

INTRODUCTION

*“Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit...”
(1 Corinthians 14:1, NIV, emphasis added)*

- God has called us to eagerly desire (from the Greek word *zēloō*, meaning to pursue with zeal) the spiritual gifts He gives, but this call is in the context of walking in His love (*agape*)

“...I want you all to speak in tongues...” (1 Corinthians 14:5, emphasis added)

I. WHAT IS THE GIFT OF TONGUES?

- A. Speaking to God or to others in another language (unknown to the mind of the speaker) as enabled by the Holy Spirit

“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance...” (Acts 2:4, emphasis added)

- B. Speaking to others in tongues...

“⁵ Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶ And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. ⁷ And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? ⁹ Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹ both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.” (Acts 2:5-11, emphasis added)

- C. Speaking to God in tongues...

“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.” (1 Corinthians 14:2, emphasis added)

- D. The one speaking in tongues usually doesn’t understand what they are saying

*“For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful”
(1 Corinthians 14:14, emphasis added)*

II. ALL BELIEVERS CAN HAVE, AND SHOULD EAGERLY DESIRE THIS GIFT

A. Jesus promised that speaking in new tongues would be a sign that would follow believers

“17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover.” (Mark 16:17-18, emphasis added)

B. Speaking in new tongues is a gift we see frequently accompanying the baptism of the Spirit (Acts 2), and was a prominent gifting in the early church along with prophecy

“44 While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. 45 And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. 46 For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God...” (Acts 10:44-46, emphasis added)

“And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.” (Acts 19:6)

C. As he exhorts us to go after the gifts of the Spirit with zeal, the Apostle Paul says he wants all to speak in tongues, and that he’s thankful he does it more than anyone

“...I want you all to speak in tongues...” (1 Corinthians 14:5, emphasis added)

“I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.” (1 Corinthians 14:18, emphasis added)

III. STEWARDING THE GIFT OF TONGUES

A. Do it – it builds you up

“The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself...” (1 Corinthians 14:4, *emphasis added*)

B. Pray and sing in tongues, and in your native language

¹⁴ *For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful.* ¹⁵ *What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also.* (1 Corinthians 14:14-15, *emphasis added*)

C. Pray for interpretation of tongues (your own and others’) in order to build up the church

¹⁰ *There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning,* ¹¹ *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.* ¹² *So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.* ¹³ *Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret.* (1 Corinthians 14:10-13, *emphasis added*)

D. Bring all of the gifts of the Spirit in love and order to build others up

²⁶ *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.* ²⁷ *If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret.* ²⁸ *But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God.* ²⁹ *Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said.* ³⁰ *If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent.* ³¹ *For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged,* ³² *and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets.* ³³ *For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.”* (1 Corinthians 14:26-33, *emphasis added*)

E. Do not forbid speaking in tongues

“So, my brothers...do not forbid speaking in tongues.” (1 Corinthians 14:39, *emphasis added*)