

The next gifts we're going to take a look at are the gift of tongues and the interpretation of tongues.

1 Cor 12:10

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.

If you have the gift of tongues, don't look down on those who don't have the gift.

Don't base your salvation on whether or not you have the gift.

The gift of tongues is a language, a form of communication directed to God.

1 Cor 14:2 2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God,

Then in verse 14 of the same chapter Paul writes, For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. (I don't know what I said).

The gift of tongues requires the gift of interpretation to unravel its meaning and to edify the church.

1 Cor 14:5

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.

Now, the very first time the gift of tongues is promised is in the book of Mark:

Mark 16:17

17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;

The verse is in the aorist tense which means that

- He was speaking to those that already believed

In Corinth we know that some of the Corinthians were exercising the gift of tongues.

However,

- the Corinthians were drawing attention to themselves
- thus doing things outside of love.

That's why Paul had to address the church on this issue.

Since some in the church had this lack of concern for others in the church, and were failing in the area of love for the brethren, Paul opens chapter 13 by telling them:

1 Cor 13:1

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

So, is speaking in tongues paramount in Paul's list of gifts?

1 Cor 12:8-11

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.

Take note of where the gift of tongues is on the list, it's 8th followed by the interpretation of tongues.

1 Cor 12:28

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.

Notice again, this gift of tongues is last on the list. The gift is important, but again, don't base your salvation on it.

Some may say, if you don't speak in tongues you're not filled with the Holy Spirit. They typically point to acts 2 the day of Pentecost which says 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

People refer to Cornelius, the first Gentile convert.

While Peter was still speaking

- the Holy Spirit fell upon those who heard the word
- and they began to speak in tongues and magnified God.

This incident involving Cornelius occurred 8 years after Pentecost.

- There is no recorded manifestation of this gift
- between Pentecost and the time when Peter met Cornelius.

In acts 19 Paul goes to Ephesus and 2 he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

Paul then preaches the gospel to them,

- they get baptized
- hands are laid on them
- they began to speak in tongues
- and prophesied.

So some conclude,

- that because they spoke in tongues in this case,
- then it must be so in every case.

Well, that's not necessarily the case. There were other instances when people were filled with the Holy Spirit. They didn't always speak in tongues after the filling of the Holy Spirit.

31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

This doesn't mean when someone is filled with the Holy Spirit the place they're in will be shaken!

What about Paul, when he traveled to Damascus to persecute Christians and he eyesight was restored, he didn't speak in tongues then.

Or Acts 13, the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. There is not mention of them speaking in tongues.

Is speaking in tongues an important gift? Yes, of course it is. Is it the most important, No!

Now, it would seem to some that there is a contradiction between Acts 2 and 1 Cor 12 & 14.

Acts 2 speaks of the day of Pentecost

- when they were all filled with the Holy Spirit
- and each heard one another in his own language.

There was no interpreter.

But in 1 Cor 12 & 14 Paul says that unless there is an interpreter no one is going to understand. So it would seem like a contradiction.

Acts 2 wasn't a church meeting, people that understood were not believers. These were Jewish people coming from all over the world for Jewish Passover, the feast of unleavened bread then Pentecost.

Acts 2:1-4

1 When the Day of Pentecost had 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 the whole house where they were sitting.

When the OT speaks of rushing wind it often refers to the “Spirit of God.” Here in Acts 2:2 it symbolizes the natural phenomenon of the Holy Spirit’s outpouring.

3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled (all 120 of them, including Mary the mother of Jesus, the apostles,) with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The Holy Spirit didn’t speak thru them, He gave them utterance.

How do you reconcile Acts 2 and 1 Cor 12 & 14?

Pentecost was a unique time,

- it was a temporary speaking of foreign languages,
- never repeated again.
- It was the birth of the church.

The Holy Spirit came upon them and was getting the attention of foreigners.

Neither in Acts nor in Corinthians is the gift of speaking in tongues the preaching of the gospel.

- You don’t go to a foreign country and give them the gospel in their language if you don’t speak the language.

The basic difference between Acts and Corinthians is

- that one requires a human interpreter and the other does not.
- Acts 2 was getting the attention of outsiders and
- 1 Cor 12 & 14 was used for personal edification.

In acts 2 there were human languages, many could understand them.

In 1st Cor Paul distinguishes between tongues and languages.

What is the purpose of tongues:

1) Private devotion

2) For effective intercession. 1 Cor 14:14

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

Rom 8:26

26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

A third reason for the purpose of tongues is:

3) Personal edification: 1 Cor 14:4

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

Paul says in verse 11,

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

The Lord who ultimately gives to each whichever gifts He wishes to give.

1 Cor 12:12-31

Paul is wanting to help the Corinthians understand the importance of unification and he uses the human body as comparison.

Rom 12:4-5

4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

Eph 2:18

16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross,

Eph 4:4

4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;

Paul also uses "One body" in a negative sense in 1 Cor 6:16

16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh."

When we think of the physical body,

- the human anatomy is a great testimony to God.

Ps 139:14

14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Marvelous are Your works,
And that my soul knows very well.

The Lord created mankind unlike any other creature he created.

When the church body is working as it should work, it's amazing.

Col 1:18 tells us that And He (Jesus) is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

If Christ is not the head of the body then the church is like, for lack of a better term like a chicken with his head cut off.

Eph 4:15-16 Jesus the head:

15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

1 Cor 12:12

12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free – and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

This is not speaking of water baptism.

Christians should be baptized. Mark 1:5 all of Judea and Jerusalem were baptized in the Jordan river and confessed their sins.

Now, baptism doesn't save us, we do it to identify with Christ. It's an act of obedience.

But Paul is not referring to water baptism

- nor is he referring to the baptism of the Holy Spirit where Jesus does the baptizing.

He's talking about the baptizing into the body of Christ.

What does that mean?

- When a person surrenders his life to Christ, at that point he becomes part of the body of Christ.

14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.

Collectively we make up the body of Christ

We all play an important role in the body of Christ.

15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I

am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling?

18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. 19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be?

You may feel insignificant:

Be who the Lord wants you to be in the body:

You're the Lord's favorite!

The Corinthian church wanted to be independent instead of being part of the body.

That's a dangerous place to be:

20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

The church began to think that they didn't need the others.

- We can do this on our own! (Dangerous!)

Eccl 4:9-10

9 Two are better than one,
Because they have a good reward for their labor.
10 For if they fall, one will lift up his companion.
But woe to him who is alone when he falls,
For he has no one to help him up.

Next, Paul has to deal with another issue in the church and that was esteeming one gift over another.

22 No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. 23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, 24 but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it,

All body parts are important:

What are some of the vital ministries that we don't often see unless we're involved.

Prayer:

Teachers:

Cleaning Crew:

Many more:

Many work for the Lord behind the scene: Three times in Matthew 6 Jesus says that the Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Perhaps you've been burned in Ministry:

Things happen in our life that cause us to stop doing the things the Lord called us to.

- We get tired,
- maybe bored,
- discouraged,
- get our feelings hurt,

then before you know it, you're not being used anymore.

- This just doesn't seem like fun anymore.

Priorities in our life change,

- we have children in sports so we don't go to church.
- We have other things going on in life so we stop going to church.

Heb 10:23-25

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works; 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

We are entering a time when we need each other more than ever.

- And I'm not necessarily speaking of our physical needs in terms of provision,
- I'm speaking of our spiritual needs.