

# 1 Corinthians Q&A; Panel

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Okay, so this is a time where we're going to answer some questions some of you might have forwarded. And again, you can still forward questions now, just about 1 Corinthians and everything that we've heard about.

So we're just going to invite Pastor William, who you know is our English pastor. Moxie, Pastor Albert, who is the senior pastor of our church. And also Eva to come up. So you guys might have seen Eva around or remember her speaking to us before. But yeah, so just in case you don't know her, she's someone who has studied a lot in theology and also started the children's worksheets.

Those of you who may have seen them before, even though you're not children. Yeah, so she's going to help us also to answer some questions. Sorry, I wish I got a seat for myself.

I don't mean to. Over you guys. Oh no, it's okay. As long as you don't mind me. So yeah, we're going to just start off with some questions that, as I said, have been put on the jam board.

[ 1 : 1 0 ] But you can still put up more. I don't know if you've got this slide for the link. Maybe. Oh yeah. Either or. Yeah.

Yeah. Also, if you want to ask questions, you can actually just put your hand up and ask. When I, yeah. We'll hand you the mic and you can ask as well.

Also, if you really want to be anonymous and you don't have the link, you can also message me if you know my message and my contact details. All right. So first, we're going to start off with a question that the kids have asked.

They're just asking, why do Paul talk so much? So, I don't know. Pastor William, do you have any insights on this? Or any thoughts?

I'm pretty sure we won't know the real answer. Who? Okay, Pastor. I think when you see us three, who's the longest winded person?

[ 2 : 1 0 ] That would be me, right? Because the older you get, the longer you talk. So, I think Paul was, you know, getting aged. And because he, I believe he felt something very important.

And he kind of, I preached that chapter 15, the last nine, ten verses, nine verses. And he just kept on saying, incorruptible, corruptible, corruptible, incorruptible.

That things, you die and it will not die. It's sort of, it's just repeating himself. I think that's, that's the sign of old age. And also, I believe because he, he believed it was very, very important.

That's why he repeated and repeated. Yeah, that's, that's my, my impression. Fair answer. Does anyone else have anything to add?

I think, I think, Paul in this instance, he had to write a lot. Because there were a lot of issues to address. He wasn't always like this.

[ 3 : 1 6 ] Like, you can see in other letters to other churches. He doesn't always talk. Maybe he wasn't that old at the time. I don't know. But, we can see that he, like, he wasn't trying to waste anyone's time.

He was addressing issues that needed addressing. Yeah. Yeah. And we want to remember, this is a love letter. Yeah. It started and ended with love. And so, this is someone with a pastor's heart.

And sometimes, when you pastor a church and there's lots of issues, you write a long letter.

Because, yeah. And actually, you may, some of you may know this, but there's actually a 2 Corinthians. And they must have written a letter in between as well.

So, actually, I think there were, like, four letters that Paul wrote to Corinthians. So, they had a lot of love, this Corinth church. It's not because they had a lot of issues. But, actually, yes. But, also because Paul really cared for them.

He was there when the church was born. He cares about how they go. And I think, yeah. So, that makes sense. But, I mean, compare Paul as well. Paul is a single. I don't think he was married. [ 4 : 18 ] You look at Peter's letters, he was married. He probably had kids. So, yeah. You do have more availability, I think, to write and to pray and read, I think, in different stages of life. Yeah.

So, make the most of it. Next is, if you kind of scroll to the top of that page. Because some of the questions at the bottom had been answered with our other sermons and services as well. But, yeah. When do we get the spiritual gifts? So, maybe Eva. Do you mind starting us off? I think, well, let me find it.

The thing with spiritual gifts is that we can't expect it like there's a date. Like, Mariah's birthday tomorrow. And she can expect birthday gifts, right?

And then Christmas, we expect Christmas presents. But, the thing with spiritual gifts, the Bible tells us very clearly. Let me find it. Paul tells us very clearly that the gifts are used to build up the church. [ 5 : 33 ] And the Spirit, I think, in 1211. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit.

And He gives them to each one just as He determines. So, when do we get the spiritual gifts? If the purpose of the spiritual gifts is to build up the church, then I think when there's a need.

