

## **Gifts of the Holy Spirit**

### The Interpretation of Tongues

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We have now come to the third and final Utterance Gift. This Gift is called the Interpretation of Tongues.

By definition the Interpretation of Tongues is a supernatural utterance inspired by the Holy Spirit, which interprets an unknown Tongue.

“Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.” (1Corinthians 14:13)

Here the Apostle Paul tells us that we should pray, asking the Holy Spirit to enable us to interpret our Tongues. He’s referring to the Believer interpreting what they pray out in other Tongues during their private or corporate prayer times.

There is another type of Interpretation of Tongues as well. This is the public Interpretation of Tongues for use in public services. Everyone can pray and interpret their own Tongues in private. However, not everyone can pray and interpret their own Tongues or another’s Tongues in public services. This is a separate and a unique form of the Gift that is not possessed by every Believer.

Let’s read what the Apostle Paul said. “Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?” (1Corinthians 12:30)

Here Paul could only be referring to the public Gift of Tongues and Interpretation because the Baptism with the Holy Spirit and the speaking with other Tongues is promised to every Believer. (Acts 1:8) The public Gift of Interpretation of Tongues is not promised to every Believer. It is the public Gift of Tongues and Interpretation that Paul referred to when he said, “Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?” Of course, all do not possess the public Gift of Tongues and Interpretation. Therefore, the implied answer to Paul’s question is “No. All do not possess the public Gift of Tongues and Interpretation.”

So we see that there are indeed two separate manifestations of the Gift of Tongues and Interpretation. Whether you possess the public Gift as well as the private Gift or only the private Gift, interpretation basically operates the same way. Let’s look at how that happens.

It is not the easiest job in the world to explain how Spiritual Gifts operate but it is doable. Although the Interpretation of Tongues is the ability to translate into a known tongue something that has been spoken in an unknown Tongue, it doesn’t just end there. There are different ways for interpretations to come. I will describe my experiences, which are similar to the experiences of many.

I've had times when I or someone else would speak forth in an unknown Tongue, publicly or privately. I would then see something, on the inside of my spirit. Something like a still picture, possibly even a moving picture. In pre-DVD days, one Prophetess of God referred to this as, "Video prophecies." I would simply describe out loud what I was seeing in my spirit in a way that would honor God and edify the hearing congregation. This is one way an interpretation can come.

Sometimes, one or two words will come to me. As I am obedient to speak those words forth by faith, not knowing where they are leading me, the rest of the interpretation will follow. This took a little getting used to, but after a time or two I realized that the Holy Spirit will always be there to meet me if I'll just step out and speak the few words I already have by faith. It sounds a little scary, but the Holy Spirit will never leave you hanging. He won't embarrass you.

Then there are times when I actually just know down in my spirit what the "gist" of the interpretation is. Sometimes it's a Scripture verse. Sometimes it's a subject or a theme. I'll begin to explain aloud that which I am knowing inwardly and the Holy Spirit always helps me to present it in a Scriptural and in an encouraging way.

Just keep this in mind. Interpreting Tongues, publicly or privately, is a whole lot simpler than describing how to interpret Tongues, publicly or privately.

Some individuals are gifted to both speak and interpret Tongues publicly. Some individuals are gifted only to speak Tongues out publicly but they are unable to interpret publicly. These individuals should always be sure that there is an interpreter present before they speak in a public Tongue. If no interpreter is present, the Tongue should not be given.

"But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God." (1 Corinthians 14:28)

If one speaks publicly in Tongues and no one interprets it for them, there is no condemnation for making a mistake. However, it is best to not speak again until an interpreter is present.

However, speaking in Tongues in your private prayer time is quite another matter altogether. One may speak at will and ask the Lord for the interpretation. (1 Corinthians 14:13) If it is His will at that time, He will surely give it to you. If it is not, He simply will not.

Interestingly, I have discovered that whatever or whomever continues to come to mind while I'm privately praying in Tongues is usually for what or for whom I am praying. I then simply focus in on that. Interpretation of Tongues can indeed come in the form of what consistently comes into your mind while you are praying. Once you get settled down in prayer and get into the Spirit, this becomes a common occurrence.

Keep in mind, just like the Gift of Prophecy, there are two kinds of Tongues and Interpretation. One can simply be for edification, exhortation and comfort of the Saints, containing no revelation or prediction. The other can contain revelation or prediction, pointing towards things that will happen in the future.

By picking up your Bible and simply reading First Corinthians chapter fourteen, you can learn much about both kinds of Tongues and Interpretation.

Finally, the Interpretation of Tongues is equivalent to the Gift of Prophecy. This is because an interpreted Tongue has now become inspired utterance in a known tongue.

It has been often stated, "Tongues plus Interpretation equals Prophecy." Think of it this way. Two five-dollar bills are equivalent to one ten-dollar bill. Although they're totally different, the end result is identical!

We have come to the end of our abbreviated study on the nine Gifts of the Holy Spirit and their three categories. In closing this series, I would like to remind you of something that I said to you way back in the Introduction.

It would be good for you to memorize the name of each Gift as well as its definition. This was the first thing I did when I discovered them nearly 25 years ago. The Holy Spirit's Gifts operate best through those who recognize and understand them best.

Please keep in mind that each of these Gifts is a Supernatural Gift. They operate by the Supernatural power of God. They have nothing to do with man's natural abilities.

Soon you will recognize which of the Gifts the Holy Spirit has imparted to you. Please keep in mind that you cannot turn your Gifts on and off at will. The Holy Spirit decides when and how your Gifts will operate. The best thing you can do is to spend time worshipping God and reading His Word. This always leads to greater manifestations of your Gifts.