



# **Message Transcript**

## **Gifts Operating in the Church**

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Well, thank you so much for choosing to worship with us today. And just let me add an invitation. This Tuesday night is first Tuesday of the month. We call it first Tuesdays. And what we do on the first Tuesday of every month is we gather here from 630 to eight to pray and seek the face of God.

If you want to know what our church is about, that's where you want to be. That's where everything starts. That's the fuel of all that we do in our church. So look forward to seeing all of you there this Tuesday night. First Tuesdays, 630.

And with that, let's pray. Let's prepare our hearts. We've been praising the Lord, seeking his face. Let's get ready to hear his living and active word. As God wants to speak directly to each one of you, let's pray.

So, Lord, we come before you now. And, Lord, we ask that during this time that we have together, Lord, that you would speak directly to us. Lord, we believe your word is authoritative. We believe you have things you want us to know and you want us to do. And, Lord, reveal yourself here to us this day.

And, Lord, for what you're going to accomplish in advance, we give you all the praise that you so rightly deserve. Glory be yours. Honor goes to you. And now, lord, all of your people who are in this place, who are ready to receive your word and to put into practice what you show them, agreed. By very loudly saying with me, amen.

Amen. This week, as I was watching tv, I was trying to figure out why is it that I watch the shows that I watch now? It's not very hard for me when I'm watching a sporting event or NFL Network. It's because I enjoy sports, but I find that I watch a lot of HGTV and the Food network, and I find that I know all the shows that are on there, and I really enjoy watching. And I was like, why do you enjoy watching that?

And I came to a conclusion because on those shows, no matter whom you're watching, whether you're watching in a kitchen or you're watching someone build a home, these people who are gifted are able to take ingredients if we're talking food or prefabricated things, if we're talking building. And they can just take all these random objects, put them massively together in a way that is a thing of beauty, right? For those of you that have the gift of cooking, you know what it's like. You may not have all the ingredients, but you know how to substitute things and heat things just right. And do all

that.

And there's a big difference between seeing someone who's a master chef versus someone like me, right? I mean, there's a difference. I mean, if I was making you chocolate chip cookies, I mean, I can give you the ingredients. I can read what the ingredients, but to mix them together and cook them just right and do all that, it's awesome for me. And I think it's because I can neither cook nor build that.

I love those shows because normally, like, when I watch property brothers or something like that, like, do you know, for someone like me, I can't build anything. But in an hour, there are people out there that can totally transform an entire house and make it look miraculous in just 60 minutes. Right? And I love watching that stuff. It's awesome.

But here's what I really love. I love that God's gifted everybody in the body of Christ with certain gifts that are not meant to be used individually, but are to come together to be a marvelous thing, to give him glory, to build his church and to advance his kingdom that comes together. It's a thing of beauty. And this is what the apostle

Paul is going to be talking to us about today through God's word. That's what we're going to be taking a look at.

We've spent the last several weeks on spiritual gifts. We've talked about how God has gifted every member in the body of Christ for service to him, for the exaltation of Jesus, for building up his body to go advance his kingdom. And that while we're many members in the body, there's just one body. It's the body of Christ. That's who we are.

And all of us have been gifted that way. We took a look at the love chapter, which was, that's how we best exercise our gifts, by loving God and loving. And then last week, we looked at two specific gifts of prophecy and tongues and how they operate today in the church. And what Paul is going to do now is bring it all together and say, hey, listen, this is how gifts need to operate in the church if we're going to see Jesus Christ exalted and the body built up so that the church can have an impact on the culture. And so if you have a copy of the scriptures, I encourage you, open your bible to one corinthians chapter 14, one corinthians 14.

We're going to begin in verse 20 and take a look at things that God has to say. Now, there's really one main thing God's going to tell us, and three reasons why it's important. And so if you'll pay attention, you'll kind of walk through this with me, and you'll see it right in your own text. Notice what he says. He said, brethren, do not be infants or do not be children in your thinking, yet in evil, be infants, but in your thinking, be mature.

And that verse, verse 20, is really the thrust of the entire rest of this passage. Because when Paul's talking about gifts being operative in the church, here's what he's talking about. He's telling you, be mature in your thinking and behavior to build up the body of Christ. Be mature in your thinking and in your behavior to build up the body of Christ. He says, brethren, or brothers and sisters, do not be children in your thinking.

Now, what are children like in their thinking? Children in their thinking tend to be very selfish, especially when it comes to the context of gifts. I want my gifts, and I want them now, and I want to know how they please me. And you know what kids are like. When they get a gift that they like for a while, then they don't want that gift anymore.

They want to discard that, and they wish they had that gift. And, you know, if your kid's friend gets a gift that they don't have, then they want that gift. They want their gifts to be noticed, and they want to know how their gifts can benefit them. And that's called immaturity in your thinking and behaving. When it comes to spiritual gifts, as a reminder, your gift is not for you.

Your gift is for the exaltation of Jesus for the purpose of building up the body. When we come to this text, if we think differently on gifts, it's going to take us in a whole different direction. Again, the purpose of gifts. Use your head, use your mind, behave wisely, and do it in such a way so that Jesus gets exalted, so his church gets built up, because that's what Jesus Christ cares about now, he says, when it comes to evil, when it comes to practicing sin and evil, here's where he says to be infants. Why?

