

Discussion Guide

1. Why were the Corinthians seeking ecstasy? How does that relate to Pentecostals and charismatics today?
2. Why did Paul exhort them to seek prophecy rather than tongues?
3. Review and discuss the clues that tell us Paul was speaking of the misuse of tongues in 1 Cor. 14:2. What difference does the definite article make?
4. How does Paul's reference to Isaiah 28:10-11 affect our understanding of the gift of tongues? What is the connection?
5. What does it say to modern-day tongue speakers that tongues is not for believers but for unbelievers?

ANSWERS: Ecstasy, Prophecy, corrective, purpose, One true God, Definite Article, pagan, unintelligible, purpose, human, unrepentant Israel



Series: Power From On High.
Title: Is Speaking in Tongues for Today? Part 2

Text: 1 Cor. 14
Date: July 31, 2022
Lesson: 11

The most important and most dangerous pagan influence in the Corinthian church was

“ _____ ”

Three basic truths about tongues:

1. _____ is superior to tongues.

1 Corinthians 14:1–19 Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. 2 For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries. 3 But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. 4 One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church. 5 Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying.

1 Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy

“love” [agape]

“Pursue” - plural

“prophesy”

2 For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries.

“tongue” - singular

Why did Paul use the plural form in chapters 12-13 and now changes it to singular?

“tongues” = the true gift of tongues

“tongue” = the counterfeit gift of tongues

Why the difference form?

1. In Corinth the word “tongue” was used to describe what the pagans were doing. So Paul borrows that word and applies it to the Corinthians.

2. The singular and plural forms describe the difference in the practice of tongues.

not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophecy is for a sign, not to unbelievers but to those who believe.

“believe” -

“unbelievers” -

God gave Israel a similar warning two other times.

Deuteronomy 28:49 “The Lord will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you shall not understand,

Jeremiah 5:15 “Behold, I am bringing a nation against you from afar, O house of Israel,” declares the Lord. “It is an enduring nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language you do not know, Nor can you understand what they say.

Why did Paul draw on the Assyrian event?

Paul is using the Assyrian incident to explain the true use and purpose of tongues.

1. God's use of tongues has always been natural _____ language.

2. Foreign tongues was a sign of God's judgment given exclusively to _____.

22 So then tongues are for a sign. not to those who believe but to unbelievers;

"So then" [hosta] - Conjunction - Conjunctions connect two clauses

This is a conjunction of logical conclusion. So based on Isaiah 28 we can conclude that ...

"tongues are for a sign"

Just as the foreign language of the Assyrians was a SIGN to the O.T. Jews, so tongues remained a SIGN to the Jews in the N.T.

The singular form describes a single unintelligible gibberish.

The plural form describes multiple languages.

Clues that affirm Paul is referring of counterfeit tongues:

1. The entire tone of chapters 12-14 is _____.

Paul is not praising them in this one verse while the entire discussion is one of rebuke.

2. The private use of tongues is a misuse of God's _____ for gifts.

Spiritual gifts are not for personal, private use.

12:7 *But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*

25 so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.

1 Peter 4:10 *As each one has received a special gift, employ it in servicing one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

2 For one who speaks in a tongue **does not speak to men but to God**; for **no one understands**, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries.

3. They were not speaking to the

2 For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men **but to God**: for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries.

Definite articles draw attention to specific persons, places, or things.

“I pray to **THE** God”

“I pray to **A** God”

4

3. The true _____ of tongues

20 Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature.

The abuse of tongues comes from carnality and immaturity.

Paul explains the true purpose of tongues.

21 In the Law it is written, “By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people, and even so they will not listen to Me,” says the Lord.

Paul is quoting from Isaiah 28:11-12

In Isaiah's day, Israel wouldn't listen to their prophets even though they spoke clearly and simply in their own language.

So as a judgment God told them He would send a foreign invader (Assyrians) to take them captive.

It was the Assyrians who were the "strangers with strange tongues and lips who God would use to administer His judgment.

9

It is the same with human languages.

9 So also you, unless you utter by the tongue speech that is clear, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.

10 There are, perhaps, a great many kinds of languages in the world, and no kind is without meaning. 11 If then I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be to the one who speaks a barbarian, and the one who speaks will be a barbarian to me.

“barbarian” [barbaros] - The basic meaning is rude unloving speech that is incomprehensible.

onomatopoeic word - Those are words that imitate the sound they describe

12 So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek to abound for the edification of the church.

Paul placed a definite article before God five of the six times he mentions God.

18 I thank **THE** God,

25 ... so he will fall on his face and worship **THE** God, declaring that **THE** God is certainly among you.

28 ... and let him speak to himself and to **THE** God.

33 for **THE** God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

36 Was it from you that the word of **THE** God first went forth?

Paul does not use a definite article in verse 2

2 For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God ... (A god) (some god)

In their single tongue of gibberish, they were speaking to **A** god but not to **THE** God

4. They were speaking _____ mysteries.

2 For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries.

They were speaking in their own “spirit” - Not THE Spirit, but “his spirit”

“mysteries” - Pagan mysteries that were only for the spiritually elite

3 But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.

4 One who speaks in a tongue (**singular**) edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church.

5 Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues (**plural**) but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying.

“tongues” - Legitimate tongues

Why would Paul want everyone to speak in tongues when he points out that tongues is inferior?

2. Their abuse of tongues made it

6 But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongues, what will I profit you unless I speak to you either by way of revelation or of knowledge or of prophecy or of teaching?

The true gift of tongues was given to edify others with God's Word.

What about counterfeit tongues?

7 Yet even lifeless things, either flute or harp, in producing a sound, if they do not produce a distinction in the tones, how will it be known what is played on the flute or on the harp?

8 For if the bugle produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle?