

# Ephesians Series

Lesson #141

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Dean Bible Ministries

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# The Purpose of the Sign Gifts

## Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 14:21–22



# EPHESIANS

THE WEALTH, WALK  
& WARFARE  
OF THE BELIEVER

**1 Cor. 13:8, “Love never fails.**

**But [contrasts love with prophecies, the gift of languages, and knowledge]**

**whether there are prophecies, they will fail [καταργέω *katargeō*];**

**whether there are tongues, they will cease [παύω *pauō*];**

**whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away [καταργέω *katargeō*];”**

1 Cor. 13:8, “Love never fails.

But [contrasts love with prophecies, the gift of languages, and knowledge]

whether there are prophecies, they will be set aside [καταργέω *katargeō*];

whether there are tongues, they will cease [παύω *pauō*];  
whether there is knowledge, it will be set aside [καταργέω *katargeō*];” ~RD

καταργέω *katargeō* 3 plur fut pass indic

“to cause something to come to an end or to be no longer in existence, *abolish, wipe out, set aside*”

**1 Cor. 13:8, “Love never fails.**

**But [contrasts love with prophecies, the gift of languages, and knowledge]**

**whether there are prophecies, they will be set aside [καταργέω *katargeō*];**

**whether there are tongues, they will end [παύω *paiō*];**

**whether there is knowledge, it will be set aside [καταργέω *katargeō*];” ~RD**

**παύω *paiō* 3 plur fut mid indic to cause something to stop, cease, end**

**“For we know in part [ἐκ μέρους , *ek merous*], and we prophesy in part [*ek merous*]. (1 Cor. 13:9)**

**“But when the perfect [τὸ τέλειον, *to teleion* “complete”] comes, the partial [*ek merous*] will be done away [*katargeo*].” (1 Cor. 13:10)**

**“For we know in part [ἐκ μέρους , *ek merous*], and we prophesy in part [*ek merous*]. (1 Cor. 13:9)**

**“But when the perfect [τὸ τέλειον, *to teleion*] comes, then<sup>1</sup> the partial [*ek merous*] will be set aside [*katargeo*].” (1 Cor. 13:10)**

**“In part” means *partial or incomplete*.**

**What is learned from the exercise of gifts of knowledge and prophecy is partial, incomplete, but when that which completes comes, the partial is set aside.**

“For we know partially [ἐκ μέρους, *ek merous*], and we prophesy partially [*ek merous*].” (1 Cor. 13:9) ~RD OR

“For we know *incompletely*, and we prophecy *incompletely*,

But when the complete [τὸ τέλειον, *to teleion*] comes, then<sup>1</sup> the incomplete [*ek merous*] will be set aside [*katargeo*].” (1 Cor. 13:10) ~RD



**1 Cor. 13:11, “When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I set aside childish things.”**

“For now [ἄρτι, *arti*] we see in a mirror [incomplete canon] dimly but then [when the canon is complete] face to face; now [ἄρτι, *arti*] I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known.” (1 Cor. 13:12)

ἄρτι, *arti*; now in this pre-canon period

[αἴνιγμα, *ainigma*]

**Num. 12:6, “He said, ‘Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, shall make Myself known to him in a vision. I shall speak with him in a dream.**

**Num. 12:7, “Not so, with My servant Moses, He is faithful in all My household;”**

**Num. 12:8, “With him I speak mouth to mouth, even openly, and not in dark sayings (αἴνιγμα, *ainigma*, LXX), and he beholds the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant, against Moses?”**

**1 Cor. 13:12, “For now we see [ourselves] in a mirror dimly (αἴνιγμα, *ainigma*), but then face to face;**

**now I know myself in part, but then I shall know myself fully just as I also have been fully known.”**

**“But now [Novì,/ *nuni*] abide faith, hope, love,  
these three; but the greatest of these is love.”  
(1 Cor. 13:13)**

**2 Cor. 5:7, “for we walk by faith, not by sight —**

**2 Cor. 5:8, “we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.”**

**Heb. 11:1, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”**

**Rom. 8:24, “For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one also hope for what he sees?”**



**1 Cor. 14:20**, “Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature [τέλειος (*teleios*)].

**1 Cor. 14:21**, “In the law it is written: ‘*With men of other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people; And yet, for all that, they will not hear Me,*’ says the Lord.

