

# UNDERSTANDING SPIRITUAL GIFTS Part 2

## **Acts 2:1–2, 4**

***1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.***

There were several signs that accompanied the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost (rushing mighty wind, cloven tongues of fire, speaking with tongues). However, only ONE of these signs—speaking with tongues—was repeated when people were baptized with the Spirit following Pentecost.

## **Acts 10:44–46**

***44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,***

## **Acts 19:6**

***6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.***

Why is speaking with tongues the one gift we see repeated whenever believers received the Holy Spirit? The reason I ask this is because when you talk about spiritual gifts or receiving the Holy Spirit, the one question that is always asked is, “Is everyone given the gift of tongues?” OR, “Does everyone speak with tongues when they receive the Spirit?”

## **1 Corinthians 12:30**

***30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?***

The answer to Paul’s question is obviously “No. All do not speak with tongues.” However, we have to understand that Paul is speaking here about the “gift” of tongues that is given to men to address the church!

## **1 Corinthians 14:26–27**

***26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. 27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.***

Not all 'tongues' is spoken to MEN. Sometimes we speak in tongues to GOD!

**1 Corinthians 14:2**

***2 For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.***

Again, this ability to speak in tongues to God seems to be a gift that is given to EVERYONE who is filled with the Spirit!

Now, the question is WHY? Why is speaking with tongues the one manifestation of the Spirit that is associated with receiving the Spirit? The answer is TWOFOLD.

1. First, the reason tongues is associated with receiving the Spirit is because speaking with tongues is the one gift that benefits the *user*.

**1 Corinthians 12:7 NLT**

***7 A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.***

Notice, most spiritual gifts are given to "help" or benefit OTHERS. However, the ability to speak with tongues is the one gift that benefits the USER.

**1 Corinthians 14:4**

***4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.***

2. Second, the reason tongues is associated with receiving the Spirit is because speaking with tongues is simplest way to introduce people to spiritual gifts.

In order to operate in a spiritual gift a person must know how to *cooperate with the Spirit of God*. Moreover, the simplest way to teach a person how to cooperate with the Spirit is through tongues!

**Acts 2:4**

***4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.***

This verse reveals details about tongues that no other passage in the New Testament includes. For example, we are not simply told that the disciples "spoke with tongues." We are told that they spoke with tongues AS THE SPIRIT GAVE THEM UTTERANCE. This means that the disciples cooperated with the Holy Spirit when they spoke with tongues! Also, the disciples had to TRUST that as they began to speak the Holy Spirit would put the words or the utterance in their mouth!

Thus, when a person speaks with other tongues they are learning how to trust AND how to cooperate with the Spirit. And, this kind of *learning* is one of the reasons why we operate in spiritual gifts.

**1 Corinthians 14:31**

***31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.***

Notice, prophesying (or operating in spiritual gifts) is intended to produce two things: 1) comfort (aid) to others, and 2) learning (education) to the user. What kind of learning is produced when we operate in spiritual gifts? Learning how to cooperate with the Spirit, of course!

The more we operate in spiritual gifts the more we learn how to cooperate with the Spirit of God. The reason most believers struggle with cooperating with the Spirit is because they have no little to no experience operating in spiritual gifts!

This is the value of Pentecost. The value of Pentecost was NOT the “rushing mighty wind,” nor the “cloven tongues of fire”. The value of Pentecost is being introduced to a life of cooperating with the Spirit. And this introduction is when they spoke with tongues, because this single act gave them the best introduction into knowing how to cooperate with the Spirit of God!

In the same way, the value of ‘pentecostal’ experiences today isn’t “running around the walls,” nor is it “feeling goosebumps down our spine.” The value of ‘pentecostal’ experiences today is when they introduce us to spiritual things. We are benefited by pentecostal experiences when they teach us how to cooperate with the Spirit of God. And I submit to you that one of the simplest ways to learn this is when we speak with other tongues.