal sign that applies under any circumstances, regardless of nationality, language, or location.
 - **Recognition:** People from any background can recognize speaking in tongues when it occurs among them.

Certainty and Assurance

1. **Certainty of Experience:** Speaking in tongues provides certainty about one's experience with God, signifying the baptism of the Spirit at a specific point in time.
2. **Assurance of Salvation:** If someone has been baptized in the name of Jesus, received the Holy Ghost with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues, and continues to obey God's Word, they can be assured of their salvation.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues" (Mark 16:17).

Addressing Uncertainty

1. **Problem of Assurance:** Many churches deny the evidentiary role of speaking in tongues, leading to uncertainty about salvation among their members.
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Conclusion

Key Points on Speaking in Tongues and the Abiding Presence of the Spirit

Initial Sign vs. Abiding Presence

1. **Initial Sign:** Speaking in tongues is the initial sign of receiving the Holy Ghost.
2. **Abiding Presence:** Tongues alone do not prove the continual presence of the Spirit.
 - **More Important Evidences:** The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), particularly love, is the ultimate test of true discipleship.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34-35).

Characteristics of a True Child of God

1. **Love for God:** True believers will love God and obey His commandments.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 John 2:3).
2. **Walking and Being Led by the Spirit:** They will walk after the Spirit and be led by the Spirit.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:4).
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14).

Limitations of Speaking in Tongues

1. **Continual Ability:** Continuing to speak in tongues indicates faith for that particular gift but does not guarantee submission to God in all areas.
2. **False Doctrine and Sin:** A person can speak in tongues but still believe false doctrine, live in sin, or refuse God's leadership.
3. **Adherence to Doctrine:** Salvation requires adherence to biblical doctrine, obedience to biblical instructions, and submission to God's Spirit.

Faith and Assurance

1. **God Honors Faith:** God honors faith in certain portions of His Word, even if there is a lack of submission in other areas.
 - **Examples:** God answers the prayers of sinners, fills people with the Holy Ghost before baptism in Jesus' name, and performs miracles through hypocrites.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21-27).

Gifts and Repentance

1. **Irrevocability of Gifts:** Romans 11:29 suggests that once God bestows a spiritual gift, He never revokes it entirely.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Romans 11:29).
 - **Encouragement for Repentance:** God may leave a portion of the gift to encourage the backslider to repent.
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2. **False Imitations:** There is the possibility of false imitations of tongues by men or counterfeit tongues caused by the power of Satan.
 - **Satanic Miracles:** Satan can perform many miracles and imitate God's work.

- **Scriptural References:** "And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments" (Exodus 7:10-11).
- **Scriptural References:** "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon... And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men" (Revelation 13:11-13).

Key Points on the Role of Speaking in Tongues After Initial Spirit Baptism

Non-Necessity After Initial Baptism

1. **Initial Sign:** The Bible does not teach that speaking in tongues is a necessary sign after the initial Spirit baptism.
 - **Frequent Speaking Not Required:** Frequent speaking in tongues does not necessarily indicate spirituality.
 - **Lack of Speaking Not Unspiritual:** A lack of speaking in tongues does not necessarily indicate unspirituality.

Role of Tongues After Initial Experience

1. **Reminder and Confirmation:** Speaking in tongues may serve as a reminder and confirmation of the initial Spirit baptism.
2. **Frequent Use by Paul:** Paul frequently spoke in tongues.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1 Corinthians 14:18).
3. **Ongoing Experience:** Those who receive the Spirit often speak in tongues throughout their lifetimes.

Gift of Tongues

1. **Availability of the Gift:** The gift of tongues is one of the gifts available to Spirit-filled believers.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit... to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues" (1 Corinthians 12:8-10).
2. **Not Universal for Regular Use:** Not everyone continues to speak in tongues regularly.

- **Scriptural Reference:** "Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" (1 Corinthians 12:30).
- **Primarily Public Messages:** This likely refers to public messages in tongues.

Encouragement to Seek Tongues

1. **No Less a Christian:** A Spirit-filled person who does not continue to speak in tongues is still a Christian.
2. **Encouraged to Seek:** Believers are encouraged to seek the gift of tongues for private edification.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way" (1 Corinthians 12:31).
3. **Faith and Yielding:** By exercising faith and yielding to the Spirit, one can speak in tongues again.
4. **Private Edification:** Tongues are primarily for private edification.
 - **Encouragement to Use:** Believers are encouraged to seek and use the gift of tongues for personal spiritual growth.

