

SPEAKING OF TONGUES

by Ray C. Stedman

Surely this subject of tongues is one of the most, if not *the most*, controversial issues in the church today. Without a doubt it is one of the major eyebrow-raisers of modern times. Many are asking questions about it, and there is much that is written in this area. You cannot meet with any Christian group and start discussing any prominent Christian leader but the question, either voiced or unvoiced, arises, "Does he, or doesn't he?"

Well, the whole of Chapter 14 of First Corinthians is devoted to a comparison by the Apostle Paul of the two gifts of tongues and of prophesying. Both of these gifts were obviously being featured and focused upon in the city of Corinth and in the church there. Therefore, the apostle gives us some very helpful insights on these gifts and how they contrast one with another.

The most important verse in this whole chapter is Verse 1:

Make love your aim, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. {1 Cor 14:1 RSV}

That ties this back to the "love" chapter, and it is good to remind ourselves that this is the essence of the exercise of any spiritual gift. Here is where we get our balance. Love is to be the basic, biblical reason for exercising a spiritual gift. Love, as we have already seen, is the urge, the hunger to reach out for someone else's benefit. That is to be the controlling theme throughout this whole chapter in both the discussion of tongues and of prophesying. Love, edification, building up someone else, that is the issue. There is no question about it.

Now to that end he says, "desire spiritual gifts" in order that they may be a means of helping others and fulfilling love. He does not mean by that for an individual Christian to start planning what kind of spiritual gift he or she would like to have. This is not addressed to the individual; it is addressed to the congregation. They are to desire that the better spiritual gifts will be exercised among them to help them grow in spiritual power and effectiveness and influence in the city. Clearly, therefore, the one spiritual gift that is most effective in that direction is prophesying. That is why Paul says, "Make love your aim, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, [but] especially that you may prophesy."

We have already seen that the gift of prophesying is not predicting the future. That may be an element occasionally in it, but it is basically the explanation of the present in the light of the revelation of God. The closest term we would call it by today is "expository preaching," unfolding the mind of God and applying it to the daily struggles of life. That is prophesying. That, Paul says, is the gift to desire above all others.

Beginning with Verse 2 and on through Verse 5, there is a little section that deals with the comparison of these two gifts as to their value in the church. Paul begins with the gift of tongues:

For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit. {1 Cor 14:2 RSV}

That is a very important little verse to understanding much of the controversy that is raging on this subject today. There are several things we need to note about it very clearly:

First, the word "tongue" is a reference to a language that is employed. This is the common Greek word for language. It is a reference, of course, originally, to the member of the body that is used in speaking -- the little organ that is called the tongue, and several references refer to it in that way. Metaphorically, it means a language spoken by that member of the body. There are numerous instances in Scripture where it is translated "language" and properly so. It is the normal word for language, and, therefore, we have a clear hint right at the

beginning of this discussion that the gift of tongues is the gift of supernaturally speaking languages never learned. We have already seen that in Chapter 12.

Now the apostle here tells us that that supernatural gift has a certain characteristic about it, and it is a very important characteristic. He puts it both positively and negatively. Negatively, it is not addressed to men. He who speaks in a tongue, a language never learned, is not speaking to men (Paul underscores that), but he is speaking, affirmatively, positively, to God. That is a very important thing to note. Tongues are never addressed to men. You will find that confirmed again in Verse 28, where the apostle, still speaking about this gift, says: "... if there is no one to interpret [the language], let each [each speaker] of them keep silence in church and speak to himself [that is, in his thought life; he is to keep silence, but the thoughts still continue] and to God." So again, tongues are addressed to God and not to men.

That is very important when judging whether the gift that we hear all around today is the true, biblical gift. One of the first questions you ought to ask is, "Was it addressed to men?" Sometimes today, when interpretations are given, the content makes clear that they constitute a kind of exhortation to the audience. Well then, that is not the gift of tongues, because, according to the Word of God, tongues are not addressed to men.

