

Gift of Tongues & Interpretation

Characteristics of the Gift of Tongues

- Manifests as different kinds/‘species’: human, angelic(?), divine
 - Paul’s context (for the local church): supernaturally inspired divine language meant for prayer, praise and thanksgiving
- Benefits the church corporately only if there is an interpretation
 - ...otherwise, benefit is retained individually. (Speaker urged to remain quiet.)

Purpose/Outcome of the Gift of Tongues

- Prayer/communication with God that He understands, and not necessarily the speaker. (1 Cor. 14:2,14–15)
- A *praise language*, enabling the speaker to engage in unique worship of God (1 Cor. 14:15)
- An expression of *thanksgiving* to God (1 Cor. 14:17)

"For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit."

“Now I want you all to speak in tongues...”

“I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another.”

1 Corinthians 12:7–11 (ESV)

“To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (8)For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, (9)to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, (10)to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. (11)All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as He wills.”

“And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. (29) Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? (30) Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?”

1 Corinthians 12:28–30 (NASB95)

“And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. (29)All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? (30)All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?”

“For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea”

1 Corinthians 11:3 (ESV)

“But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.”

1 Corinthians 12:1 (ESV)

“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.”

“If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds?”

1 Corinthians 12:8-10 (ESV)

“For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, (9) to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, (10) to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.”

“When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.”

Characteristics of the Gift of Interpretation of Tongues

- Can be possessed by anyone as the Spirit wills
- Not the same as interpreting dreams/visions
- Not simply translating of a foreign (known) language
- Spirit-empowered ability to understand and communicate an unintelligible public utterance of tongues, for the benefit of the church

Characteristics of the Gift of Interpretation of Tongues

- More than 1 interpreter/interpretation possible
- Subject to judgment (like prophecy)
- God-focused: prayer, praise, gratitude (?)