

# 1 Corinthians 12:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

## Analysis

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**Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?**—Mē pantes apostoloi; mē pantes prophētai; mē pantes didaskaloi; mē pantes dunameis;—the Greek particle mē (μή) expects a negative answer: "Not all are apostles, are they?" Paul's rhetorical questions (continuing v.30) hammer home gift-diversity. Not every believer is an apostle; not every Christian is a teacher. The Spirit distributes as He wills (v.11), not uniformly to all.

This demolishes two errors:

1. elitism—"superior Christians have all gifts, especially tongues"
2. egalitarianism—"all Christians should have the same gifts." God's design features specialization, not duplication.

A body needs one mouth, not multiple mouths competing to speak. This means some believers will never speak in tongues (v.30)—contradicting any theology demanding tongues as evidence of Spirit-baptism. Paul's questions refute the notion that any single gift should be universal among believers.

## Historical Context

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Some Corinthians apparently taught that tongues-speaking was essential proof of Spirit-baptism or spiritual maturity, creating pressure for all believers to manifest this gift. Paul's rhetorical questions show such teaching contradicts the Spirit's sovereign, diverse distribution.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How do these rhetorical questions refute the teaching that all Spirit-baptized believers must speak in tongues?
2. What pressure exists in your church context for believers to manifest certain gifts as 'proof' of maturity?
3. How can churches celebrate gift-diversity without creating pressure toward gift-uniformity?

## Interlinear Text

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μὴ	πάντες	ἀπόστολοι	μὴ	πάντες	προφῆται	μὴ
<b>Are all</b>	G3956	<b>apostles</b>	<b>Are all</b>	G3956	<b>prophets</b>	<b>Are all</b>
G3361		G652	G3361		G4396	G3361
πάντες	διδάσκαλοι	μὴ	πάντες	δυνάμεις		
G3956	<b>teachers</b>	<b>Are all</b>	G3956	<b>workers of miracles</b>		
	G1320	G3361		G1411		

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