This means, of course, that the gift of tongues was never used for the preaching of the gospel. I have heard preachers take the story of Pentecost and say that when the gift of tongues was given to the 120 on the Day of Pentecost that these Galilean peasants were being endowed with the power to preach the gospel to those who had gathered into the city from all the surrounding regions. Not so. Tongues are not addressed to men. They were not listening to them preach the gospel. The account in Acts 2 tells us they heard them declaring the magnificences of God. They were praising, not preaching. In fact, that is why Peter gets up just a few moments after this and interprets the event to the crowd. He then preaches the gospel to them, but they were not preaching the gospel in tongues, and tongues are never used for the preaching of the gospel. It is not addressed to men; it is not an exhortation; it is not a prediction of events. It is addressed always and only to God.

It consists, in its content, of praise, prayer, thanksgiving and singing unto God. That is confirmed in Verses 14-17. Pick out the words where Paul is describing his own practice in this regard. He says (Verse 15), "I will pray with the spirit," that is, in tongues; and, "I will pray with the mind" (it consists of prayer), and, "I will sing with the spirit." Then, in Verse 16, "if you bless with the spirit" (bless who? bless God). And, again in Verse 16, "your thanksgiving." In Verse 17, "you may give thanks well enough." Obviously, the content of tongues is always prayer, praise, singing, thanksgiving, blessing God. It is an exhortation of praise addressed to God himself for his mercy and blessing to the human race.

You will notice that Paul also adds this word, that anyone who speaks in tongues is not understood in a congregation because he speaks "mysteries in the Spirit." Now obviously the reason for that was not that he was speaking things that nobody had ever heard before; he was simply speaking in a language that they did not understand. That would, therefore, appear to be something mysterious. In the church at Corinth people would stand up and speak in these languages, perhaps recognizable as being languages used somewhere nearby (as on the Day of Pentecost), but the people there did not understand the language, and so they could not know what the speaker was saying. He was uttering, therefore, "mysteries [to them] in the Spirit."

One further thing needs to be said before we leave this verse, and that is: This verse clearly makes apparent the fact that it is the true, Spirit-given, biblical gift of tongues that is being discussed in this chapter. I say that because some commentators today are telling us that what Paul is discussing here is a carry-over from the pagan practices around. In the pagan mystery religions there was a kind of ecstatic utterance, a purely psychological phenomenon (which I will comment on later in this message), that was induced by a kind of religious excitement. It consisted of a babble of sounds, an incoherent stammering of various syllables and sounds. Because this was exercised in the mystery religions of Corinth, some expositors are telling us that this is the problem here in the church at Corinth. But I cannot agree with that, and the reason I cannot is this: All through this chapter the apostle interjects references to his own practice of the gift of tongues, and he makes no distinction whatsoever between the way he spoke in tongues and the way these Corinthians were speaking in tongues. He does not put their gift down, in fact here in this very verse he says it is "in the Spirit," it is addressed to God, so in no sense is he putting down the exercise of this gift. He himself exercised it, as he

tells us very plainly in this chapter. Therefore, it is not the pagan practice that had crept into the church, as some would tell us today. It was the true, biblical gift of tongues as it was manifested also on the Day of Pentecost.

In contrast, Paul now describes the gift of prophesying (Verse 3):

On the other hand, he who prophesies speaks to men for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. {1 Cor 14:3 RSV}

Prophesying, as we have already said, is basically the explaining and expounding of the mind of God. Calvin called it "the peculiar gift of explaining revelation." It is applying the world view of God to the circumstances of men, so that men begin to see what is happening in their lives in terms of what God understands them to be, as different from the illusions and fantasies and mistaken concepts of the world around them. That is the business of prophesying. It is a very needed gift in our day as well, because it has, as Paul says, a threefold effect:

First, it builds people up. The word is *oikodomen* in the Greek, *oiko* means "house," and *domen* means "to build." To build a house on a solid foundation is the idea; and the work of prophesying then gives people a foundation. One of the major problems among Christians today is the struggle they have with the sense of their true identity. Many people are emotionally torn apart because they do not understand the revelation of the Word of God that they are new creatures in Christ Jesus; they are no longer what they once were. Because they still get feelings of being what they once were, they believe those feelings, and they react accordingly. There is an up-and-down experience that they can never get away from. But prophesying corrects that. It teaches us who we are in Christ. That is why it is so needed in our day, as it was needed here in Corinth.

