

## ***Study on the Holy Spirit***

### **Tongues/Interpretation of Tongues**

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This week's study is on the gift of Tongues, which seems to be a controversial subject in some churches. There are different views on what this gift is or what it represents. Even when I did the original teaching in a home group, I was met with a lot of questions before I could even get into the study. I had to assure them that all their questions would be answered in the study. If there is a question you have that is not answered here, please send me an E-mail with your question and I will let you know what the bible says.

You may be saying, *"Oh no, what does this guy have to say about it? I know what people say about it, and even what my friends and my church believes about it."*

I am not here to prove anyone wrong or right, I'm just here to teach you what the Bible says about it. You can reach your own conclusions, but make sure your belief is based on the bible, and not on what people say.

Let's start out in:

- ***1 Cor 12:10-11 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. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.***

Let's look at verse 11 again, that says, *"the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills"* not as man wills.

Some churches teach that when you are baptized with the Holy Spirit, you must speak in tongues. If you don't, they think there is something wrong with you, or you're not saved. But if the Holy Spirit distributes as **He wills**, that means that He gives the gifts as He sees fit for each believer.

- ***1 Cor 12:30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?***

Not all have the gift of teaching, or healing, or giving, just as all do not have the gift of tongues. If all were to have the gift of tongues it would have been mentioned separately and as a special gift given to all believers and not together with the list of other gifts. Even Paul says:

- ***1 Cor 14:5 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.***

If Paul said that he wished that all spoke in tongues, that would mean that all do NOT speak in tongues.

Let's think about what Paul said in **1 Cor 14:5** again. Go back and read it.

If you read it correctly, Paul is saying that it's a good thing to speak in tongues, but even better to prophesy.

Now if you think about it, Paul who taught the way to eternal life does not mention that speaking in tongues as part of the criteria for salvation, or even proof of your salvation. Nor does he say that it's proof of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

If tongues were part of salvation, or even proof of salvation or the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, don't you think Paul would have said so? He wouldn't leave anything out that would get you into heaven.

When you share Jesus with someone, don't you tell him or her all there is to know about salvation? You don't give people only part of the truth, by saying to believe in Jesus. No, you tell them it's more than believing, but accepting Jesus as the lamb whom was slain for our sins. Not just a washing, but also a total cleansing. Accepting Jesus' death as total payment on the cross for us, and to have a relationship with Him and that dreaded R word, repenting from their sins.

Just as you share all about salvation to others, so does Paul.

I may offend some with this teaching because I know, as did Paul, that this is a controversial subject. But hang in there and let's look at what the Bible says about the gift of tongues.

***Acts 2:1-14 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 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?" Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine." But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.***

You may be familiar with this story, and some use it as evidence that all should speak in tongues.

But look at the effect this had on non-believers, it caused them to think that they were drunk or they just didn't know what was going on.

But it also gave opportunity for the gospel to be preached by Peter (see verses 14-42)

And the results of this teaching is,

- **Acts 2:41** *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.*

Once again we see that the effect of the gift was to minister to others.

But you may say, "wait a minute, you told us that the gift of tongues was for the user of the gift only, that it wasn't for the ministry of others."

In most cases this is correct, but not in this case.

Next week we will look at when and where the gift should be used.

- **Mark 16:15-18** *And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."*

Once again verse 17 is used to say that all should speak in tongues. But speaking in a new tongue would be like the experience that I had when I accepted Jesus.

I used to cuss all the time. Every other word was profanity. But when I accepted Jesus, He gave me a new tongue with no longer cussing, but praising God, and that's what a new tongue is here, no longer praising the world or constant cursing, but praising God.

Let's look at the definition of tongues from Vine's Dictionary: "*The supernatural gift of speaking in another language without its having been learnt;*"

And so throughout the New Testament when you read tongues, it usually means speaking in another language, one you don't already know that is supernaturally given by the Lord. And the interpretation of tongues is being able to understand another language, one you don't already know that is supernaturally given by the Lord.