Because he doesn't want us to walk around and have spiritual gifts and not have the maturity to demonstrate them. There's nothing worse than seeing somebody in the body of Christ that's been given a spiritual gift. And yet at the same time, that person lives a life of iniquity. So he's saying this, hey, be mature in your thinking and be mature in your behavior. In other words, church grow in your ability to love God and love other

people.

Spiritual maturity, again, is not giftedness. There are a lot of gifted people in the body of Christ who are not all that mature. Maturity is the idea of loving God and loving his people better. It's the idea of loving God so much that as I'm receiving from him, I have a desire to love other people better. That's the litmus test of my maturity.

And when it comes to gifts, this is where we have to get. This is where we need to remain. Cause if we forget this, then gifts become selfish. It's all about me and how gifted I am and what I get and how I use it and how I build myself. And in many places when gifts are talked about, where maturity of love for God and love for others is not paramount and foundational to gifting, all sorts of things can go awry.

All sorts of things can become crazy. And at the end of the day, it's not about having a crazy environment. It's not about a self centered environment. It's about a God glorifying environment where God's people are seeking to be mature, using their minds, using their life, and living out the gospel of Jesus Christ. And that's what Paul says is important as we go through this text.



And so he's going to highlight these two gifts that we've been talking about specifically, which is the gift of tongues and the gift of prophecy. So let me just remind you, if you weren't here last week, you can go back and watch last week's message. But we talked about tongues being this, that speaking in tongues is a God given ability to pray or praise in languages not understood by the speaker or the hearers. That's what tongues are. The only way they could be understood is if there's an interpretation.

So it's prayer and praise that you're giving to the Lord that's going vertical in a language that is unknown to you who's speaking it or to the people that are listening. That's what the gift of tongues is. And so we talked about this. Now, I used the word last week, trying to be clear. I use the word or syllables.

But upon further review, I've always thought tongues are languages, even if we don't understand the language or know what the language is. That's what tongues are. By definition, they're languages. Didn't realize there was a group of people out there that believe tongues are more like ecstatic speech where you get all frenzied up into this emotional stage and you just, you just blab. I don't think that's of the Lord.

I just don't. I think you can be in your absolute right mind, speaking in tongues, not knowing what you're saying, but having your heart filled with the things of God. That's what a tongue is. Now, here's what Paul is going to say. Be mature in your thinking and in your behaving when it comes to that.

He's going to quote in verse 21 here from Isaiah 20 811. Okay. And following. So here's what he says in the law. It is written by men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers.

I will speak to this people. Even so, they will not listen to me, saith the Lord. So what happened is Isaiah was prophesying imminent judgment on the nation of Israel hundreds of years earlier. And here's what he says. Because you're not going to repent.

God's going to judge you. And here's how you know God's going to judge you. When another nation comes in and you hear them in their foreign tongue speaking and

they're taking over your nation, you will know that God's judgment was true. Which is exactly what happens when the, what happened when the Assyrians came in and attacked them and sacked the nation? And they hear all the Assyrians speaking, assyrian, realizing, oh, the judgment of God has come upon us.

And guess what? They still didn't repent. Right? So there's an understanding that tongues are a sign of God's judgment. Keep that in mind.

So then he goes on in verse 22, tongues are a sign, not to those who believe, but to unbelievers. But prophecy is for a sign, not to unbelievers, but to those who believe. Hang with me. I'll explain it. Therefore, if the whole church assembles together and all speak in tongues, and ungifted men, ungifted men would just be simply men or women that don't have the gift of interpretation, that can't understand.

So if ungifted men or unbelievers, people who have not confessed Jesus as Lord enter, will they not say that you are mad? Here's what he's making the case of. He's making the case that tongues can indeed be a sign of God's judgment on unbelieving people. Now, Paul's going to say, it's okay. We're going to see later in this text, it's

okay to use the gift of tongues in church, but only with an interpretation, which means that can't be the only reason tongues are spoken.

But here's what he's saying. He's saying if you speak in a tongue and somebody doesn't understand what you're saying, or there's an unbeliever that comes in and they don't know what's being talked about, will they not say, hey, you're crazy, like, you're out of your mind, you're mad? What's going on here? I found this week a very helpful paragraph about this. Sam Storms, who's a pastor in Oklahoma, in his book *The Beginner*.

*The Beginner's Guide to spiritual gifts*, sums up this passage this way. He says, when God speaks to a people in a language they cannot understand, it is a form of punishment for unbelief. It signifies his anger. Incomprehensible speech will not guide or instruct or lead to faith and repentance, but only confuse and destroy. In other words, if people don't understand what's being said, it's not going to lead them to faith in Jesus.

It's only going to confuse them or destroy what they're doing. Thus, if outsiders

or unbelievers come into your meeting, most likely out of spiritual curiosity or perhaps even in the pursuit of the gospel, and you speak in a language they cannot understand, you'll simply drive them away. You will be giving them a quote unquote sign that is entirely wrong, because the hardness of their heart has not reached the point where they deserve that sign of judgment. In other words, when tongues are being said in a church and an unbeliever walks in and they don't know what you're saying, and there's just a bunch of people blabbing in tongues, here's what they're going to say. Y'all are crazy.

I came in here to learn about God, and you guys are mad. You're out of your mind. Now, I don't know about you. I haven't been in every single church. I haven't seen every single kind of worship, but I have been in environments where everybody is told, hey, go ahead and just speak in your prayer language, talk in tongues.

