

The Holy Spirit and Tongues

Acts 1:8

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

The Holy Spirit was given to empower the believers to be faithful and effectual witnesses of Jesus Christ. Tongues by the Holy Spirit, of which there are several different kinds, aids the saints of God in ministry.

The first kind of tongues is given for all believers. This is a personal prayer language for building up oneself in the most holy faith (Jude 1:20). This tongue is a heavenly language (not known on earth).

(Acts 2:38b-39)

38b) ...and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

39) For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

(1 Cor. 14:2,4-5a)

2) For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.

4) He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

5) I would that ye all spake with tongues...

The second kind of tongues is one of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit. This tongue is spoken in church for edification of the body when used together with another one of the Holy Spirit's gifts: the interpretation of tongues.

(1 Cor. 12:10)

To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

(1 Cor. 14:5)

I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

(1 Cor. 14:27-28)

27) If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.

28) But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

Another kind of tongues is in an earthly language not understood by the speaker. This is used by God as a sign for the unbeliever (1. Cor. 14:22a). This was the tongues spoken on the day of Pentecost.

(Mark 16:17)

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

(Acts 2:4,6-8)

4) And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

6) Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7) And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

8) And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

Tongues is evidence of someone receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the New Testament when the Holy Spirit fell on believers there was evidence that was clearly seen and heard.

(Acts 2:33b)

...having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

(Acts 19:6)

And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

The Bible lists four things we receive when we pray in tongues: revelation, knowledge, prophesying, and doctrine. (1 Cor. 14:6)