Speaking praises to the Lord was a foreign way of speaking for me, before I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior. But when I accepted Him, He gave me a new language, a language of praise and adoration to Him. He took this dirty, filthy mouth and filled it full of praise, so much so that I am a worshipper musically writing and singing praise songs to Him.

But why would we need to speak another language?

- **1 Cor 14:2** *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.*

In the spirit we speak mysteries. We are speaking by the Spirit to God. And why?

- **Isaiah 64:6** *But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*

“*All our righteousnesses are like filthy rags*” that pretty much sums it up. Our words are unclean because we don’t always speak in the spirit.

James tells us about this.

- **James 3:8-12** *But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.*

What does it mean to speak in the spirit?

- **Romans 8:26-27** *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. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*

Have you ever been praying, and there are times when you just don’t know what to say. The thought of God is so awesome to you that you are speechless. You just kneel there and stutter as you try to get the words out to praise the Father, but nothing comes out. So you just sigh, look up to heaven and sigh again.

Maybe you are overcome with a problem, or you’re just weighed down by a sin that you can’t seem to speak to God, once again you just sigh.

Do you know what? God says: I hear you, I understand that I am God and you are doing your best to worship me, and I know exactly what you are trying to say, because the Holy Spirit is interceding on your behalf. Your spirit and Mine have come together to talk.

You may not understand what you are saying, but God does.

It’s like Daniel when he was praying and he heard from the Lord

- **Dan 10:15-19** *When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. And suddenly, one having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, "My lord, because of the vision my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor*

*is any breath left in me." Then again, the one having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. And he said, "O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!" So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me."*

Daniel was praying and seeking the Lord and when he got his answer. It was in such an awesome way, that he couldn't even look up, and he became speechless.

Sometimes in the morning driving to work or looking out the window, I see the awesomeness of God in His creation. So much so that I become speechless or so overcome I want to cry out with joy.

Or when I am hearing the word of God being taught, and the Holy Spirit speaks to me about salvation and others being saved, or the return of Jesus, I become overwhelmed, speechless; I just don't have the words to describe GOD in all His awesomeness!

So one form of speaking in tongues is a groaning or sighing.

Another is speaking in another language as we saw in

- ***Act 2:4&7-8 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.***
- ***Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? "***

I count at least 16 languages being spoken here in Acts chapter 2, how where they spoken? Were they all speaking in a different language?

I don't know. But I can give you what I think based on what I read.

Remember a few weeks ago that I did the example with all saying their birth date.

If you don't remember, try it now by having a bunch of people together, and at one time with all in unison saying their date of birth.

You will hear all English, although it's confusing.

Now just think if someone came in at that moment, what would they say? "*What have you all been drinking?*"

We would have said, "*We haven't been drinking, it's the Holy Spirit teaching us or speaking to us!*"

So I think it was the same here. They heard all this commotion and everyone speaking at one time and thought they were drunk, but they also wondered, how could they be drunk and speaking of such the wonderful works of GOD?

And as they thought about it more, they discovered that they were not only all talking at the same time, and praising GOD, but they all heard them speak in their own language.

God created the ear as well as the hearing. God created the mouth as well as the speaking.

God can give you a different language to speak without even thinking about it.

What happen that day? God did it!

How He did it, I don't know. Just as I don't know how He could send His only Son, Jesus to suffer and die for me. But I believe it, just as I believe that God did a miracle on the day of Pentecost.

I do have the gift of tongues. What language do I speak? I don't know, God knows.  
How do I know I have the gift and I'm not just babbling?  
God's Spirit speaks to my spirit and assures me.  
Just like the Spirit assures me I am going to be with Jesus in heaven someday.

I remember when we (my sisters, brother-in-law and myself) were younger in the Lord; we went to one of those Holy Spirit teachings, done by a traveling minister. My older sister went up to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, so the guy prayed for her. Then he told her to just start babbling. And it sounded like babbling. Even when we got together the next week, she said that she was babbling. Was she speaking in tongues? NO, she was babbling. Don't let man try to force one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit on you. Let the Holy Spirit give as HE WILLS!

Next week we will look at **1 Cor 14**, on how and when to use the gift.  
So read it this week and study it for yourself to be prepared for next week.