Nobody knows what's being said. Those who have the gift, try it. Those who don't are trying it, or sitting there feeling completely uncomfortable. At the end of the day, there's many people sitting there saying, what in the world was that? And Paul says, if the purpose of the church is to glorify Jesus and build up the body so he can advance the kingdom, then what's the point in a church service having people that can't

interpret and don't understand, or unbelievers coming and all they hear is a bunch of rambling babble that nobody understands.

They're going to say, this is crazy, right? Even believers are going to say crazy, right? Can we just be honest that we've been in some environments that have been like that? I mean, I've been in environments before where I've watched a guy get up with a youth group and say, hey, everybody line up in a semicircle, and y'all are going to speak in tongues. Start just talking, you know, like, just say the word banana backwards, like seven times, and it'll just come right.

That's not the gift of tongues. The gift of tongues is not something you have to work up or try for. You'll either get it or you won't. And it really doesn't matter, because at the end of the day, here's the deal. It's probably the lowest in terms of building up the body of Christ, and yet the enemy has used tongues as one of the most divisive gifts in the body of Christ.

Paul's going to show us later, if you have the gift, how to use it. If you don't have the gift, it's okay. But in a church service, because it's used as a sign for unbelievers,

you can't do it without an interpretation. It'll make people think you're crazy. If the only purpose of the gift of tongues was to drive away unbelievers, Paul would just say, speak in tongues all you want, because that way, when unbelievers walk in, they'll say, you're crazy, and they'll leave, and that will be awesome.

And that is not the heart of the gospel. Make sense? So that's what Paul says. Be mature in your thinking. Be mature in your behavior.

Right? Then he's going to talk about this gift of prophecy. And I said last week, prophecy is the God given ability to discern or verbalize a thought that God has brought to mind for the person or situation. It's the ability to hear from God, a revelation from God, the ability to discern and or verbalize that thought. Oftentimes, I think it's a spontaneous thought that's brought to mind for a person or a situation at hand.

And here's what he says about prophecy. He says, but of all prophesy and an unbeliever and ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all he is called to account by all the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so he will fall on his face and worship God,

declaring that God is certainly among you. So what happens in a gathering when God is revealing himself through a speaker directly to a person? Here's what happens. They are convicted of their sins, right?

First and foremost, when the gospel is proclaimed, people are convicted of their sin. Now, whether they turn to Christ or not, we don't know. But they'll be convicted of their sin. They'll be convicted by all. And notice what else?

The secrets of their heart are disclosed. When prophecy is being done correctly, people will know that God is speaking through the person that's speaking. Oftentimes this can come out in a message where I've had people tell me after messages on numerous occasions, hey, Pastor Jeff, how did you know what was going on in my life this week? And how did you know to speak that directly to me this week? And on Wednesday, this happened.

And when you said that in church, that totally fit. That's prophetic in the sense that it's God's living in active words, speaking a word to you that brings conviction to your heart that God is among you, that causes you to do what? To fall on your face



and worship and say, certainly God is among us. Now among many prayer requests.

As a pastor of this church, I can tell you what our number one prayer request is before a weekend service.

It's not so that people will walk out and say, that was the best songs I've ever sung, or that was the best worship, or Jeff's a great speaker, or anything like that. It's none of that stuff. Our prayer every single week is that people that enter into our church, that come to brave church would say, there is no doubt that God certainly dwells with those people, that Jesus Christ is alive and exalted in this place, that God is real. That is our prayer. And Paul says the purpose of pride prophecy is to bring that out of people's hearts.

When you speak a word or when someone speaks a word into your life that is directly from the Lord, for encouragement, for edification, for building up or for comfort, that is how you know the Lord is among you. And more and more and more, that's what we want to see. And so Paul's saying, be mature about this, right? Be mature about this. I mean, it's important for us.

And he even says, even unbelievers get this right for prophecy. So this is what he's saying. Be mature in this. And here's the outcome. Notice what verse 26 says when it comes to our thinking and our behavior being mature to build up the body of Christ.

Notice the outcome. He says in verse 26. What is the outcome then, brethren, when you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Here's the thrust of Paul's entire argument. Let all things, things be done for edification.

Let everything that's done in the church be for glorifying God and building other people up. Let your gifts be used in a way where other people receive and say, I feel more built up in Christ as a result of the ministry that's taken place. Now. A lot of people will read this verse, verse 26 alone, and they'll say, hey, listen, I noticed that when we gather together, everybody's bringing something. Well, here's why.

Because every person in the member of the body of Christ has something to contribute. What it doesn't mean is that in every single meeting, at every single time,

you have to have something to bring. It would be pretty chaotic if every single person in our church got up and had a prophetic word or everybody had a tongue. As a matter of fact, you're going to see the limitations of this in the next section. And so some people will say, well, Pastor Jeff, that's why I believe in the home church movement, because in a home church where we only have twelve people meeting every single time we get together, somebody can bring a tongue, somebody can bring a psalm, somebody can bring a hymn, somebody can bring a word, somebody can bring a teaching, and that's why we do it there.

My challenge to that would be this great do it. But what happens if you're serious about the mission of Christ? It means you're going to evangelize too, right? So you're going to grow. What happens when you grow too big for one house?

Well, Pastor Jeff, then we'll have two houses. That's fantastic. And then in that house you can continue to operate in all your gifting. What happens when you get four houses? Well, then we'll continue to operate in four independently.

