

1 Corinthians 14:1-5

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First Corinthians Sermon Study Equipping Class

1. Read 1 Corinthians 13. Summarize what Paul was emphasizing in chapter 13. What command would you expect Paul to give after the conclusion to chapter 13? What command would you not expect him to give?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 14:1-5. What are the two commands that Paul gives in v. 1?
3. How does the second of these commands fit alongside the argument of chapter 13?
4. How would you define “pursue”? What would it look like for a congregation to pursue love in the use of spiritual gifts based on what we have seen in 1 Cor so far?
5. Why would Paul tell the Corinthians to “earnestly desire” the spiritual gifts? What did Paul say about the spiritual gifts in 13:8-13? What did he *not* say?
6. Is it contradictory for Paul to tell the Corinthians to both pursue love and to earnestly desire the spiritual gifts? Why or why not? Would the Corinthians have thought so? What would cause this kind of thinking on the part of the Corinthians?

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7. What specific gift does Paul say the Corinthians should pursue in v. 1?
8. What is the gift of prophecy according to our study so far in 1 Corinthians?
9. Why would Paul want the Corinthians to earnestly desire this gift *especially*? How does the rest of verses 1-5 answer this question?

❖ Day 2

Read 1 Corinthians 14:1-5 again.

10. How would you define the gift of tongues, based on our study in 1 Corinthians so far and the survey of tongues in the NT last week? Does that description seem to fit v. 2? Why or why not?
11. In order to help us understand what Paul means in v. 2 we must look to what follows. Read 1 Corinthians 14:6-25. Pay special attention to v. 9-12 and 21-22. Based on the context you've just read, what does Paul mean in v.2?
12. Is Paul advocating that the legitimate expression of the gift of tongues comes out in nonsensical sounds? Why or why not? How does this speak to the modern arguments that tongues is a kind of heavenly/angelic language that sounds like something other than a legitimate language?
13. How does Paul's explanation in v. 2 highlight the superiority of prophecy over tongues in the local church?
14. What is the contrast between the audiences of tongues and prophecy Paul highlights in the first part of v.3? (Note: the ESV translates the same word as "men" in v. 2, but as "people" in v. 3)

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15. What are the goals of prophecy Paul lays out in v. 3? How does this highlight the usefulness of prophecy over tongues?
16. How does v. 4 highlight and summarize the superiority of prophecy over tongues?
17. What is the point of all spiritual gifts according to 1 Corinthians 12:7? How does v. 4 compliment this? Is Paul then encouraging the Corinthians to build themselves up or correcting their view of the use of the gift of tongues?

❖ Day 3

Read 1 Cor 14:1-5 again.

18. Briefly summarize Paul's point in v. 5.
19. What are the parallels between the second part of v. 1 ("especially that you may prophesy) and the first part of v. 5 ("I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy")?
20. Why is the one who prophesies greater than the one who speaks in tongues? When is it the case that tongues is as valuable as prophesy?
21. What is the purpose of the gifts that Paul highlights in v. 5?

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22. Recall the initial commands given in v. 1. What should be our response to both of these commands?
23. What is the motivation Paul offers for desiring spiritual gifts? Is this what motivates your pursuit and exercise of gifts in the church?
24. How should our understanding and practice of spiritual gifts be shaped by this passage? What sorts of sinful thoughts and behaviors should be repented of? What righteous thoughts and actions should be sought after?
25. How can you practically apply this passage to edify the church in the weeks to come at SWBC?
26. Spend time praying for your own heart and others' at SWBC to pursue loving one another and right thinking and exercising of spiritual gifts.