

MEMORY VERSE: "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy." 1 Corinthians 14:1, NKJV

LESSON STUDY INTRO

This week we will study the doctrine of spiritual gifts.

1. The Spirit gives gifts to benefit the church (Sab-Fri)

- All spiritual gifts lists are spoken of in context of the corporate church (see Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:8-12, 28-31; Eph. 4:8-11).
 - The lesson brings out that God gave the gifts "in order to promote unity through diversity" (Qtly, Sab, par 2). More specifically, unity in mission (see Eph. 4:12).
 - "Each believer is granted gifts individually (1 Cor. 12:11), but they all are to benefit the community of believers as a whole."

Qtly, Sun, last par
- The gift of tongues is for a sign to unbelievers (1 Cor. 14:22).
 - This gift was "most likely the Spirit-granted ability to speak in foreign languages." Qtly, Wed, par 1
 - The word translated "tongue(s)" is the Greek word "glossa," which, according to the *New Bible Dictionary*, is used "both of the tongue of man and, by extension, of man's language." The word "language" does not appear anywhere in the NT; the word "tongue" is used instead.
 - The gift of tongues may also apply to the ability to articulate.

The Holy Spirit, assuming the form of tongues of fire, rested upon those assembled. This was an emblem of the gift then bestowed on the disciples, which enabled them to speak with fluency languages with which they had heretofore been unacquainted.... They could now proclaim the truths of the gospel abroad, speaking with accuracy the languages of those for whom they were laboring. This miraculous gift was a strong evidence to the world that their commission bore the signet of Heaven. From this time forth the language of the disciples was pure, simple, and accurate, whether they spoke in their native tongue or in a foreign language. AA 39.1, 2

- "The misuse and abuse of this gift by the church in Corinth caused disorder and confusion in public worship (1 Cor. 14:23, 27, 33, 40)." Qtly, Wed, par 2

- The gift of prophecy is primarily for the church (1 Cor. 14:22; 12:28; Lk. 13:33; Eph. 4:11-16).
 - All the gifts are intended to unite the church in doctrine and purpose, especially the gift of prophecy.
 - “The gift of prophecy is meant to provide edification, exhortation, and comfort (1 Cor. 14:3; compare with Acts 15:32). This suggests that prophecy is not so much about predicting the future as it is about how to live in the present.” Qtlly, Thu, par 2

God has, in [His] Word, promised to give visions in the “last days”; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth. EW 78.1

2. Not all have the same gift(s) (Mon)

- Spiritual gifts are varied and distinct (1 Cor. 12:4, 28-30).
 - Faith and witnessing are not gifts in the usual sense (cf. Qtlly, Sun, par 1 & 2)
- As the human body is comprised of many interdependent parts, so is the church (1 Cor. 12:12, 14).
 - The gifts are given as the Holy Spirit determines they are needed (1 Cor. 12:11, 18).
 - Spiritual gifts tools and tests can be ineffective and even detrimental in determining one’s spiritual gifts.

3. Every gift, exercised in love, is vital to the church’s success (Sun-Tue)

- If every member served the same function, the church would be incomplete, like a body of only one part (1 Cor. 12:17, 26).
- Love must be the driving force in order for the gift to accomplish its intended purpose (1 Cor. 13:1-3).
 - “Love is not one gift among many. It is the means through which all of the gifts reach their ultimate purpose.” Qtlly, Tue, par 1
 - Notice how all the things that love is “not” were the causes of division in the Corinthian church (and every other)!

CONCLUSION

The diversity of gifts leads to a diversity of operations, ‘but it is the same God which worketh all in all’ (1 Cor. 12:6). Let no man despise the supposed lesser gifts. Let all go to work. Let no one fold his hands in unbelief because he thinks that he can do no mighty work. Cease looking at self. Look to your Leader. In meekness, sincerity, and love do what you can. RH, Apr. 12, 1906 (Qtlly, Fri, par 1 & 2)