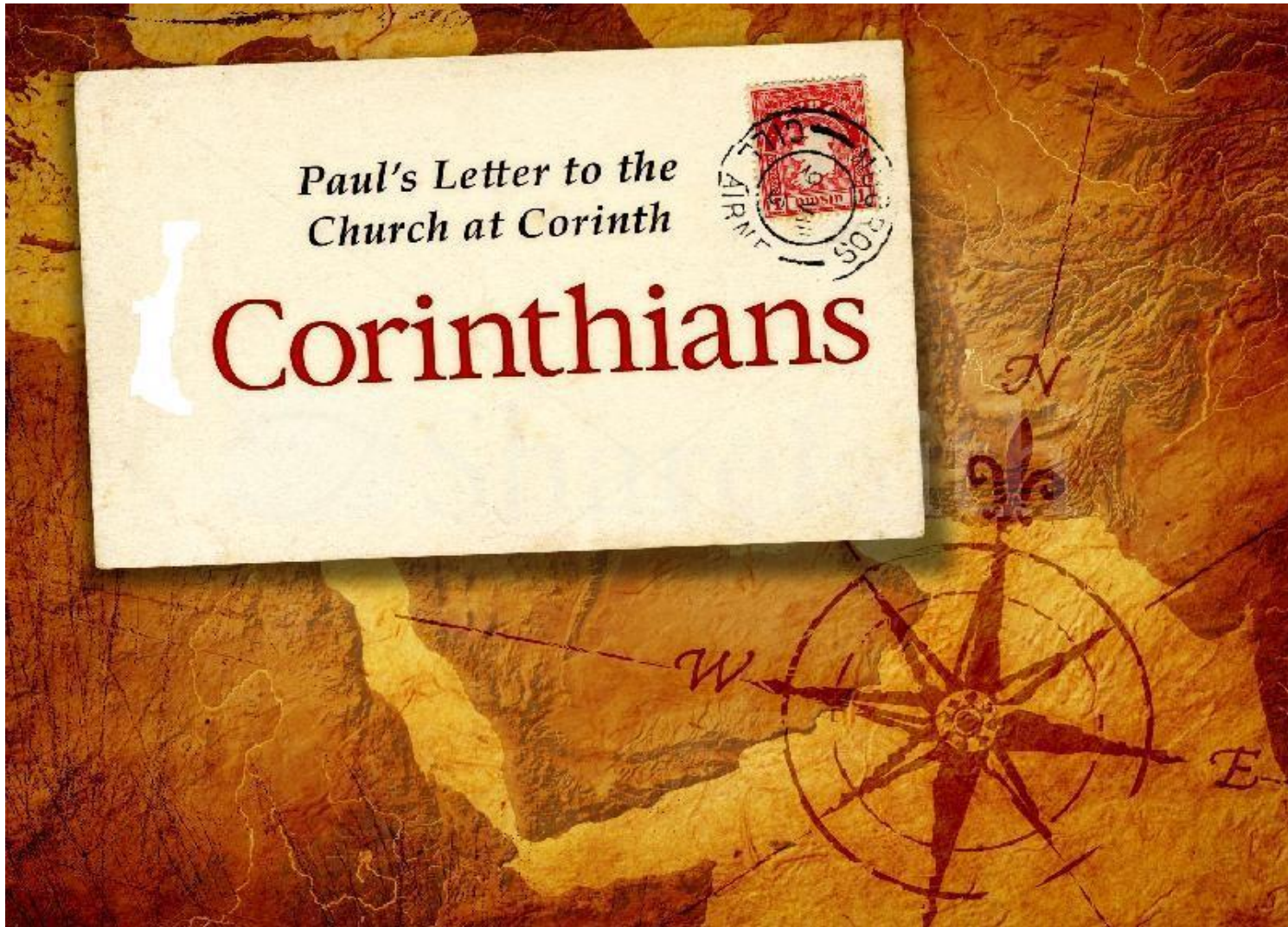


1 Cor.14:13-19 The Deficiency of Tongues





Brief Overview of 1 Cor. Chp 12 to 14*

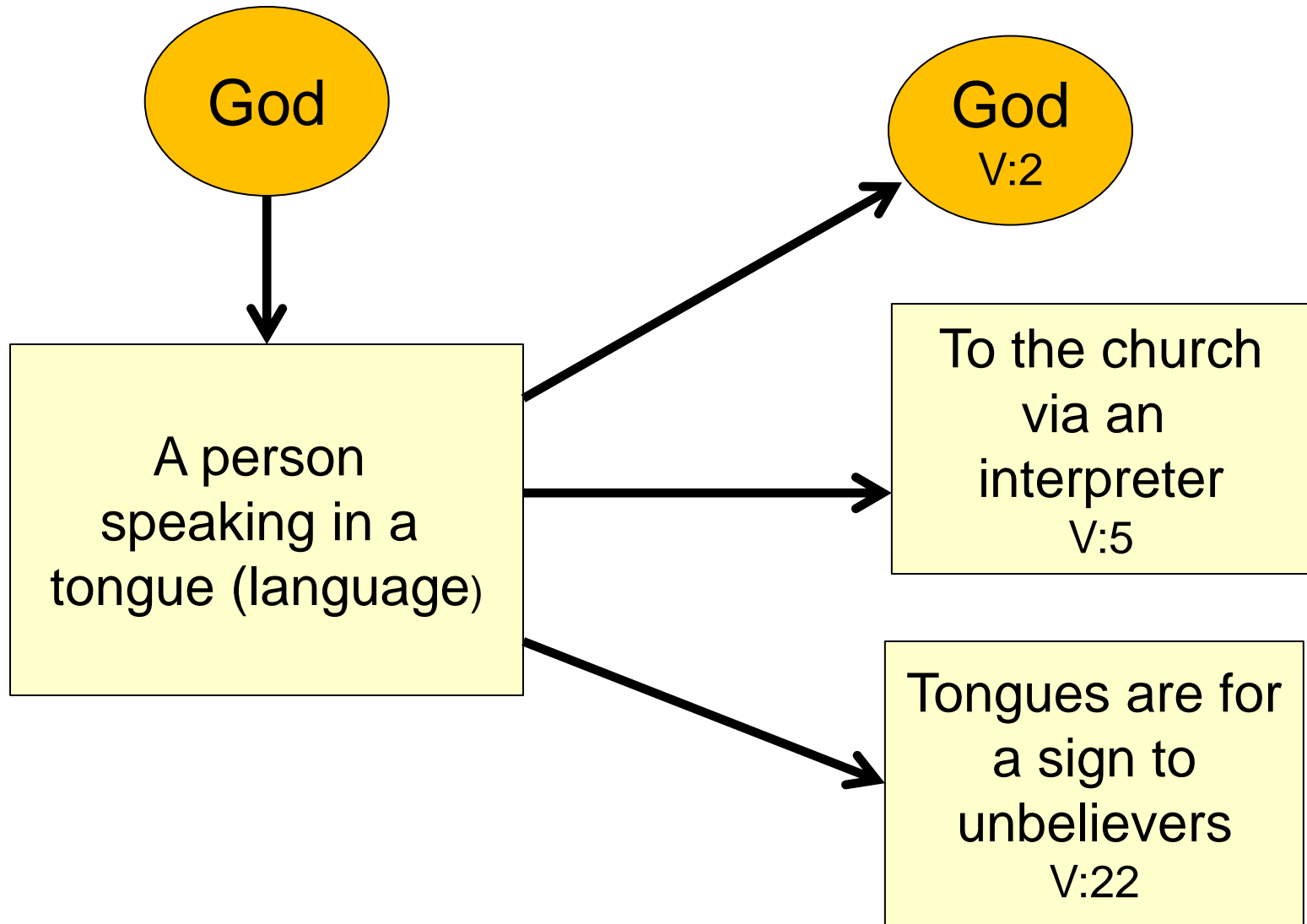
- Chapter 12 - Presents the facts of spiritual gifts and their (rank and) purpose.
- Chapter 13 - Presents spiritual gifts and their relationship to things permanent (i.e. Christ's love).
- Chapter 14 - Presents spiritual gifts (tongues and prophecy) and their perversion at Corinth.

