

Exploring the Gifts of the Spirit - Part 3

Tongues, Interpretation of Tongues, and Prophecy

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Good morning. We are in our third message in our message series called “Exploring the Gifts of the Spirit”. We have pulled a list given to us by the Apostol Paul from 1 Corinthians 12. These 9 gifts have been broken down by many scholars into 3 sections.

Paul’s desire is that we would “not be uninformed;” that’s how he starts the chapter of how these spiritual gifts are to operate in the church. But also, not just in the church but in your living room, in your marriage, and in your parenting.

Gifts of Revelation

- **Word of Knowledge**
- **Word of Wisdom**
- **Discerning of Spirit**

Gifts of Power

- **Faith**
- **Healings**
- **Miracles**

Gifts of Inspiration

- **Tongues**
- **interpretation of Tongues**
- **Prophecy**

Today we are going to be focusing our time on the Gifts of inspiration also known as the vocal gifts.

I’d like to acknowledge the commentary from Enduring Word was really helpful and easy to understand if you would like to go a little bit deeper into this chapter.

Enduringword.com

Also “The gifts of the Spirit” by Derek Prince

“The Gifts of the Spirit” by Derek Prince

Before we do this, I would like to tell a story (keys)

God knows where the keys are

Here we have Paul writing in 1 Corinthians to the Corinthian church, these would have been small house churches. Paul is attempting to give some instruction to them about the use of gift in their gatherings. In chapters 12, 13, and 14 it's basically Paul telling these churches to settle down. They are speaking in tongues like crazy, they are talking over each other. People are interrupting the service to ask questions. Paul says to stop thinking like little children. The gifts of the Spirit are about honoring Christ, loving one another, encouraging one another.

In fact, he ends this chapter by saying,

1 Corinthians 14

⁴⁰ But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

1 Corinthians 14

1 Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy.

2 For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit.

3 But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort.

4 Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church.

5 I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.

In these first 5 verses Paul gives us almost everything we need to know about speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, and Prophecies. Because in the scripture he goes back and forth talking about the two topics, so I'd like to isolate the verses that highlight one theme from the other. Let me show you what I mean.

1 Corinthians 14 (Tongues)

2 For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit.

4 Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves,

5 I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.

1 Corinthians 14 (Prophecy)

1 Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy.

3 But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort.

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5 I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.

So let's start with tongues and interpretation of tongues

1 Corinthians 14 (Tongues)

2 For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit.

Paul is making the obvious point that when a person is speaking in tongues no one can understand them. They are mysteries by the Spirit. Tongues started in the book of acts 2:4

Acts 2:4

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

Mark 16:17

"And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues."

Acts 10:46

For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared.

Acts 19:6

And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.

so tongues is a thing,

⁶ Now, brothers and sisters, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction? ⁷ Even in the case of lifeless things that make sounds, such as the pipe or harp, how will anyone know what tune is being played unless there is a distinction in the notes? ⁸ Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle? ⁹ So it is with you. Unless you speak intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air. ¹⁰ Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning. ¹¹ If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a

foreigner to the speaker, and the speaker is a foreigner to me. ¹² So it is with you. Since you are eager for gifts of the Spirit, try to excel in those that build up the church.

So what does speaking in tongues sound like? I don't know. I think it sounds a little different for each of us. All I know is that when I was baptized with the Holy Spirit I started speaking in tongues and it has been a part of my prayer and worship life ever since.

4 Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves,

There is a private personal component to tongues, in fact, I think, that primarily, with one exception, praying in tongues is a private thing, many scholars have said that praying in tongues is the practice of praying perfect prayers.

Romans 8:26-27

²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. ²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

I encourage you along with Paul to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit and ask for a prayer language.

5 I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.

Paul would like everyone to speak in tongues

Unless someone interprets, it is the major point here. Paul here makes a distinction between the private you of tongues and the public or corporate use of tongues. That if someone does speak out and publicly say something in tongues it's useless unless there is an interpretation. In fact, he says if there is no interpretation so everyone can understand and be edified that people shouldn't speak.

1 Corinthians 14 (prophecy)

1 Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy.

Paul is clearly teaching that the most important thing is that we would use these vocal gifts to lovingly edify one another. And in this regard prophecy is king because it always accomplishes that end.

3 But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort.

Strengthening is edification or “building up.” It is a construction term and speaks of our being “built up” in the Lord. A word of prophecy will *build someone up*, not tear him or her down.

Encouragement or exhortation. It is like the speech from the coach in the locker room before the big game, rallying the team to go out and perform as they were trained to perform. A word of prophecy will *encourage* someone, not discourage him or her.

Comfort has the idea of not only consoling, but also *strengthening*. It doesn’t just cry with someone hurting, it puts its arms around them and strengthens them to carry the load. A word of prophecy will *strengthen*, not weaken someone.

4 the one who prophesies edifies the church.

5 I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.

Acts 2:4

⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Mark 16:17

17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;

Close

Interested in leading a small group