And when the Holy Spirit sees there is a need, so He will give it. Maybe I'll add to that as well. My favorite book is Ephesians.

And when it talks about the Holy Spirit straight off, Ephesians 1.13 says, That's the verse. It reminds us that when you are saved, when you trusted Jesus, you have every spiritual blessing. So, I think behind the question is kind of like, have I missed out? You know, when do I get my spiritual gift?

[ 6 : 37 ] And I want to say to you as a Christian, brother or sister, you have not missed out. If you are in Christ, you have every spiritual blessing. That being said, I think spiritual gifts, we've covered this in the sermon, there are spectacular looking ones, and there are really ordinary seeming ones.

But actually, if you're a Christian, you already have some kind of gift. And actually, part of our church's responsibility is to find out how to use them and how to develop and grow them. So, that's good, yeah.

So, yeah, it sounds like when you believe you have the Holy Spirit in you, but maybe when the manifestation of the gift could be, as Eva said, when the Holy Spirit sees that there is a need. And I think, just to add on to that, I just want to say, yeah, I think it's something that we probably need to think more about in terms of finding out where your gifts are and how you get to use the most of what God has given you as well.

And following on from that, someone has asked, do we need to practice or train in the gifts? Maybe Pastor Albert, could you start?

[ 7 : 41 ] Thanks. A gift is a gift, right? If I'm not gifted in that area, if it's a particular gift, no matter how much I practice, I would never be gifted as someone who has that particular gift.

But it doesn't mean that I believe if God has given me the gift, it doesn't mean that naturally I just do it. I do need to practice.

Say, for instance, like, before I became a Christian, I was very shy. I never would be able to speak in front of people, right?

But after when I became a Christian, I just felt that God gave me this passion to speak the Bible, right? And, yeah, I had to anyway, whether I liked it or not.

But then, and then I slowly discovered that, oh, God has maybe just given me this gift of preaching. But I had to practice. It just wouldn't come.

[ 8 : 51 ] So that, for me, that's my understanding. Yeah, I agree. Paul also told Timothy in 1 Timothy chapter 4.

Actually, it's really good if you read the entire chapter 4. But I'll just read some of the verses where it says, in verse 14, well, actually starting 11.

Command and teach these things. Don't let anyone look down on you because you're young. But set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity.

Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching, and to teaching. Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message, when the body of elders lay their hands on you.

Be diligent in these matters. Give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both

yourself and your hearers.

[ 9 : 59 ] So I think in here we can see that gifts can be neglected, but it can also be improved upon. That's why Paul actually told Timothy, you need to keep doing this, and then you will get better.

Other people will see the progress. So I think practicing and training in the gift makes sense because no one is perfect in the things they do to serve the church.

And there's always other people that you can learn from. And also we can see with the nature of the gifts, a lot of them work together.

So practicing and training actually means you need to humble yourself, know your weaknesses, and practice with other people. Just like you may be Celine Dion or something.

You sing perfectly well. But then the other members of the worship team may not be as good. Then you need to practice. And maybe your gift may be singing really well, but perhaps what you need to train in is humility.

[ 11 : 07 ] So in order to give our best to God, we need to practice and train. I just wondered, like from that, do you have any like practical kind of maybe ideas of how to train and practice in the gifts?

I mean, that's a great verse. I mean, if you want a memory verse, you guys should memorize 1 Timothy 4.12, right? Then no one look down on your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, conduct, faith, love, and purity.

Those are five things we can work on very practically. And again, I want to echo what Eva said. We need each other as a family, right? Imagine you want to get really big biceps like some of the people here in this church.

You can't do it on your own, all right? You can, but it's hard, right? Sometimes you have to have someone spot you, right? It's the same with church. It's the same with your spiritual gifts. So find someone that maybe has an interest in, you know, helps or prophecy or, you know, teaching or whatever gifts that have been listed here or not here and say, can you help me out?

You know, I want to grow in this area of my faith. Again, you know, it's much harder to do that when you're on your own. So that's why God gifts us a community as well. Thank you.

[ 12 : 27 ] So getting into more specific gifts, the question is, what different ways can we practice prophecy as a church? How can we learn supernatural aspects?

