


Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.


*Introduction to Paul’s teaching about “speaking in tongues”*

**Romans 8:26-27**

<sup>26</sup> In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. <sup>27</sup> And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints [Believers] in accordance with God's will.

Q1. How would you define speaking in tongues?

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 *Tongues* defined: “special language given to [some] Christians by the Holy Spirit” [Life Application Bible, NIV version, Tyndale/Zondervan Publishing, ©1986, Page 2494]

Q2. With Paul’s emphasis on speaking in tongues in this chapter, what can you infer about the state of the Corinthian church to which Paul is writing this letter?

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Q3. Do you think there is a warning or an application in this chapter for us, today?

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 In this 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians epistle, Paul references “speaking-in-tongues” as a communication between a person’s spirit directly to the Holy Spirit in a divine language that requires God-enabled translation or interpretation, which God may have not granted to the person speaking-in-tongues. This usage is compared to Acts 2, in which the Holy Spirit enabled the Apostles to speak in other spoken languages understood by other native speakers, because the Apostles were about to undertake Jesus’ command to <sup>19</sup> “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’ ” [Matthew 28:19-20 “The Great Commission”]

**Acts 2:4, 6-8, &11**

<sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. . .

<sup>6</sup> . . . a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. <sup>7</sup> Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? <sup>8</sup> Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? . . .

<sup>11</sup> (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs -- we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!"

**Acts 10:45-46**

<sup>45</sup> The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. <sup>46</sup> For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

**Acts 19:5-6**

<sup>5</sup> On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup> When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

**Mark 16:17**

And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;

**1 Corinthians 12:8-11**

<sup>8</sup> To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup> All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

**1 Corinthians 13:1**


If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

## *Gifts of Prophecy and Tongues*


<sup>1</sup> Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.

Q4. What is “prophecy”?

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 *Prophecy* defined: noun [© 2003-2023 Farlex, Inc; <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/prophecy>]

1. a. An inspired utterance of a prophet, viewed as a revelation of divine will.
1. b. A prediction of the future, made under divine inspiration.
1. c. Such an inspired message or prediction transmitted orally or in writing.

 *Prophesy* defined: verb [© 2003-2023 Farlex, Inc; <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/prophesy>]

1. To reveal by divine inspiration.
2. To predict the future with certainty. See Synonyms at foretell.
3. To prefigure or foreshadow.

Q5. Why should we “eagerly desire spiritual gifts”?

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Q6. Why should this instruction be sprinkled with “love”?

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## Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

<sup>2</sup> For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit.

Q7. If someone ‘speaks in tongues’, how can we Believers, who do not have the ‘interpretation’ gift, discern between gibberish and a true gift from God? (Refer to 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 ↓)

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 Evidently, some Corinthian Believers prayed aloud in a tongue that was a direct communication from the Believer’s spirit (soul) to the Holy Spirit. In some instances, the Believer did not understand the words, groans, or modulations s/he uttered. In verse 13, Paul admonished those, who spoke in tongues, to desire the gift of interpretation, too.

### 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

<sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

<sup>7</sup> Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. <sup>8</sup> To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup> All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

Q8. If I pray hard enough or read the Bible from cover-to-cover enough times, will I earn the gift of speaking in tongues?

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**1 Corinthians 14:27-28** [We will examine these two verses in greater detail later in this lesson.]

<sup>27</sup> If anyone speaks in a tongue, two — or at the most three — should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. <sup>28</sup> If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak [silently] to himself and God.

<sup>3</sup> But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement, and comfort. <sup>4</sup> He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

Q9. How are we to use the gift of speaking in tongues?


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Q10. Again, Paul is making a contrast between *prophecy* and *tongues*. Why does speaking in *tongues* edify the speaker?


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 Edify defined: to improve the morality, intellect, etc., of, especially by instruction. Synonyms: teach, educate, guide, inform, uplift, nurture. [\[https://www.thefreedictionary.com/edify\]](https://www.thefreedictionary.com/edify)

 Speaking in Tongues edifies the speaker because it is a conversation between the speaker and God; it is inward-focused to the individual. Whereas prophecy is outward-focused; it amplifies the Word of God and builds-up the church through instruction and teaching.

 Back in the early 1<sup>st</sup> century church, Scripture consisted of scrolls known today as the Old Testament. In the 1<sup>st</sup> century, the Gospels were being written; Paul was writing letters (epistles) to his churches to encourage, persuade, and correct; Doctor Luke was researching, gathering testimony from firsthand witnesses, and writing the Book now known as the Acts of the Apostles; the Apostles Peter and John were also writing letters; and an unknown author was writing a book on faith that we call the Book of Hebrews. Prophecy was critical to the early church, because God had to supplement the Old Testament teachings with Truth concerning His Son, our Savior, and correct teachings and behavior. Today, we have God's Holy Bible, which is a compilation of the Old Testament scrolls and God-inspired 1<sup>st</sup> century writings that comprise the New Testament. The New Testament provides us with the Gospel message and tenets for living a Christ-like life in this stained world.

