

**OCTOBER 9, 2022**  
**LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**  
**A PROPHETIC COMMUNITY**  
**1 CORINTHIANS 14:1-40**  
**FALL QUARTER WEEK 5 OF 12**

**Getting to Know Each Other Better**

**1. What's the best twenty bucks you've ever spent?**

When Darica and I were dating and it was time to make a decision about asking her to marry me I bought a ticket to a Padre game and went by myself and sat and watched the game and prayed and listened to God and made the final decision to propose. From there I went and bought a ring and waited for the right moment to pop the question. That was over thirty years ago!

**Renewed by Grace/Equipped as Disciples**

**2. Read 1 Corinthians 14:1-40**

**Re-read verse 1.**

I don't feel compelled to write much in my notes about Question #2. I will say this - What I am hoping to accomplish with the first of three sub-questions is to spark a conversation about why you think a lot of churches don't preach the command to earnestly desire the "spirituals" (I have rarely, if ever, heard this preached in the churches I have attended over the years.)

The second of the three sub-questions might be part of the answer as to why a lot of churches don't cover this command given in verse one. I would like your group to talk about any discomfort or dis-ease they feel. This is important to identify (and later begin to address) because this discomfort and dis-ease is most likely getting in the way of your group's ability to follow the command in verse one (assuming they have discomfort and dis-ease, of course.).

The third of the three sub-questions goes to the "I want more" point that Pastor Ryan brought up. I'd like to give your group a chance to talk about where they are with this. Do they want "more love, more power, more of You in my life"?

Though the questions are in the order they are in, sub-question two and sub-question three are more important than sub-question one. Why? Because identifying any hesitancy we might have and being honest about any lack of desire we might have is important to identify and begin to pray about so that we can live out the verse more.

- **While you may have often heard the command preached to pursue love, have you often heard the command preached to desire the "spirituals"? Why do you think that might be?**
- **Do you feel any discomfort or dis-ease with the command to desire the "spirituals"? Why do you think that is?**
- **What are some of your thoughts about the fact that you are to be "jealous" for the "spirituals"?**

**3. Re-read verse 3. In it we find a great definition of what prophecy is. In what ways does this definition help you understand what the “gift” is, why you should desire it and how you can use it in the lives of others?**

Here is verse three - “But the one who prophesies speaks to people for edification, exhortation, and consolation.”

Here are some notes from Ryan’s manuscript:

- Paul wants the church to keep in mind that when it’s gathered together, everything that’s done should be done to build each other up - never to puff one's self up.
- When we are gathered, it’s about “us,” it’s not about “me.”
- It’s (prophecy) something from God for someone else - and that someone could potentially be the whole church or life group or class.
- This (verse) normalizes prophecy a bit, doesn’t it? It takes it out of the realm of only predicting the future and brings it into the space of imparting good. See, if I were to ask you if you prophesy, many of you would say “no.” And yet, if I asked you if you’ve ever spoken a word of strengthening, encouragement, or hope to someone that resonated with them and that God used - my guess is you’d say “yes.” Paul’s teaching us that those words can be prophetic.
- Prophecy is a word that encourages. And he’s calling us to desire to live that out.
- The Spirit’s response when you are down, frustrated, or at the end of your rope might be to give someone in our church body a word of encouragement for you. Don’t you LOVE that God wants to build you up, not tear you down; he wants to encourage you, not remind you of your failings; he wants to give you hope, not bring you to despair? And he wants to use others to speak that truth over your life. That’s why being a part of the church is SO IMPORTANT. When people are the recipients of a prophecy, they are fortified. The Spirit wants to bring communal strengthening through prophecy.
- However, prophecy is not always a positive message, is it? We want to remain tender to the work of the Spirit. What might this look like? Maybe as we’re singing a song the Spirit might whisper something to you like, “What you just said isn’t true of your life.” Or as we’re learning from the Scriptures there might be a sense of impetus around a word or phrase and God starts doing business.
- Even when the prophetic word discloses the darkness of our hearts, it’s always to bring it to light so that Jesus can shine his refining grace into our shadows and lead us toward healing.
- The Spirit messes with us - in the best possible way. He speaks through the community of the Saints and something happens in our hearts.

**4. Remind each other of the four tests Pastor Ryan provided us concerning prophetic words that might be shared with us. In what ways are these helpful? In what ways do they help you be more open to giving and receiving this work of the Spirit?**

Here are the four tests:

- First, does the prophetic word align with Scripture? If it contradicts Scripture, you know that it's not from God. As an aside, if you sense that God is giving you the grace of being able to move in the prophetic, let me encourage you to saturate your life in Scripture. Memorize scripture, love Scripture, and bathe your mind in Scripture - it'll allow you to move in the prophetic with greater certainty about what's from God and what it is not.
- Second, does it confirm or correct what God is already doing in your life? If someone gives you a prophetic word that is totally out of the blue and doesn't resonate, it might be from God, but it might not. It might be, but that's often something you'll only know later on in hindsight.
- Third, does it glorify God or the prophet? When a word is really from God, the voice of the message drowns out the messenger.
- Finally, what does the community of Saints think about the word? The discernment process in the early church happened in the community. This was in part because they didn't have the Bible as we have it. However, it was also because of the central conviction that we are a body - and that God has wired some people to be able to discern the spirits.

**Sent in Love**

**5. What is one way you can Pursue Love! this week?**

Please remind them that doing this consistently is impossible without the power of the Holy Spirit. This isn't about rolling up our sleeves and doing it ourselves. It's about glorifying God by relying on God as we seek to glorify God. Also, this should be the easiest message to apply that we have had in a long time.