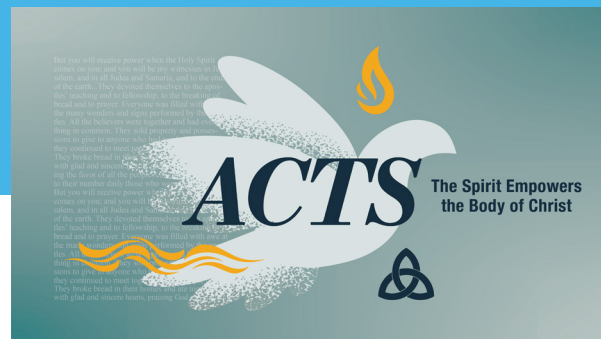


Discussion Questions

May 25, 2025

Demystifying Prophecy: Building Up the Body of Christ

Icebreaker: Share a time when someone's words of encouragement or comfort made a large impact on you and built you up.



1. What fear or concerns do you have in regards to the subject of prophecy?

Have you had negative or positive experiences with it?

2. Read 1 Corinthians 14:1-5, 24-25, and 29-32 aloud as a group.

In what ways can the modern church relate to the church in Corinth?

Why does Paul emphasize the centrality of love so much in this letter?

3. The sermon defined prophecy as "hearing from God on behalf of others to strengthen, encourage, and comfort the body of Christ" (1 Cor. 14:3). How does this definition challenge or expand your previous understanding of prophecy? Does it make it seem more or less accessible? Why?

4. Why do you think Paul emphasizes prophecy over other gifts like tongues?

5. Why is love the foundation for prophecy?

6. James finished the sermon by saying, "What if Northview became known, above all else, as a place where people are radically loved and relentlessly built up? Imagine a place where every Sunday, people don't just come to receive, but they come eager to give. A word of encouragement, comfort or strength..."

- What would it take for it to become a greater reality than it is now? And specifically, what part could you play in helping to see it happen? Discuss if that is a realistic goal for a diverse church community.
- What fears or hesitations might hold you back from offering to pray for someone or speaking a word of encouragement you feel God might be prompting you with?

1 Corinthians 14:1-5 (NLT)

Let love be your highest goal! But you should also desire the special abilities the Spirit gives—especially the ability to prophesy. For if you have the ability to speak in tongues, you will be talking only to God, since people won't be able to understand you. You will be speaking by the power of the Spirit, but it will all be mysterious. But one who prophesies strengthens others, encourages them, and comforts them. A person who speaks in tongues is strengthened personally, but one who speaks a word of prophecy strengthens the entire church. I wish you could all speak in tongues, but even more I wish you could all prophesy. For prophecy is greater than speaking in tongues

1 Corinthians 13:1-2,4-6 (NLT)

If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing....

Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out.

1 Corinthians 14:1 (ESV)

Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.

1 Corinthians 14:1 (NLT)

Let love be your highest goal!

Dr. Paul Gardner - Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on 1st Corinthians

"love is not a "natural" attribute of Christians simply because they belong to the Lord. They are called to be like Jesus... Paul uses the verb "to pursue" elsewhere of the work in which believers must engage as they seek conformity to the will of God or Christ."

1 Corinthians 4:2-3 (NIV)

For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit. But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort.

Hearing from God on behalf of others to Build up, Encourage & Comfort the body of Christ**1 Corinthians 14:4-5 (NIV)**

Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church. I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.

1 Corinthians 14:12 (NIV)

So it is with you. Since you are eager for gifts of the Spirit, try to excel in those that build up the church.

1 Corinthians 14:16 (CSB)

...how will the outsider say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying?

1 Corinthians 14:18-19 (NIV)

I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue.

1 Corinthians 14:23-25 (NIV)

So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and inquirers or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind? But if an unbeliever or an inquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted of sin and are brought under judgment by all, as the secrets of their hearts are laid bare. So they will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, "God is really among you!"

1 Corinthians 14:29-31 (NIV)

Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said. And if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker should stop. For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged.

1 Thessalonians 5:19-22 (NIV)

Do not quench the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt but test them all; hold on to what is good, reject every kind of evil.

1 Corinthians 14:32-33 (NIV)

The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets. For God is not a God of disorder but of peace - as in all the congregations of the Lord's people.

1 Corinthians 14:39-40 (NIV)

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

1 Corinthians 14:1 (ESV)

Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.