Some Key Points in Chapter 14*

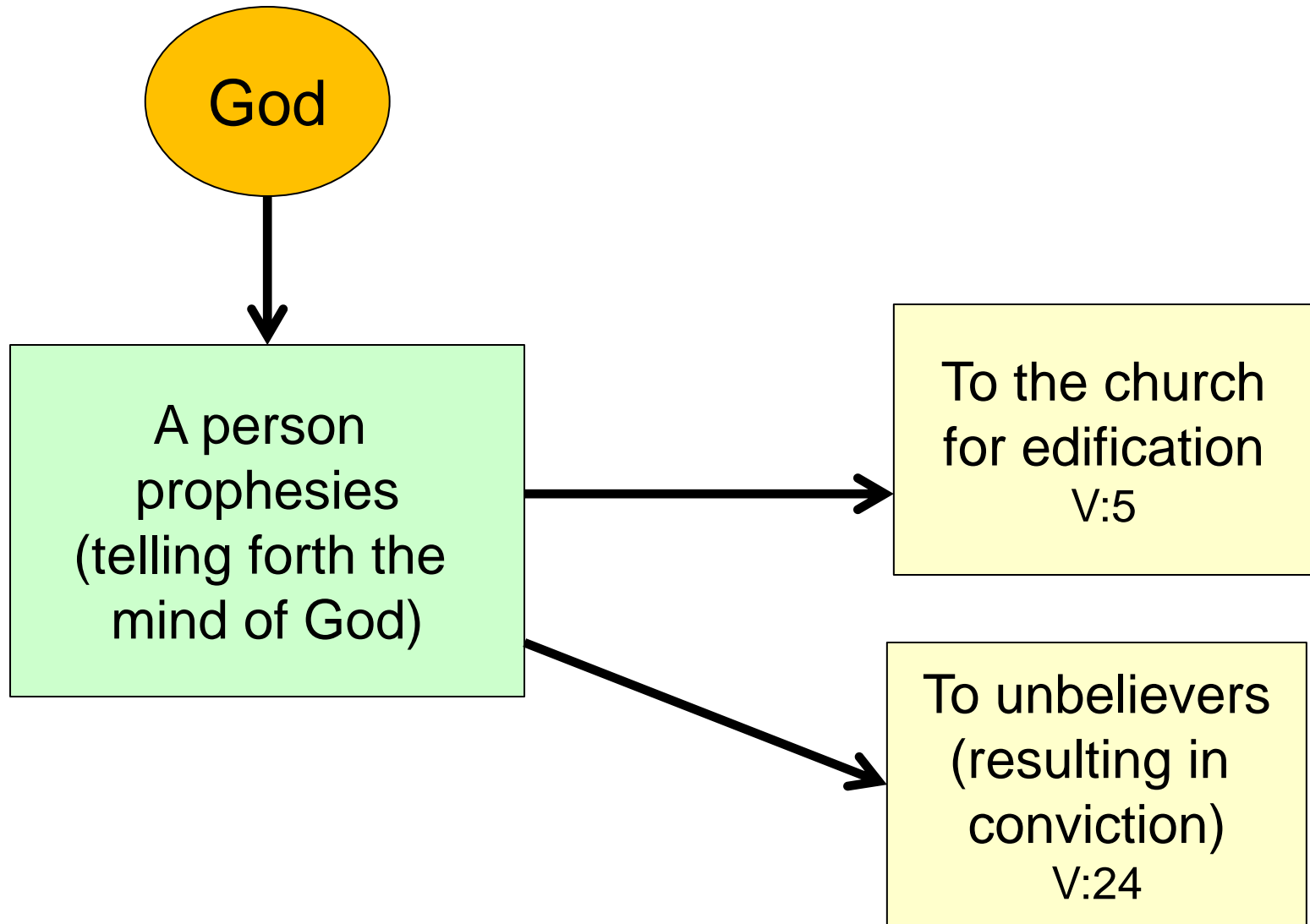


- There must be the priority of edification in the local church.
- The misuse of tongues was getting in the way of edification.
- This chapter tells why prophecy is superior to tongues.
- Prophecy is the telling forth of the mind of God before the New Testament was completed.

Chp 14 Comparison of Tongues and Prophecy*



Chp 14 Comparison of Tongues and Prophecy*



Outline*



The Inferiority of Tongues 14:1-5

The Deficiency of Tongues 14:6-19

The Reiteration of Deficiency of Tongues 14:13-19

- a. Understanding Using the Mind Is So Important That Tongues Should Not Stand Alone 14:13
- b. The Principle of Understanding Includes Singing and Praying Also 14:14-17
- c. Paul Serves As an Example 14:18-19

Today's Verses



¹³ Therefore let one who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.

