

## *The Purpose of Tongues Part 1*

First of all, let's talk about what is happening when you are speaking in tongues.

Acts 2:4

- When you speak in other tongues, you are speaking in a language that you have not learned naturally.
- The Holy Spirit is giving you the words to say by either bringing them to your mind or by just causing them to flow out of you.
- But notice they spoke.
  - o In order to speak in tongues, you have to make a conscious decision by faith to speak.
  - o From my personal experience and hearing others' personal experiences with speaking in tongues, you either hear or see the words in your head or you just feel like forming syllables out of your mouth.
  - o But in every instance, you have to make a conscious decision to speak it.

When you speak in tongues you can possibly speak in two different kinds of tongues.

1 Corinthians 13:1

- According to this verse, you can speak in tongues of men or tongues of angels or I like to say heavenly tongues.
- When the disciples spoke in tongues on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, they were speaking in tongues of men or known languages on the earth. But these languages were not languages that they had ever learned naturally or understood naturally. (reference Acts 2:6-8)
  - o But the purpose of this was to convey the gospel to people of another tongue and prove to them that God was speaking.
- The tongues of angels are a tongue that no man knows or has ever learned. It's not an earthly language.
  - o 1 Corinthians 14:2 calls it an unknown tongue that no man understands.

One purpose of tongues is that it is used to convey a divine message to others in the public church setting.

- In 1 Corinthians 12 primarily verses 8-10, Paul lists nine specific gifts of the Holy Spirit or we could say empowerments of the Holy Spirit.
  - o These are gifts or abilities that the Holy Spirit manifests through believers to minister to the body of Christ. These gifts are not for themselves.
  - o According to verse 1 Cor 12:11, it's up to the Holy Spirit who operates in these gifts, not the believer.

- This is seen in the fact that in 1 Cor 12:12, Paul begins to talk about how we are like a body and a body is made up of different members that have different purposes and abilities.
- Well these gifts mentioned here are different gifts given to different members of the body of Christ for the body.
- One of the gifts mentioned that the Holy Spirit decides to operate through certain people in the body is found in 1 Cor 12:10
  - The tongues referred to here is tongues that are manifested within the church to give a message from God to the body of believers.
  - But the only way these tongues are affective is if they are interpreted through the gift of interpretation.
    - These two gifts combined equal prophecy.
  - Notice its interpretation, not translation.
    - This means the message in tongues could be long and the interpretation short or vice versa. Because you are not translating word for word, you are just trying to interpret the message and get the point across.
  - The only other way this tongue may be used without interpretation is if you are speaking by the Holy Spirit in a known language to someone that speaks that language.
- 1 Cor 12:28-30
  - Here's where it says do all speak with tongues? Well the obvious answer is no, and people have used this to say we are not all supposed to speak with tongues. But that's not true; you have to look at the context of this scripture.
  - This whole chapter is dealing with ministry to the body itself. Paul talks about the gifts of the Spirit and then talks about the church being a body and how we are all like body parts having our own place to be within the body with our own function.
  - So here where it says He set some in the body as apostles, and then prophets and so on He's talking about setting people in the body with these gifts for the body. The point He's conveying is that we are all different and are purposed to do different things just like in the physical body.
  - So, in context the tongues he's referring to here is the tongues that would be used to give a message to the body in a public church setting. Not everyone will speak in those type of tongues because remember that is up to God. Concerning the gifts, He says that the Holy Spirit will manifest the gifts through who He will (1 Cor 12:11).

The other purpose or kind of tongue is the tongue for the personal edification of the believer. Everyone can speak in this tongue if they want to. This tongue is not up to God, it's up to you.

- So, understand that there is a spiritual gift of tongues and then there are personal tongues for the believers own personal edification.

This tongue is the tongue Paul was referring to in 1 Cor 14:4

- Remember this is the unknown tongue in v2, it's the tongues of angels.

The Greek word translated edify here literally means

- a)** to build a house, erect a building
- b)** to build (up from the foundation)
- c)** to restore by building, to rebuild, repair

its metaphorical meaning is the way Paul was using it here

- a)** to found, establish
- b)** to promote growth in Christian wisdom, affection, grace, virtue, holiness, blessedness
- c)** to grow in wisdom and piety

- Paul was letting us know that the personal tongue of the believer brings spiritual growth.

Three things the Lord spoke to me about building up:

- When you build up, you add levels
  - o Practicing tongues will take you to a new level in your spiritual walk.
- When you build up, you strengthen.
  - o Speaking in tongues will give you strength. It will make you stronger and reinforce you.
- When you build up, you enlarge your capacity.
  - o Speaking in tongues is going to increase your wisdom; it's going to increase your ability to receive.

How does this work.