 We, who believe in the saving grace of our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus, are the hands, feet, and mouth of God, for God, to this world. Unbelievers need to be led to Jesus through our examples, words, encouragement, service, care, and love. If we know the Bible then we begin to understand our mission to the people God has brought into our lives.

Q11. Why does *prophecy* build-up the church? (“build-up” is also used in verse 12)

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<sup>5</sup> I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified.

Q12. Are all gifts from God (for example, *prophecy* compared to *tongues*) equal in His eyes?


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1 Corinthians 12:28, 31

<sup>28</sup> And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues... <sup>31</sup> But eagerly desire the greater gifts.

Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

<sup>6</sup> Now, brothers, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction?

Q13. How would you answer Paul’s question “if I . . . speak in tongues, what good will I be to you”?

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<sup>7</sup> Even in the case of lifeless things that make sounds, such as the flute or harp, how will anyone know what tune is being played unless there is a distinction in the notes? <sup>8</sup> Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle?

Q14. Can you imagine attending a concert where the orchestra (or band) played one continuous note for the entire performance? Or even one three-minute song?

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Q15. From the times described in the Old Testament into the first century, why is a clear trumpet call important?

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<sup>9</sup> So it is with you. Unless you speak intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air.

<sup>10</sup> Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning.

Q16. How do people understand what you are saying to them?

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Q17. In verse 10, Paul writes “yet none of them is without meaning”; what is he teaching?

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<sup>11</sup> If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and he is a foreigner to me.


Q18. Sometimes, as an American English speaker I have difficulty understanding an English brogue or an American drawl or even a scientist teaching a scientific principle. We are not foreigners; we Americans all share the English language. What is Paul teaching in regard to “foreigners”?

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Day 4

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<sup>12</sup> So it is with you. Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church.

Q19. How do we find our spiritual gifts?

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Q20. If my gift is being a good listener, how does such an inconsequential trait “build up the church”?

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<sup>13</sup> For this reason anyone who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret what he says.

Q21. Again, what is “speaking in tongues”?

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Q22. What does this mean: “anyone who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret what he says”?

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<sup>14</sup> For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.

Q23. What is meant by “my spirit prays”?

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Q24. Why would the mind of the person praying be “unfruitful”?

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<sup>15</sup> So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind.

Q25. How would you explain the experience of the person praying as described in verse 15? Unity?

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Q26. Have you ever daydreamed during a church service? If yes, how can we combat our jeopardized, or divided, attentiveness in our devoted worship?

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Q27. How can we achieve the peak where our minds and spirits are one in worship of the one True Lord?

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### Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

<sup>16</sup> If you are praising God with your spirit, how can one who finds himself among those who do not understand say "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying? <sup>17</sup> You may be giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified.

Q28. Why should we care whether another person is "edified" by what we say in prayer to God?

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18 I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. 19 But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue.

Q29. Why does Paul put such emphasis on instruction compared to speaking in tongues? And does that extend to us, too?  
Emphasis on instruction?

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Extend to us?

20 Brothers, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults. 21 In the Law it is written:

"Through men of strange tongues  
and through the lips of foreigners  
I will speak to this people,  
but even then they will not listen to me," [from Isaiah 28:11-12] says the Lord.

Q30. What is "the Law"?

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Q31. In regard to evil why should we be like infants?

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Q32. Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" [Matthew 18:3]. Why does Paul countermand Jesus and tell us to think like adults?

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Q33. Does our present-day culture "listen to" God? Do we humans learn from history? How might God be trying to get the attention of present-day society? Or is He silent?


Listen?

Learn?

Attention or silent?

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Day 6

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

<sup>22</sup> Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is for believers, not for unbelievers.

Q34. Why is “prophecy” for Believers?

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Q35. What tools do unbelievers have available to them to discern Truth?

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**Acts 17:11**

Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

**Romans 1:20**

For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities -- his eternal power and divine nature -- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Q36. Paul has interesting wording: he wrote that “prophecy... is for believers”, but “Tongues... are a sign... for unbelievers”. Why the distinction?

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<sup>23</sup> So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and some who do not understand or some unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind?

Q37. How would you describe what an unbeliever might see and hear when he enters a church described in verse 23?

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<sup>24</sup> But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everybody is prophesying, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, <sup>25</sup> and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So, he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, "God is really among you!"

Q38. What does the phrase "the secrets of his heart will be laid bare" mean?

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Q39. What is the primary difference between what an unbeliever might see and hear in a church described in verse 24 compared to the church described in verse 23?  
Tongues?

Prophesy?

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Q40. What do you think Paul would want to be the ultimate goal of any church?

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**1 Corinthians 14:33**

For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.

**James 3:16-17**

<sup>16</sup> For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.  
<sup>17</sup> But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

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