The second thing prophesying does is strengthen people. This is the word from which we get the word *paraclete*, one of the titles of the Holy Spirit. He is the strengthener of God's people. It means to support and encourage; it is "one called alongside," that is the literal meaning of the term, to support you and steady you and strengthen you.

The third ministry of prophesying is that of comforting; it comforts. Still a third Greek word is used here, *paramuthian*, which means, basically, to empathize, to put yourself in the place of others, to understand the pressures they are under. It means to be able to feel with them and be able, then, to encourage them with the fact that you know how they feel, you have been there, but God is working it out with them as he worked it out with you. That is what the word of prophesying is inclined to do. We have all had the experience of listening to a text of Scripture expounded, and it seemed to speak right to our basic problem. That is what prophesying does. You can see, therefore, how useful and how important it is to have this exercised in a church.

The apostle now goes on (Verse 4):

He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. {1 Cor 14:4 RSV}

There is some benefit to the individual who is praising God in a language he has never learned and does not even understand himself, but his spirit is praising God and, therefore, it is blessed, and he himself feels refreshed. There is a benefit to him, but he is the only one, and, therefore, tongues without interpretation is self-centered; it ignores the needs of others. It is denying this whole appeal to act in love, and "make love your aim," which is to build up and bless and strengthen others around you. Prophesying, as Paul says, "edifies the church," and, therefore, fulfills the demands of love. And so he says:

Now I want you all to speak in tongues, [That is a good gift; there is nothing wrong with that, but he especially demands that it be interpreted so it would be of benefit.] but even more to prophesy. [That is the great subject of this chapter. For:] He who prophesies is greater than he who speaks in tongues, unless some one interprets, so that the church may be edified. {1 Cor 14:5 RSV}

That is his whole thrust throughout the rest of this chapter. The church must be fed, and tongues alone do not do it unless they are interpreted.

In the next section, Verse 6 on through Verse 12 (which I am going to read through rather rapidly because it has more application to Corinth than it does to us), he is simply developing this a little more. We must put ourselves back into the scene of that 1st century world where these people were glorying in these supernatural manifestations of being able to do what no natural man could do -- speak a language he had never learned. They thought that was marvelous, and they were encouraging this sort of thing to the detriment of listening to people really expound and explain the mind of God. That is why Paul is turning and spending time with this.

In this section he shows and describes the effect of uninterpreted tongues in the church. First, he says it is not profitable (Verse 6):

Now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how shall I benefit you unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? {1 Cor 14:6 RSV}

Paul uses himself as an example. He says: If I come to you and all I do is stand up and praise God in this unlearned language in your presence, I am perhaps blessed by that, but you are not profited any, for the things I could do that would profit you would be these four:

1. First, I might bring you a revelation. This was his privilege as an apostle. Christ had taught him truth others did not know. That is why the writings of the New Testament are apostolic revelation. That would have blessed them tremendously.
2. Or he could have shared something of knowledge. I think there he is referring to his vast knowledge of the Old Testament. He could have shared an Old Testament story and taught them from it. That would have been a great blessing to them.
3. Or he could have prophesied. He could have shared with them an illumination of their present situation by the insight of the mind of God into their lives. That would have strengthened them.
4. Or he could have simply taught them, explaining in detail certain doctrinal matters that would have helped them to understand the whole range and spectrum of divine instruction, and that would have helped them.

But to simply stand up and speak in tongues was of no benefit at all unless somebody at least explained what he had said. Thus he sets that aside as a ministry that would not be of benefit in the church.

