

Gifts of The Spirit

Class 6 - Vocal Gifts Pt 2

Tongues Defined: A supernatural utterance, inspired by God, in an unknown tongue.

Interpretation of Tongues Defined: interpretation is the supernatural giving forth of the meaning of what was spoken in tongues. It is interpretation, not translation. Its purpose is to make the supernatural utterance understandable so that the congregation can be edified.

The Gift of Tongues

I Corinthians 14:6-12 NKJV “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.***”

1. Paul is referencing the public ministry of tongues. Notice the phraseology... “*If I come to you speaking with tongues*”.
2. The gift of tongues on its own does not profit those that hear unless there is also an interpretation.

So we see now that tongues on their own do not bring a profit to those that hear them. Let's now look at the context in which tongues should be used in regard to Interpretation and order in the church.

The Gift of Interpretation with Tongues

I Corinthians 14:13-19 NKJV “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.***”

1. We are encouraged to pray for interpretation particularly if a tongue is given in a public setting. Why? That others may understand what is being said.
2. Then, Paul goes into explaining what Tongues are, Praying out of our spirits. This is not an intellectual practice. If Paul didn't always know what he was praying then we should expect not to know all the time either.
3. We finally get down to the final section, "*I would rather speak five words with my understanding*"... Why? Because tongues without interpretation only benefit the speaker and not the congregation. This is particularly referencing during the time of teaching. During a prayer service we aren't necessarily looking to edify each other but seek the Lord so its okay and encouraged to pray in tongues in that setting.

Private Tongues vs. the Public Gift Summarized

***Private devotional tongues** are primarily directed toward God. Paul says the person speaking in a tongue "speaketh not unto men, but unto God" and that his understanding may remain unfruitful. Hagin therefore teaches that your personal prayer language does **not** have to be interpreted every time you pray.*

***The public gift of tongues**, however, is a supernatural utterance given in an assembly that requires interpretation so the congregation can receive edification.*

Tongues + Interpretation = The Equivalent of Prophecy

I Corinthians 14:5 NKJV "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."

1. Tongues with Interpretation accomplish the same thing that prophecy does which is why prophecy is greater. Why? It stands alone.

Interpretation Is Supernatural — Not Something You Figure Out

When a public tongue is spoken most of the time the hearers **do not understand the language being spoken** which is why an interpretation is necessary.

1. On a side note it is entirely possible for individuals to hear a public tongue and understand it in a language that they know personally
 - a. **Acts 2:11-12 NKJV** "Cretans and Arabs—**we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.**" So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?"
 - i. Actually this gives us a pretty clear look at what the interpretation of the tongues were. The wonderful works of God.

*Interpretation is not the product of intellectual analysis. The Spirit operates through the believer rather than the person mentally determining what the tongue means. Interpretation may come in different ways. Someone might receive **words**, while another may receive something resembling a **picture or vision** that they then describe under inspiration.*

Howard Carter described this from his own experience...

1. He would sometimes receive a vivid picture and simply describe what he saw. Later, words would come. Eventually he reached a place where sometimes, when the tongue finished, he had essentially **nothing consciously in his mind and had to begin in faith.**

How to yield to the Spirit in Tongues & Interpretation

1. **Desire the gifts.**
 - a. Don't approach the gifts passively with the attitude, "*If God wants to completely overwhelm me, He can.*" Scripture tells believers to desire spiritual manifestations while pursuing love.
2. **Learn the difference between your prayer language and a public utterance.**
 - a. You can pray in tongues personally without waiting for interpretation. But if you sense an utterance rising within you that is intended for the congregation, recognize that you are moving into a different operation of tongues.
3. **Recognize the inward prompting without waiting to be forced.**
 - a. The Holy Spirit does not normally seize control of your mouth. There may be an inward urging, heightened awareness, words or syllables rising within your spirit, or a strong sense that an utterance should be given. You still have to cooperate.
4. **After the tongue, wait for interpretation.**
 - a. Don't immediately fill the silence because it feels uncomfortable. Someone else may receive the interpretation. The one who gave the tongue may also interpret—1 Corinthians 14:13 specifically says the speaker should pray that he may interpret.
5. **If you sense the interpretation, don't demand the entire message before beginning.**
 - a. The interpreter may initially receive only a word or two and must give those words **by faith**, after which more comes. The vocal gifts operate by faith and that the believer begins giving what has been received.
6. **Speak what you receive—don't manufacture what comes next.**
 - a. If you receive, "*My people, do not be afraid...*" begin there. Don't mentally compose the next paragraph. Give what comes, and remain sensitive for what follows.
7. **Stop when the inspiration stops.**
 - a. You don't have to make an interpretation impressive, long, poetic, loud, or dramatic. When words come, speak them.
8. **Judge everything by Scripture and its fruit.**

- a. A genuine manifestation will not contradict Scripture, glorify the vessel, produce disorder for disorder's sake, or become a means of controlling people. The fundamental New Testament test in this context is: **Did it edify the church?**