

New Testament Lesson # 35  
September 2-8  
God Is Not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace  
I Corinthians 14-16  
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- I. The early Christians were blessed with a sudden outpouring of Gifts of the Spirit. As with many new things, having this new phenomenon brought some challenges. To keep peace and order in the Church, Paul continues his marvelous counsel on how to handle and share the varying gifts that the Spirit had now blessed the Saints.
- A. He writes of shortcomings to the Gift of Tongues, [that others cannot understand what you are saying and therefore are not edified, unless they are interpreted by you or others].
  - B. However, in our day, the Gift of Tongues is more needful, as members as a whole are called to carry the Gospel to peoples of all nations.
  - C. This Gift has come as certain prophets have been blessed to speak and members of the congregation, not understanding his language, have nevertheless been able to understand.
  - D. More commonly, it is as a Gift of coming to understand another language with limited study.

For example, I had a nephew who was called to serve in Canada. His father and grandfather had all served in the same general area, so the family was very excited. However, when the Stake President was setting him apart, he blessed him that he would be able to “learn the language.”

His mother was quite upset about this. And she admits she grumbled on the way home that she wished the Stake President had updated himself on where her son was going, to avoid embarrassment to the family.

But the spirit spoke truly. When Alvin arrived in the mission, he was put with a Korean elder, and sent to teach Koreans in that mission. He did indeed need the Gift of Tongues --- to learn Korean just from his companion and personal study. He was blessed to do so!

- II. Paul, in his day, found it advisable to encourage the Saints to desire, instead of Tongues due to its shortcomings, the Gift of Prophecy.
- A. He explains that true prophecies can edify everyone.
  - B. While Latter-day Saints may be cautious in believing the gift of Prophecy is possible, except for the Ordained Head of the Church, scriptures show it is a Gift the Lord is anxious to bestow on all, today.
  - C. Joel, for example, tells us that in our time the Lord “will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit” (Joel 2:28-9).

- D. In fact, the brethren have given us a lot of counsel, not only to seek personal revelation, but are continually sharing ways to help us achieve it.
  - E. And Church periodicals are full of examples of ordinary members of the Church being guided by personal revelation. While only one can speak *for* the Church, all of us can and should seek to edify others with our testimonies of how we have been guided by the Holy Spirit, in various ways.
  - F. Of Course Paul's earlier counsel is still in force. Underlying any usage of any Gift of the Spirit must be the Gift of Charity. We must use any gift with Love --- Love for our Father in Heaven, and love for all men.
- III. Paul enumerates a number of times Christ was seen after His Resurrection in order to reassure Saints who had lost faith in the Resurrection, that it was Real (Ch. 15:5-7).
- A. Christ's continued visitations to so many in Judea after His Resurrection support His visits to those in other lands after His Resurrection.
  - B. How can we doubt He was able to come to the Americas and visit His other sheep here, if He appeared to so many there?
  - C. Furthermore, Paul makes it clear that the whole purpose of Jesus' life was to prepare a way to overcome death and resurrection for all.
- IV. Paul makes the important connection between Adam and the Fall, and Jesus Christ in overcoming the Fall.
- A. Professor Thomas A. Wayment in his new translation of the New Testament points out that Paul is the only one in the New Testament to make this connection, though it is a very prevalent concept expounded on by Book of Mormon prophets.
- V. Paul's writings also begin to include references to the Full Plan of Salvation, particularly its promises for Exaltation.
- A. He mentions baptism for the dead (15:29).(See my lesson # 34 for more detail).
  - B. He also mentions anointings and sealing.
  - C. And he shows that in the Resurrection there will be more than one kingdom of glory: the Telestial, the Terrestrial, and the Celestial (15:40-1).
  - D. **The early Christians did possess knowledge of and the keys necessary for the ordinances of sealing for time and all eternity.** (See Bruce R. McConkie, DNTC II, p 75). Unfortunately this concept and the keys to perform it were lost.
  - E. There has been gathered evidence from non –Biblical writings that the early Saints did know of and practice Eternal Marriages. Those references are to such things as a “mirrored bridal chamber,” etc.
  - F. There is evidence from descendants of Book of Mormon people that they too were given the sealing powers and temple ordinances when Jesus Christ came among them. Thus we have a second witness that Jesus Christ taught these things and bestowed the keys to carry them out after His Resurrection.
  - G. Dr. Hugh Nibley, who did much research of Native Americans and their religious practices wrote the following:

1. “Thousands of American Indians and Pacific Islanders, including many of the greatest chiefs and wise men, have become Mormons in their time and engaged in the work of the Temple. They have been quick to detect the often surprising parallels between the rites of the Temple and the traditions and practices of their own tribes... Far from being disaffected by this discovery, these devoted workers have rejoiced that at last they could understand the real meaning of what they had inherited from their fathers, corroded as it was by time and overlaid with thick deposits of legend and folklore,” (Hugh Nibley, *The Temple in Antiquity*, ed, Truman Madsen, p. 32).

- VI. Paul respected the value and spiritual powers of Women, regardless of what it seems.
- A. What he said in some cases is surprising, so we need to point out the following:
- First, that Jesus Christ had set a powerful example by allowing women to be the first to witness His Resurrection, and to bear witness to others that it had occurred. Traditionally, the witness of a woman was considered of no value. But this changed through Christ, and Paul had to be aware of this.
  - When Paul wrote to the “brothers” he was using a Greek form which included the sisters as well. So his letters deliberately include the sisters.
  - His writings in 1 Corinthians 11:7-10 about coverings of the head, actually pertained to **how women who are prophesying in church should dress**. (See Wayment, f 11:7-10 and 11:16). But this verifies that he accepted women as having the power to prophesy.
  - His saying “Let the women remain silent,” is contradictory to everything else he says. Fortunately, Joseph Smith corrected this to show it means “rule.” This interpretation is confirmed when Paul ends, with “Therefore brothers and sisters, seek to prophesy” He continued to recognize God’s trust in women.
- VII. Paul revealed here that at Christ’s Coming, many of the Righteous will not die, but will be changed in the twinkling of the eye.

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (15:52-3).

He later confirmed this in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.

In both cases he gave the Saints this word so that they might be comforted, and that they might have the courage to persevere.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58). The lifting up of the righteous is confirmed in D&C 88:96-7.