To illustrate this, he gives us two pictures which I will handle very quickly because they are so obvious. One is in the realm of music (Verse 7):

If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or the harp, do not give distinct notes, how will any one know what is played? And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? {1 Cor 14:7-8 RSV}

Suppose I went over here to this organ and started playing for you: You would all say, "What was that? I don't recognize that piece. In fact it doesn't even sound like music." The indistinct and uncoordinated notes that I would play would be of no enjoyment and no benefit to anyone. And if I were appointed to be the bugler in a military camp and it was up to me to blow reveille or the call for retreat or advance or mealtime, etc., the whole place would be in chaos. People would never know whether to get up, or to go to a meal or what because I do not know how to play a bugle. That is what Paul says, "If you are going to play a bugle you had better play it so everybody understands." That is the point he is making. He says:

So with yourselves; if you in a tongue utter speech that is not intelligible, [in a language that no one understands] how will any one know what is said? For you will be speaking into the air. {1 Cor 14:8-9 RSV}

He follows that with an illustration from the realm of languages:

There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning; but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me. So with yourselves; since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church. {1 Cor 14:10-12 RSV}

It is very plain, is it not? There are many languages -- and here again is a confirmation that the gift of tongues is a gift of languages -- and Paul says those languages have meanings, but you cannot get at the meaning if you do not know the language. Somebody has to interpret it for you, or it is a waste of time.

I am looking forward to going to Poland shortly, and I am going to have to speak through an interpreter, because what I say in English will be Greek to them unless it is interpreted! This is the thought here: You must have it explained or it is of no value.

Now, therefore, in Verses 13-19 you get his suggestion as to how to make the true, biblical gift of tongues (languages), when it was exercised in Corinth, of benefit to the congregation.

Therefore, he who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. {1 Cor 14:13 RSV}

That suggests that when God gives the gift of tongues, as he did in that 1st century world, very obviously, he also gives with it the gift of interpretation. But there must be a deliberate attempt made to exercise that gift. So Paul urges them that if they can exercise the gift of tongues they ought to expect and pray to exercise the gift of interpretation.

Then he brings his own practice in again:

For if I pray in a tongue, ["I know," he says, in effect] my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. {1 Cor 14:14 RSV}

There is the testimony of a man whom we love and trust telling us what the effect of this gift is upon the very one who exercises it. His spirit, the deep, central essence of his humanity, is crying out and worshipping God, but it is not articulated into words. He himself, his own mind, does not understand. He senses that he is worshipping, but he does not know how. He does not understand the language he is speaking, and, therefore, he does not know specifically what he is praising God about. So Paul says, "If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful,"

What am I to do? {1 Cor 14:15a RSV}

Well, the answer is obvious. He has just told us. He should interpret. That is what he does.

I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; {1 Cor 14:15b RSV}

"If I am going to speak in tongues in a church," he says, "I will never do it unless I interpret what I say. I will pray with the mind also."

I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also. ["I will never do one without the other." For, he says] Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how can any one in the position of an outsider say the "Amen" to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you are saying? For you may give thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified. {1 Cor 14:15c-17 RSV}

Here again it is clear that the exercise of tongues in a public assembly is a self-centered procedure that does not even allow the participation of others to say "Amen" unless it be clearly understood. That is the thrust of this.

Now, again speaking of himself, comes this biographical section:

I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all; nevertheless, in church: [That is the context of this whole chapter; it is not what goes on in private] I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue."
{1 Cor 14:18-19 RSV}

That is a strong emphasis, and it raises the question, "When did the Apostle Paul speak in tongues?" He obviously does not intend to do it in church -- he would much rather exercise his gift of prophesying there. Well, when did he do it? Modern Charismatics and Pentecostals tell us, "Ah, this proves that the gift of tongues is for private use, to be used at home as a prayer language." Now I know that sounds logical at this point, but I do not think it is true, because nowhere in the Word of God is the exercise of the gift of tongues ever a private matter. It is never referred to as such, and it is in no way spoken of as such. Every manifestation of tongues in the New Testament, without exception, is a public demonstration -- on the Day of Pentecost, in the home of Cornelius, where many were assembled, in the synagogue at Ephesus, as referred to in Acts Chapter 19 -- these were the only three places where the gift of tongues was said to have been exercised outside of this one in Corinth, and they were all public manifestations. Well, then, when did Paul speak in tongues? I think the only situation that fulfills all the biblical requirements for the gift of tongues, one that would have allowed the apostle to exercise his ability in this area, would be when he went into the Jewish synagogues, because there was a provision made for public praise of God by visiting people. To praise God in a language never learned would be a very impressive thing to the Jewish people present, especially if it was a Gentile tongue. That is when Paul spoke in tongues "more than them all," and that would fulfill every requirement of the biblical gift of tongues.

