

Series: Together Toward Maturity

Inductive Bible Study Guide: 1 Corinthians 14:25-40



Step 1: Observation – What does the passage say?

Read **1 Corinthians 14:26-40** slowly and carefully. Paul gives instructions for how the church should function when gathered, with a focus on **order, clarity, and edification**.

Observation Prompts:

- What does Paul say should happen when the church gathers?
- What repeated themes do you notice (order, peace, building up)?
- What guidelines does Paul give for tongues and prophecy?
- What does Paul say about God's character in relation to worship?
- What final commands or warnings does Paul give?

Read the passage and note what you see:

What does Paul say should be the goal when the church gathers in verse 26?

What instructions does Paul give about speaking in tongues in verses 27–28?

What instructions does Paul give about prophecy in verses 29–33?

What statements does Paul make about order and peace in verses 33–35?

What does Paul say about the authority of his instructions in verses 36–38?

How does Paul summarize his instructions in verses 39–40?

Step 2: Interpretation – What does the passage mean?

Paul is teaching that corporate worship should not be chaotic or centered on individuals. Gifts are good, but they must be exercised in a way that **builds up the church**, encourages clarity, and reflects God’s character.

Paul stresses that God is a God of **peace**, not confusion. Order is not the enemy of the Spirit—order is the environment where the body can be strengthened and unbelievers can understand what’s happening.

Questions to Explore:

Why does Paul insist that everything be done for “building up” when believers gather?

What do Paul’s rules for tongues and interpretation reveal about the purpose of tongues in public worship?

What does Paul’s instruction for prophecy (weighing, discernment, taking turns) show about accountability in the church?

Why does Paul connect orderly worship with the character of God?

What does Paul mean when he says his instructions are “a command of the Lord”?

How do verses 39–40 keep the church from two extremes: total restriction or total disorder?

Word Study Suggestions:

- **Build up (v.26): strengthen, edify, help others grow**
- **Interpret (v.27): explain so others can understand**
- **Weigh (v.29): evaluate, discern, test carefully**
- **Confusion (v.33): disorder, instability, chaotic disturbance**
- **Peace (v.33): wholeness, harmony, stability in the gathered body**
- **Decently and in order (v.40): fitting, appropriate, arranged properly**

Step 3: Application – How should I respond?

This passage calls believers to value worship that is Spirit-filled **and** orderly—worship that prioritizes others over self-expression. Maturity looks like humility, self-control, and a passion to build others up.

Personal Reflection:

When I gather with the church, do I come to contribute and build others up—or mainly to receive?

Do I value clarity and understanding in worship as much as emotion and intensity?

How do I respond to correction, discernment, and accountability in spiritual matters?

Are there areas where I need to grow in self-control or humility in how I serve?

What would it look like for me to help create a culture of peace, order, and edification in our church?

AM I hindering the work of the Spirit in my life and am I earnestly desiring the gift for the benefit of others?

Summary Truths:

- Spiritual gifts are meant to build up the church, not elevate individuals.
 - Orderly worship reflects the character of God, who is a God of peace.
 - Public worship should be understandable, accountable, and edifying.
 - Discernment and evaluation are part of healthy spiritual community.
 - We should not forbid gifts, but we must practice them decently and in order.
-

Optional Memory Verse:

“But all things should be done decently and in order.”— 1 Corinthians 14:40 (ESV)

Prayer Prompt:

“Lord, help our church worship in a way that reflects Your peace and holiness. Give us humility and self-control as we serve. Teach us to build one another up with clarity, love, and reverence for You.”

For Further Study:

- Colossians 3:16 — Worship that is Word-filled and edifying
- 1 Thessalonians 5:19–22 — Do not quench the Spirit; test everything
- James 3:17 — Wisdom from above is peaceable and gentle
- Romans 12:4–8 — Serving the body with humility