



## Acts 2:4 The Gift of Tongues Speaker: Jeff Thompson

...they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them. - Acts 2:4

- Tongues comes from the Holy Spirit (“they... began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them.”).
- Tongues is the believer being supernaturally enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak a language unknown to them (“tongues” in the Book of Acts = “glossa” in the original Greek, meaning “a language”).

### Descriptive vs Prescriptive Texts in the Bible:

- *Descriptive* texts chronicle history (I.E., they document what happened).
- *Prescriptive* texts are commands, instructions, or models that followers of Jesus, and His Church, are called to follow.

### The Extraordinary Instances of Tongues in the Book of Acts:

- **Acts 2** // The Upper Room on the Day of Pentecost // The first Jews are regenerated // Tongues to prove the Holy Spirit had been given equally to all believers and to attract a crowd
- **Acts 8** // Believers in Samaria // The first Samaritans are regenerated // Tongues (implied) to prove salvation and the Holy Spirit were equally for the Samaritans
- **Acts 10** // The household of Cornelius // The first Gentiles are regenerated // Tongues to prove salvation and the Holy Spirit were equally for the Gentiles
- **Acts 19** // The disciples of John the Baptist in Ephesus // Regeneration occurs after hearing the Gospel // Tongues to prove there cannot be regeneration apart from the Gospel

The primary purpose of tongues in the Book of Acts is to \_\_\_\_\_.

The Book of Acts deals with tongues in a primarily \_\_\_\_\_ manner, while 1 Corinthians deals with it in a primarily \_\_\_\_\_ manner.

### Tongues in the Book of Acts vs 1 Corinthians:

- The gift of tongues seems to refer to *earthly* languages in the Book of Acts and a *heavenly* language in 1 Corinthians.
- There is no gift of interpreting tongues in the Book of Acts. It appears in 1 Corinthians, where Paul lists it beside tongues as “A manifestation of the Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:7).

*A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good: to one is given a message of wisdom through the Spirit, to another, a message of knowledge by the same Spirit, to another, faith by the same Spirit, to another, gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another, the performing of miracles, to another, prophecy, to another, distinguishing between spirits, to another, different kinds of tongues, to another, interpretation of tongues.* - 1 Corinthians 12:7-10

*If I speak human or angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so that I can move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing.* - 1 Corinthians 13:1-2

*...the person who speaks in a tongue is not speaking to people but to God, since no one understands him; he speaks mysteries in the Spirit (or “his spirit”).* - 1 Corinthians 14:2

...if you praise with the spirit, how will the outsider say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying? For you may very well be giving thanks, but the other person is not being built up. - 1 Corinthians 14:16-17

Therefore the person who speaks in a tongue should pray that he can interpret. - 1 Corinthians 14:13

If anyone speaks in a tongue, there are to be only two, or at the most three, each in turn, and let someone interpret. But if there is no interpreter, that person is to keep silent in the church and speak to himself and God. - 1 Corinthians 14:27-28

...do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything is to be done decently and in order. - 1 Corinthians 14:39-40

### **The Content of Tongues:**

The gift of tongues is the Holy Spirit supernaturally empowering a person to speak \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Cf. 1 Corinthians 14:2)

...if you praise with the spirit, how will the outsider say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying? For you may very well be giving thanks, but the other person is not being built up. - 1 Corinthians 14:16-17

...we hear them declaring the magnificent acts of God in our own tongues." - Acts 2:11

...they heard them speaking in tongues and declaring the greatness of God. - Acts 10:46

On the other hand, the person who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouragement, and consolation.  
- 1 Corinthians 14:3

### **Tongues as a "Private Prayer Language":**

...if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. What then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with my understanding. I will sing praise with the spirit, and I will also sing praise with my understanding. Otherwise, if you praise with the spirit, how will the outsider say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying? For you may very well be giving thanks, but the other person is not being built up. I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you; yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, in order to teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.  
- 1 Corinthians 14:14-19

I wish all of you spoke in tongues, but even more that you prophesied. The person who prophesies is greater than the person who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets so that the church may be built up. - 1 Corinthians 14:5

Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints.  
- Ephesians 6:18

...God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, next miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, leading, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all do miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But desire the greater gifts. And I will show you an even better way.  
- 1 Corinthians 12:28-31