

# 1 Corinthians 14:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.

## Analysis

---

**Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret**—Paul's practical command: the tongues-speaker should proseuchesthō hina diermēneuē (προσευχέσθω ἵνα διερμηνεύη, "pray that he might interpret"). This assumes

1. interpretation is a distinct gift from tongues
2. it can be sought through prayer
3. the same person can potentially exercise both gifts.

Paul doesn't say "stop speaking in tongues"; he says "pray for interpretation." This transforms tongues from self-edifying to church-edifying speech.

The command places responsibility on the tongues-speaker: if you're going to exercise this gift publicly, ensure it edifies by seeking the interpretation gift. Love (chapter 13) compels this: don't settle for self-edification when you could serve the body.

## Historical Context

---

This instruction suggests some Corinthians were content to speak in tongues without interpretation, valuing the experience itself. Paul insists on accountability: if you exercise the gift publicly, make it profitable for all.

## Related Passages

---

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

---

1. Why does Paul place the burden of seeking interpretation on the tongues-speaker?
2. What does it mean to 'pray that he may interpret'—is interpretation automatic or sought?
3. How does this verse show Paul's pastoral wisdom (not forbidding, but regulating)?

## Interlinear Text

---

διόπερ	ὁ	λαλῶν	γλώσση	προσευχέσθω
<b>Wherefore</b>	G3588	<b>let him that speaketh</b>	<b>in an unknown tongue</b>	<b>pray</b>
G1355		G2980	G1100	G4336
ἵνα	διερμηνεύη			
<b>that</b>	<b>he may interpret</b>			
G2443	G1329			

## Additional Cross-References

---

**Mark 11:24** (Prayer): Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

**1 Corinthians 12:30** (Parallel theme): Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?