

Speaking in Tongues in the Church
International Bible Lesson
Acts 2:1-7, 12
1 Corinthians 14:13-19
Sunday, May 24, 2015
L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

“Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue”
(1 Corinthians 14:19—KJV).

“Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue”
(1 Corinthians 14:19—NRSV).

In his first letter to the Corinthian Christians, the Apostle Paul wrote carefully about speaking in tongues; still, the debate about speaking in tongues has troubled the Church for many years. When the first apostles spoke in tongues on the Day of Pentecost, they spoke languages that others from other nations could understand. When the crowds wondered why they could understand these Galileans in their own language, they asked, “What does this mean?” Because the Bible is the only sure guide to spiritual truth and reality, Peter explained the Scriptures, and about three thousand people were added to the church that day (see Acts 2). Paul wrote that people need to understand what is said before they agree with an, “Amen” or a “So be it.” If someone speaks in tongues, then they need to pray for the interpretation so they can explain what they said. People make a mistake when they try to separate their mind from their spirit in their spiritual exercises or worship. They can easily be misled when they do not have their minds to help them discern the spirits that may be talking through them. People need their minds to evaluate what they are thinking, so they will believe and speak according to the Bible with the Holy Spirit’s guidance. Paul wrote that he would pray and praise God with his spirit and his mind together. Furthermore, in church, he would rather speak five understandable words to instruct people than ten thousand words that no one could understand. We could solve many problems by following Paul’s advice and example. – L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

– E-mail: lgp@InternationalBibleLessons.org: You may be reprint or reproduce this International Bible Lesson for not-for-profit use. More Uniform Bible Lessons are available at InternationalBibleLessons.org. Read the verse by verse *International Bible Lessons Commentary* at: InternationalBibleLessons.com. See the recommended study and worship resources at SmallChurchResources.com.

Thinking Further

Including Questions from the Companion Lesson Text Acts 2:1-7, 12

1. Why do you think it was important for the Holy Spirit to come with the sound of a rushing wind?

2. Why do you think it was important for the Holy Spirit to rest individually upon each follower of Jesus in the house?

3. Why do you think it was important for the Holy Spirit to give the gift of speaking in tongues to Jesus' disciples?

4. Why do you think Paul wrote so much about the gift of speaking in tongues?

5. Why should both the spirit and the mind be engaged and work together when believers preach, teach, and praise God?