To confirm that is the proper explanation of these words of the apostle's, he goes on to tell us in a brief paragraph what the designated purpose of the gift of tongues was. He opens it with a word of caution (Verse 20):

Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; be babes in evil, but in thinking be mature. {1 Cor 14:20 RSV}

Why does he introduce that exhortation here in the midst of this? Well, because there were a kind of tongues around in Corinth. In the mystery religions there was this kind of babbling, ecstatic sound that sounded very much like a language that had never been learned. To an uninitiated person it would be hard to tell the difference at first. Therefore, he is warning these Corinthians: "Now investigate this matter. Do not be naive like a child and just assume that everything you hear is the biblical gift of tongues, because it is not. In evil you do not have to investigate. When you know something is evil, stay away from it; you do not need to delve into it and probe it and try to find out; it is evil. But when it comes to matters concerning spiritual gifts, grow up in your thinking and investigate." Then Paul gives us the basis upon which we may judge. He goes back to the book of Isaiah in the Old Testament, to the only prediction of tongues in the whole of the Bible, and tells us that this is what will govern our decision: Does it fulfill the predicted purpose for the gift of tongues? Verse 21:

In the law it is written, "By men of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord." Thus, tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophesying is not for unbelievers but for believers. {1 Cor 14:21-22 RSV}

You could hardly ask for plainer language, could you? The gift of tongues is a sign. A sign to whom? Well, the quotation from Isaiah 28 makes it clear {cf, Isa 28:11}: Isaiah was speaking to the whole nation of Israel at a time when the Assyrians were knocking at the doors of Jerusalem, threatening to capture it. Through the prophet, God is warning the nation that, if they do not repent and turn from their evil and idolatrous ways, they are going to hear foreigners talking in the Holy City; they are going to hear Gentile tongues filling the streets of that city. It is a warning to Israel to face up to their relationship with God lest he turn from them to the Gentile world.

Now that was the scene and the setting of Isaiah's words. One hundred years later they were completely fulfilled when the Babylonians came in and did take over the city and the streets of Jerusalem were filled with foreigners speaking strange tongues. If you read the Day of Pentecost in that light you will see how fully that

accords with this prediction, for, on that day, when the streets of Jerusalem were filled with thousands and thousands of people, largely Jews, who had come from all the nations around, they heard the disciples speaking these strange, Gentile languages they had never learned. It was a sign to unbelieving Jews that God was about to turn from Israel's favored position and go to the Gentile world. On that day, remember, Peter stood up and warned them that they were facing the judgment of God, being convicted in their hearts, that was why they said, "Men and brethren, what must we do?" {cf, Acts 2:37}, and three thousand of them turned to God because of that, while the rest of the city, the mass of the population, remained in unbelief.

That is what Isaiah said would happen, "By men of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord." {cf, Isa 28:11}. So Paul says that is the purpose for the gift, that is why he used it in synagogues wherever he went, because it would be a sign of warning to unbelieving Jews that God was turning to the Gentiles.

Now, many have been confused by the next two verses. They say, "Well, if that is the case why does Paul go on and seem to reverse this?"

If, therefore, the whole church assembles and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad? But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you. {1 Cor 14:23-25 RSV}

People say, "Well that sounds like just the opposite of what Paul said. He said tongues are a sign for unbelievers, and yet he goes on to say that if people speak in tongues in the church and a nonbeliever comes in he will not be impressed with the sign. He will say, "They are all mad; they are crazy; they all speak in languages I cannot understand." But if they prophesy, Paul says, the unbeliever will hear the Word of God and be convicted. He will fall on his face and say, "God is among them." (In fact, that seems to be so much the reverse of what Paul has just said that J. B. Phillips dares to actually change this around. In his translation he makes Paul say exactly the opposite of what he says here. That is why you cannot always trust translations, because they take liberties with the text).