But you know what's going to happen over time. Now you're going to have to

appoint elders that are going to oversee all that. And now you're going to have people crying out like, when are we going to get together and just worship together? And when are we going to just have somebody drive what we're doing? And you're going to end up with the same model of church that we have, just backwards up.

So at the end of the day, Paul is not mandating that small groups are only for what we do or that in every meeting that you have, everybody has to speak and bring something he's saying that all people in the body of Christ are gifted and you should be receiving from the Lord. So that in your area of service and in what you're doing, you are contributing to something. Which is why I unapologetically tell you that groups, brave groups, small groups, are probably the most important ministry that you can be a part of, because in those groups, you have to come and contribute something. If you're in a group where only one person contributes in a small group, it's lame. In a small group where everybody's coming together to build for prayer, for care, for share with one another.

It is a great opportunity. And this is what Paul is saying. Just make sure everything is being done. For what? The edification of the body of Christ.

The building up of the body of Christ. Not for selfish means, not for selfish gain, not for look at me. Not for I wish I had that gift. Not for what am I getting out of this? No, I'm bringing something to contribute for the sake of Christ church and his kingdom.

Amen. And this is why it's important that when it comes to spiritual gifts, that we're mature enough to see. How does Paul say, we need to build this? How is God putting all this together? Why is he doing this?

He's saying, hey, listen, if you do this and you're mature in this, this is what's going to happen. There are three reasons that we want to be mature in our thinking and behaving. And the reason. The first reason we want to do that is, number one, this. So that we can understand and evaluate what is taught.

So that we can understand and evaluate what is taught. When you're mature in your thinking and behavior, it aligns you to be able to understand and evaluate what is being taught. Notice verse 27. He's going to give some instructions for tongues. He says this.

If anyone speaks in a tongue, it should be by two or three at the most, and each in turn. And 1 may interpret so in a gathering, whether it be in a group, whether it be in a church setting, whether it be in a corporate gathering. Here's how tongues are to function. Two or three at the what? At the most.

That's it. According to God's word, which I happen to believe, what God's word says. And what does he also say? He also says one at a time, in other words, each in turn. So there's not everybody speaking out in a tongue all at the same time, not according to the word of God.

There's two, three at the most, one at a time. And what does he say next? He says this, and one must interpret. In other words, if there is no interpreter, there is no tongue being publicly taught out loud. Right?

Why? Because the gift of tongues is not known to the speaker nor the hearers, unless. And this is the unless. Unless there's a gift of interpretation that somebody in

the body can take what is being said and translate it in such a way where the body of Christ is built up. Okay.

Because notice what he says in verse 28. But if there is no interpreter, he must keep silent in the church. In other words, if there's no interpretation, there's no public tongue speaking, period. That's according to God's word. And then he says this, and let him speak to himself and God.

So the place where I believe tongue can be used in a gathering is when that person is praying in their prayer language, their praise language, to the Lord, in a way that's not disrupting anybody else. And by that, I mean this. Perhaps you're in your seat sometime during a service and you're praying in tongues, but it would only be to a way that you and the Lord could hear it. It wouldn't be like, I'm gonna make it just loud enough so the person in front of me knows I have that gift and they can turn around and see I'm spiritual. No, that would be a distraction.

But I believe that you are allowed to do that. Now, some people want to shut down the gift of tongues altogether, and I would tell you this. We have a lot of people

that pray in our church, a lot of people that pray for me before each service. And I can sometimes know who the tongue speakers are just because I can kind of hear them privately praying to themselves. And I have no problem with that.

I don't shut them down and say, I didn't understand what you said. Is there an interpreter? Shut up. Shut up. And here's why I don't do that, just to be honest.

Some of y'all can't sing very well. Did you know that? And when we're doing praise and worship, we don't encourage people to turn around. Like, what did you say? I didn't hear you enunciate praise there.

You know, what are you doing? You're just kind of babbling. We don't do that. When you're worshipping between you and the Lord, it's not to be disruptive. What Paul's trying to make the case of is that tongues can be used for personal edification.

We talked about it last week for building you up so you can contribute to the



body of Christ. But never, ever, never, ever to be a distraction where people would look your way and draw attention to yourself, it would only be for the purpose of glorifying Jesus. Now, I can tell you this. I've only had one experience in 29 years of being a Christian where I've seen this done. The way this text points out only once.

I've been in hundreds of places where I would say, these people are out of their mind. Right. And it doesn't mean they don't have the gift. It just means they're not following biblical instructions for how it should be done. Right.

I was in a church up in Michigan. I told you I prayed over the guy that died in the Chicago marathon last week. He didn't die in the marathon last week. I told you the story last week of how he died in the Chicago marathon years ago. And we were at their church, and during this church service, there were two or three tongues that were spoken during the worship that were immediately interpreted, that went right along with what the worship was saying and right along what I was feeling in my heart.

And I remember looking at Kim having tears come into my eyes. That was amazing. That's the only time that's ever happened I've seen. Crazy. We're not going

to be crazy.

We're going to be what? We're going to be biblical. We're going to allow the word of God to speak. So the only time should be two, no more than three, one at a time. Only if there's an interpreter.

Okay? That's what the Bible says. It doesn't mean in every meeting everybody speaks in tongues. It doesn't mean in every meeting there's always an interpreter. It may never happen.

It may happen on rare occasions. We don't know, but we're going to be biblical about what we do. Okay, that's tongues. Now, when it comes to prophecy, here's what he says. Here's what he says.

