

## The 4 Purposes of Tongues #4: The Gift of Tongues

### Scriptures Used

1 Cor 12:1-11

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:

2 You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led.

3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,

9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,

10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

1 Cor 12:28-31

28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

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

30 Do all have gifts of healings? **Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?**

31 But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

1 Cor 13

1 Cor 14:1-24

14:1 Prophecy and Tongues Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.

2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.

3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

5 I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.

6 Tongues Must Be Interpreted But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching?

7 Even things without life, whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is piped or played?

8 For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle?

9 So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance.

11 Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to him who speaks, and he who speaks will be a foreigner to me.

12 Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel.

13 Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.

14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.

15 What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.

16 Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say?

17 For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified.

18 I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all;

19 yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

20 Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.

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.

22 Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.

23 Therefore if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those who are uninformed or unbelievers, will they not say that you are out of your mind?

24 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all.

25 And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.

26 Order in Church Meetings How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret.

28 But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God.

"These guidelines apply when someone speaks to the church in tongues. If nobody interprets the words, the speaker should not continue on and on. Instead, he should speak to himself and to God.

Either the tongue is for his benefit alone, or else someone whom God wishes to use for the interpretation has not fully yielded to Him. In either case, continued speaking of tongues in public will not accomplish God's intended purpose. In short, when a speaker has the attention of the church, he should speak in tongues only when there is an interpretation. Some argue from this passage that no one should ever speak in tongues in a church service without an interpretation, not even when everyone praises God or prays together. But in those times, everyone speaks for his own personal benefit, just as if he were alone. No one tries to capture the attention of the entire congregation, but everyone seeks personal edification, and thus speaking in tongues without interpretation is appropriate in this case. Verse 28 says as much: even in the congregation it is appropriate to speak in tongues without interpretation as a means of individual communication with God." –David K. Bernard, Spiritual Gifts

29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge.

30 But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent.

- 31 For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.  
32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.  
33 For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

“I Corinthians 14 provides guidelines for the proper use of the gifts of tongues, interpretation, and prophecy in public worship.

While the true exercise of these gifts is of God, we should not claim infallibility for them. Each listener should judge whether a message is indeed of God, in part or in full, and how it applies to him personally. (See I Corinthians 14:29)

It is possible for the core message to be of God but for the human messenger to add his own fallible thoughts out of ignorance, excessive zeal, or pride. Some people become so proud of a vocal utterance that they assume all their thoughts and feelings at the time must be from the Lord.

It is also possible for an utterance to be completely fleshly or even demonic.” -Bernard

1 Cor 14:34-40

34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

36 What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

KJV