

The Third Person: The Gift of Tongues

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Jay Haugh

Believers are meant to know and use their spiritual gifts.

The Gospel: Jesus died for sins and He rose from the dead.

Paul's instructions on spiritual gifts – tongues & prophecy.

Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. 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. On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. (1 Corinthians 14:1-3)

Glossa means “tongue” or “language.”

For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God. (1 Corinthians 14:2)

Speaking in tongues is a prayer or praise in a language unknown to the speaker.

Cory's prophetic “word” wasn't scripture, but it aligned with scripture.

...he utters mysteries in the Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:2)

On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up. (1 Corinthians 14:3-5)

Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the higher gifts. (1 Corinthians 12:29-31)

Prophecy is greater than tongues because it is intelligible and able to edify.

Now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or the harp, do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is played? And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? So with yourselves, if with your tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is said? For you will be speaking into the air. (1 Corinthians 14:6-9)

There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning, but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me. So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church. (1 Corinthians 14:10-12)

The problem isn't speaking in tongues per se. The problem is speaking in tongues without interpretation.

Otherwise, if you give thanks with your spirit, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say “Amen” to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you are saying? For you may be giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not being built up. I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue. (1 Corinthians 14:16-19)

What then, brothers? 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. If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God. (1 Corinthians 14:26-28)

I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all. (1 Corinthians 14:18)

Big Idea: The Holy Spirit still uses the spiritual gifts of tongues and prophecy to build up believers.