When it comes to prophecy, notice verse 29, let two or three prophets speak and let the others pass judgment. Really interesting. He's giving permission for two or three prophets to speak. In other words, there shouldn't be everybody getting up out of their

seats and everybody's speaking and saying, I have a word from the Lord, two or three. And notice what it says.

It's really interesting. And let others pass judgment. This is where New Testament prophecy is different than old Testament prophecy. In Old Testament prophecy, when Isaiah said, thus saith the Lord, it was, thus saith the Lord. When Ezekiel said, thus saith the Lord.

It's thus saith the Lord. When Jeremiah said, thus saith the Lord. It's thus saith the Lord. In the New Testament, prophecy is not authoritative. It's not people saying, this is what's going to happen authoritatively.

Why? Because the canon is closed. New Testament prophecies we talked about last week is for the purpose of edification or building up encouragement or consolation or comfort. That's what it's for. And so we need to evaluate, just because someone knows the Lord, just because someone's spiritual, just because someone's filled with the spirit, doesn't mean that everything coming out of their mouth is exactly what God would have to say.

So we need to evaluate it. And you say, well, where do you get that? I showed you last week. One Thessalonians chapter five. If you would turn there first.

Thessalonians chapter five. Paul writes to the Thessalonians and talks about this right in the context of one thessalonians 5:19. He says this, do not quench the spirit. So in other words, there's things the Holy Spirit wants to do among you. Don't quench it.

Say, well, how would we do that? The very next verse says, do not despise prophetic utterances. In other words, do not treat prophecy with contempt. When somebody has a prophetic word, don't say, oh, that's just nonsense. I have the Bible.

No, don't treat it that way, but do what he says, but examine everything carefully. In other words, when it's coming out of their mouth, examine everything carefully. Even as your pastor, I've told you time and time again, and this doesn't, this not only doesn't hurt my feelings, this makes me feel real good. If there's things that I say, and you're

like, Pastor Jeff, I can't find that in the word, then believe what the word says. This book is authoritative.

I'm not. Jesus Christ is the authority. I'm not. When it comes to New Testament prophecy, there's nobody that's in authority. We need to evaluate it with the word of God and what we know to be true about Jesus in order to receive it.

That's the context for what he's saying about prophecy. So don't despise it, but examine everything carefully. And he says this, hold fast to that which is good. It means someone may have a prophetic word and some of it may be man. That's really good.

And I don't know that that's true. It's take the meat and spit out the bones. And if there's going to be prophetic words uttered, there needs to be someone there who can help interpret what that is. Now, you may ask, how are we going to do this in our church? What's this going to look like?

Here's my candid answer. I have no idea. I really don't. I want to be biblical and all, but I don't know what you do. I mean, I've been in places where they have open mic time where people can just come and do that.

I'm a little leery of that, to be honest, because what if someone walks in that doesn't know anything and they come and hijack a mic and then we got to shepherd the whole thing? That's not good. I've seen it done where there's usually an elder or a senior pastor, where if somebody has a prophetic word, they can kind of share it with a mature, seasoned believer who can make a judgment in that moment. Yeah, that seems right. Hey, this is when we should share it.

Maybe at the end of the service, hey, maybe next service. Hey, maybe next week. Let's pray about it. It doesn't mean we get it right every time. Who's the person that's going to share it?

Is the person that brought the word, or is it going to be one of the elders or pastors? Listen, this is something we got to grow in as a church, be open to what God wants to do and allow God's spirit to work. Now, here's the reason why. A lot of

people say, well, that makes me uncomfortable because many of us have been in environments where things haven't been biblical. And it makes us a little leery, to be honest.

I mean, I've been in environments where during the service somebody blurts out a tongue and then everybody's like, what are we going to do? Somebody going to stop that? Shut it down, shut it down. Shut it down. Right?

And I've seen it shepherded well, and I've seen it shepherded poorly. I've seen nothing happen. I've watched great pastors walk up and say, hey, listen, you know, in a group this size, it'd be really difficult to know if there's an interpreter present. And so while you have a heart to serve the Lord, and while that's so good, it would be best at this time if you kept that tongue to yourself, unless we knew there was an interpreter here for the sake of the whole body. And that's a very loving way to do that.

Or maybe it is that we have an interpreter. So we play one more song. We say, is this interpretation line, does this seem to be what God said, saying to our church? But there needs to be wisdom. You don't turn your brain off when it comes to spiritual

gifts.

You always keep your brain on to see, is this really what God is saying? And that's what he's talking about. We need to evaluate it. We need to weigh it. We need to say, hmm, I don't know.

And that's what we're called to do. Does that make sense? And so when it comes to tongues and prophecy, this is what the apostle Paul is saying. And notice what he says. Here's some further understanding of this.

He says this two or three will pass judgment notice, verse 30. But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, the first one must keep silent. In other words, if there's somebody up here that's giving a prophetic word, and the Lord moves on the heart of somebody that's seated, and they're like, man, I got something I need to say. It's okay for that person to finish what they're saying and then allow God to move through the person that God spoke to so that they can come up, but to do it in order to do it with respect to what God wants done and how he wants done. And then he says this, for you can all prophesy what one by one, so that you may learn and all may be



exhorted.

And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not a God of confusion, but a God of peace. That's what he says. In other words, you don't have to get the word out, brother. I gotta say this.