And I will just read 1 Corinthians 14, verse 1, just to remind us. So verse 1, chapter 14 says, follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy.

So it seems to say that it's important. So yeah, what different ways can we practice this as a church? Maybe I preached this passage, so maybe I'll just recap what we learned.

1 Corinthians 14 says, we want to edify everyone, not just certain select people when we gather together to worship. And so for that reason, Paul, when he thinks that all the different spiritual gifts there are, he says, look, if there's prophecy, which is intelligible, controlled speech that strengthens, encourages, equips, comforts the church, it may have supernatural insight, but really the main thing is that it edifies everyone.

Let's prefer that, right? Rather than tongues, right? And however you view them, human or angelic, only with an interpretation. Is it beneficial for the whole church family here when we worship together?

[ 13 : 45 ] And so he says, prefer prophecy, okay? And I have, you know, I am a very broad view person when it comes to prophecy. I know sometimes we can, you might look on YouTube videos, you might be people that teach you, this is how you prophesy, that sort of thing.

Let's listen to Paul, and what do we hear? We hear, it's a gift for everyone to excel in. So it must be something that Mariah can do, and I can do, right?

So I think it is encouraging words that will encourage the whole church. So, and that's a very broad definition. Some people might say, oh, look, isn't prophecy more like telling the future, like, you know, getting a really special word?

It could be, but remember, the prophecy in the whole Bible, think about the book of Isaiah, there's a bit of future telling, like foretelling, but there's actually a lot of forthright, forth telling as well, right? Pointing out their sin, that doesn't require telling the future, okay? So we just got to be really broad about prophecy. Any words that encourage, equip, inspire. And actually, it's for men and women.

[ 14 : 49 ] So actually, you know, some practical ways we can do prophecy is do more of this, okay? Pass the mic around more in church. It's a shame if only, mine is the only voice you hear in a

worship service.

We were in a church, it's called Petrus and Baptists in Sydney. They had a community news time, and then they actually said, anyone have a news to share?

Just come on up. And that was wonderful. It was sometimes chaos, but sometimes you had to do some quality control. Okay, what are you going to share, you know? But look, it was lovely. It was such a good time, and one of our favorite parts of the worship service there.

So I'm sure we can find ways to be prophetic among us. Yeah, so that's my thoughts. Yeah, I think by the time you know now, I think all the gifts there, either it was tongue, it was prophecies, they were functioning instead of an office, somebody, a prophet, or something like that, okay?

So I think, especially in chapter 14 of 1 Corinthians, Paul was actually, even the gift of prophecy, when it's exercised, it was better than tongues, right?

[15:58] Because it was intelligible, all right? But you still have to discern because whether it was speaking the Word of God, I mean, you will have to discern.

You just cannot take for granted. Or somebody who has a mind, he must be speaking the Word of God. You will have to discern because I, you know, I actually was kind of prophesied on and I knew it was wrong.

So I did not, even, you know, even I did not discern, I knew it was wrong because it was actually my colleague in Hong Kong. And he said something like, oh, I felt that the Lord was telling me something.

I was saying, seeing your family, like, very, very joyfully dancing in the field. I was like, oh, that's nice. Thank you very much.

But he said, some, some, some, but the thing is, that, that was not Simo. Huh? That was, that was a problem, you see? So I think, sometimes it can be even more subtle.

[17:03] You will really have to discern whether that was from God. So this is why I believe that Paul was telling the people there, you have to discern.

Yeah, that's my, that's my, my understanding. And I think Pastor William brought up a really good point. If we want to understand prophecy, the, the clearest way to see it is through the Old Testament when there, there's the office of the prophet.

And when we actually read through those prophetic books, prophetic words, actually most of them are not about the future. We have, in the Old Testament, there are different genres of books, right? You have the history. Basically, it was a record of what happened from people's point of view. Okay? This king was born and then he had a son and then he died and then whatever.

This nation defeated that and then there was a war. It's all earthly perspective. And then at the same time, there's like a parallel history of the prophets, the prophetic books.

[18:12] And that is recording the same thing but from God's point of view. So, for example, in Solomon's reign, everyone thought, wow, it's so great. Like, he's famous, he's, he's wealthy and like, everyone came to talk to him.