Indications of Spiritual Health

1. **Drifting Away:** Failure to exercise the gift of tongues may indicate a drifting away from God.
2. **Availability to All:** The gift of tongues is available to all Spirit-filled people who seek it in prayer with persistence and faith.
 - **Scriptural References:**
 - "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matthew 7:7).
 - "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matthew 21:22).
 - "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12).
 - "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way" (1 Corinthians 12:31).

Gift of Tongues

Paul discussed the gift of tongues in I Corinthians 12-14. He wrote the book to save believers who were all baptized in the Spirit and thus had all spoken in tongues (I Corinthians 1:2; 12:13). His purpose was to instruct them in the use of the gift of tongues, particularly in public meetings. Since these three chapters are so important to any discussion of tongues in the church today, let us summarize their main points relative to this subject.

Key Points from 1 Corinthians 12 with Verse-by-Verse Breakdown and Exegesis

Verse 1

Verse: "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." (1 Corinthians 12:1, KJV)

Breakdown: Paul introduces his teaching on spiritual gifts, indicating the importance of understanding them. He addresses the Corinthian believers as "brethren," emphasizing their shared faith and his concern for their knowledge and practice of spiritual gifts.

Exegesis: Paul wants the Corinthians to have a clear and informed understanding of spiritual gifts. The term "spiritual gifts" (Greek: pneumatika) encompasses the various gifts and manifestations of the Holy Spirit within the church. Paul's intent is to ensure the believers are not uninformed or misled about these gifts, highlighting the need for proper teaching and discernment.

Verse 2

Verse: "Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led." (1 Corinthians 12:2, KJV)

Breakdown: Paul reminds the Corinthians of their past, where they were led astray by idols that could not speak. This underscores their previous ignorance of spiritual realities and sets the stage for their need to understand the true work of the Holy Spirit.

Exegesis: The Corinthians' former lives were marked by idolatry and spiritual blindness. Paul contrasts their past with their present, where they now serve the living God. This historical context is crucial for appreciating their need to grasp the genuine workings of the Holy Spirit, as opposed to the false spiritual experiences they once knew.

Verse 3

Verse: "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Corinthians 12:3, KJV)

Breakdown: Paul states that the Holy Spirit will always exalt Jesus. Only through the Holy Spirit can one genuinely acknowledge Jesus as Lord. Conversely, anyone who curses Jesus is not speaking by the Holy Spirit.

Exegesis: Paul establishes a key test for discerning the influence of the Holy Spirit: the exaltation of Jesus Christ. This principle serves as a foundation for understanding and evaluating spiritual gifts. A

true manifestation of the Spirit will always honor Christ's lordship. This theological point safeguards against false teachings and practices within the church.

Verses 4-11

Verses: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." (1 Corinthians 12:4-11, KJV)

Breakdown: Paul explains that there are various spiritual gifts, services, and workings, but all come from the same Spirit, Lord, and God. The purpose of these gifts is the common good of the church. He lists nine specific gifts: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, different kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues. Each gift is distributed by the Holy Spirit according to His will.

Verses 12-27

Verses: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." (1 Corinthians 12:12-27, KJV)

Breakdown: Paul uses the analogy of the human body to describe the unity and diversity of the church. Just as the body is one with many parts, so is the body of Christ. All believers, regardless of their background, are baptized into one body by one Spirit. Each member has a unique function, and all are necessary for the body to function properly. Paul emphasizes the interdependence of the members and the need for mutual care and respect within the body.

Exegesis: Paul's metaphor of the body highlights the essential unity and diversity within the church. Each member, regardless of their perceived importance, is vital to the overall health and function of the body. This teaching challenges any notions of superiority or inferiority among believers and promotes a culture of honor and mutual support. Paul's emphasis on the interconnectedness of the members reinforces the idea that the church thrives when every member is valued and contributes to the common good.

Verses 28-30

Verses: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" (1 Corinthians 12:28-30, KJV)

Breakdown: Paul lists various roles and gifts that God has placed in the church, emphasizing that not everyone has the same role or gift. These include apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments, and diversities of tongues. He poses rhetorical questions to highlight that not everyone holds these public offices or exercises these gifts.

Exegesis: Paul's listing of roles and gifts underscores the diversity of functions within the church. Each role and gift serves a specific purpose and contributes to the overall mission of the church. The rhetorical questions emphasize that it is unrealistic and unnecessary for every believer to have the same gifts. This teaching promotes the understanding that diversity in gifts and roles is by God's design, intended to equip the church for various aspects of ministry and service.

Verse 31

Verse: "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." (1 Corinthians 12:31, KJV)

Breakdown: Paul encourages believers to desire the best spiritual gifts earnestly. However, he transitions to introduce something even greater and more important than spiritual gifts, setting the stage for his discourse on love in the following chapter.