I gotta. I can't control my tongue. Yes, you can. You totally can. And, yeah, we can trust the leadership in the church to decide when and where it gets decided.

I mean, that's maturity. That's what it looks like. That's what Paul's saying. And Paul says, these are the guidelines that we need to follow if we're gonna operate on this correctly. Otherwise, it's gonna be total chaos.

I mean, this is kind of like the apostle Paul being a judge in the courtroom, pounding his gavel, saying, order, please. Order. Why? Because there's a difference between gifts functioning the way God wants in community, versus being ringling brothers Barnum and Bailey circus, where it's just up for grabs, and it's like, dun dun

dun dun dun dun dun dun dun. And everybody's walking out saying, that was awesome.

And people are like, what was that? It was emotional. Yeah, I know, but what do they talk about? I have no idea. But it was cool.

No, it wasn't. I mean, that's not what church is supposed to be. It's to be grounded in the word of God for the exaltation of Jesus Christ, for building one another up so that we can hear and evaluate what God is saying. Amen. And we want to follow what God's doing, because when we're mature in that we can understand intelligently and evaluate the things that are being taught.

Let me give you another one that we can do. If we're mature in our thinking, then it also helps us so that we can follow God's divine order of authority. So we can follow his divine order of authority. Now, I want to read these verses to you, and I want to tell you something about these verses. First of all, as your pastor, you need to know this.

I believe the entire word of God is inerrant. All 66 books, all of it is inspired by God for our edification and belief. I believe everything. I'm about ready to read to you, but I'm going to tell you this. This would be a contender for the most offensive three verses in a row in the entire section of scripture.

I do not apologize for that because I believe God has a word for us he wants us to hear. So let's read them and then unpack them. Here's what he says. As in all the churches of the saints, which really is an unfortunate verse break in verse 34. It really goes better with verse 34.

As in all the churches of the saints, the women are to keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the law says. If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home, for it is improper for a woman to speak in church. Was it from you that the word of God first went forth, or has it come to you only? Amen. Okay, anybody have any questions?

I mean, in our culture, that has shifted so far in one direction that is so confused

about gender and so confused about the word of God that this can come across as being extremely painful. And women, let me just give you some clarity on this before we get started. When I taught on one corinthians 13, I said, if I speak in the tongue of men and angels, but have not love, what am I? A noisy gong or a clanging symbol? Women, listen to me.

Look at me. For those of you who have been abused by men, for those of you who have been put down by men. For those of you who have been talked down to by men, and you hear this, your first guttural reaction is to say, oh, heck no. Okay? And I just want to tell you, as your pastor, I get that.

Okay. I want to also tell you, it doesn't change the word of God. It just doesn't change the word of God. So the question we have to ask is, what does this mean? Now, I've read lots of commentaries this week, and let me just tell you what I've discovered.

Nobody agrees, not one person. Some people will say this, well, that was just culture. That was just back then. You know, he's got to kind of toss that out. That's

convenient.

It just doesn't seem to play very well. Some people say, well, that's just. That was just the apostle Paul being a chauvinist. That's who he is. So we can toss that out today.

I have a hard time with that. I have a hard time. And there are even evangelical scholars that try to argue that this was added later. And that's not what he meant. So they threw.

Throw it out. There's other people that say, hey, it says what it means. Just tell women, shh. Be quiet. Right.

The challenge I have with the interpretation of taking this at face value is like any other scripture that I do. If you're gonna interpret what a scripture means, you need to interpret it in the context of what's being said. Then with the broader context of that book, and then with the broader context of scripture, keep in mind what's Paul talking

about here? He's correcting teaching in the church. That's not being done correctly.

Right. And what's he just gotten done? Talking about? Prophecy. Evaluating prophecy.

That's what he's talking about. And in the evaluation of prophecy, I believe what Paul is saying. Women, it is not your job to evaluate the prophecy. It's men's job. And you see all throughout the canon of scripture that women are not to teach nor have authority over men.

It's a man's responsibility. Now, I know that comes across as kind of a harsh word, and I'll explain why in just a minute, but that's good God's design. So when it comes to interpreting prophecy or being in a small group where a man's leading, you're like, wait a second. I don't think that's right. I don't think that's right.

I don't think that's right. Here's what happens. I know it for a fact. When women

step forward, men step back. It is an absolute 100% fact.

And Paul knew about this. I mean, gender is a big deal. God created gender, and as I told you a few weeks ago, he created two, male and female. I saw an article here in the last month and it had, this guy was arguing for 37 genders. I don't even know how you do that.

Right. I mean, we live in such a culture where when people get hurt, they go their own direction. They don't want to hear the word of God. God's word is true whether we like it or not. Now here's one of the reasons why many women have a hard time hearing this, is because you know what?

Notice the next verse after women are to keep silent in the churches. They're not permitted to speak, but are subject themselves, just as the law said. I believe that's in the context of interpreting prophecies and saying, I don't agree with him. That's not authoritative, I don't agree with her. Here's another reason, let me just say this, why I don't think Paul is talking about absolute silence.

Because in one corinthians eleven, he's talking about women that have the gift of prophesying and women that have the ability to pray. I mean, so how can you say, well, they have the gift to prophesy and pray. They just can't use it in the church. When the purpose of gifts is to, to exalt Jesus and to build body, build the body in the church, it makes it really difficult to argue that way for me. That's why I don't think that's what Paul is saying.

