

Messy

Part Sixteen: *tongues*

August 21, 2022

Last Sunday, we looked at 1 Corinthians 13 where Paul says we must use our spiritual gifts in love. Paul describes what love does and does not do, then he says spiritual gifts will end, but love will last forever. Today, we are going to look at a 1 Corinthians chapter fourteen where Paul teaches us about the gift of tongues.

The Christians in the church at Corinth were misusing the gift of tongues and it was disrupting their church service and causing division in their church body. *Why were the Corinthians misusing the gift of tongues?* One, they were saved out of pagan Graeco-Roman religions where they worshiped idols in drug induced frenzies. The gibberish they spoke during these experiences was thought to be the language of the gods. Two, the prideful Corinthians longed for the spiritual gifts that gave them the most attention.

- **In 1 Corinthians Chapter Fourteen, Paul teaches on the gift of tongues.**

1st - Paul says the gift of prophecy is better than the gift of tongues.

Vs. 1-19

After reemphasizing the importance of love, Paul tells the Corinthians that the gift of prophecy is better than the gift of tongues because prophecy is understandable to everyone in the church whereas a foreign language is only understandable to the people who speak that language.

2nd – Paul says the gift of tongues was a sign to unbelievers – specifically Israel. Vs. 20-25

How was the gift of tongues used as a sign to unbelievers? The gift of tongues was used as a sign of God's judgment (Isaiah 14), a sign of God's blessing (Acts 10), and a sign of God's authority (Acts 2). Those who preached God's judgment and promised His blessing were validated by signs and miracles.

3rd – Paul gives some rules for using the gift of tongues in church.

Vs. 26-28

Paul tells the Corinthians that no more than two or three should speak in foreign languages in a church service. The speakers must speak one at a time. And there must be an interpreter present, so everyone is strengthened spiritually. If an interpreter is not present, those with the ability to speak foreign languages must remain silent.

After giving the Corinthians some procedures to follow, Paul tells them to eagerly allow the people with the gift of prophecy to speak, and to not forbid those with the real gift of tongues to use their gift when it is appropriate. Finally, Paul tells the Corinthians (and Christians living today) to make sure everything in their church service is done properly and in order (Vs. 39-40).

Here is today's lesson...

Christians should use their spiritual gifts to strengthen their entire church.