

HOLY SPIRIT POWER

December 16th, 2018 - Holy Spirit Power

Part 27 – The Gift of Interpretation of Tongues

One of the nine Gifts of the Holy Spirit from I Corinthians 12 is the Gift of Interpretation of Tongues. I'd like to bring back the scripture to mind that we taught on in Part 21, entitled 'Rest and Refreshing in the Holy Spirit', which says in **Isaiah 28:11-12**; *"For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people, to whom He said, "This is the rest with which you may cause the weary to rest," and, "This is the refreshing"; yet they would not hear."*

God by his Sovereignty and infinite knowledge, has chosen something that with our logical minds seems foolish, which is speaking in tongues. We know the Bible says that every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning according to James 1:17, and that all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him amen, according to II Corinthians 1:20. The Prophet Isaiah spoke by the Holy Spirit saying that, *'they would not hear'*. Absolutely and unequivocally everything that our Heavenly Father gives us is perfect and not to be second guessed, doubted or rejected. So in God's eyes, speaking in tongues is very normal and something he desires for the Christian.

The Gift of Interpretation of Tongues is different than the tongues we receive when we're baptized in the Holy Spirit; it's a gift that is given separately. **1 Corinthians 14:1-5** says this about Prophecy and Tongues; *"Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. 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. But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. 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."*

We see that Interpretation of Tongues is on the same scale as Prophecy. It's end result is equal. Verse 3 says; *"But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men."* It continues in verse 5 by saying; *"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."*

The word 'unless' is the key. The prophetic words and tongues that are to be interpreted are not of judgment, condemnation or to cause you to backslide, or to breed fear, doubt and unbelief or full of lies and deception. They are words of encouragement, to build you up and comfort you in your walk with Christ. If you hear then a word that is contrary to what the Apostle Paul says here, you can pretty well conclude that the interpretation of the tongues that were spoken were probably of the flesh. You have to rightly divide and discern the operation of the Holy Spirit in the church. The Apostle John also says in I John 4:1 to test the spirits.

This gift of interpretation of tongues needs to align itself with the Bible which edifies, exhorts and comforts you. We're not talking about the Word of Knowledge that reveals and bring to light things in the heart of man. A word of judgement and condemnation will not come to the body of Christ through this gift of tongues, but instead a word to build up your brother and sister in Christ in the faith. It will strengthen the church and not tear it down.

If a word comes that exposes sin, there is need to examine your heart then and repent, but the Holy Spirit has ways to expose sin which is usually not done publicly. He can send a brother or sister in Christ to you to

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minister and pray over you to lead you to repentance. According then to I Corinthians 14, this gift of interpretation of tongues is like that of prophecy, it's to edify, build up, encourage and comfort the church.

The gift of speaking in other tongues, notifies the church that the Holy Spirit is about to speak thru a person in the church who operates in the Gift of Interpreting Tongues. It's like an alarm that sounds notifying you that something is happening. So if you're in a meeting where someone's voice raises louder than the rest and they are speaking in tongues, you know that the Holy Spirit is about give an interpretation through someone whom He has gifted to interpret. This is a great demonstration of two gifts working together to deliver a word of the Holy Spirit for the edification of the Church.

We know though that there are times when the Holy Spirit speaks through leadership for rebuking the congregation but according to what we can see here, it won't be through prophecy or interpretation of tongues, but probably through the preaching of the word from the pulpit or one-on-one.

The Apostle Paul continues in **1 Corinthians 14:6-19** by saying that the Gift of Tongues must be interpreted; *“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? 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? For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle? 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. There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance. 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. Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the **edification of the church** that you seek to excel. Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. 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.** 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? For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified. I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all; 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.”*

We can see when there is praying or singing with the Spirit, which is tongues, in a voice that is louder than the rest, more pronounced or prominent than the rest gather there, there needs to be an interpretation of it. Why? So that the rest will know what the Holy Spirit is saying so they too can give thanks, be edified and comforted. It's really very simple and is not complicated at all. Paul was not at all discrediting the speaking in the Gift of Tongues in church, but clarifying that when it's done, there has to be interpretation, or not to speak at all.

In **1 Corinthians 14:26-33**, Paul makes it very clear that there needs to be order when this Gift of Interpretation of Tongues is manifesting. There must have been problems in the Corinthian church for him to lay out instruction so clearly than it could be understood by all. In their zeal to be used by the Holy Spirit in these gifts, they could have been like children jostling for the first position to get the first word in. Zeal is good, but there has to be order.

It says; *“How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. **Let all things be done for edification.** If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God. Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent. For you can all*

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prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.”

This is so clear. If there is no one in your church who has the gift of interpretation or you don't have this gift to interpret a tongue that you feel you need to give, you or others need to be silent. This must happen to dissuade or discourage confusion and disorder in church services. The Holy Spirit has ways He wants His gifts to operate. It's very simple.

