

## WATCH YOUR TONGUES - PART 1

(1Corinthians 14:1-40)

*March 12, 2017*

Paul's teaching compared the gift of preaching/prophecy with the gift of tongues, which was causing some issues in the church. First, Paul desired for the church:

### I. A WORD That Builds Up

There is not a consensus among biblical students as to just what the gift of tongues is. What we do know:

- It seems to have been **COMMON** in the Corinthian church.
- It seemed to be **SPIRITUALLY** inspired.
- It was a highly **COVETED** gift.
- The way people were using the gift was causing **TENSION** in the church and **CONFUSION** in the worship services.

There are three major interpretations:

#### 1) An **ECSTATIC** utterance

The speaker was so intense in their worship that they began to make **SOUNDS** that didn't seem to be any known language.

#### 2) Speaking in a foreign language **KNOWN** by the speaker

The person reverts to a language they may have studied or known, but not well.

#### 3) Speaking in a foreign language **UNKNOWN** to the speaker

Supporters of this idea give five reasons:

- It is the most **CONSISTENT** use of "tongues" in the Bible
- It was the **PENTECOST** experience (Acts 2:1-11)
- Paul's use of "interpreter" and "Interpretation" most often refers to **TRANSLATION** from one known language to another
- Paul's citation of Isaiah 28 (v.21) is clearly a reference to **LANGUAGES**
- If all the gifts purposes are to **PROCLAIM** the gospel, this fits

Whichever of these notions is correct, it does not change Paul's counsel to the church. Though he **RECOGNIZED** tongues as a spiritual gift, he put it low on the totem pole.

Paul made a strong case that the indiscriminate use of tongues was a **HINDERANCE** to the gospel, especially to unbelievers who needed to hear it most. The key word Paul had in mind is **BALANCE**.

True reflection ought to lead to increasing joy and wonder, expressed with **PASSION**. At the same time, Paul would counsel against unstructured spontaneity that creates **BEDLAM** as he calls for:

## **II. A WORSHIP That Builds Up**

Paul offers several insights about Christian worship that can be beneficial to the church today:

### **1) The principal of PARTICIPATION**

Every believer has some gift that is beneficial to the entire worship experience. We need to **BRING** our gifts and **UTILIZE** our gifts with and for God. Worship is not something you watch – it is something you **DO** !

### **2) The principal of COMPREHENSION**

Though passion is needed, those who come to worship must be able to **UNDERSTAND** what is sung and what is said. Paul **DISCOURAGED** the use of tongues for that reason. He insisted that interpretation **MUST** accompany it.

There is still potential for great confusion in all of our churches. It arises from using a separate “**RELIGIOUS**” vocabulary in our worship services.

How often do we **EXCLUDE** non-believers or even new believers from understanding our conversation, our teaching and our worship – without intending to do so?

### **3) The principal of ORDER**

The disorder in Corinth was caused by **SELFISHNESS**. Each person was thinking about his **OWN** wants and needs rather than the needs of the entire church.

Whenever we approach a time of worshipping our almighty and loving God with a demand that **OUR** personal needs be met, we are not really here to worship or serve, but demanding to **BE** served.

We begin by watching our tongues – **WHAT** we say and **HOW** we say it.