Exegesis: Paul acknowledges the value of spiritual gifts and encourages the pursuit of them, indicating that some gifts may be more beneficial or edifying than others. Yet, he points to a "more excellent way," which he elaborates on in 1 Corinthians 13, emphasizing love as the highest virtue. This transition highlights the primacy of love over all spiritual gifts and underscores that the gifts should be exercised within the framework of love for them to be truly effective and meaningful.

Key Points from 1 Corinthians 14 with Verse-by-Verse Breakdown and Exegesis

Verse 1

Verse: "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." (1 Corinthians 14:1, KJV)

Breakdown: Paul encourages believers to pursue love ("charity") as the primary virtue. Alongside this pursuit, he urges them to desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.

Exegesis: Paul underscores the importance of love as the foundation for all spiritual activities. He then places a special emphasis on prophecy over other spiritual gifts, particularly tongues, in public worship. Prophecy, being an inspired utterance in a known language, is more beneficial for the edification of the church community.

Verses 2-4

Verses: "For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church." (1 Corinthians 14:2-4, KJV)

Breakdown:

- **Verse 2:** Speaking in tongues primarily benefits the speaker, as they are communicating with God and speaking mysteries that others do not understand.
- **Verse 3:** Prophecy, on the other hand, edifies, exhorts, and comforts the entire church, as it is spoken in a language everyone understands.
- **Verse 4:** Tongues edify the speaker, while prophecy edifies the whole church.

Exegesis: Paul contrasts the personal edification received from speaking in tongues with the communal edification provided by prophecy. While speaking in tongues is valuable for personal spiritual growth, prophecy is more advantageous in a corporate worship setting because it builds up the entire congregation.

Verse 5

Verse: "I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying." (1 Corinthians 14:5, KJV)

Breakdown: Paul expresses his desire for all believers to speak in tongues, but he places a higher value on prophecy. In a church setting, prophecy is greater than tongues unless tongues are interpreted so that the church can be edified.

Exegesis: Paul values the gift of tongues but prioritizes prophecy for its greater capacity to edify the church. The interpretation of tongues can elevate its value in public worship, aligning it with the benefits of prophecy by making the message comprehensible and edifying to all.

Verses 6-11

Verses: "Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine? And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification. Therefore if

I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me." (1 Corinthians 14:6-11, KJV)

Breakdown:

- **Verses 6-7:** Paul argues that speaking in tongues without interpretation does not benefit the church. He uses the analogy of musical instruments needing to produce distinct sounds to be understood.
- **Verses 8-9:** Similarly, a trumpet giving an uncertain sound is useless in preparing for battle. Likewise, speaking in tongues without clear meaning is ineffective for edification.
- **Verses 10-11:** Every language has significance, but if the meaning is not understood, communication fails, likening speakers and listeners to foreigners to each other.

Exegesis: Paul emphasizes the necessity of clarity in communication within the church. Speaking in tongues, while spiritually significant, must be interpreted to be beneficial in a public setting. The analogies of musical instruments and languages illustrate the importance of intelligible communication for the edification and unity of the church body.

Verses 12-14

Verses: "Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." (1 Corinthians 14:12-14, KJV)

Breakdown:

- **Verse 12:** Believers should seek spiritual gifts that build up the church.
- **Verse 13:** Those who speak in tongues should pray for the ability to interpret.
- **Verse 14:** Praying in tongues engages the spirit but does not benefit the mind without interpretation.

Exegesis: Paul encourages believers to pursue spiritual gifts with the intent of edifying the church. He highlights the importance of interpretation for tongues to ensure that the entire congregation benefits. The distinction between spirit-led prayer and understanding underscores the need for intelligibility in corporate worship, ensuring that both the spirit and mind are engaged and edified.

Verses 15-19

Verses: "What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified. I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." (1 Corinthians 14:15-19, KJV)

Breakdown:

- **Verses 15-16:** Paul emphasizes praying and singing both in the spirit (tongues) and with understanding (known language). Public prayers should be understandable to the congregation so that all can agree and be edified.
- **Verses 17-19:** While Paul speaks in tongues more than the Corinthians, he prefers to speak in a known language during church meetings to teach others effectively.

Exegesis: Paul advocates for a balanced approach to spiritual practices, incorporating both tongues and known languages. He highlights the importance of edification in corporate worship. Public prayers and teachings must be intelligible to ensure that the entire congregation benefits. Paul's preference for known language in public meetings underscores the primacy of teaching and mutual edification in the church.