If there are tongues which need interpretation, there are to be only two or three and the words are to be judged, or to bear witness that they are edifying, exhorting and comforting the church. Those judging are probably prophets themselves. Prophesying one by one shows that they are not stepping all over each other vying for position and rights. It shows humility and love in the operation of the gift.

Where it says that the '*spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets*', shows that you do have control over what you're saying. It is totally different from the demonic realm where the demon will overtake the psyche of a person and cause them to be out of control. As one operating under the power of the Holy Spirit with tongues and interpretation, even though you may be bursting inside to give a prophetic word in tongues, if you cannot interpret it or if there is no one in your meeting that can interpret it – then you have to be silent the Apostle Paul says.

Paul spent this particular chapter and other places in the New Testament, to encourage the use of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, NOT to discourage. As I said earlier, the believers in the Corinthian church were very zealous for the gifts to be in operation but they needed guidance and maturity as to how they were to operate, not as kids wanting to be in first place, vying for position and being disorderly.

Again, **1 Corinthians 14:27** says; *“If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret.”* So there may be two or three spoken tongues at the most, and each have one person interpreting what is being spoken, or a different interpreter for each tongue, because there may be a few in the meeting that are gifted with Interpretation of tongues, and so each will have their opportunity to use that gift.

The only conclusion for this type of order, is the limited time given in a service along with everything else that goes on in a church service; i.e. preaching, prayer, singing, altar ministry, etc. Plus, it may be that if there are five or ten tongues and interpretations, people will forget the majority of them. It would seem that this limited number will help the Christians remember what the Holy Spirit is saying.

God, who is infallible is speaking thru man who is fallible, therefore there needs to be instruction given to Christians regarding the operation of this gift, which makes sense in Paul's instruction. Prophecies are to be judged according **1 Corinthians 14:29**; *“Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge.”*

Because prophecies are the merging of the infallible God with fallible man, they are not all God or all man, but the gifts depend upon man for their operation. That's why prophecies need to be judged and must line up with the Bible, which is a more sure word of prophecy. If it's not in union and agreement with the Bible, it's of the flesh and if so, then the scripture I mentioned earlier in **I John 4:1** gives clarity; *“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”* False prophets, false doctrines and cults emerge if it does not line up with the Holy Scriptures.

Prophecies and Interpretation of Tongues do not promote new doctrines or revelations that are not already in the Bible. God will reveal himself in a revelatory word for direction for your life, but it will always line up with what's already in the Bible.

We summarize this by saying that the Interpretation of Tongues is given by the Holy Spirit, but he's using flesh and blood, minds, and bodies that have a physical tongue to speak with. He's operating through individuals who

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may or may not get it totally right the first time when the word is given but it doesn't mean you want to shut that person down. It's important to take the person aside and encourage them in their gift, not to control them where they end up walking in fear to step out, but to use what the Holy Spirit is giving them. If order and instruction are not given, and unchecked interpretation of tongues slide through when they don't line up with the Bible, then it's likely that the church will have problems. The Lord wants pastors and leaders to regulate what's happening in church, in a loving and caring way. Doing to others as you'd want done to you.

You're the one that has the physical tongue that the Holy Spirit wants to speak through. Just as you have the ability to talk or not to talk, to pray in tongues or not to, the same applies to the Gift of Tongues and Interpretation of those tongues. It's not like the demonic that possesses people where they're uncontrollably speaking. You have a will, and you must yield your will to the will of the Holy Spirit. This may sound redundant but it's to drive the point home and make it crystal clear.

This scripture shows that there are times to speak and times not to speak as the Holy Spirit gives the word, and that that the interpreter, regardless of knowing the interpretation, speaks when he is supposed to speak, that the Church may be edified.

Usually, but not always the interpretation coincides with the sermon being preached, and doesn't distract those in the service from what is being preached or about to be preached from the pulpit.

1 Corinthians 14:33 says; *“For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.”* The reason for order then as Paul was stating, is that God is not the author of confusion. If the tongues and prophecy in your church are not bringing peace and there is confusion, it's a clear indicator that the Lord isn't in it or it needs to be reigned in. It may be that the prophets or those speaking in tongues are speaking over each other, or that the words are not lining up with the Word of God, or is contrary to sound doctrine. The Holy Spirit is yes and amen. He's not double minded and unstable, but is peaceable.

1 Corinthians 14:39 says; *“Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues.”* The Apostle Paul could not be any clearer could he.

In **1 Thessalonians 5:19-21** Paul speaks to the Thessalonian church these words; *“Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast what is good.”* That is a great word to conclude on today. As the saying goes, don't throw out the baby with the bath water. Learn how to work with these gifts and how they're to be directed in your church because they will build up and edify the body of Christ. If leadership is doing their job, there will be peace, order, edification and comfort with the Gifts of the Spirit in operation.