

Distinctions of Spirits & Kinds of Tongues

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[0 : 00] in the gospel all morning. You notice that? What a, no, not one, no friend like the lowly Jesus who will not refuse us.

Rock of ages, not the labors of my hand can fulfill the law's demands. Could my zeal and the rest but no? Could my tears forever flow? All for sin could not atone.

Thou must save and bow alone. Jesus paid it all. For nothing good I have whereby thy grace to claim.

I'll wash my garments white in the blood of Calvary's lamb. Jesus worthy is the lamb that was slain. You can sing in the gospel all. Good morning. I hope that was encouraging to you. Take out your Bibles with me please and turn to, one more time, to 1 Corinthians chapter 12.

[1 : 08] We've been doing this summer a series on spiritual gifts and there are four places in Scripture that refer to the spiritual gifts.

Romans 12 gives us a list of seven gifts that are clearly gifts God gives, distributes to members of the church that remain their gifts because if your gift is serving, do it in the serving, right?

If it's teaching, do it in the teaching. If it's encouragement, keep on encouraging. So in other words, it's gifts that we continue to use. Now we've come to the second list which is in 1 Corinthians 12.

Here they're not technically called gifts. Paul calls them manifestations. Manifestations of the Spirit that are given as the Spirit wills to whom He intends.

So there is a, more of an inclination or an impression that these are not permanent but rather come as gift. Come, each one, each occurrence is a gift.

[2 : 17] And then we have two other lists. Ephesians 4, which we'll look at next week, Lord willing, where Paul lists the gifts given to the church. Apostles and prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

So there are gifted people given to the church. And then, of course, 1 Peter chapter 4, he refers to the spiritual gifts in two general ways. There are speaking gifts and there are serving gifts.

Okay, so we've been looking at the main list, Romans 12, and now 1 Corinthians 12. We come to the last ones here. We're in chapter 12, verse 10.

Well, let me read it and then we'll pray and then we'll dig in. If you're able, please stand as I read from 1 Corinthians 12. I'm going to read from verse 4 through 11.

Now, there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are varieties of service, but the same Lord.

[3 : 17] And there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance or word of wisdom. To another, the utterance or word of knowledge according to the same Spirit.

To another, faith by the same Spirit. To another, gifts of healings by the one Spirit. To another, works of miracles. To another, prophecy.

To another, distinctions of spirits. To another, kinds of tongues. To another, the interpretation of tongues.

All these are empowered by the one and the same Spirit who apportions to each one individually as He will.

[4 : 24] So, reach the Word. Let us pray. Father, guide us, direct us, teach us. We pray that You would fill us with the knowledge of Your will and all spiritual wisdom and insight so that we might walk in a manner worthy of You in every pleasing way.

Bearing fruit in every good work. Increasing in the intimate knowledge of You. Being strengthened with all power according to Your glorious might for the attaining of all steadfastness and

long-suffering.

Joyously giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us for the inheritance of the saints in life. This we pray in Christ's name.

Amen. Please be seated. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Agape says, Curion ton theon, Ec holestes cardias, Kai ec holestes suces, Kai ec holestes iscus.

Amen? Amen? Oh, you need an interpreter? You don't know Greek?

[6:11] All right, let's try another one. Ahav ta et Yahweh Elohecha, Bekol lavavka, Bekol nefeshka, Bekol ma'odka.

Yeah? I know ma'od. Ma'od, you know ma'od. Another, you know what? You're not edified? Agape says? Love. Ton theon? Theos? Theos, God.

Cardias, with all your cardias, With all your suche, soul, With all your iscus, This is really tiny, Iskuas.

Strength. Ahavka, Ahavka, Ahavka, Love. Yahweh, Elohe, Ha, Your God, Bekol, With all your lavavka, Lavavka, Heart, With all your nefeshka, Soul, With all your Ma'od, Strength.

[7:49] Ma'od just means, There's not really translate out of Hebrew. Hebrew is very visual and concrete. So, interpretation, Love the Lord your God with all your heart, With all your soul, With all your strength.

Amen? Now you're edified? In 1 Corinthians, Paul lists These manifestations of the Spirit To benefit the body.

We come to the last ones. These are interesting ones. In verse 10, You have on your outline the list And the definition, Or working definition, Toward what these gifts are.

The word of wisdom, Word of knowledge, Faith, Gifts of healings. Remember, plural, Gifts of healings, Works of powers, Prophecy. We didn't look at prophecy last week, But we did back in Romans 12, So, We're not going to repeat on that.

Just think of it, We could have done French, huh? We could have done French. We would have interpreters, If we had done it. But I don't know French by any means. So, We?

[8:57] Yeah. So, Today we look at the final three, Which are in verse 10. The ESV translates, The ability to distinguish between spirits.

That's not at all what Paul wrote. What Paul wrote was, To another, Distinctions Of spirits. And then, To another, Kinds of tongues.