¹⁴ For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.

¹⁵ What is *the outcome* then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also.

¹⁶ Otherwise if you bless in the spirit *only*, how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying?

¹⁷ For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not edified.

¹⁸ I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all;

¹⁹ however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind so that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue.

13 Therefore let one who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.



Therefore – based on what was said before

Subject: one who speaks in a tongue

Verb: let him pray (present, imperative, middle)

Dir Object: that he may interpret

interpret - *diermēneuō* - to interpret fully, to explain

- Pray that you may interpret this language you do not know.
- **Why would Paul give this command?**
- To remind us again of the importance of the edification of the church.

13 Therefore let one who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.



More on [praying that you may interpret](#):

- Note that Paul never said they should abandon this gift, but their practice of it needed correcting.

Constable

- This obviously argues that the nature of tongues is not ecstatic but human language with grammar and syntax.

McCalley

- The Corinthian who already had the gift of tongues should ask the Lord for the ability to interpret his or her utterances so the whole church could benefit from them (v.5c --- the church may receive edifying).

Constable

14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.

For if I pray in a tongue (unknown language)

- my spirit prays (by means of the Holy Spirit)
- Rom 8:26b --- but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.
- but my mind is unfruitful (unprofitable)

It [my mind] bears no fruit and helps nobody.

- While praying in a tongue might give the person doing so a certain sense of exultation in his spirit, his mind would not benefit. Amplified
- Isa 1:18a "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD --- Constable

¹⁵ What is *the outcome* then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also.

What is *the outcome* then?

- I will pray with (by means of) the spirit,
- and I will pray with the mind also.
(with the aid of my intellect also)
- Paul advocated praising and praying to God with both the spirit (emotions) and the mind (understanding).
Constable

¹⁵ What is *the outcome* then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also.

- I will sing with (by means of) the spirit,
- and I will sing with the mind also.
(with the aid of my intellect also)
- Eph 5:19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord
- What he (Paul) has said of preaching or public ministry of the word is just as true of singing. Therefore the importance of singing hymns that express Scriptural truth.

Ironside

¹⁶ Otherwise if you bless in the spirit *only*, how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying?

Otherwise if you bless [uttering eulogies and praises] in the spirit *only*,

- Paul now poses a question about anyone hearing you bless in an unknown language.
- How can anyone in the position of an outsider or he who is not gifted with [interpreting of unknown] tongues, say the Amen to your thanksgiving? Amplified
- Those [ungifted] believers (Gr. *idiotes*) who do not understand what the person praying in tongues is saying are unable to add their affirmation at the end of the prayer. "Amen" means "so be it." Constable

17 For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not edified.

For you are giving thanks well enough

God understands your giving thanks

but the other person is not edified (built up)

but the bystander is not edified [it does him no good]

Amplified

- Speaking in tongues is inconsiderate because it does not consider the needs of others for understanding.
- There should be nothing in corporate worship that is not understandable and orderly.

McCalley

¹⁸ I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all.

I thank God, I speak in tongues (unknown languages) more than you all.

- In the Corinthian church speaking in an unknown language was vital to getting God's word to all.
- Similar contrast as verse 5a:
Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but *even* more that you would prophesy.
- Corinthian tongues-enthusiasts could not reject Paul's instruction because [they could not say] he did not have the gift himself. Constable

19 however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind so that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue

however, in the church (assembly)

however (or but) – *alla* – in strong contrast

I desire to speak five words with my mind

mind – *nous* - comprising the faculties of perception and understanding, and those of feeling, judging and determining

- Luke 24:45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

¹⁹ however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind so that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue

- so that I may instruct others also,

so that – lit: with a purpose that

instruct - to teach, instruct orally. Spoken of the oral instruction or preaching of the Apostles and early Christian teachers - see Gal 6:6

The word *instruct* is the word *katacheo*, brought into English as the word *catechism*. It refers to instruction presented in an orderly and categorical manner. McCalley

- rather than ten thousand words in a tongue

Final Thoughts*



Paul affirmed the gift that the Corinthians apparently regarded as the sign of genuine spirituality, but he did so by correcting their thinking about what was really important in their meetings.

Worship should never be selfish, but it should always be intelligible.

* Constable