

Bereans Bible Institute
Module VII – The Apostolic Mission
Lesson 13 – No Such Thing as a ‘Prayer Language’

I. I Corinthians 12 The Father distributed individual gifts according to His plan.

- A. Vss. 4-6 (6b) *“Yet it is God Himself the one producing all in all”*
- B. Vss. 7-8 *“through the Breath”* (dia = agency, not source)
- C. Vs. 12 *“distributing to each one according as He (God) intends.”*
- D. Vs. 18 *“But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.”*
- E. Vs. 24 *“But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it”*
- F. Heb. 2:4 *“God ... according to His will.”*
- G. Gifts were to operate in the context of the local assembly

II. The Corinthians had wrongly elevated ‘languages’ as a status symbol (obvious miracle).

- A. 1 Cor. 12:28-31 The proper order of importance to the assembly.
- B. *‘Earnestly desire’* (be passionate about) the gifts that best benefit the whole assembly.
- C. 1 Cor. 14:1 *“Pursue love, and be passionate about spiritual things, especially that you may prophesy.”*
 - 1. ‘You’ is collective plural (y’all) – the local assembly, the ‘body of Christ.’
 - 2. Nowhere suggested that an individual pray or ask for spiritual gifts.

III. Speaking in Languages vs. Prophesying – their purposes for the congregation

- A. Vs. 2 Describes the problem Paul wished to correct, the misuse of ‘languages.’
 - 1. So called ‘prayer language’ comes from misunderstanding this verse.
 - 2. Also 1 Cor. 13:1 *“languages of men and angels”*
 - 3. No one understand him is a bad thing (vs. 5)
- B. Vs. 3 Describes the “better” application of the gifts in the assembly
- C. Vs. 4 Contrasts these again
 - 1. The person speaking in languages is only edifying himself (bad)
 - 2. The one prophesying is edifying the whole congregation (good)
- D. Vs. 5 Prophesying is the ‘better’ activity, unless there is an interpreter.
- E. Vss. 6-11 “Languages” along have no benefit for the assembly.
- F. Vss. 12-19 The problem of using ‘languages’ to pray in the assembly
 - 1. vs. 12 Make sure that your gift edifies the congregation
 - 2. vs. 13 The one praying in foreign languages, do it (pray) with the intent of interpreting the prayer.
 - 3. Vs. 14 Praying without interpretation is ‘unfruitful’ – lack of understanding.
 - 4. Vs. 15: *“What then? Should I pray with the Spirit? Yet I will also with the mind. I will sing with the Spirit, yet also with the mind.”* (never pray in languages or sing in languages without the accompanying interpretation).
 - 5. Vs. 16 Otherwise, the ‘unlearned’ (in those languages) cannot participate.
 - 6. Vs. 17-19 speaking, praying, or singing in languages alone not beneficial
- G. Vss. 20-22 The purpose of tongues (according to Isaiah 28), not a ‘prayer language’
- H. Vss. 23-24 A supernatural sign to Israel turned into a symbol of insanity.
 - A. Can function in praise to God (Acts 10:44-46), but still a sign to Israel.