

Prophecy and Tongues

Lesson #25

1 Corinthians 14:1-19

Paul laid a clear foundation for spiritual gifts in chapters 12 and 13.

- Spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit. (12:11)
- Spiritual gifts are to be used in the church for the common good. (12:7)
- Spiritual gifts are always to be used in love. (chapter 13)

With that understanding, Paul turned his attention to addressing the abuse and correcting the application of spiritual gifts.

1. What was Paul's overall teaching on the topic of spiritual gifts? (1 Corinthians 14:1)

The definition for prophecy given in the footnotes of the NIV Study Bible (pg. 1750) is helpful for understanding what is meant by the gift of prophecy.

Prophecy: A communication of the mind of God imparted to a believer by the Holy Spirit. It may be a prediction (cf. Agabus, Acts 11:28; 21:10, 11) or an indication of the will of God in a given situation (cf. 14:29, 30; Acts 13:1-2).

2. Why did Paul say that the gift of prophecy was more valuable within the church than that of tongues? (1 Corinthians 14:2, 3)
3. What point was he making about the use of tongues in the church? (1 Corinthians 14:4)
4. Once again Paul realized his teaching could be misused, so he clarified what he meant. What additional information did he give regarding the gifts of tongues and prophecy? (1 Corinthians 14:5)

The NIV Study Bible footnotes (pg. 1750) defines tongues as follows:

Tongues: "Since the Greek word for "tongues" means "languages" or "dialects," some understand it to refer to the ability to speak in unlearned human languages, as the apostles did on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4, 5, 11: cf. also 1 Corinthians 14:9, 10).

Others believe that in 1 Corinthians 12:1-4 the term "tongues" refers to both earthly and heavenly languages, including ecstatic languages of praise and prayer (1 Corinthians 13:1; 14:2, 10).

5. It appears that the Corinthians were misusing the gift of tongues. Paul set down some guidelines about the gift of tongues. What did Paul say was most important in tongues or languages? (1 Corinthians 14:6)
6. What was Paul's illustration for use of tongues?
 - 1 Corinthians 14:7
 - 1 Corinthians 14:8, 9
7. What point was he making regarding speaking in tongues? (1 Corinthians 14:9)
8. Paul said, *"Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages (tongues) in the world."* But what did he say they all had in common? (1 Corinthians 14:10)
9. It is important to take a few minutes to review the history of the gift of tongues as God originally gave it. As recorded in Acts chapter 2, the story picks up with all the disciples of Jesus gathered together at the House of the Lord (the Temple in Jerusalem) for the 9 a.m. sacrifices and prayer. This day was the day of Pentecost, also called the Feast of Weeks, one of the three festivals that God had required all the men of Israel to assemble at the Temple. (Deuteronomy 16:16) Using Acts 2:2, 3, describe what the disciples heard and saw while they were sitting in the House of the Lord.
 - Heard:
 - Saw:
10. Using Acts 2:4:
 - Who arrived at that moment?

- Where did he go?
 - What was the evidence of this?
11. How did those gathered at the Temple who were not Jesus' disciples respond to this and why? (Acts 2:5-8)
 12. In Acts 2:9-11, a list is given of all the native languages and dialects that were present that day. That list covered the entire Roman Empire. What were the disciples saying in those many tongues and dialects? (Acts 2:11b)
 13. When tongues were used as God intended, the result should be the same. What did those hearing the words ask? (Acts 2:12)
 14. As chief disciple, Peter stood up and with the enabling of the Holy Spirit gave his first public proclamation of the gospel. What was the result of this initial giving of the gift of speaking in tongues? (Acts 2:41)
 15. Paul emphasized that if the meaning of one's speaking in tongues is not grasped, then it is as if they are speaking a foreign language. Having said that, what did Paul say they should all do regarding spiritual gifts? (1 Corinthians 14:12)
 16. In verses 13-17, Paul explained the gift of tongues. When one uses this gift, what should be his prayer? (1 Corinthians 14:13)
 17. If that is not present at the time one speaks in tongues, how does that affect one's prayer? (1 Corinthians 14:14)

18. What did Paul say was better? (1 Corinthians 14:15)

19. Why is the interpretation of tongues important when praising God in church?
(1 Corinthians 14:16, 17)

20. Did Paul have the spiritual gift of speaking in tongues? (1 Corinthians 14:18)

21. What was Paul's attitude toward tongues in church? (1 Corinthians 14:19)