And to another, The interpretation, Singular, The interpretation, One interpretation, Of tongues. Okay, So, We're looking at those final ones. We're going to mesh the last two, Kinds of tongues, And interpretation of tongues, Together.

Because if we define what kinds of tongues is, Interpretation of tongues kind of makes sense, Right? Just nothing fancy there. So, What are these?

What are these? Distinctions of spirits is, On our list, The seventh manifestation of the spirit. Distinctions or distinguishings of spirits.

[9:59] Let's define some words. To distinguish or to discern. This word means to divide between. Right? To differentiate, To judge between, See a distinction between things.

Right? So, Distinctions. Or distinguishings. So, I'm making a distinction, Or a differentiation between things. Now, What we're differentiating, Or distinguishing, Is spirits.

What is that? Distinguishings of spirits. Now, Again, Note that it's plural, Plural. Okay? Which, The grammar tells us that means it's not a permanent gift.

It's a, It is, They occur occasionally from time to time kind of thing. But spirit. So, I looked, I read, I got on my computer, Got spirit, Pneuma, Pneuma, And then you click on that, Pneuma, And it's like, What is it everywhere?

Where, Where does it appear? Where's the root go everywhere? And I, I forget how many times, But it was a long list. So, What are the different kinds of spirits? Obviously, You have Holy Spirit.

[11:07] In the Gospels, You have evil spirits, Or unclean spirits, Several times. But then there's other ones. So, 1 Timothy 4 talks about a deceitful spirit.

2 Corinthians 7 talks about how we should cleanse ourselves from, From a defiling spirit. Ephesians 2 talks about how we once walked in the spirit of disobedience.

2 Thessalonians 2 talks about disturbing spirit. Don't, Don't be disturbed by a spirit. 1 John 4 talks about the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Right? Testing the spirits. Paul talks to Timothy in 2 Timothy, 1, 7 talks about we're not given a spirit of fear. Right? And then Galatians 6 talks about when we restore a sinning brother, We go with a spirit of gentleness.

Right? So, Interesting. So, So, What is this gift? Distinctions of spirits. So, Let's look at some possible examples.

[12:26] So, This is one of the ones in here in this list that is hard to define because we don't, You can't just take those phrases, Distinctions of spirits, And find it elsewhere in scripture.

You just don't. You find the word for distinguishing. You'll find that a few places. Then you find spirits. You'll find that a lot of places. So, How do you put that together? What does that look like? So, I think one of the examples might be in Acts 5. Remember when, At the end of Acts 4, When Barnabas, Well, His name was, What was his name before they called him Barnabas? I forget. But anyway, They called him Barnabas, Son of Encouragement, Because he had sold a piece of land and given all the proceeds to the church so that the people who were in need could use that.

So, They called him Barnabas, Son of Encouragement. So, In chapter 5, Then a couple other people said, Hey, Oh, We want to kind of be popular like Barnabas. So, Let's also sell a piece of land and give the proceeds to the church, But we won't give all of them.

[13:29] We'll just say we're giving all of it and we'll hold some back. And they bring it to the church. And what does Peter do? Without any knowledge, Peter says, Why are you lying to the Holy Spirit?

And moments later, He falls down dead. Then he asks the wife and she falls down dead. From that point, Nobody wanted to join the church.

It's kind of a bad marketing scheme. But what is Peter doing? How did he know that? Did he discern a lying spirit?

He was certainly prompted by the Holy Spirit. He wouldn't have known that as just a person. Then you have Jesus. Jesus did this all the time. He knew their thoughts. Matthew 9, He knew their thoughts.

And He would confront them. Why are you thinking this? How did He know? Well, It's Jesus. Yes, But Jesus on earth was emptied of His, Right?

[14:34] He's dependent every moment. Just like we are to be. So, Where did He get that? Right? From the Spirit. Is that a discernment of Spirit?

1 Timothy 4 talks about recognizing deceitful spirits that turn people away from the truth. We have a possible sighting of this gift described in 1 Corinthians 14.

Look at 1 Corinthians 14. Just over a page. 1 Corinthians 14. 29. Yeah, 29. So, He uses the word discerning here. He's talking about order in church.

As we assemble together, How do we do it properly? So, He says, Let two or three prophets speak and let the others weigh what is said. Let the others distinguish.

Let the others determine. Let the others judge. Right? So, In other words, When a New Testament prophet or a speaking prophecy speaks, They are not unaccountable.

[15:41] They are accountable. Right? They're not speaking new stuff. They're speaking stuff that might be newly applied, But nothing new in terms of revelation.

Right? So, The prophets are to weigh each other's prophecies. They're to determine and divide between. Is that true? Is that wash out? Is that square with the gospel?

Right? And then, So, So, Let two or three prophets speak and let the others discern what is said. If a revelation is made to another sitting there, Let the first be silent.

For you can all prophesy one by one, So that we may all learn and all be encouraged. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to, To the prophets. So, In verse 29, You have discerning.

And then, Verse 32, You have spirits. So, Discernments of spirits. There's a discerning between the prophets and church who speak forth. How do we define prophecy?

