

1 Corinthians 12

1. Does God love people because they love Him?

-No.

-God loves people even when they don't love Him.

2. Why does love never fail?

-Because God is love, and love is God, and it is impossible for God to fail.

3. Why is love more important than the gifts of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge?

-Because love will never end.

-Because love is eternal.

4. What does it mean that "when completeness comes, what is in part disappears"?

-We only know God partially now, but when we arrive in heaven, we will know God completely.

5. Why will spiritual gifts no longer be necessary in heaven?

-Because our belief in God will be complete.

6. Even though prophecy, tongues, and knowledge will be taken away, what will remain?

-Faith, hope, and love.

7. Which is the greatest of faith, hope, and love?

-Love.

8. Why is love the greatest?

-Because love is the foundation for all of life.

9. Can we Christians love like God?

-No.

-We can never love like God.

10. Then how can we Christians love?

-We must allow God in us to love others through us.

-What is the theme of 1 Corinthians?

-“Problems in the Church.”

-Because of the Corinthian Christians misuse of the gift of speaking in tongues, God through Paul uses all of chapter 14 to talk about this problem.

-This chapter is one of the most difficult chapters in the Bible to understand.

-To correctly understand the gift of tongues, it is important to learn three truths. What are these truths?

-1) The gift of speaking in tongues was a temporary gift to begin the church.

-In Acts 2, the gift of tongues was given to the believers at Pentecost so that they could teach the Jews that the church of Christ was beginning.

-In Acts 10, the gift of tongues was given to Cornelius and other Gentiles when they believed in Christ to teach Peter and all the other Jewish believers that God was

bringing Gentiles into the church.

-In Acts 19, the gift of tongues were given to the disciples of John the Baptist when they believed in Christ to teach us all that the church in the New Testament was fulfilling the laws of the Old Testament.

-In summary, the gift of tongues was to teach us all that God was no longer only working with Israel, but now with all people.

-2) The gift of speaking in tongues was to build up the church.

-The gift of tongues was not given to serve God nor to exalt the one with the gift.

-Rather, the gift of tongues was given to build up the church.

-All spiritual gifts given by God are to build up the Body of Christ or all Christians.

-3) The gift of speaking in tongues was with known languages.

-The languages spoken using this gift were known, human languages, and not meaningless words that no one understood.

-At Pentecost when Christ gave the Holy Spirit to the apostles, they taught about God in the known languages

of the Jews and the converts to Judaism.

-“Each one heard their own language being spoken” (Acts 2:6).

-“Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?” (Acts 2:10).

-“We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” (Acts 2:11).

-Nowhere does the Bible teach that the gift of tongues is anything other than known, human languages.

-In addition, to correctly understand the teaching in this chapter, it is also important to know this:

-Some verses speak of a right or correct use of the gift of tongues while other verses speak of a wrong or incorrect use of the gift of tongues.

-Therefore, in order to properly understand each verse in 1 Corinthians 14, what must we do?

-We must understand whether God and Paul are teaching about a correct use of the gift or a wrong use of the gift.

-In some verses, God and Paul teach of a correct or right use of the gift of tongues.

-In other verses, God and Paul teach of an incorrect or wrong use of the gift of tongues.

-In order to properly understand each verse, we must know whether the Word of God is teaching about an incorrect use or correct use of the gift of tongues.

Let's read 1 Corinthians 14:1

1-Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy.

-As we learned in the last lesson, the way of God's love is the foundation for all of life.

-We have also already learned that God alone decides the gifts that He gives us, that we cannot choose our gifts, and that we should not search for other gifts.

-The meaning, therefore, of the verse above is that we should desire to be able to teach the Word of God.

-Why should we desire to be able to teach the Word of God?

-To be able to teach the Word of God to ourselves as well as to others is the most important work in all of eternity.

Let's read 1 Corinthians 14:2

2-For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; [but in his spirit he speaks mysteries].

-Some people have understood this verse to mean that

speaking in tongues must be our prayer language to God.

-Did the Lord Jesus ever pray to the Father in a tongue or foreign language?

-No.

-Did any of the apostles ever pray to God in a tongue or foreign language?

-Are there any verses in the Bible that teach us that we must pray to God in another tongue or in a language other than our own?

-No.

-As 1 Corinthians was written in the Greek language, and as the word for God and a god are the same word, some people think that this verse is better translated to read as follows:

-“For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to a god.”

