

# Exploring the Holy Spirit

Point of Light Group

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## Week 3: Tongues – Communicating with God

### Different expressions of the gift of tongues

#### Xenoglossia

- The act of speaking in an established language the user has never learned.
- We see an example of this in Acts 2:1-12. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and started preaching to the crowd. The listeners each heard the gospel preached in their own native tongue by Galileans.

#### Glossolalia

- The act of speaking in a heavenly language or “divine utterance”.
- Usually this is practiced in prayer for personal devotion but can be used in a corporate setting.
- We find an explanation of this 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 14. Paul makes a case for both Xenoglossia in a group setting and Glossolalia in a private setting and even encourages both praying in the spirit and singing in the spirit. (v.15)

### Is the gift of tongues for everyone?

#### Tongues being a sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit

- Many would argue that speaking in tongues and/or prophesying is the initial evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit and because this baptism is for all believers, so are these gifts. Examples of this happening can be found in Acts 2, Acts 11:44-46, Acts 19:1-7)
- Some would argue to the contrary, pointing to Paul’s exhortation in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12 as an argument for a distinct gift of tongues that God gives to some for the benefit of all.
- Regardless of either argument, I believe a healthy approach for the believer is to earnestly pray for the gift of tongues simply because it may be something God wants to give us.

### What is a prayer language?

#### It is talking to God in a language given by the Holy Spirit

- The author says in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 14:2 that we are talking to God by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit resides within us according to Romans 8, and tongues are a manifestation of that power inside of us making its way out.
- Jesus says in John 16:13 that the Holy Spirit will speak through us whatever He hears God the Father say.

It is speaking the perfect will of God in our lives

- In Romans 8:26-27, the author tells us that in our weakness the Holy Spirit prays for us and that it is in harmony with Gods perfect will for our lives.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 14:4 says that tongues strengthens us personally. My opinion is that it does so because we our surrendering our consciousness, our logic, and our speech to the Holy Spirit. Similar to how fasting helps us control our natural body's desire for food, speaking in tongues helps us control that side of our brain that desires strict logic over faith.

**How can tongues be utilized in a church service or gathering of believers?**

There is a model of worship found in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 14

- Corporate worship should always have some kind of order. Paul makes recommendations that if anyone operates in the gift of tongues and wants to speak publicly, there should always be an interpreter present. This seems to indicate that the tongues practiced here is Xenoglossia and that the interpreter actually knows the language being spoken. (v.27-28)
- It could be possible, although the tongues being spoken are not a known language, that there is someone with a gift of interpretation who can translate by the Spirit what is being said in tongues.
- It is my opinion that as believers we should embrace the ambiguity of tongues and interpretation. However, things should be done in order. If a believer feels they have something given to them by the Holy Spirit that needs to be shared, it would be wise for them to find another leader within the church that can help them find the proper way to address the body.

Questions or Notes:

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