What does Paul mean? Well, he is going back to what has been the theme all through this passage, that the gift of tongues is not really intended for the church. It is not for believers; it is for unbelievers. If it is exercised in a church, especially by a lot of people who stand up and speak and nobody interprets, what Paul says will happen -- unbelievers happening to be there will not understand it as a sign gift because it is not addressed to them. They will see it as an attempt to minister to the people present, but as nobody understands them they will think that everybody is mad. I have seen this happen in meetings today where what is claimed to be the gift of tongues is exercised.

But if prophesying occurs and people hear the Spirit of God speaking the mind of God they are often convicted. We see this almost every week here at PBC. I have seen hundreds of people come to Christ here in this congregation while I am teaching the Christians. They hear the truth, and the Spirit brings it home to their hearts, and they are converted. That is what Paul said would happen. But that does not change the fact that, when the gift of tongues is properly exercised, it is addressed to the unbelieving Jews particularly. Now that means that it could be exercised today. Once again Israel has come back into prominence, and there are many unbelieving Jews. I drove around Miami last week with Baruch Goldstein, of the "Jews for Jesus" people, in the van that has "Jews for Jesus" painted on it. People shook their fists at us as we drove. There are 600,000 Jews in the Miami area alone. This gift could reappear in our day, but, if it does, it will have all the marks of the biblical gift of tongues.

That raises, then, the final question, which I want to briefly answer this morning. That is, "Is what we are hearing around us today the biblical gift of tongues?" My judgment is, "No, it is not." I have heard hundreds of manifestations of what is called "tongues" today, and I am alarmed by the fact that hardly anybody ever raises the question, "Is this the same thing?" They never ask, "Is this a language, or is it not?"

I have a quotation here from William Samarin, professor of linguistics at the University of Toronto, who says,

Over a period of five years I have taken part in meetings in Italy, Holland, Jamaica, Canada and the United States. I have observed old-fashioned Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals. I have been in small meetings in private homes as well as in mammoth public meetings. I have seen such different cultural settings as are found among Puerto Ricans of the Bronx, the snake handlers of the Appalachians and the Russian Molakans of Los Angeles... I have interviewed tongue speakers, and tape recorded and analyzed countless samples of tongues. In every case, glossolalia turns out to be linguistic nonsense. In spite of superficial similarities, glossolalia is fundamentally not language. It is not a language, and it is not often addressed to God. It is usually addressed to a crowd of people present, so it does not fit that qualification. And it is primarily exercised privately today, whereas there is no manifestation of the private use of tongues in the New Testament. Finally, it is not a sign to unbelievers, therefore, we have to judge that the phenomenon that we see and hear today is not the biblical gift of tongues.

What is it then? Well, once again people are being misled, oftentimes quite earnestly and sincerely, into identifying a purely psychological phenomenon, of which many temperaments are capable, a kind of self-induced hypnosis which results in a repetition of sounds and syllables that have no meaning in themselves, as the gift of tongues. In itself it is relatively harmless. If people want to do it at home I have no objection as long as they do not call it the biblical gift of tongues because it is not that. It is this common phenomenon which was present all through the ancient world, and which Plato discusses in several of his discourses, and which was practiced commonly in the mystery religions of that day. It is very often, all through the history of the church, associated with religious excitement. That is what is being identified today as the gift of tongues.

Now, if the true gift is given, Paul says, "forbid not to speak with tongues," {cf, 1 Cor 14:39}. But when that which is not the biblical gift, but is being mistakenly called that, is exercised, we have every right to discourage its use and even forbid it as a divisive matter within the church.

Well, the subject is not exhausted, and I am sure I have not convinced everybody. We are going to go on next week into the rest of the passage that continues to deal with this gift.

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