[16:38] Right? The ability at times to report a message spontaneously brought to mind by the Holy Spirit, Which is accountable to the scriptures and others. In order to edify and exhort. So, So, When someone speaks out spontaneously brought to mind by the Lord, A message to the congregation, The others are making discernments about that.

And the spirits of the prophets. So, In other words, The, What? What spirit mean? The truth or error?

The genuineness? Right? So, How does that work? So, The best text we have for discern, For this, Is 1 John 4, Where he warns us about deceiving spirits.

Right? That are false. That are worldly. That speak error. So, John is talking about one of the ways we know that we've been born again. Right? Remember 1 John is all about, How do I know I've truly been born again?

How do I know? What are the tests? What are the, What are the marks that I can look at in my own life and know, I didn't just pray the prayer and, And it was all just me and I wasn't really born again. I wasn't really changed.

[17:52] Right? How do I know I've truly been changed? So, He gives these marks. And He says, One of the marks is that you receive the spirit. We know we've been born again because we have the spirit.

And then He says at the beginning of chapter 4, 1 John, Not every spirit. Right? Beloved, Do not believe every spirit.

So, I know I've been born again because I have the spirit, But do I have the spirit of God? Because there's other spirits. Right? So, Here's what He says. So, Beloved, Do not believe every spirit, But test the spirits to see whether they are from God.

For many false prophets have gone out in the world. By this you know. Here's the test. By this you know the spirit of God. Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.

There's your test. Does the spirit confess the historical, physical, incarnate Son of God? And with that, of course, from the rest of 1 John, we know it means what He preached, what He taught, how He lived, how He was born, etc., etc.

[19:00] And every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. There's a simple test. This is the spirit of the Antichrist, Which you have heard was coming and is now in the world already.

Little children, you are from God and overcome them. In other words, those who are from the spirit of the Antichrist. For he who is in you is greater than he, the Antichrist, the spirit of the Antichrist, who is in the world.

They, the false prophets, are from the world. Therefore, they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us. Whoever is not from God does not listen to us.

By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. So, he gives us two tests, right? One is the Jesus test. Does he confess Jesus come in the flesh?

And all that that means in the Gospels. And two, the world test. Do they, is there a message from the world? Is it something the world would listen to?

[20:02] Is it a worldly message? So, we can judge some of the popular preachers we know. We could judge a Joel Osteen that way. Right? Joel Osteen, is his message square?

Does he confess Jesus come in the flesh? Yeah. Oh, yeah. He fully buys in all that. What about is the character of his message worldly? Yeah.

It is. Unfortunately. Therefore, we know he is a spirit of error. Is that harsh? No, that's just truth. That's just supplying truth. Okay? That's, it's, so you can determine those kind of things. So, we're discerning. We're discerning between spirits. What kind of, you know, you listen to, pick on Joel. Why not? He's got a pulpit that has his initials on it. So, you know, if I did, you'd know, you know, that's not good. Inside joke. BS on the pulpit.

[20:58] No, okay. So, let's pick on him because he promotes himself. You listen to him and he's, I mean, he's the most popular pastor in America.

Right? He fills stadiums. And, you know, he's been on Oprah. Gosh, that means he's successful. So, you listen to some of what he says.

He says, oh, it sounds fine, right? He's motivating. He's motivational. You listen more carefully. What do you get? He mentions Jesus. Of course he mentions Jesus.

He's a Christian pastor. What's his goal for you? What's his first book? Your Best Life Now.

Right? I read that book. Today is all about your best life now. Is that what you get from Jesus? Is that the message Jesus gives? His message is, no, your worst life now.

[22:04] For a believer, you experience hell now. And heaven later. Your best life later. So, even from the get-go.

I mean, even from his just, he's off. But that's why he draws the crowds.

That's how you draw a crowd. Give it a message people want to hear. Give it a message that's all about you. Okay? So, distinguishings of spirits. Let's try to define this manifestation. Distinctions of spirits is the ability to be used by God at times to instantly recognize the intention or genuineness spirit of another.

To differentiate between truth and error. Maybe truth and demonic. Or to know when there is something hidden or false. Anybody experience that?

[23 : 08] Have you ever suddenly just known something? I don't mean just that, like, like, women kind of have that red flag, you know, that goes up when they know something's wrong. Right? Probably some men do, but it seems like it's always women that kind of know something's off.

But this goes further. It knows what it is that's off. Belinda has had this experience. And she was a dean at Simpson College back in San Francisco.

She was the dean of women. And she would meet students. And they would talk about things. And suddenly she would just know, are you struggling with this? And they'd go, how'd you know?

I didn't say anything about that. But she knew. Are you struggling with homosexuality? Like that. Just know that. Now, do you have that all the time?

Can you tell when? No. But it's from time to time, right? It's from time to time. And I wonder if there's others here that have had that kind of experience.

[24 : 16] I just know. It's not just that you know something's off, but you know what's off. Or what is, what's that spirit that's disturbing that person? Or what that deception is going on in their mind?

