

— OUTLINE —

- I. God's Word clearly teaches that the gift of tongues is for today.
 - A. This can best be seen in the three chapters of the Bible that deal specifically with the gifts of the Holy Spirit—1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14.
 - B. The local body at Corinth was one of the most carnal churches in the entire New Testament.
 - C. These believers were carnal in spite of the gifts of the Spirit—not because of them!
 - D. It's wrong to assume that the gifts are bad for you just because the Corinthians had so many problems.
 - E. Although maturity isn't instantly granted, the gifts of the Holy Spirit do promote spiritual growth.
 - F. This is why three different times, Paul advised this carnal, sinful bunch to earnestly **"desire spiritual gifts"** (1 Cor. 14:1, see also 1 Cor. 12:31 and 14:39).
- II. I started talking about the Lord once to a woman whose house I was painting.
 - A. When she asked me why I'd left the Baptist church, I told her that they kicked me out after I received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. "Are you talking about speaking in tongues?" she inquired. I answered, "Yes, that's part of it. I do speak in tongues, and that's why they asked me to leave the church." She said, "Well, my church would have kicked you out too." I showed her 1 Corinthians 14:39 and said, "The Bible clearly says here, **'Forbid not to speak with tongues.'**" I've never forgotten her candid reply: "Well, there are lots of things in the Bible our church doesn't believe."
 - B. With that, I knew I couldn't minister to her anymore, because God's Word was not the final authority in her Christian life.
 - C. She, like so many others, had chosen to believe her denomination's doctrines above God's Word.
 - D. This is why 1 Corinthians 13 remains the most misunderstood passage of Scripture regarding the gifts of the Holy Spirit today.
- III. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are meant to be operated in love.
 - A. This explains why Paul wrote **"But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way"** (1 Cor. 12:31) as he launched into his famous love passage (1 Cor. 13).

- B. Some people have tried to say that love is the “**more excellent way**”; however, the context clearly shows that all of Paul’s comments concerning love in chapter 13 pertain specifically to the use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit that are listed in chapter 12 and expounded on in chapter 14.
- C. His point was not that love is better than the gifts but rather that operating the gifts in love is better than using them without it.
- D. The Holy Spirit doesn’t control you like a puppet—He leads, guides, and inspires you to speak in tongues and operate the other gifts, but you are the one who actually does it.
- E. Therefore, it’s possible to operate in the gifts carnally, make mistakes, and fail to be motivated by love.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-2

- F. It doesn’t matter which gift you’re operating in—tongues, prophecy, faith—there’s no benefit apart from the right motive.
 - G. In fact, God’s love should be the motivation for everything you do—“**And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing**” (1 Cor. 13:3).
 - H. From God’s point of view, your motive is more important than your action.
- IV. People who reject the baptism in the Holy Spirit twist 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 in order to support their position that tongues passed away with the early church:

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:8-10

- A. They claim that God only gave the gifts of the Holy Spirit (speaking in tongues, prophecy, gifts of healing, working of miracles, etc.) to the early church because the Bible wasn’t written yet.
- B. Asserting that the Bible is “**that which is perfect,**” they justify their conclusion that God doesn’t do these things anymore—nonsense!
- C. If you read that passage in its context, you can easily see what it’s really saying.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:9-12, UNDERLINE MINE

- D. The **“then”** in verse 12 refers to **“when that which is perfect is come.”**
- E. **“That which is perfect”** refers to your glorified body, not the Bible.
- F. For now, speaking in tongues has been given to help you grow in the knowledge of Him.
- G. In your glorified body, you won’t need tongues or the other gifts of the Holy Spirit—prophecy, the word of wisdom, discerning of spirits, interpretation of tongues, etc.—to reveal the Lord anymore, because you’ll already know Him fully.
- H. The very scriptures people use to dismiss the gifts of the Holy Spirit actually prove their validity for today!
- I. As long as your knowledge of Him is incomplete, the gifts of the Spirit will function.
- J. Since **“that which is perfect”** has yet to come, God’s miraculous power continues on earth today just as it did for the early church.
- K. **“Brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues”** (1 Cor. 14:39)!
- V. Some people fight so hard against the truth that the baptism of the Holy Spirit and His miraculous power are for today—two main reasons for this are wrong teaching and a rejection of personal responsibility.
 - A. Doctrines of men can render the Word of God ineffective—that’s what happens when you hold on to religious tradition instead of God’s Word (Mark 7:13).
 - B. Also, there’s a fear of having to produce biblical results.
 - C. If you profess to believe in the baptism in the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, casting out demons, healing, and miracles, then that puts pressure on you to manifest them (Mark 16:17-18).
 - D. Instead, many hide behind a convenient theology—calling themselves “Christian,” they quickly confess that their sins are forgiven, while their lives offer very little proof.
 - E. It’s easy to profess “My sins are forgiven” because you can’t see a sin, and you can’t see when it’s forgiven.
 - F. However, if miracles are really part of the Christian life, then there are things you can do to prove their reality.
 - G. Jesus used miracles to prove salvation.

Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.

MARK 2:9-11

- H. No one can see a sin forgiven, but everyone in that crowded room, including the Pharisees, would be able to see if this man was healed or not.
- I. **“And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God”** (Mark 2:12)—Jesus used the fact that He could heal bodies and perform miracles in the physical realm to substantiate the fact that He could also do things, like forgiving sins, in the spiritual realm.
- J. The reason many people hide behind this false doctrine that miracles passed away is so they can claim to be in relationship with God without ever doing anything to demonstrate it.
- K. The truth is that God still does miracles today, and you should be speaking in tongues until you receive your glorified body!

DISCIPLESHIP

QUESTIONS

1. What are the three chapters in the Bible that best show that the gift of tongues is for today?

2. True or false: The Corinthian believers were carnal because of the gifts of the Spirit.

3. Although maturity isn't _____ granted, the gifts of the Holy Spirit do _____ spiritual growth.

4. What scripture did Andrew use in dealing with the woman whose house he was painting?

5. What makes 1 Corinthians 13 one of the most misunderstood passages of Scripture regarding the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

6. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are meant to be operated...

- A. In a hospital
- B. Carnally
- C. In love
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

7. Paul preceded his famous love passage (1 Cor. 13) with 1 Corinthians 12:31, which says, **“But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a**

_____.”

8. What was Paul's point regarding 1 Corinthians 12:31 and 1 Corinthians 13?

9. True or false: The Holy Spirit doesn't control you like a puppet—He leads, guides, and inspires you to speak in tongues and operate the other gifts, but you are the one who actually does it.

10. Is there any benefit to operating in the gifts apart from the right motive?

11. What should be your motivation for everything you do?

12. What do people who reject the baptism in the Holy Spirit claim?

13. First Corinthians 13:9-12 says, **“For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is _____ is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then _____ to _____: now I know in part; but _____ shall I know even as also I am known.”**

14. What does **“that which is perfect”** refer to and what does it not refer to?

15. Why has speaking in tongues been given, for now?

16. Will you need the gifts of the Holy Spirit once you receive your glorified body? Why or why not?

17. What are the two main reasons some people fight so hard against the truth that the baptism of the Holy Spirit and His miraculous power are for today?
- A. Wrong teaching and a lack of knowledge
 - B. Wrong teaching and a rejection of personal responsibility
 - C. A crowd mentality and a rejection of personal responsibility
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above
18. True or false: It's hard to profess "My sins are forgiven" because you can't see a sin, and you can't see when it's forgiven.
19. True or false: If miracles are really part of the Christian life, then there is nothing you can do to prove their reality.
20. **"Whether is it _____ to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to _____ sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house" (Mark 2:9-11).**
21. Did Jesus use the fact that He could heal bodies and perform miracles in the physical realm to substantiate the fact that He could also do things, like forgiving sins, in the spiritual realm?

— SCRIPTURES —

1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-10

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; [9] To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; [10] To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.

1 CORINTHIANS 5:1

It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:1

Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

1 CORINTHIANS 6:6-7

But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. [7] Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?

1 CORINTHIANS 3:3-5

For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? [4] For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? [5] Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

1 CORINTHIANS 11:20-22

When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. [21] For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. [22] What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:26-28

How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. [27] If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. [28] But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:1

Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:31

But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:39

Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-12

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. [2] And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. [3] And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. [4] Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, [5] Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; [6] Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; [7] Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. [8] Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. [9] For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. [10] But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. [11] When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. [12] For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

DANIEL 12:4

But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

MARK 7:13

Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

MARK 16:17-18

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; [18] They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

MARK 2:9-12

Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? [10] But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) [11] I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. [12] And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.