**1 Cor. 14:22**, “Therefore [the] tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.”

**Isa. 28:11, “For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.**

**Isa. 28:12, “To whom he said, ‘This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest;’ and ‘This is the refreshing’: yet they would not hear.”**

**Isa. 28:7, “And these also reel with wine and stagger from strong drink: The priest and the prophet reel with strong drink [barley beer], They are confused by wine, They stagger from strong drink [barley beer]; They reel while having visions, They totter when rendering judgment.**

**Isa. 28:8, “For all the tables are full of filthy vomit, without a single clean place.”**

**Isa. 28:9, “Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just drawn from the breasts?”**

**Isa. 28:10, “For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little.”**

**Isa. 28:11, “Indeed, He will speak to this people through stammering lips and a foreign tongue,**

**Isa. 28:12, “He who said to them, ‘Here is rest, give rest to the weary,’ and, ‘Here is repose,’ but they would not listen.”**

**Deut. 28:49, “The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you shall not understand,”**

**1 Cor. 14:21, “In the law it is written: ‘*With men of other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people; And yet, for all that, they will not hear Me,*’ says the Lord.**

**1 Cor. 14:22, “Therefore [the] tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.”**

**“Tongues have a further use, as a sign to unbelievers, not a convincing, saving sign, but a judicial sign. Just as the disobedient Jews, who refused to listen to the clear and intelligible message which God frequently sent to them through His prophets, were chastised, by being made to listen to the unintelligible language of a foreign invader, . . .”**

**~Robertson and Plummer, *1 Corinthians***



**“... so those who now fail to believe the Gospel are chastised by hearing wonderful sounds, which they cannot understand. If this is correct, we may compare Christ’s use of parables to veil His meaning from those who could not or would not receive it.”**

**~Robertson and Plummer, *1 Corinthians***

**“The use of the definite article with the Greek word for ‘tongues’ (αι γλωσσαι) does not appear in the AV of this verse but must not be overlooked. Inasmuch as the article gives to the word γλωσσαι a pointed specificity, it further confirms that Paul finds *this particular* phenomenon to be the thing referred to by the Scripture he has cited. ...”**

**~Z. Hodges**

**“It is not simply ‘tongues’ in general to which Isaiah of old refers, but ‘*the* tongues’ of which the apostle has been speaking throughout.”**

**~Z. Hodges**

**1 Cor. 14:22, “Therefore [the] tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.”**

**The Greek adjective construction, τοῖς ἀπίστοις, rendered by the AV, “*them that believe not*,” here is not distinguished by the English version from the preceding participial construction τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, “*them that believe*,” but they are not identical.**

**The fact that either two participial constructions, or two adjectival ones, could have been used if precise, exact opposition of the two expressions were intended points to the conclusion that a certain shade of difference existed in the apostle's mind. The adjective ἀπίστος under these circumstances would—in contrast to a participial form—express pure description as over against the *action* of believing involved in the foregoing participle.**

**“Thus ἀπίστος *apistos*, as a description, is more static and hence more inherent in tone. Accordingly, even this grammatical nicety seems emphatic with the spirit of the Isaiah prophecy which deplures a *condition* of unbelief so tragically fixed that not even the sign-gift of tongues can arouse the nation from it.”**

**~Hodges**

**Eph. 4:11, “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,**

**Eph. 4:12, “**for** the equipping of the saints **for** the work of ministry, **for** the edifying of the body of Christ,**

**Eph. 4:13, “until we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;”**