

The Gift of Tongues

1. Gifts of the Spirit vs. Fruit of the Spirit

Fruit	Gifts
Character qualities Gal 5:22, 23	Ability to perform a specific ministry - practical
Evidence that a person has the Holy Spirit Mt 7:16-23	Can be counterfeited Mt 7:22, 23 Mt 24:24
Test of genuine Christian Jn 13:34, 35	Given for benefit of the whole group 1 Cor 12:7
ALL will have fruit	Holy Spirit chooses who, and what gift. 1 Cor 12:11

2. Guidelines

1 Cor 13 lists the gifts of tongues, prophecy, knowledge, faith, giving and martyrdom and says that any of these without love (fruit) is meaningless. Apparently many people who have displayed their gifts will be lost, not having the fruit.

Matt 24:24 indicates that the gifts of prophecy and miracles will be counterfeited to deceive people, so why not the gift of tongues.

1 Cor 12:7 indicates that the gifts of the Spirit are given for the common good, not solely to benefit the individual.

1 Cor 12:31 Some gifts are to be desired above others.

3. The gift of Tongues in action

Acts 2 - purpose: to communicate the gospel in the various languages present.

Acts 10, 11 - Again a language barrier - Jew / Gentile - what was said was understood

Acts 19 - linked with prophesying - what was said was understood

4. The church at Corinth

a. was ignorant of spiritual gifts 1 Cor 12:1

b. needed to be reminded that:

- * there were different gifts from the one Spirit v. 4
- * gifts are for the common good of the entire church v.7
- * not everybody has the same gifts v.11-30
- * there are more important gifts than tongues v.31

c. 1 Cor 14 deals with tongues in church from the perspective of the man in the pew

- God may understand what you are saying but we don't.
- seek gifts that will build the church up v. 12
- tongues is not for in church (but in the marketplace) v.19

5. Concerns about the Charismatic movement

a. The focus seems to be more on gifts and phenomena than the fruit of the Spirit

b. A narrow range of gifts is focused on -tongues, healing, miracles, prophecy (narrow application)

c. The gift of tongues appears to be being used for individual edification rather than evangelism (the common good) this is at best a misuse of the gifts.

6. Origin of the Tongues

a. from God

b. humanly induced - either self or group

c. from Satan - many non Christian religions also have speaking in tongues - i.e. the Voodoo worshippers in Haiti

Finally

There is no evidence that Jesus spoke in tongues. He is our example in faith and practise. **The fruit of the Spirit were manifested in His ministry. Many of the gifts of the Spirit were in evidence in His ministry** There is no evidence of Him or His hearers being slain in the Spirit, or drunk in the Spirit.