

INTRODUCTION: Message - "Order vs. Chaos" (1 Corinthians 14:1-40)

Ever since the day of Pentecost, people have mocked the use of speaking in tongues (Acts 2:12-13). Christians differ in opinion on the belief and practice of speaking in tongues. Some believe the gift of tongues have ceased long ago, while others believe that they should be and are for us today. This lesson examines the use (and misuse) of the gift of tongues by the Corinthian church.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: (*All Questions from 1 Corinthians 14*)

- 1) The Corinthian church members were already baptized by the Holy Ghost BEFORE this letter. Therefore, Paul is not addressing the issue of "tongues" for salvation nor of Holy Ghost baptism. From your study, what then is the purpose for the gift of tongues?
- 2) Read v18. Paul says he spoke with tongues more than anyone in the Corinthian church. Why was he so thankful? How do you think it helped him?
- 3) Read verses 22, 27, & 28. How does verse 21 help to resolve the apparent contradiction?
- 4) Read v31. Why prophesy at all?

SOME GLEANINGS FROM CHAPTER 14. SPEAKING IN TONGUES...

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| 1) Is speaking to God, not to men (v2)  | 6) Is a sign to unbelievers (v22)                              |
| 2) Is not understood by the hearer [with exception of interpretation] (v2, 11)  | 7) Can be done to excess and subject to ridicule (v23)         |
| 3) Is not understood by the speaker [with exception of interpretation] (v13-14) | 8) Should be limited in an assembly, with interpretation (v27) |
| 4) Is done in prayer and singing (v14-15)                                       | 9) Should be done in silence if no interpreter (v28)           |
| 5) Is a fulfillment of OT prophecy (v21)  | 10) Should not be forbidden (v39)                              |

SO WHAT?:

Speaking in tongues is NOT condemned by Paul. On the contrary, he desires this experience for everyone (v5). Although speaking in tongues is a good thing, Paul says that it's more important to speak with understanding in an assembly (v19). The emphasis of chapter 14 is the edification (building up / strengthening) of the assembly... not the individual. Paul says to do both... but in an orderly fashion (v14-15 & v39-40)

THINK ABOUT IT:

"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." (1 Cor 14:19)