

GIFT OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES:

Biblical Examples:

- Mark 16:17

What is it?

- When it comes to the gifts of the Holy Ghost, speaking in tongues is one of most well known and probably misunderstood. So, today we are going to do a little overview on tongues.
- The gift of speaking tongues is also known as the gift of diverse tongues, and the gift of different kinds of tongues. These different name variations of the same gift is because of different Bible translations.
- Speaking in tongues is the supernatural ability to speak in other languages or tongues through the utterance of the Holy Spirit. It is a vocal gift.
- I like how David Pytches defines tongues:
"This is spontaneous inspired utterance by the Holy Spirit where the normal voice organs are used, but the conscious mind plays no part. The language spoken are entirely unlearned by the speaker."
- The Gift of tongues can work two ways – 1 Cor. 13:1
 - o a language that is unknown to any human on earth, which requires the Gift of Interpretation of tongues to accompany it – 1 Cor 14:5 / 1 Cor. 11-14 / 1 Cor. 14:28
 - o a language that is unknown to the speaker, but is a language known to others – Acts 2:4-8

What is it not?

- Some people can pick up a language super quick and have no problem knowing multiple languages. These people are also known as polyglots.
 - o There are testimonies of missionaries picking up a language super fast. And as cool as that may be (and most likely an answer to prayer!) it's not the gift of speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues is a supernatural utterance and the one speaking it is unaware of the language they are speaking.
- It is not the same as when a person speaks in tongues as a result of them being baptized / filled with the Holy Spirit. (In essence they are the same, but they are different in purpose and use)
 - o This needs to be understood in the same way we understand and contextualize the gift of word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, the gift of faith, the gift of discernment of spirits, etc.
 - o Scriptures to help us understand the difference between Speaking in tongues as the physical evidence that a person has been baptized in the Holy Spirit in contrast with the Gift of Tongues.
 - Evidence of Baptism in the Spirit: Acts 2:1-4 / Acts 10:44-48 / Acts 19:1-7 / 1 Cor. 14:2&4 / 1 Cor. 14:14 – (Praying in the Spirit: Rom 8:26-27 / Eph. 6:18 / Jude 1:20)
 - The Gift of tongues - 1 Cor. 14:5 / 1 Cor. 14:12 & 1 Cor. 12:7 / 1 Cor. 14:13 / 1 Cor. 12:30

- Contrasts and Combination – 1 Cor. 14:4 VS. 1 Cor. 14:12, 1 Cor. 12:7 / 1 Cor. 14:18-19 VS. Eph. 6:18 / 1 Cor. 14:27-28 VS. 1 Cor. 14:39 / 1 Cor. 14:15-17 / Acts 2
 - Some may argue that the Bible doesn't explicitly mention this and that implications are not enough, but the same would have to be said about the doctrine of the Trinity or even that of the rapture.
 - There are many Biblical truths that are not explicitly / directly mentioned but all of the evidence is implicitly derived from correct interpretation, contextualization and studying the historical background of scripture.

Purpose:

- The purpose of the gift of tongues is essentially the same as that of the Gift of prophecy – to Edify, Exhort, Comfort – (this is only true when the gift of interpretation accompanies this gift) 1 Cor. 14:5
 - Usually, the Gift of Tongues must always be accompanied by the gift of interpretation of tongues – otherwise it will not bring edification – 1 Cor. 14:13 / 1 Cor. 14:27-28
- This Gift will usually be manifested when there is unbelief / stubbornness / rebellion present – 1 Cor. 14:20-25
 - 1 Cor. 14:20-22: This is not talking about unbelievers who are unsaved, but must be understood in the context of “Unbelieving believers” or Christians that have doubts or are struggling to believe or submit to a certain word or principle
 - An example of an “unbelieving believer” is Thomas – John 20:24-28
The same word for Unbeliever / Unbelieving is used both in John and 1 Corinthians – *Apistos*
 - Context of the OT portion of the law – Isaiah 28:11-12: This is a word that was spoken to and for the people of God who were not willing to obey and submit to what He was speaking to them
 - 1 Cor. 14:23-25: Prophecy is the sign for Christians who believe and submit to a word, as well as for unsaved unbelievers that God is speaking to directly.

Important Closing notes:

- There is no gift that receives so explosive a reaction as the gift of tongues. This gift is so dynamic and can change people's lives that the devil gets everybody fighting over it. The church must understand this gift in order to use it mightily as not the Lord.
- I want to end with this neat note...Benedict Carey of The New York Times wrote the article, A Neuroscientific Look at Speaking in Tongues. He says this about mental health of those who practice speaking in tongues...

“Contrary to what may be a common perception, studies suggest that people who speak in tongues rarely suffer from mental problems. A recent study of over 1,000 evangelical Christians in England found that those who engaged in the practice were more emotionally stable than those who did not. Researchers have identified at least two forms of the practice, one ecstatic and frenzied, the other subdued and nearly silent.”