Verse 20

Verse: "Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." (1 Corinthians 14:20, KJV)

Breakdown: Paul urges the Corinthians to be mature in their understanding of when and how to use the gift of tongues appropriately. While they should be innocent (like children) in malice, they should be mature (like adults) in their understanding.

Exegesis: Paul calls for spiritual maturity, distinguishing between innocence and understanding. He encourages the believers to be discerning and wise in their use of spiritual gifts, ensuring that their actions are appropriate and edifying for the church. This maturity involves recognizing the proper context and purpose for each gift.

Verses 21-22

Verses: "In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe." (1 Corinthians 14:21-22, KJV)

Breakdown:

- **Verse 21:** Paul quotes Isaiah 28:11-12, indicating that God would use foreign tongues to speak to His people, yet they would not listen.
- **Verse 22:** Tongues serve as a sign for unbelievers, attracting their attention and inspiring belief, whereas prophecy is intended for believers, providing edification and instruction.

Exegesis: Paul uses Isaiah's prophecy to illustrate that tongues are a sign meant to capture the attention of unbelievers. However, once their attention is gained, teaching and edification must be carried out in a known language through prophecy. This distinction ensures that both unbelievers and believers are appropriately addressed and edified in worship.

Verses 23-25

Verses: "If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth." (1 Corinthians 14:23-25, KJV)

Breakdown:

- **Verse 23:** If everyone speaks in tongues during a church meeting, visitors or unbelievers will think the congregation is insane.
- **Verses 24-25:** If everyone prophesies in a known language, visitors and unbelievers can be convicted, led to God, and acknowledge His presence among the believers.

Exegesis: Paul emphasizes the need for intelligible communication in public worship. While speaking in tongues can initially attract attention, it can be confusing and off-putting if not interpreted. Prophecy, on the other hand, communicates God's message clearly, leading to conviction, conversion, and worship. This approach ensures that worship services are both welcoming and edifying for all attendees.

Verses 26-31

Verses: "How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." (1 Corinthians 14:26-31, KJV)

Breakdown:

- **Verse 26:** A typical church meeting should include various contributions—psalms, teachings, tongues, revelations, and interpretations—all aimed at edifying the congregation.
- **Verses 27-28:** Guidelines for speaking in tongues: two or three people should speak in turn, and there must be an interpreter. Without an interpreter, they should remain silent in the church and speak to themselves and God.
- **Verses 29-31:** Guidelines for prophecy: two or three prophets should speak, and others should evaluate. If another receives a revelation, the first should be silent. This allows for orderly prophesying so everyone can learn and be comforted.

Exegesis: Paul provides practical instructions for orderly and edifying worship services. Each contribution, whether a psalm, teaching, tongue, or prophecy, should build up the church. The emphasis is on order and clarity—tongues must be interpreted, and prophecies must be evaluated.

This structured approach ensures that worship is both spiritually enriching and comprehensible, fostering growth and unity within the congregation.

Verses 26-31: Practical Guidelines for Orderly Worship

Guidelines for Implementing Order in Church Services:

1. **Two or Three Messages in Tongues:** "If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret." (1 Corinthians 14:27, KJV)
 - There should be no more than two or three public messages in tongues during a service.
2. **Taking Turns:** "And let one interpret." (1 Corinthians 14:27, KJV)
 - Speakers should take turns rather than speaking all at once.
3. **Interpretation of Tongues:** "But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God." (1 Corinthians 14:28, KJV)
 - Each message in tongues must be interpreted. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should remain silent during the public assembly and speak in tongues privately.
4. **Private Benefit:** "Let him speak to himself, and to God." (1 Corinthians 14:28, KJV)
 - Without interpretation, speaking in tongues should be done quietly for personal edification.
5. **Two or Three Prophecies:** "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge." (1 Corinthians 14:29, KJV)
 - Similarly, there should be no more than two or three messages of prophecy.
6. **Judgment of Prophecies:** "Let the other judge." (1 Corinthians 14:29, KJV)
 - The listeners should evaluate and discern whether the prophecy is truly from God.
7. **Taking Turns in Prophesying:** "For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted." (1 Corinthians 14:31, KJV)
 - Everyone is allowed to prophesy, but they should do so in turn to ensure orderly and edifying worship.

Exegesis: Paul provides clear instructions for maintaining order and edification in church services. The guidelines emphasize the need for structure, ensuring that spiritual gifts, particularly tongues and prophecy, are exercised in a way that benefits the entire congregation. Interpretation and discernment are crucial for the edification and proper functioning of the church.