It's like Jesus knowing their thoughts. He knew exactly what they were thinking. And so he could address it. Wouldn't that be a beneficial gift of the spirit to give to you when you're counseling someone or you're working with someone?

And all of a sudden you just, you can nail it. Because they're kind of hedging around and not, you know, and you go right to it. And then they go, whoa. How'd you know? I think the spirit wants this out.

Something like that. Now, the work of the spirit, that's what the spirit does all the time with us, does he not? He knows our hearts. He knows our thoughts.

He knows our intentions. He knows if our spirit is being deceitful or disobedient. Or when we're disturbed. He convicts us of truth in order to draw us to the Father.

[25 : 27] And the difference between the conviction of the Holy Spirit and guilt, right? Guilt moves us away from God. The Holy Spirit conviction comes in a way that draws us to him.

Spirit's going to bring us to the Father. Right? So, how do you respond to that kind of discerning spirit when the Holy Spirit is convicting you?

How do you respond to that? And this gift, I think, is just the Holy Spirit using this, that kind of conviction or that kind of distinguishing through another believer.

Right? So, we have one more to look at. That's distinctions of spirits. Now, we come to kinds of tongues and interpretation. Oh, tongues. This will be fun, right?

All right. Where do you stand on tongues? Has anybody experienced in an assembly of a church the speaking of tongues? Anybody experience that?

[26 : 34] No? No? No? No? My very first experience, I think it was my first experience. I was pretty young. I was a very young counselor at a junior high camp.

And we were in a session. There was probably about 100 kids. So, I was in a large church. So, our junior high camp would be like 100 kids or more.

I don't know. And I was just one of the junior counselors kind of there. Not the real counselor. I was assisting the real counselor. You know, he's mature and grown. I'm just like an intern.

But we're sitting in this meeting. All of a sudden, Alfred. Now, Alfred was in my cabin. And Alfred was a little different. He's a little different, more alone, kind of more, you know, clearly a disturbed individual.

We didn't know. Most people just made fun of him because you know how kids are. He was struggling. And in one of these sessions, he suddenly stood up while the speaker was speaking and started just ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba.

[27 : 40] Now, Alfred did not speak clearly normally. And suddenly, he stood up in this articulate. This was articulate, but clearly not English. And all of us junior hires and people a little older than junior high like me are going, uh, what's going on?

And of course, when he finished, he ran out of the room. Because I think Alfred returned. And discovered he was in front of everybody standing up and ran out.

I don't know. So, what's going on? So, later in my cabin, Alfred's there in his bunk. And the main speaker is there talking to him.

And I'm hearing weird things. Weird voices, weird whatever. And I'm going, what's going on? We're dealing with a demon, Bill. Okay, I'll leave now.

Okay? Because I was terrified. Me and my buddies used to make fun of that.

[28 : 50] Made fun of speaking in tongues. Made fun of demon stuff. And all of a sudden, something happened where we go, okay, I can't explain that. And there was a sense that just thoroughly terrorized.

So, me and two of my friends and my buddies, Tom and Kevin, we went out and away and prayed. And I believe that may have been the night that I was truly converted.

I had walked the, you know, I'd walked the aisle, prayed the prayer, done all the, you know, stuff, but not been changed of heart. And I think that may have been the night. I don't know. I don't know. So, anybody had an experience like that?

I remember I told my mom. My mom's charismatic. And she dealt with demons a lot. And I told her about it. She was like, oh, yeah. Okay. Whatever. That's for you, not for me.

I don't want to deal with that. That was my first experience. I later had an experience with my brother. He was also charismatic. He was in an Assembly of God church in Texas. Plano, Texas.

[29 : 56] And I went down one summer for a couple of weeks to just kind of investigate this whole thing. I just wanted to see what was going on. So, I've been in a church where they had a church where they met for two hours.

The first hour was called worship hour. And that's where they sang and spoke in tongues for an hour. And then the second hour would be an hour of teaching. Okay.

So, the first hour. So, I'm there. I'm like, oh, boy. And they're all doing it at the same time. And I will give it. It was like, you know, the passion of the people on their knees crying.

That looked real. Was it real? I don't know. So, but it was confusing. It was just. And my brother asked me later. He said, what do you think?

What did you get out of it? I said, well, the drummer controls everything. So, just as a, you know, observer, what I noticed was as the drummer got loud, everybody got louder.

[30 : 54] And they sustained that. And then he started going. Because I didn't know what they were saying. So, I'm not watching the drummer. And he slowed down. It's like, oh, they slowed down. It's like, ah. Who's filled? Who's following the spirit?

The drummer. You were the drummer. Just a joke. Just a. It was my joke to my brother. I said, what's with that? I never noticed that.

Well, you're busy. So, tongues. So, let's define the words here. It says kinds of tongues. So, kinds. Kinds usually refers to kindred. Kind or a kindred. Like a race. Like a people group. Right? So, kinds. A kindred of tongues. So, referring to a people.