- First of all, let's look at 1 Corinthians 14:14

- When I'm speaking in tongues, my spirit is in control. Not my mind or my flesh or anything around me. In that moment, my spirit is king the way it's supposed to be.
- Through speaking in tongues, I bring my spirit man back into His rightful place in my life and bring my flesh under subjection.
- What am I speaking? 1 Corinthians 14:2 amp For one who speaks in an [unknown] tongue speaks not to men but to God, for no one understands *or* catches his meaning, because in the [Holy] Spirit he utters secret truths *and* hidden things [not obvious to the understanding].
- And one of the main things is the spirit is controlling my tongue in that moment. James 3:1-5
  - The picture that James gives of the tongue is that it is like a bit in the horse's mouth and a helm of a ship.
  - Both things stir and direct.
  - He says here that if a person can control his tongue, he can control his whole body.
  - The tongue is a major part of what directs my life and causes me to go where I need to go and accomplish what I need to accomplish (The Power of life and death). As I'm moving through life, what I say determines where I go.
  - When speaking in tongues, what I have done is I have turned over my tongue totally to the spirit. And now my spirit is using my tongue to declare in a heavenly language truths over my life and my future.
  - So, if you want to get control of your life, get control of your tongue.
- 1 Corinthians 14:2
  - 1 Cor 4:1
    - There are mysteries of God or things that are in the mind of God that we have not perceived in our mind.
    - But here it says we are stewards over these things or in other words we are supposed to take these things and manage them and use them for the kingdom of God.
    - So that means we need to know them.
  - 1 Cor 13:2
    - Paul said He understood all mysteries.
    - He did this through tongues.
  - 1 Corinthians 14:13
    - Here it says when he that speaks in an unknown tongue pray that he interprets.
    - 1 Corinthians 14:8 lets us know that Paul spoke in tongues a lot.
    - Those mysteries that are not perceived in our mind are perceived in the mind of the spirit and when speaking in the spirit, we can speak those things
    - Then according to verse 13 we can pray for the interpretation which will convey those things to our mind.

- This is what Paul did.
  - This is an awesome ability and tool to grow in wisdom and revelation.
  - You know you can pray in tongues over the Word and speak the mystery of the Word and then pray for the interpretation and get the understanding of it.
  - You can pray over situations, decisions, and speak the truth about that situation and then pray for the interpretation.
- V16-17
  - You give perfect praise with tongues.
  - You can praise God in tongues which is your spirit praising God
  - This is perfect praise; it's not hindered by your mind or the limited English language.
  - The awesome thing about this is when I'm in a situation that the circumstances look so bad and it has brought so much heaviness to my emotions and I just don't feel like speaking praises, I can just let my spirit praise through tongues.
  - Sometimes when I can't muster up a praise for victory in myself, I can do it through the spirit.
- Isa 28:11-12
  - Tongues bring refreshing and rest to the weary.
  - The word weary means exhausted and faint. We're talking about being drained.
  - Part of the power of tongues is this that if we are going through something that has drained us and pulled from our strength and our mind we can refresh and refill ourselves through tongues.
  - But understand this that if you practicing tongues on a regular basis, what's going to happen is it's going to keep you from being able to be drained.
  - It's like a phone battery.
  - Things are going to come and happen in your life, but the tongues are a tool to keep you from being in a place where it can drain you.
- Jude 20
  - Speaking in tongues builds you up in faith. It makes you stronger in faith and more able to walk in faith.
  - Speaking in tongues is an exercise in faith because the whole work is a release of faith.
  - Because when I pray in tongues, I have to use my faith to even speak in that language and then I have to use my faith to believe that the spirit is praying and speaking to God, speaking the mysteries of God, giving thanks to God because I can't understand what He's saying.
  - So, as I speak in tongues, I am exercising my faith and faith is like a muscle.
  - Remember we preached that we have the same measure of faith. But some seem like they have more faith, but that's not true, they have just used their faith more than others and it's got stronger.
  - With muscle we have all been given the same amount of muscle, but we don't all have the same size muscles or the same strength in our muscles because some use

their muscles more than others. Those are able to do more that use their muscles more.

Initially it sounds like Paul is saying that tongues are not good but that's not true. In context what He is saying in this chapter is that within the public church setting it is better to prophecy than speak with tongues so that the people may be edified. Unless of course there is an interpretation of those tongues.

The main purpose in the church setting is the edifying of the whole body, not personal edification. When we come into the church setting our mindset must be the edifying of the body not personal edification. Now I will receive something of course, but I don't come in and interrupt the service and hold back from the service to please myself. That's for my own devotional time.

The problem in the Corinthian church was this v 26-v38

V26

- When ye come together
  - o Church
- Chaos
  - o They all came in and was excited about the baptism and the gifts and they all just wanted to share what they had, and everybody was jumping up at once and so on and nobody was hearing and growing.
  - o We have to come in the mindset that we have to operate in way that is edifying.
- So, one of the things that was happening was people were just getting up and speaking in tongues out loud and overpowering the service and drawing attention to themselves but there was no interpretation. Without interpretation in a public setting, the person that's speaking is edified but the church is not.
  - o V27 so don't jump up in the middle of a service and a bunch of you just start speaking real loud in tongues that draws attention to you unless it's at a proper time and it's one person at a time and somebody interprets.
  - o V28 if there be no interpreter
    - This can be taken two ways, if there be no one there who has the gift of interpretation that operates in it then don't speak your tongue even if there is a message in tongues to give.
    - And if your tongue isn't a message from God that gets interpreted for the church, hold it.
  - o Let him speak to himself and to God.
    - So, if your tongue isn't a tongue that's going to be interpreted, don't disrupt a service with it.

- There's nothing wrong with speaking in tongues in the church as long as it is not bringing disruption to the service or hindering the people from receiving. You can speak quietly to yourself in the church setting maybe while we are singing or during alter and prayer time.
- V32
  - The spirit is subject to you, you can control it.
  - If you can't control it, then it's not the Holy Ghost.
  - That's the difference between God's Spirit and demon spirits. The Spirit will submit itself to you and only work if you work Him and allow Him to work. But demon spirits try to overthrow you and take over in your life.