Verses 32-33: Orderly Exercise of Prophecy

Verses: "And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." (1 Corinthians 14:32-33, KJV)

Breakdown:

- **Verse 32:** The gift of prophecy is under the control of the prophet, indicating self-discipline and order in its exercise.
- **Verse 33:** God desires all spiritual gifts to be exercised in an orderly manner, reflecting His nature of peace and not confusion.

Exegesis: Paul emphasizes that prophetic utterances should be controlled and orderly, reflecting the character of God, who brings peace and order rather than confusion. This teaching reinforces the need for discipline and structure in the use of spiritual gifts within the church.

Verses 34-35: Conduct of Women in Church Services

Verses: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." (1 Corinthians 14:34-35, KJV)

Breakdown:

- **Verse 34:** Women should not disrupt church services by asking questions aloud.
- **Verse 35:** They should ask their husbands at home if they have questions.

Exegesis: Paul's instructions are aimed at maintaining order in the church. The context suggests that women were disrupting services with questions, and Paul advises them to seek understanding at home to prevent disorder. This directive does not prohibit women from participating in church activities such as prophesying, as seen in 1 Corinthians 11:5-6 and 14:31.

Verses 36-38: Acknowledging God's Guidelines

Verses: "What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant." (1 Corinthians 14:36-38, KJV)

Breakdown:

- **Verses 36-37:** Paul asserts that these guidelines are commands from the Lord, and anyone who considers themselves spiritual or a prophet should recognize their divine authority.
- **Verse 38:** If someone chooses to ignore these instructions, they are to remain in their ignorance.

Exegesis: Paul challenges the Corinthians to recognize the divine authority behind his instructions. He calls for submission to these guidelines as the commandments of the Lord, reinforcing their importance for maintaining order and edification in the church. Those who refuse to accept this teaching are left in their ignorance, highlighting the importance of obedience to divine instruction.

Verse 39: Desire Prophecy, Do Not Forbid Tongues

Verse: "Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues." (1 Corinthians 14:39, KJV)

Breakdown: Paul encourages the Corinthians to earnestly desire the gift of prophecy while also ensuring that speaking in tongues is not forbidden.

Exegesis: Paul balances the importance of prophecy and tongues, encouraging believers to seek prophecy for its edifying potential while also recognizing the legitimacy and value of speaking in tongues. This balanced approach ensures that both gifts are valued and exercised appropriately within the church.

Verse 40: Order and Decency in Worship

Verse: "Let all things be done decently and in order." (1 Corinthians 14:40, KJV)

Breakdown: Paul concludes with a general principle that all things in the church should be done decently and in order.

Exegesis: This final exhortation encapsulates Paul's teaching on spiritual gifts and worship. Order and decency are essential for a healthy, edifying worship environment. This principle ensures that the exercise of spiritual gifts contributes to the building up of the church in a manner that reflects God's nature of peace and order.

Conclusions about 1 Corinthians 12-14

(1) Speaking in Tongues in the New Testament Church

- **Normal Part of Church Life:**
 - Paul spoke in tongues and encouraged other believers to do the same.
 - He provided specific instructions for the proper use of tongues in worship and commanded that tongues should not be forbidden.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1 Corinthians 14:18).
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues" (1 Corinthians 14:39).

(2) Consistency of Speaking in Tongues in 1 Corinthians and Acts

- **Same Phenomenon:**
 - The Greek word for tongues (glossa) is used consistently in both 1 Corinthians and Acts, indicating the same phenomenon.
 - Paul refers to literal languages, as demonstrated in Acts 2, not to unintelligible or ecstatic gibberish.

- **Scriptural Reference:** "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place... And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1, 4).
- **Scriptural Reference:** "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal" (1 Corinthians 13:1).

(3) Purposes of Speaking in Tongues

- **Initial Sign of Spirit Baptism:**
 - In Acts, speaking in tongues serves as the initial evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).
- **Edification:**
 - **Personal Edification:** Speaking in tongues is valuable for individual spiritual growth and devotion.
 - **Corporate Edification:** When interpreted, tongues edify the entire church.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church" (1 Corinthians 14:4).
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret" (1 Corinthians 14:27).

(4) Necessity of Interpretation for Public Messages in Tongues

- **Public Benefit:**
 - A public message in tongues must be interpreted to be beneficial for the congregation.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God" (1 Corinthians 14:28).
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret" (1 Corinthians 14:13).

(5) Benefits of Tongues in Personal Devotion

- **Personal Spiritual Growth:**
 - Speaking in tongues is highly beneficial for personal prayer and devotion, contributing to the believer's spiritual growth and intimacy with God.
 - **Scriptural Reference:** "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself" (1 Corinthians 14:4).