Tongues. Usually refers to language. And I think in scriptures we would assume it's language that's understandable outside of 1 Corinthians.

[31 : 50] So, tongues is used, the word tongue, 47 times. Outside of Corinthians, seven times it refers to the literal tongue. Remember where, like John says the tongue.

Right? The tongue is evil. Right? Five times it refers to speech or talk. Right? So, we talk with our tongue. Sixteen times it refers to a known language. That's primarily Acts.

That leaves 19 times for its use in 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14. So, kinds of tongues. First of all, we know it's plural, plural.

Right? Kinds of tongues. Not to each one is given a kind of a tongue, but each one is given kinds, different kinds of tongues.

Different tongues. Okay? So, it lays stress on the separate act. It occurs at times. As the Holy Spirit gives us. So, again, what this implies, like all these other manifestations, this is not a permanent gift.

[32 : 54] But something that occurs from time to time. Like gifts of healings. Like works of powers. Like prophecy. Like a word of wisdom. Like a word of knowledge.

These don't occur constantly. They occur from time to time. Interesting. And remember, Gordon Fee, a Pentecostal, tells us that all of these, including kinds of tongues, is not permanent.

Okay? So, all right. What does that mean? Interpretation. Obviously, that word just means to translate whatever the tongue is.

And notice that it's interpretation of tongues. So, it's singular. Not different interpretations. But one interpretation is the correct translation of whatever the tongue is.

Okay? So, let's look at a few places. So, let's go to Acts 2 first. Acts 2 is the first reference to this. We know that it's dealing with the same kind of thing that Paul's talking about.

[33 : 54] It's the day of Pentecost. All right? So, let me just read the text. See what you think. Acts 2 verse 1. When the day of Pentecost arrived, they, the apostles and everyone else, were all together in one place.

And suddenly there came from heaven a sound. Like a mighty rushing wind. And it filled the entire house where they're sitting. So, something unusual is going on. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.

Okay? What's going on there? And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now, that wording almost sounds exactly from 1 Corinthians 12.

They all began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. As the Spirit wills. As the Spirit distributes. Right? So, okay? So, this was not a permanent thing but an occurrence for this event.

Verse 5. Now, there were dwelling in Jerusalem. If we're wondering what speaking in tongues looks like, what tongues are, here it's going to clarify. Verse 5. Now, there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.

[35 : 04] And at this sound, the multitude came together and they were bewildered because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.

And they were amazed and astonished saying, are not all of these who are speaking Galileans? You know, what comes out of Galilee? Does anything good come out of Galilee?

So, Galileans, that's a cut, right? That means like they're second rate. Right? Galileans, those are not real Jews. Those are northern Jews. They're north. Okay.

They had a north and south issue as well in Israel. So, and Galileans tend to be uneducated. So, how did they learn these languages?

In other words, that's kind of what they're saying. Are not these who are speaking Galileans? You know, Peter, James, John. And how is it that we hear each of us in his own native language?

[35 : 57] Well, what native languages were those? Parthenians, Medes, Elamites, residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus in Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome.

So, we had Latin speakers there from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians. We hear them telling in our own tongues what? What was the message of these tongues?

What were they saying? The mighty works of God. Not gibberish. They were proclaiming the mighty works of God.

This was a demonstration and manifestation of the Holy Spirit among them. Because suddenly, miraculously, foreigners were hearing Galileans, of all people, speaking their native language with a message about the mighty works of God.

What is going on here? Well, the Spirit was giving them utterance. So, clearly human languages.

[37 : 09] Now, let's go to 1 Corinthians. So, we have a few instances. So, 1 Corinthians 12, we have the words there in verse 10. We have them a couple more times at the end of the chapter.

By the way, at the end of the chapter, he's saying not all speak in tongues, do they? Right? No. Not all do. So, then we come to the next reference, 1 Corinthians 13, 1.

Here we go. If I speak in tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I'm a noisy gong and a clanging cymbal. Okay? His point's about love. But if I speak in the tongues of men and of angels.

Ooh. What if I speak in the tongues of angels? What's that like? Is that a heavenly language? Every time angels spoke in the scriptures, did they speak in something that was not understandable?

No. What did they do? They give a message from God. Right? A clear message from God. That did not need interpretation. It was simply that the angels spoke in the language of the people hearing.

[38 : 08] Okay? So, when you talk about the tongues of men and of angels, we're not talking about something strange. We're talking about, although, you know, a message from an angel, okay, yeah, that seems pretty significant.

Okay, now let's get into chapter 14. Here's where our work begins. So, in chapter 14 of 1 Corinthians, Paul is talking about tongues.

He's going to talk about it 14 times in this chapter. And he's going to compare it with prophecy. And he's going to talk about how prophecy is building up others.

Tongues only builds up yourself. Okay? So, what does that mean? Is that good or bad? All right? So, let's read and see what we can discover.

So, chapter 14, 1 Corinthians 14, 1. Pursue love. So, remember, chapter 13 is all about love, love, love, love, love. Right? So, pursue love and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.