But then when you look at the prophetic words from God, God wasn't pleased with him because he was sinning. And so, I think, to understand prophecy, I think, there's an aspect of looking at the same thing but from God's point of view.

So, sometimes, perhaps, like, as a church, we have to tackle issues, very practical issues. But do we tackle it from a worldly point of view? Like, like, some kind of, I don't know, organization or look at the rules of the world, how people actually practice the law of the land.

Or do we look at it through the lens of the gospel, which is what Paul has been doing throughout the entire 1 Corinthians. Every issue that people threw at him, he just answered with Jesus because Jesus is the answer.

So, looking at everyday issues, maybe it's personal issues or global issues, but from God's perspective, I think that, in a way, is prophecy.

[19:34] And how can you learn supernatural aspect? Basically, when we learn to think like Christ, that is already a supernatural aspect because naturally, we won't be able to do it.

Thank you. And just, I think the last question about the gifts, when should we desire and practice tongues then?

So, if you remember, we read a passage that was talking about, yeah, the gift of tongues and when it shouldn't be used. So, when should we desire and practice tongues then?

That was my sermon again, sorry. Look, we come from a diverse range of views on this and we are brothers and sisters in the Lord, right?

We remember, if you declare Jesus as Lord, we are part of the same body of Christ. And some of you, tongues means angelic tongues, it means spiritual language, it means this is how I really connect with God.

[ 20 : 33 ] Some of you are really scared by the fact that someone will be babbling in the corner next to you, right? Whatever your view, scripture is clear actually and Paul is clear, don't forbid it but it's not helpful in a gathered church like this without interpretation.

So, when can we desire and practice tongues? I think it depends on your view. So, I lean towards, I think, the tongues Paul was talking about are probably human languages that he hadn't learned. So, that's my view, maybe Pastor, we can talk about different view. So, practical ways, I've been taking Chinese classes since I started church and so my Cantonese has improved but only like marginally.

I go to night market most Saturdays, I ask them, how do you say thank you in your language? And that's a conversation starter, that's me practicing. I won't master it, like everyone has gifts that they're good and bad at but I know that as I listen to others, as I pray and worship in other tongues, I'm connecting with them in some way.

But that's me personally, yeah, so, and that's one way I practice. But I wouldn't do it all here in church because then you'll be like, I don't know what you said, right? I don't know what you're saying, yeah, so that's me.

[ 21 : 50 ] Because of that, we actually, our pastors in the church has actually talked about it and it's, it's, I think it's interesting to know we hold different views.

That's okay. I mean, we can be different but we can still be united. We can serve together, all right? Because to me, I mean, whether it's human language or heavenly tongues, you can't understand anyway because you need someone, some gifted, spiritual gifted, spiritual gifted person to interpret it, you see?

So whether it was Italian, Russian, you know, it was somebody uttered something out, I don't get it anyway and someone need, please, interpret for me. So I think it doesn't matter.

So that's why Paul was added to it later on and said, oh, we're just looking into the mirror. We can't see clearly. One day we'll see. Yeah, that's for me.

So I think, yeah, I think follow the Bible during the worship no one interprets it, don't speak. Speak something that's intelligible and people can understand, right?

[ 23 : 04 ] And, yeah, that's the rule here for me. You want to say something? Personally, I have no idea where the tongues are.

I think from Acts we can see that it's earthly language, like people's actual language, dialect. But then to be honest, this passage is confusing.

So is it language of angels? Do they actually speak? But in the Bible we see them, well, English Bible they speak English. So do they have a specific language that we need to learn?

Why? I'm not an angel. But I think Paul gives us a hint in chapter 14. He quotes it Isaiah. And if we read the context in Isaiah, actually in the Old Testament, God foretold about a day when there will be different languages.

And it is a sign of judgment on the unbelieving Israelites. And that is why if you read Paul chapter 14, he said, tongues is a sign not for believers but for unbelievers.

[ 24 : 22 ] This is about the unbelieving Jews. When they come into the church and see these people worshipping God, but in different tongues, in foreign languages, then they know this is the time that Isaiah was warning them about.

