

The Gift of God

There are two different and distinct words used in the Greek New Testament to denote our English translation of the word “**gift**”. Each one of these Greek words carry their own distinct theological meaning. A closer look at these Greek words and the context in which they were used will give us further insight into the meaning of the word “**gift**”.

Dorea- Strongs Greek #1431

The first Greek word that we will take a closer look at is “**dorea**”. “Dorea” is free gift that emphasizes the unconditional generosity of God, the giver. It is totally unmerited and cannot be earned.

“**Dorea**” is typically used to describe foundational monumental gifts from God. Let’s look at some Biblical examples of the use of the Greek word “**dorea**”. In **John 4:10**, Jesus refers to Himself as the “**gift**” or “**dorea**” of God.

Joh 4:10 Jesus^{G2424} answered^{G611} and^{G2532} said^{G2036} unto her, ^{G846} If^{G1487} thou knewest^{G1492} the^{G3588} gift^{G1431} of God, ^{G2316} and^{G2532} who^{G5101} it is^{G2076} that saith^{G3004} to thee, ^{G4671} Give^{G1325} me^{G3427} to drink; ^{G4095} thou^{G4771} wouldst have asked^{G154} ^{G302} of him, ^{G846} and^{G2532} he would have given^{G1325} ^{G302} thee^{G4671} living^{G2198} water. ^{G5204}

G1431

δορεά

dōrea

do-reh-ah'

From G1435; a *gratuity*: - gift.

Total KJV occurrences: 11

Jesus was God manifest in the flesh to become our sacrifice for sin in order to release us from the penalty of sin. There could be no greater gift than this; thus, the word “**dorea**” is used here. Here are a few other examples where “**dorea**” is used to refer to Jesus Christ: **Romans 5:15** and **Ephesians 4:7**.

Another paramount example where the Greek word “**dorea**” is used is found in **Acts 2:38**. In **Acts 2**, we read about the outpouring of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Notice in Acts 2:38, the Holy Spirit is called a “**gift**” or “**dorea**”.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit was monumental because it marked the birth of the Church of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the Greek word “**dorea**” is used here. The Greek word “**dorea**” is this same context in the following Scriptures: **Acts 8:20**, **Acts 10:45**, and **Acts 11:17**. Some other references where “**dorea**” is used to refer to God’s “**unspeakable gift**” of the Holy Spirit are: **2 Corinthians 9:15**, **Ephesians 3:7**, and **Hebrews 6:4**.

Charisma – Strongs Greek #5486

Now, we will take a closer look at another Greek word “**charisma**”. The root word of “**charisma**” is “**charis**” which means grace. Thus “**charisma**” highlights the manifestation of God’s favor.

“**Charisma**” is used to describe the “**thing**” or “**benefit**” that is received by a believer. Very often it is used in the plural to describe specific spiritual functions. Thus, the Greek word “**charisma**” is used when referring to diverse spiritual gifts given to believers to build up the first-century Church.

These gifts were in operation in the first century in order to bring the early Church to maturity. Let’s take a closer look at several verses where the Greek word “**charisma**” is used.

There are several verses where the Greek word “**charisma**” is used to describe diverse spiritual abilities given to individual believers. **Romans 12:6** speaks of “**differing gifts**” or charisma given to the believers.

Rom 12:6 Having ^{G2192} then ^{G1161} gifts ^{G5486} differing ^{G1313} according ^{G2596} to the ^{G3588} grace ^{G5485} that is given ^{G1325} to us, ^{G2254} whether ^{G1535} prophecy, ^{G4394} let us prophesy according ^{G2596} to the ^{G3588} proportion ^{G356} of faith; ^{G4102}

G5486

χάρισμα

charisma

char'-is-mah

From ^{G5483}; a (divine) *gratuity*, that is, *deliverance* (from danger or passion); (specifically) a (spiritual) *endowment*, that is, (subjectively) religious *qualification*, or (objectively) miraculous *faculty*; - (free) gift.

Total KJV occurrences: 17

Paul encouraged the Church in Corinth to keep using the **gifts (charisma)** that God had given them until Jesus returned. (**1 Corinthians 1:7**) The whole chapter of **1 Corinthians 12** focuses on the use of the spiritual gifts given to them. The Greek word “**charisma**” is used throughout **chapter 12** in the following verse: **1 Corinthians 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31**.

In **Romans 6:23**, we see the Greek word “**charisma**” used to describe a wonderful benefit bestowed upon man by God: eternal life. In **1 Timothy 4:14**, Paul encourages Timothy not to neglect the **gift (charisma)** that was given to him. We see these same words of encouragement in **2 Timothy 1:6**. A similar usage of the Greek word “**charisma**” is found in **1 Peter 4:10**.

In the New Testament, it is very clear that there had to be a “**dorea**” before there could be any “**charisma**”. In other words, the **gift** or “**dorea**” of the Holy Spirit had to come before any of the **spiritual gifts** or “**charisma**” could be received and become operational.

In the Scriptures, there is a clear distinction between the initial **gift** of the Holy Spirit evidenced by speaking in tongues and the subsequent **gift** of “**tongues**”.

The Greek word used for “**gift**” when it denotes the gift of the Holy Spirit is always “**dorea**”. The Greek word for “**gift**” when it denotes any of the nine **gifts** or manifestations of the Spirit is “**charisma**”.

These two words are **NEVER** interchanged in the New Testament. The language, teaching, and examples of the New Testament all indicate a clear distinction between these two aspects of spiritual experience.

Conclusion

Due to the clear distinction between “**dorea**” or the **gift** of the Holy Spirit and “**charisma**” the **gifts** of the Spirit, we can conclude that the speaking in tongues when one initially receives the Holy Spirit is different than the spiritual gift of tongues.

The **gift** or “**charisma**” of tongues and interpretation was given for the perfecting of the first century church.

This evidence proves many wrong who believe that **the gift of tongues** and **the tongues** one receives when he is filled with the gift of the Holy Spirit are the same.

“**Dorea**” and “**charisma**” are two distinct words with their own distinct meaning and usage.

The **gift** or “**dorea**” of the Holy Spirit evidenced by the Biblical evidence of speaking in tongues is part of the never-changing everlasting Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

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