

## NOTES



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## PRAYER

Lord, we thank You for calling us together as Your people. As we gather to study Your Word, teach us to worship You in spirit and in truth. Help us to recognise that true worship honours You, builds up others, and points the world to Your goodness. Give us order, love, and clarity as we seek to reflect Your character. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## OPENING QUESTION (OPTIONAL)

When you think of your most memorable worship experience, what made it so meaningful for you? Was it the music, the moment, the message—or something deeper?

## WORD

17 But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. 18 For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, 19 for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. 20 When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. 21 For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. 22 What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not. 23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 27 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. 28 Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30 That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. 31 But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world. 33 So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another— 34 if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home—so that when you come together it will not be for judgment. About the other things I will give directions when I come.

**- 1 Corinthians 11:17–34 (ESV)**

26 What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. 27 If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. 28 But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God. 29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. 30 If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. 31 For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged, 32 and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. 33 For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.

**- 1 Corinthians 14:26–33 (ESV)**

## WORD (cont)

36 Or was it from you that the word of God came? Or are you the only ones it has reached? 37 If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord. 38 If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized. 39 So, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. 40 But all things should be done decently and in order.

**- 1 Corinthians 14:26–33, 36–40 (ESV)**

### Supplementary Scriptures

**Acts 2:42–47 (ESV):** The early church devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer—worship expressed in community.

**Colossians 3:16–17 (ESV):** "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly... singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

### COMMENTARY

#### 1. God-Honouring Worship

True worship reflects God's character—orderly, loving, and edifying. Paul calls the Corinthian believers to move from self-centred expressions to Christ-centred formation. Worship that honours God draws attention to His holiness, not human performance.

#### 2. Community over Individual

Paul's correction reminds us that worship impacts everyone. The Lord's Supper was never meant to be a private spiritual moment but a communal expression of unity in Christ. When individuals prioritise themselves, they dishonour the body.

#### 3. Reverent Approach

Communion is sacred. It requires self-examination—not to disqualify us, but to help us approach God's grace with humility and gratitude. It's a time to remember the cost of our redemption and to reconcile where needed.

#### 4. Intelligible Communication

In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul brings clarity to spiritual expression. Prophecy, tongues, and revelation should never confuse but clarify. Our spiritual gifts are not random fireworks—they're instruments in the symphony of the Spirit for the building up of the church.

#### 5. Worship's Witness

When the church worships with love and order, it reveals God's peace and presence to a watching world. Our gatherings become a living gospel—testifying that God is not a God of confusion, but of peace.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (Pick one from each Section)

### Section 1: DIVISIONS IN WORSHIP

- In what subtle ways do you think divisions still appear in modern worship spaces — maybe between cultures, generations, or styles?
- Have you ever felt on the outside of a worship environment? What made you feel that way?
- What would a worship gathering look like if everyone truly belonged?

### Section 2: Communion and Confrontation

Paul tells believers to “examine themselves” before taking the Lord’s Supper.

- What kinds of things surface in your heart when you slow down and really reflect before communion — resentment, pride, unworthiness, gratitude?
- How does our pace of life or church culture sometimes rush us past reverence?
- What would it look like for communion to become a weekly rhythm of reconciliation, not just remembrance?

### Section 3: Cultural Expression vs Kingdom Order

Paul doesn’t silence culture; he calls for order that reflects God’s peace.

- How do your cultural roots (Polynesian, First Nations, African, Asian, European etc.) shape the way you express yourself in worship — passion, volume, movement, reverence?
- Have you ever felt like your cultural expression was too much or not enough in a worship setting?
- How can a truly intercultural church hold space for different worship languages while maintaining order that honours God?

### Section 4: Spiritual Gifts and Self-Awareness

1 Corinthians 14 highlights how the gifts must build up others, not just validate the gifted person.

- How do you discern when you’re using your spiritual gift to serve versus to be seen?
- What practices keep you grounded in humility while still stepping out boldly in your gifting?
- Can you share a time when someone’s prophetic word, teaching, or encouragement genuinely built you up — what made it different from empty hype?

### PRAYER POINTS

- Reverent Hearts: Pray for hearts that approach worship with reverence and expectation.
- Community Mindedness: Ask God to help us make space for others in worship and not centre it on ourselves.
- Clear Communication: Pray for clarity in teaching, prophecy, and expression that helps people encounter Jesus.
- Presence Over Preference: Ask the Holy Spirit to align our worship with God’s presence, not our preferences.

### WEEKLY CHALLENGE

- Worship Preparation: Before attending a worship gathering this week, pray and prepare your heart for worship.
- Communion Reflection: Take a moment of gratitude and confession before participating in communion.
- Edification Contribution: Offer one specific contribution to your church’s worship—whether through encouragement, service, or participation—that builds others up.

### CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank You for inviting us into the beauty of Your presence. Teach us to worship You in spirit and truth. May our gatherings be marked by order, love, and reverence that reflect Your character. Help us to build up Your church and make Your presence known in all we do. In Jesus’ name, Amen.