[39 : 11] Why prophecy? For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God. For no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the spirit. Let me pause right there for a moment.

When we come to 1 Corinthians, everything that we have up to this point in the Bible, and it uses the word tongues, is talking about a human language. Okay? Everywhere.

So, when we come to 1 Corinthians, we should assume first and foremost that tongues is still talking about a language. Okay? Because we've had no other indication than anything else.

Okay? Now, 1 Corinthians 14 might change our mind about that, which it does for some people. But we must assume first. And the burden of proof is on other people to make it mean something else. I think it makes complete sense if it's just human language.

So, verse 2. The man who speaks in a foreign, let me say, a human foreign language speaks not to men but to God because nobody else around him understands. No one understands him, but he utters mysteries in spirit.

[40 : 14] Not in the spirit, by the way, just in spirit. On the one hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their own upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself.

But the one who prophesies builds up the church. Now, when he says in verse 4, he builds up himself. In this context, does that sound like he's being positive about that?

Self-edifying, that's good, right? In this context, it's not. Because it's not about you. It's about the church. Okay?

Keep that in mind. Doesn't mean he doesn't mean it's okay. The one who speaks in a tongue builds himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. Verse 5. Now, I want you all to speak in tongues.

Oh, okay. So, it's okay. Even though back at chapter 12, he said not everybody will. But anyway. He's just saying, you know, I'm good if you all spoke in tongues. But even more to prophesy.

[41 : 14] The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongue. Unless someone interprets so that the church may be built up. So, if you speak in tongues in church and it's interpreted, we're good.

If you speak in tongues in a church that's not interpreted, not good. Okay? By the way, linguists will tell you, language, any language can be interpreted.

Okay? If it's a real language. What is called ecstatic utterances? You heard that phrase before? Charismatics use that phrase. Ecstatic utterances.

Praying in the spirit. Heavenly language. So and so. Linguists will tell you that's not interpretable. Ecstatic. Languages have code and pattern. Right?

They can be deciphered and translated. Ecstatic utterances have no pattern. Well, they might have a pattern of repetition. But they have no code. They have no way to translate.

[42 : 19] So whatever. In other words, whatever Paul's talking about in 1 Corinthians 14. Not talking about ecstatic utterances. Because what he's talking about is interpretable. Is translatable. It's decipherable.

And until it's translated, it sounds like a mystery. Likewise, I spoke at the beginning of this service. I'm speaking Greek and I'm speaking Hebrew.

And what are you thinking? Sounds like gobbledygook to me. Right? Until you heard a couple of words like agape. Oh, I've heard that.

Elohim. Yahweh. Oh, I know that one. Kardia. Oh, he might be speaking a real language. Okay. But generally, he's talking about languages that can be interpreted.

So, verse 6. Now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in a tongue, how will I benefit you unless I bring something else? Some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching.

[43 : 20] If even lifeless instruments such as a flute or the harp do not give distinctive notes, how will anyone know what is played? You ever heard somebody first time practicing on the saxophone?

Okay. Can you decipher what they're playing? Right? No, no, no. Especially the saxophone. It's hard with the reed, right? Or a guitar. Pick up a guitar. You start playing first. Is it decipherable? No. It takes a while. Can't even hold the strings down. Right? Verse 8. And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will be ready for battle? Sow with yourselves.

So, in other words, we're talking about things that are understandable. Understandable. Sow with yourselves. If with your tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is said?

For you will be speaking into the air. You don't even know what you're saying. Verse 10. There are, now he's going to compare tongues with languages.

[44 : 18] Interesting. Verse 10. There are doubtless many different languages in the world. And none is without meaning. But if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker foreigner to me.

In other words, we're just talking about a language that sounds like it's indiscernible. It has no meaning. If you speak in a foreign language and I don't have an interpretation, it's meaningless. That's what I think he's saying all through 1 Corinthians 14.

Whatever this gift of tongues is, it's a language. But if I do not know the... Right. Verse 12. So, yourselves, since you are eager... Since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.

The manifestations of the church are not for self-edification. The manifestations of the church are for common good. Right? The gifts of the Spirit are not for you.

They're for you to minister to others. Got it? This is Paul's language. Therefore, here's an application.

[45 : 27] If you speak in tongues, here's your application. In fact, this is an imperative. This is not a suggestion. This is if you speak in tongues, this is an admonition for you.

Therefore, Paul says, verse 13, one who speaks in a tongue, not should pray, must pray. Must pray to interpret.

There's an application. By the way, Gordon Fee, the Pentecostal who is so honest about the plural, plural. When you come to verse 13, I'm like, what does Gordon have to say on this praying?

He skipped it. Come on, Gordon. Bless his heart. He means well. But he had a bias, I believe, to prove a prayer language.

I'm not saying a prayer language doesn't exist. But he's... Here's the first command in chapter 14. Here's the first application of all that he had to say.