And women, you see this all throughout the Old and New Testament where women are used mightily of God for his glory. This is not an issue of gifting. This is an issue of divine order of things. The only place I do not see women serving in the entire Old Testament is we have no Old Testament priests that are women. Right?

When it comes to the divine order of the priesthood, it's all male in the New Testament. The only place I don't see women serve is as elder or lead pastor. Jesus, when he picked his twelve apostles, he picked all twelve men. Now, you might say, well, that's just Jesus. You know, he just didn't want to upset the culture.



Have you ever studied Jesus? I mean, if there's anybody that would have said, man, I'm just going to pick twelve women, it would have been Jesus. Women followed him around his whole ministry. Jesus elevated the role of women in ministry consistently. The first two witnesses of his resurrection from the dead were women telling men the gospel that Jesus Christ had risen.

Women, let me tell you something. You're in a church where you can exercise the fullness of all of your gifts, because that's what Jesus Christ would want. However, the only prohibition I see in scripture is to be an elder senior leader in a church or the interpretation of prophecy during a church meeting. That's it, right. Everything else goes right.

And this is what Paul is talking about. Let me tell you the other reason why this is hard. The other reason why this is hard is I would just have to say to the women here that most women get put down for the very thing God put them on the earth to do. I hear women talk like this sometimes. I'm just a wife.

I'm just a wife and a mother. Just a. What do you mean, just a. If you're married,

that is your highest possible calling you could have in your life, is to bring glory to God by serving your husband. And if you happen to have children, the highest calling in your life is to serve your husband and your kids.

And, oh, by the way, married women, that's what God thinks is the most important culture may tell you you're not getting your value there. Go out in the workplace. And God doesn't prohibit women from being in the workplace in any way. But let me tell you what God thinks. He doesn't see you as just a wife.

He doesn't see you as just a mom. He sees you as glorious, doing the very thing that God's called you to do. Amen. Now, with that as a background, and this is just. This is quick, notice what he tells the women to do.

If I can't speak in church and I can't interpret these prophecies, well, then what am I supposed to do? Notice what he says. If you desire to learn anything. So women, learn as much as you want. What are you supposed to do?

Ask your own husbands. Ask your own husbands. What does this tell me about the men? Men, you better be able to answer their questions. I mean, that's what it means.

I mean, for this to work, you need to be able to answer the questions that your wife would ask. And I know how some of you women feel when it comes to this. I know way more than that guy does. I mean, I feel crippled, right? I mean, it'd be like for me and my wife, like if we're at a Broncos game and I'm watching the game and I turn my back to get some popcorn from a vendor, and turn back around, and I noticed that the quarterback got sacked.

And I looked at my. My wife. I'm like, what happened? I'm like, did they blitz or did the back misses block, or was it the left tackle? And she's like, yeah, I don't know.

I didn't see any of that. If somebody told me, you have to rely on your wife. If you have questions about the Broncos, go home and ask Kim. I feel paralyzed. Right?

But in other areas, she would feel paralyzed about me. I'm not a Sci-Fi person. I don't like Sci-Fi movies. Never have, never will. So when it comes to, like, Star wars and all that stuff, if.

If she ran out to get pop culture and came back in and she's like, what happened? I'd be like, I don't know, some animal shot some person or something. I don't know. That would not be satisfying for her. Right?

So here's the thing, women. I get it. I get it that you would say, well, I know more than my husband. I mean, I've been to Beth Moore all these times. I've been to Priscilla Evans.

I mean, I ask him about his view on the end times. You don't even know what an end time is, and all this kind of stuff, man. This is a call that's understood that to be a spiritual leader is not just an authority, authoritative role. It's growing in the ability to actually lead as one. Amen.

I mean, this is as much to the men as it is to the women. And so while I'm a pastor and you hear me go after the men, I don't go after the men because I'm down on men or because I'm trying to put men down. But I realize the pendulum has swung so far in one direction that sometimes women feel that, how can I live this thing out when I don't have any men that can actually fulfill what they're called to do? Single women, this does not discredit you. Single women, hopefully, you have a dad that can do this.

Single women, if you don't have a dad that can do this, we have men pastors on staff that would love to be that for you. If you're not married, you're not discredited, you are not put out to pasture. Okay? But this is what God says. This is his word.

Ask your husbands who are at home. Now, I realize this is so counterculture. I mean, I didn't wear Kevlar or anything today, but I understand that sometimes I think women wish it was the opposite way around. Like, why don't the men be silent? I know what it means to be silent.

I had vocal cord surgery in February. I had 21 days. I could not even whisper I love you to my family. I had a phone where I could text, and it would talk for me like a robot. That's all I had.

I was silent. And for the first two weeks, it was okay. I mean, it wasn't fun, but I got through. But when I started to go out of the house, it became really complicated because I couldn't talk to anybody. And I was like, what if I get pulled over?

Or what if this. So my assistant, Lisa, she made me this sign. You can see it behind me. Here's what it says. I just had surgery on my vocal cords and cannot speak right now.

Thank you for your patience. Every time somebody talked to me, I pulled this out of my pocket, just held it up. You know how hard that is for me? And it's really interesting to watch people's response, because some people. I mean, it looked like as soon as I pull this sign up, I'm like, do I have warts all over my head or something?

Because everybody's like, ugh. You know, other people felt really compassionate. Some people just wanted to get done with me. I remember one night, Pastor Dave invited me to go to a voice of the martyrs movie, right? On a Monday night.

