

April 25, 2021

**I Corinthians 14:1-19**  
**Proper Perspective:**  
**A Focus On Purpose**

**PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION**

In the Corinthian church “a tongue” spoken during a church gathering was taking on the flavor of the area’s pagan worship of gibberish from which they had come. This church could be described as one filled with extreme carnality; the tongue speaking was counterfeit and being done to be seen of men.

To refocus them Paul, led by the Holy Spirit, instructed them to “Pursue” love which means to: follow, hunt, or chase intently after **LOVE**.

Yet! **Desire** spiritual gifts as well, especially that you may prophesy that (in plural form) that your legitimate gift, given to you by the Spirit, may be used in the assembly. By this gift the whole assembly is edified and instructed. Tongues of this barbarian type could never do this.

Revisit **I Corinthians 12:7**, “But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit

for the common good.” (NASB)

That no one understood did not matter to them, they desired the attention and excitement along with fulfillment of self-gratification they got from this exercise. These “mysteries” spoken of were to themselves and from themselves and had no meaning to themselves or others, but that was not important. The whole idea was, look at me! They were mimicking the pagans in their area. The purpose of prophesy was to edify, comfort, and encourage by exhortation the church. Not this.

In verses 2 and 4 it states “a tongue.” In verse 5, “tongues.” The difference is that in verses 2 and 4 he is referring to gibberish and it would not be proper to speak of them speaking in gibberishes! However, in verse five it refers to “tongues” in the plural signifying legitimate languages, therefore, it would be grammatically correct to say that, “I wish that you all spoke” in genuine languages. Take note of this throughout this passage.

The gift of tongues was given as a miraculous sign gift, and it was also communicative. The first instance of this was at Pentecost. This was always a characteristic of genuine tongues. EVERY TRUE MANIFESTATION OF TONGUES AFTER THAT TIME UNTIL THERE CESSATION, WERE UNDERSTANDABLE-EITHER DIRECTLY (**ACTS 2:6**) OR THROUGH AN INTERPRETER, SEE **I CORINTHIANS 14:17**. God did not give two kinds of tongues, one intelligible and the other unintelligible. The Bible speaks of only one gift, whose characteristics and purpose did not change.

## **APPLICATION:**

**It is always important to keep the main thing the main thing. In this case there was gross abuse of a God given ability to some people with legitimate languages. Paul says in this passage that he himself spoke in tongues but notice that he made a clarification between what he did and what was going on at Corinth. God gave this gift of tongues for the edification of the church. What was going on was anything but edifying the church. The people had a desire to be seen of men, this was selfish. In the spirit of glorifying God, believers do well to be selfless in all they do with the end goal of bringing glory and honor to the Lord. Periodically examine what you do and why you do it.**

