

# 1 Corinthians 14:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

## Analysis

**What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also**—Paul resolves the tension with *kai* (καί, "both/and"). He'll pray *tō pneumati* (τῷ πνεύματι, "with the spirit") and *tō noi* (τῷ νοΐ, "with the mind"). **I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also**—the same principle applies to singing (*psalō*, ψάλλω, "sing psalms").

Paul's "both/and" refuses to sacrifice either dimension. True Spirit-filled worship engages the whole person—emotions, will, intellect, spirit. The four-fold "I will" (*proseuxomai*... *proseuxomai*... *psalō*... *psalō*) emphasizes determined commitment to integrated worship. Paul won't choose between Spirit and mind; he'll worship with both.

## Historical Context

This verse reveals Paul's own practice: he exercises tongues privately (v. 18) but ensures public worship engages mind and spirit. His personal discipline models what he teaches.

## Related Passages

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

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

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

## Study Questions

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1. How do you balance spirit-engagement and mind-engagement in your worship?
2. Why does Paul mention both prayer and singing—what's the significance?
3. What would worship that fully engages spirit and mind look like practically?

## Interlinear Text

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τί	οὖν	ἐστιν	προσεύξομαι	τῷ	πνεύματι	προσεύξομαι
What	then	is it	I will pray	G3588	with the spirit	I will pray
G5101	G3767	G2076	G4336		G4151	G4336
δὲ	καὶ	τῷ	νοῖ	ψαλῶ	τῷ	πνεύματι
and	also	G3588	with the understanding	I will sing	G3588	with the spirit
G1161	G2532		G3563	G5567		G4151
ψαλῶ	δὲ	καὶ	τῷ	νοῖ		
I will sing	and	also	G3588	with the understanding		
G5567	G1161	G2532		G3563		

## Additional Cross-References

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**Colossians 3:16** (Spirit): Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

**Ephesians 6:18** (Spirit): Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

**Jude 1:20** (Spirit): But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

**Psalms 47:7** (Sin): For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.

**1 Corinthians 14:19** (Parallel theme): Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.

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