-Whether the word is translated “a god” or “God,” this is an incorrect or wrong use of the gift of tongues.

-This is because the gift is given to build up people, and if no one understands, then no one is built up.

-Even the one who is using the gift incorrectly does not understand, as he is speaking mysteries.

-Are there any verses in the Bible that teach us that we

must pray a prayer that we do not understand?

-No.

-For all of the prayers of the Lord Jesus in the Bible, He never prayed a prayer that He did not understand.

Let's read 1 Corinthians 14:3

3-But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort.

-Instead of the Corinthians using the gift of tongues incorrectly, God through Paul tells us that the one who teaches the Word of God is strengthening, encouraging, and comforting people.

Let's read 1 Corinthians 14:4

4-Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church.

-This is also an incorrect or wrong use of the gift of tongues because the one who is speaking in tongues is only building himself up.

-God did not give spiritual gifts so that people could serve themselves or build themselves up.

-God has given us spiritual gifts so that we might serve and build up others, that is, the people of the church.

-If we teach the Word of God, then we are serving and building up the entire church.

Let's read 1 Corinthians 14:5

5-I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.

-Why is Paul saying that he would like every one to speak in tongues when we have already learned that teaching the Word of God is better?

-God through Paul is teaching us that there is a correct or right use of the gift of speaking in tongues, but teaching the Word of God is even better.

Let's read 1 Corinthians 14:20

20-Brothers and sisters, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults.

-The Corinthian Christians were misusing the gift of tongues, and God and Paul encouraged them to stop thinking like children.

-Children only think of themselves and not of others.

-As Christians, we should think as adults, and think of

others, and not think about ourselves.

Let's read 1 Corinthians 14:21

21-In the Law it is written: "With other tongues and through the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord."

-Many years ago, God through Isaiah told Israel that He would speak to them using foreigners with foreign languages (Is 28:11-12).

-When the northern kingdom of Israel refused to listen to God, God sent the Assyrians who spoke the Assyrian language to take them captive.

-When the southern kingdom of Judah refused to listen to God, God sent the Babylonians who spoke the Babylonian language to take them captive.

-Even with these signs, Israel rejected God.

-In Acts 2 at Pentecost, the gift of tongues was given as another sign to Israel that God desires to save all of Israel.

-In Acts 10 with Cornelius and the Gentiles, the gift of tongues was given as another sign to Israel that God is now bringing the Gentiles into His family.

Let's read 1 Corinthians 14:22

22-Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is not for unbelievers but for believers.

-This verse is the foundation for understanding chapter 14.

-With this verse, we understand that the gift of tongues was a sign for unbelievers—especially the Jews who rejected God.

-If the Jews rejected God, then God would leave them and begin a new work with the Gentiles.

-And this is what our God has done

-He has begun a new work with the Gentiles, working with all of the other peoples and languages in the world.

-This new work of God's is what we call "the church."

Let's read 1 Corinthians 14:23-24

23-Therefore if the whole church gathers together and all the people speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are insane?

24-But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all;

-In verse 23 above, God and Paul are speaking of the

correct use of tongues.

-Yet, the Word of God is teaching us that if Christians were using tongues correctly, and all would speak in tongues, outsiders or unbelievers would say that they were insane.

-When tongues were misused, there was only confusion.

-When tongues were misused, unbelievers would not want to remain in the church, and no one would be built up.

-Once more, however, Paul writes that teaching the Word of God is better than speaking tongues.

-If the Word of God is taught, unbelievers would hear and understand these truths, and Christians would be built up or encouraged.

Let's read 1 Corinthians 14:26

26-What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.

-In this verse, we are taught that everything that we do in church should be to serve and build one another up.

-For teaching, singing, testifying, praying, or anything

else that we do in church, it should be to serve and build one another up.

-What is the problem of exalting one spiritual gift over another?

-We are exalting one Christian and by doing this, we are pushing other Christians down.

-Nothing should be done which would exalt anyone.

-Likewise, nothing should be done by any person which would push others down.

-Before God, all Christians are important, and there is no one in the church who is not important in God's eyes.

-What is the problem with trying to use a spiritual gift that you have not been given?

-You may use the gift in your flesh, and not in the Holy Spirit.

Let's read 1 Corinthians 14:40

40-But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

-Not only should everything that is done in the church build up everyone, but also, everything should be done in an orderly way.

-God is a God of order, and not a God of confusion.