It was in a rainstorm, and he told the ladies out front that he had paid for me. And so I got to the theater, and I walk in, and these 270 plus year old women are, like, standing there like they're not going to let me in. So I held up my sign of showing them who I was. They wouldn't have it. They're not letting me in.

I'm, like, thinking, I'm not trying to, like, hijack the voice of the Martyrs film on a Monday night. And, you know, I wanted to say, listen, I thought all the persecution was going to happen on the film, not out here in the lobby, you know? But here's the truth. I mean, I had so many different stories. And one of the stories I had, I took my youngest daughter, who just turned five this week.

We went out for Gelato one day, and we're eating gelato, and we're having this

little tea party, and we're having all this stuff, and my daughter's talking to me. And I thought before I go home, I was going to buy some cupcakes for my whole family. And so I waited at the counter because I couldn't talk. And I'm just waiting and waiting. Finally, some woman comes out, and I held up my sign.

She's like, uh, you're the unicorn. And I had a puzzled look on my face. She's like, yeah. She's like, the woman in the back said, you came in here with a wedding ring on that you're sitting around with like a four or five year old girl, enjoying her, loving her. She's happy to be around you.

It's obviously you're married. It's obvious. Obviously you love your daughter and you can't even speak. Do you know how long I've been praying that for my husband? Right?

And this is how we think sometimes when it comes to this text. How come the men? How come the men. Here's the truth, here's what I've discovered, here's what I think. This is my interpretation.



There's many, and you can wrestle with this your own way, but I don't think women genuinely have a problem submitting as much as who they're submitting to. God wants us to grow in our gift. So, men, here's the word for you. It's not going home and telling your wife to be quiet. It's not telling her to shut up.

It's not saying don't speak, it's not saying be obedient. It's going home and leading in such a way that she would want to come under you, right? Amen. And women, the opposite is true for you. I mean, make it easy for your husband to lead you, right?

Make it easy for your husband to lead you. If you complain and complain and complain and complain, it won't work. I promise you, it won't work. I mean, if you walk around, say, he never prays, he never leads devotions, he never does this, he never does that, it won't work for you, ladies, I just encourage you, maybe he doesn't pray with you, but maybe you could grab his hand someday and say, honey, could we just pray together here for a minute? Hey, honey, here's what I was reading in the word today.

What do you think about that? I mean, give him a chance to grow into his leadership. Don't shut him down. And the Bible says all over the place, God opposes what? The proud, but he gives grace to the humble.

Men and women were both called to be humble, and we're humble by admitting that the word of God is true. And Lord, whether this is comfortable or not, in our culture, this is what I want to submit to, because God, I want to be a place, I want to be in a church. And I want to be a family that submits to the lordship of Jesus Christ. And we want to be a church that celebrates every gift that God has given to women. We want to be a place that celebrates every gift that God has given to men.

And we want to do it in the order that God has called us to do. And here's how I believe about this passage. Paul has said already in chapter eleven, we have no other practice. I mean, this is what we do. If you want to be contentious about this, you're contentious with the Lord.

This is the word of God, right? Notice what he says. If anyone thinks he is a

prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the what, they're the Lord's commandment. This is what Jesus wants. He wants us as men to be godly leaders.

He wants us as women to be godly followers of Jesus Christ. Wants all of us to work together in harmony, because when that happens, it's a beautiful thing, he says. But if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized. In other words, we have no other teaching. This is what we teach in all the churches.

This is a universal practice. It should be a universal practice today. He says, therefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy and do not forbid the speaking of tongues. Let me give you the final point here. When we're mature in our gifting, the final point that I have is that so we can strive for spiritual gifts and we can honor the Lord.

We can strive for spiritual gifts, and we can honor the Lord. Notice what he says. Desire earnestly spiritual gifts. Strive for them. And notice this church do not forbid the speaking of tongues.

That's God's word. We will not forbid the speaking of tongues, but we will operate in the gift of tongues in the way that the scriptures prescribe that we do. Therefore, he says, but all things must be done how? Properly and in an orderly manner. Properly, in an orderly manner.

So this is what we do when it comes to prophecy in tongues. This is the way we operate when it comes to all of our spiritual giftings. This is how we operate. We want to be mature in our thinking. We want to be mature in our behavior.

How do we grow in that? By loving God more, receiving more of his love so we can love one another. By having grace for one another, by building one another up in the body of Christ, so that we can do that. And that's what God wants for us. And so this is a message that God points out for all of us.

As we navigate through his word. We have to hold high the word of God. We have to hold true to the word of God. I will not punt the word of God. I will not change

the word of God to comfort people.

I will come under the word of God and say, thus saith the Lord. And I encourage you. Wrestle with this. Look at what it says. Men be spiritual leaders, women be godly women.

Let's be the fullness of what God wants us to be. Let's be a congregation where both men and women can be celebrated to the fullness of God, that all the gifts are in operation as we pursue him, as we pursue our gifting, so that Jesus is exalted, the body of Christ is built up, and the kingdom of Jesus Christ is advanced throughout the world. Amen. That's what God has for us. Amen.

Would you stand with me as we close in prayer? Lord Jesus, we give you all the glory, honor and praise for who you are. Lord, have your way with your word. Lord, help us to receive what you have for us. And, Lord, let us live according to what you say.

And Lord, we give you all the praise, all the glory. In Jesus name. Amen.