

The Gift of Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues

These two gifts of the Spirit are inseparable; therefore, we will study them together. Neither is to used without the other.

I Corinthians 14:27 - 28 NLT No more than two or three should speak in tongues. They must speak one at a time, and someone MUST interpret what they say. But if no one is present who can interpret, they must be silent in your church meeting, and speak in tongues to God privately.

Before we study the gift of tongues, we should make the distinction between the Gift and the Sign of speaking in tongues.

The Gift of Tongues:

- 1. Only one may speak at one time.***
- 2. No more than three should speak at one meeting***
- 3. This tongue must be interpreted***

Again, in I Corinthians 14:27 - 28 and I Corinthians 12:30 NLT Do we all have the gift of healing? Do we all have the ability to speak in tongues? Do we all have the ability to interpret tongues? Of course not!

The Sign of Tongues:

- 1. All may speak at the same time.***
- 2. All may speak at one meeting.***
- 3. This tongue requires no interpretation***

This gift, or sign of tongues, is talking of your prayer language, which you receive with the filling, or baptism, of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps you pray and worship God from your inner most being. > > >

Romans 8:26 NLT And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.

Acts 2:4 NLT And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in tongues as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.

Acts 10:46 NLT For they heard them speaking in other tongues and praising God. Acts 19:6 - 7 Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied.

- 1. What is this "Gift of Tongues and the Gift of Interpretation of tongues?"***

First of all, they are “gifts” from God. We do not earn them, we simply receive them.

Other tongues or languages are spoken by the person who is being used by the Spirit. This language will probably be unknown by anyone present; however, it may be “other” tongues, or one of the known languages of the earth, and someone present may understand what is being said without it being interpreted. The language used will, almost without exception, be the same “other tongues” as the person uses in their private prayer life. The interpretation of that tongue is just that, an “interpretation”. It is not a translation. The thought of the message is spoken to the one present for their edification.

I Corinthians 12:10 NLT He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy, He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God, or from another spirit. Still another is given the ability to speak in unknown languages (various tongues) while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said.

2. What good do these gifts do? What is their value to the church today?

We are in an imperfect state at the present time. It is while we are in this present condition of imperfection, that God has given us the gifts of the Spirit. Tongues and interpretation of tongues are two of these gifts, which we will have until we come into perfection.

I Corinthians 13:8 - 12 NLT Prophecy and speaking in tongues and special knowledge, (speaking of the gift of knowledge) will become useless, but love will last forever! Now our knowledge is partial and incomplete, and even the gift of prophecy reveals only part of the whole picture. > > >

But when the time of perfection comes, these partial things will become useless. When I was a child, I spoke and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things. Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we see everything with perfect clarity. (Face to face) All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.

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The gift of tongues, by itself, would be of no profit to the church. However, when the gift of interpretation of tongues is used with it, they perform essentially the same service as prophecy. The church is built up and strengthened. Please read I Corinthians 14:5 – 13

3. How can one be used in these gifts?

To seek after the best gifts should be the desire of our hearts. We should become so zealous to be used in these gifts to the point of covetousness. We should be craving for possession.

I Corinthians 12: 28 -31 NLT Here are some of the parts God has appointed for the church: First are apostles, second prophets, third are teachers, then those who do miracles, those who have the gift of healing, those who can help others, those who have the gift of leadership, those who speak in unknown languages.

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Are we all apostles? Are we all prophets? Are we all teachers? Do we all have the power to do miracles? Do we all have the gift of healing? Do we all have the ability to speak in unknown languages? Do we all have the ability to interpret unknown languages? Of course not! So, you should earnestly desire the most helpful gifts.

I Corinthians 14: NLT Let love be your highest goal! But you should also desire the special abilities the Spirit gives - especially the ability to prophesy.

Three times the Greek word “zeloo” is used concerning spiritual gifts. You will find it in I Corinthians 12:31, 14:1 & 14:39. It means to earnestly covet, desire and have a warm feeling for, and to be zealous. You might want to read these in the NKJV or even the KJV.

I Corinthians 14:12 - 13 NLT And the same is true for you. Since you are so eager to have the special abilities the Spirit gives, seek those that will strengthen the whole church. So, anyone that speaks in tongues, should pray also for the ability to interpret what has been said.

4. How should these gifts be used? What is the regulation? Who does the regulating?

I Corinthians 14:26 NLT Well brothers and sisters, let's summarize. When you meet together, one will sing, another will teach, another will tell of some special revelation God has given, one will speak in tongues, and another will interpret what is said. But everything that is done, must strengthen all of you.

The regulation is primarily done by the one who is used, and the one who is in charge of the meeting.

Again, in I Corinthians 14:27 - 28 NLT No more than two or three should speak in tongues. They must speak one at a time, and someone MUST interpret what they say. But if no one is present who can interpret, they must be silent in your church meeting, and speak in tongues to God privately.

There should be no more than three tongues and interpretations during one meeting. The point is not to monopolize the meeting with only part of the total ministry of the body.

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Speaking from experience, when the Spirit moves you to give a message to the body in tongues, the awesomeness of the responsibility of speaking “Thus saith the Lord” is almost overwhelming. You will anticipate the coming interpretation even more than the rest of the body, to validate your message. It is an awesome and humbling experience to think that the Lord is using you.

Contrary to what many believe, God didn't recall or revoke or rescind any of the Gifts He gave to man when Jesus ascended to His heavenly throne. It is only through disbelief in the fact that God is alive and working here on earth through those that do believe.

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January 2021.***