[46 : 29] If you speak in a tongue, pray that you can interpret so you know what you're saying. If you're praying in his tongue, if you're praying to God, don't you want to know what you're saying to him? What if you're saying something not quite right?

Boy, I'd want to know. Now, talking to other people, maybe, but if I'm talking to God, I'm... So, how does he say that? So, verse 13, pray that you can interpret.

Verse 14, why? For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. Yeah, what's the problem with that, Paul? Well, what's Paul going to do?

What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also. Paul says, I'm not going to pray to God with an unfruitful mind.

I'm not going to pray to God with kind of checked out mind. I'm not going to pray to God just in an emotional euphoria. My mind is going to be engaged.

[47 : 32] If I'm praying to God. Can you hear him? I want you all to pray in tongues or speak in tongues, he said, right?

But how? Knowing what you're saying. Or making sure that what you say in presence of others is interpreted. What am I to do?

I'm going to pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also. I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also. Otherwise, if you give thanks with your spirit, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say amen to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you're saying? For you may be giving thanks well enough. You may be giving thanks well enough. But the other person is not being built up. And that's what it's about. I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.

What in the world does that mean? I wonder. Remember, he was a preacher to the Gentiles. That probably means that he was using this gift pretty much everywhere he went, speaking their native language.

[48 : 43] That's my assumption. And if it included prayer, then he prayed, he knew what he was praying as well, okay? Nevertheless, in church, verse 19, nevertheless, in church, in church, when we're assembled, when we're gathered together, I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others than 10,000 words in a tongue.

Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. What does it mean to be childless? Childish. Childish. Childish.

What's characteristic of a child? Self-centered. Me, me, me, me, me, mine. Selfish. Of course, that's natural. Very natural.

That's why we have to train them. Right? Do you have to train them to be selfish? Parents, anything? You have to train children to disobey?

Any problem with that? No? No? Kind of comes natural? Yeah, okay. They're born with that nature, right? Don't be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking, be mature.

[49 : 59] What's Paul's emphasis? Thinking. Use your mind. In the law, it's written. Okay, now he's going to bring scripture into this, into the whole thing about tongues. In the law, it's written, by people of strange tongues, languages, and by lips of foreigners, I will speak to this people.

And even then, they will not listen to me, says the Lord. Thus, he's going to apply that. Thus, tongues are a sign, not for believers, but for unbelievers.

Well, prophecy is a sign, not for unbelievers, but for believers. If therefore, what does that mean? What does that mean? Signed, tongues are a sign to unbelievers. What's that mean?

If therefore, verse 23, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, what will they say?

You people are nuts. You people are off the mark. What is going on here? This is confusing.

[50 : 56] Right? Will they not... Where am I? Will they not say that you are out of your minds? You're a bunch of lunatics.

What did I think when I went to that church, and they're all doing that? I didn't go that far, but this is kind of nuts. But I was trying to...

But maybe it's real, so I want to know. I want to know if it's real. But man, was it confusing. And it was a long hour watching the drummer.

They did sing a few songs that I could sing. That was, you know, English. That was good. I'm not trying to make fun of them.

I was just... That's just where they are. Let's not be there. So, down to verse 26.

[51 : 59] Let's get another application. What then, brothers, when you are together, when you come together, when you are assembled together, each has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation.

Let all things be done for building up. There it is again, edification. Let all things be for building up. That's the goal. If any speak in a tongue... Okay?

Here's the second time he said about it, if you speak in a tongue. Let there be what? Verse 27. Only two, or at the most, three.

Okay, that's not what I experienced when I went to church. That's not the charismatic church that I know of, because everybody's speaking all at the same time. It's not two and most three.

It's everybody at the same time, for an hour. Okay? I got a little edification out of whatever songs we sang in English. Although I wasn't a strong believer at that time.

[53 : 05] Okay, Paul, you're kind of shutting down some doors here. Let only two, or at the most, three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret.

But if there is no one to interpret, what happens then? Let each of them be silent in the assembly of the church. Silent.

Wow, I didn't see that one followed. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged. Oh, we already said this. The spirit of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

For God is not a God of confusion, but of peace. What's the bottom line? What's the last thing?

Verse 39. So my brothers earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.

Okay. I wish, you know, if he could have just said, okay, no more tongues. You people are abusing it. No more tongues. He didn't go there. Don't forbid. Just be about edification.

[54 : 07] And be about others, not yourself. And if you pray in a tongue, what? Pray that you interpret so you know what you're saying, so your mind can be involved. And if you speak in a tongue in church, two, three at the most.

Intern, interpreted. If there's no interpretation, zip it. Why? It's not about you.

Not about whatever good feeling you get from doing that. J.I. Packer, I respect very much J.I. Packer, does not judge folks harshly on this.

In fact, he's quite gracious. He kind of says, you know, I think it might just be kind of an emotional euphoria that they experience with that. And he's fine with that. Okay. That's very gracious. In private.

So if you do that in private. My only admonition is a strong one. That if you speak in tongues or pray in tongues, if you're doing this in private, that you pray that you can interpret so you know what you're doing.

