

# Bible Studies

## 1 Corinthians 14



### Read 1 Corinthians 14v1-40

Corinth was a Church that lacked none of the Gifts of the Spirit, *1 Cor 1v7*. This does not however mean they were complete, or even mature. Paul is forced to describe them as worldly, *1 Cor 3v1*.



### What showed their worldliness?

Chapter 14 is clearly written for the purpose of teaching the Corinthians how to use the gifts they already had, correctly.

**Having read this chapter what would you say was the problem Paul wanted to rectify?**

*One of the problems in the Corinthian Church was the over use of tongues in their worship when they came together as a body. Since speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit (as the examples of the Book of Acts indicates), it is easy to reach out in faith and claim the gift of tongues. Because the individual's heart goes out to God as he speaks in tongues and is blessed and edified, it becomes easy to respond in tongues every time one feels the Spirit move. In Corinth this meant tongues were exercised so often in their meeting that the other gifts were neglected. Stanley Horton.*



### Paul teaches that both tongues and prophecy edify, what different edification do they bring?

**How does tongues edify?** 1 Corinthians 14v2, Jude v20

The gifts of prophecy and tongues have two distinct usages;

#### Prophecy

*Acts 15v32*

*1 Corinthians 14v31*

*Acts 11v28*

#### Tongues

*Acts 2v4*

*Acts 10v47*

*1 Corinthians 12v30*

*1 Corinthians 14v13*

The distinction here may not seem so clear, but there is the personal use of tongues which was, and is, considered normal for all believers. There is also a message in tongues, given in the congregation and subsequently interpreted. The Corinthians seem to have confused the two.

**Why did Paul consider prophecy superior to tongues?**

**Under what circumstances were tongues as important as prophecy?**

**Does this mean the two are the same?**

**What danger is there in the over use of tongues?**

Verse 9, 11, 23.

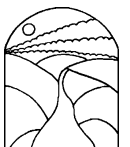
**Some people think that Paul is devaluing tongues is this true?**

Verse 5, v14-15, v16-17, v18, v22, v26-27, v39.

**How would you say Paul used his gift of tongues?**

Verses 18-19

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**In 1 Corinthians 14v27-28 Paul gives four directions about tongues?**


**Why do you think only two or three, should give a message in tongues?  
What does it mean that *one should interpret?*  
Why should we pray to be able to interpret? v13.**

**In 1 Corinthians 14v29-33 Paul gives four instructions about prophecy?**


**Who is responsible for disciplining the use of tongues and prophecy?**

This passage makes it clear that the Holy Spirit does not force anyone to bring a message, the 'user' is in control.

Verses 16-17 indicate that where in prophecy God speaks to man, in interpreted tongues man **can** speak to God. Some believe that all tongues is directed to God, as it was on the Day of Pentecost. This does not seem to be a hard and fast rule, as interpreted tongues like prophecy edifies the Church.

In verse 1, Paul says that we should *eagerly desire spiritual gifts*, in verse 12, that we should *try to excel in gifts that build up the Church*, verse 15, that we *should pray the he may interpret* and in verse 19 that we should *be eager to prophecy*. Chapter 12v11 of the gifts that the Spirit *gives them to each one, just as he determines*. Hebrews 2v4, indicates that God distributes the Gifts according to His will.

**How do you reconcile these verses?  
What part do we have in seeking the gifts?**



**A Sign to unbelievers**

I Corinthians 14v22-25 have presented a problem for many theologians and translators. Verse 22 seems to contradict the rest of Paul's argument.

**Read Isaiah 28v11 + observe the context  
What kind of a sign was tongues to be?**

The tongues were the language of the invading Assyrians. We can understand this passage by saying that like in Isaiah, tongues is a judgement on wilful unbelief. Others think this is a rhetorical question requiring a negative answer, *are tongues a sign, then, not for believers, but for unbelievers?*

**Do you think the passage describes what happened on the Day of Pentecost?**

Tongues are a sign to unbeliever in that they alert him that something supernatural is happening. But it is only a sign, it is Prophecy, even though it may not be obviously supernatural, that will see him convicted of his sin.