This is a time of judgment on them for not truly believing God's gospel. So I think for us, when should we decide and practice tongues? tongues. If tongues is a sign of judgment for unbelieving Jews, I really have no idea when we should desire that.

Yeah, sorry, no answer. A very long no answer, sorry. Yeah, thanks for sharing. I think we can see that, yeah, again, as Pastor Albert said, even amongst leaders and pastors, there are different views, and I think, again, as we said in the passage today, at the end, the most important thing is there's grace and love that's uniting us together, yeah, with our core truth that we need to believe in. So I just wanted to finish up, I just want to ask each of you, maybe through your journey of preaching or listening to the sermons of 1 Corinthians, studying it, is maybe one thought that stood

out to you or that you've been learning?

Eva, do you want to start? Thank you. I think, I really thank God that PCBC is looking deeply through this lesson, like right now.

[ 25 : 59 ] We know there have been issues in our church that have been brewing for a long time, and I really see like, looking back with Paul addressing all sorts of, you know, some are theological issues, some are just ridiculous issues in the church of Corinth, but every time he just used the gospel as the answer, and we can see that he really demonstrates how that is of first importance.

And at the beginning of the letter, he already said, like, I know nothing except Christ and him crucified. And that for me is a very good reminder. How do I look at issues in my life through the lens of the gospel?

A lot of the times, things come up, family or church or work, I look for practical results, practical way to maybe avoid the problems or solve the problem or things that make sense in this world.

But this letter really reminded me that I'm a Christian. My whole existence, I continue to exist because of the gospel.

So the gospel really shouldn't just be something that I think about every now and then. It should be my everything. So it should be the lens through which I look at my life, my relationship, all the problems.

[ 27 : 21 ] And Jesus is the answer. Thank you, Pastor Albert. Actually, quite a lot that has been reminded.

I think it's very coincident that if you're a church member, since quarterly meeting in July, it really resonates with the truth in the Bible.

different views, different attitudes, and different ways of present ideas, and different results. But I think in midst of all this diversity and different capabilities in doing things, what actually would be the most important?

even talking about these supernatural gifts and things like that, you know, I think 1 Corinthians 13 would be the answer.

We can be different, but we're running through the blood of Christ in us, and that's why I need to, I said one question there, how do I love the person I don't even like?

[ 28 : 49 ] But you can, because this is a command, you have to love, despite my emotions. I would have to look into someone who just scolded me, and I have to look him into my eye, and say, you are my brother.

It's not going to be difficult, but this is, if I claim to be a Christian, and 1 Corinthians 13 says, you have to be patient with him. I'm trying, I don't have it sussed out, but I'm trying.

Yeah, fully agree. So, yeah, praise God for this letter. I'm still trying to learn lessons, I think particularly around how do you deal with church conflict.

I think there's so much pastoral wisdom, and God has a sense of humour, because now we have our own church conflicts that are alive. But even just in my marriage, even at home with the kids, I've been trying to learn the lessons of actually, you know, because of Jesus Christ, who has forgiven me, I can forgive you.

Because Jesus is holy, I can live a holy life. You keep going back to Jesus, and we live it out, and that's a lesson for all of us. I've been really appreciating that.

[ 30 : 05 ] It's been a good book, but there are 65 other books in the Bible, so I look forward to it. Thank you all for answering these questions. I know it's a bit late, but I would like to give you guys an opportunity, just a few minutes, to talk to the people next to you.

Maybe share one thing, I know there's lots of things, but one thing that has stood out to you in this book as well, or maybe it's questions that you still have, and again, I would still encourage you to try and ask a leader, and they can always pass the question on if they don't know, but yeah, just talk to the person next to you, what's something that has stood out to you.

All right, just going to finish off in prayer together, and then we're going to go to the Lord's Supper next. All right, so let's all pray. Father God, again, we just want to thank you for all that you've taught us through 1 Corinthians, through what Paul has written.

Yeah, there's lots of things that we still don't know, and I believe that you don't, yeah, it's not your will for us to understand everything at this time, and I believe that as humans we will still interpret things wrongly, so I just pray, Father, that you are gracious towards us, and I pray that you'll continue to help us have, yeah, supernatural understanding of what you want to say to us through