[55 : 14] And so you know what you're saying. I mean, it's great. If that's a gift of an emotional encouragement that God gives to some people, wonderful, great. You know that euphoria you get when something really good happens, right?

You break the run in football. I've done that all of twice. But it's euphoria. It's like, wow, I want to do that again.

Or you make the tackle. You make the hit. And you find out later you made it successfully because it knocked you out. That happened to me twice too. I do things in twos. But it's like, yeah.

Now that kind of experience, I imagine, can be what speaking in tongues is like. Because it's like, pfft. That would be addictive if you're into adrenaline.

I'm just speaking aside. I'm not speaking as someone that, no, I'm just making a comment here. I don't know. Yeah. I don't know.

[56 : 20] Okay. So let's work toward a definition. Kinds of tongues is the ability at times to speak in praise, proclamation, or prayer to God, possibly, in a language unknown to the speaker.

And when spoken in church, needs interpretation, translation, for the edification of others, or shall remain silent. What's the definition of interpretation?

Translating whatever the tongue is. Okay. Have I offended anybody or everybody? Have I overspoken or anything? Hopefully it's been edifying.

I'm trying to be gracious, but also honest. Okay. I don't know what some of our dear brothers and sisters in charismatic churches do with chapter 14.

I honestly don't know what they're doing with it. I would never call them a heretic. I would never call them, I think they may be an error, clearly, in their assembly.

[57 : 28] But I, yeah. Just like I hope they would not call me a lesser Christian because I don't speak in tongues. I would not call them a lesser Christian because they do. Okay.

We all struggle. But brother, please read chapter 14. I love you, man. All right. What's the point of all the manifestations?

These are evidence of the Holy Spirit working among us. They're for artification. It's not about my personal private gain. It's God working to build up the body as he wills. That's what we're about as a body.

Spiritual gifts. And I hope the series has been helpful, especially Romans 12 of the ongoing gifts that you have recognized your gift. And remember, if you don't know what your gift is, how do you find out?

Pray. Absolutely pray. But there's a, because Paul gives no instruction. So here's all the gifts and here's how you figure it out. A, take a survey, right?

[58 : 33] The pastor will give you a survey and no. Paul assumes you'll know. He assumes you'll know. How do you know what your gift is? You're doing it.

You're already doing it if you're engaged in the congregation. You may not know what it's called yet, but if you're engaged, if you're serving, if you're helping, if you're meeting together, if you're doing these things, you'll be using your gift.

You might need help from someone else to say, hey, I think this might be your gift. Because, you know, you're always doing that. I mean, in a good way.

Mr. Exhorter over here? Mr. Servant over here? Huh? Teacher over here?

Prophecy over here, maybe? But now that you have some of the definitions as you work, maybe you'll see that in yourself.

[59 : 41] Why is that important? Because I think if you know what your gift is, then like Romans 12 says, hey, if your gift is serving, what are you, how are you supposed to apply that?

Serve, right? Remember, he says, if service, serve. If teaching, teach. Teachers don't retire. Spiritual teachers, right?

School teachers can retire. You're okay. All right? Right? Keep teaching. Keep exhorting.

Keep serving. Prophecy? Well, that depends on when the Lord gives that to you. Right? Gifts of mercy? Oh, please keep doing that.

But remember, with cheerfulness, so if you lose the cheer, maybe take a little break. Right? If you're leading, zeal, right? Okay?

[60 : 37] That's why, if you know what it is, then you can apply it that way. Then you know how you fit in the church. You know where you fit in the body. You're not kind of going, I don't know where I fit.

Well, if my gift is exhorting, just, or encouraging, comforting, go look for somebody that needs encouragement, comforting, right? Exhorting. Service, look for what needs to be done.

Okay. Leader, we have a few things around here that might need some leadership abilities. Okay, please, leaders, put some zeal to it.

Okay? Because not all of us are leaders and we don't always know what to do or how to do it or how to manage it. But if that's your gift, step up. Okay?

All right. We gone long enough? Remember, we learned last week that Paul preached till midnight, right? Somebody fell out dead. He revived them and then he went till morning.

[61 : 42] Okay? So, nobody's died yet so I think we're still, no. Teasing, of course. A text takes however long a text takes as long as the pastor is not too wordy on asides.

All right, let's pray. Father, thank you for your word. Thank you for Paul's deliberate teaching to us about gifts in order to build up the body of Christ.

You have given us a great gift in salvation, in awakening us, in what our hands could never fulfill in the law, in what all of our efforts could never atone for our sin.

and you have given us the gift of freedom, of forgiveness, of cleansing, and of regeneration. You've made us new.

And then, Father, as we work together in your church, you give us another gift in order to help and serve and build up and encourage the body of Christ.

[62 : 49] Thank you. You keep supplying what we need. It's not about us making it up. It's about us looking to you and leaning on you and then applying, acting upon your words.

Grant us, Lord, the wisdom and the zeal to apply your word. This we pray in Christ's name.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.