

**General Topics :: Interpretation of tongues only for the large assembly?**

**Interpretation of tongues only for the large assembly? - posted by docs (), on: 2017/1/24 10:54**

A Christian brother I know has done a bit of research and he found that part of the reason the Corinthians wanted Paul to come to them was so that he, Paul, could speak in tongues to show that he was legitimate and had really been born again and received the Spirit. To be able to do this was seen as a sort of a special sign and they liked signs. Paul then said he would not come and do so just for the sake of doing. Part of Paul's reply was, "I thank God I speak in tongues more than you all, yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue" (1 Cor 14:18-19). Yet just because Paul was not going to speak in many tongues in the church he still said he spoke in tongues more than you all. So Paul likely spent a lot of personal times speaking in tongues. And he gave the instructions, "Therefore, let him who prays in a tongue pray that he may interpret" (1 Cor 14:13). We usually have seen that as pertaining to the large assembly and it does but is it restricted to the large assembly only?

Can one pray in tongues in private and pray for the interpretation which would result in exhortation and edification and comfort to us following the same guidelines as for the large assembly? If you "pray in tongues more than you all," does anyone here pray in tongues in private and then pray for an interpretation? I heard a tape recently by Derek Prince and he said he was glad he received the baptism in the Holy Spirit before anyone could warn him against it! He was living a somewhat isolated military life at the time and basically it was just him and the word for the first few years of his Christian life. He related how many times he would speak in tongues and receive an interpretation and how it came to be just a normal way of life for him and his relationship with the Lord. He would speak in the Spirit and receive a personal interpretation in his personal time. He received a very distinct calling to be a Christian teacher of the word in this manner. "Therefore, let him who prays in a tongue pray that he may interpret." Is this limited to the large assembly or can it be a legitimate practice in our and personal devotional times with the Lord?

I'm not trying to set out a new flaky doctrine or practice. I have been pondering this for about a week after the brother I mentioned shared his research and thinking and questions. I've never really considered it that much that what can be practiced in the corporate assembly (if you pray in a tongue in the assembly then pray for an Interpreter) might also be carried over into our personal times. If we pray in tongues in private could and should we pray for an interpretation there also?

**Re: Interpretation of tongues only for the large assembly? - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2017/1/24 12:35**

Hey David,

I may be prejudiced since my early Christian experience was Charismatic and derived from Kenneth Hagin's teachings from scripture, and he taught what you are suggesting.

I say: Be it unto you according to your faith.

I personally believe, and have experienced, that persistent praying in tongues by the Spirit fills our spirits with spiritual strength, makes us sensitive to the Spirit's leading and acts as a gateway, if you will, into the other gifts of the Spirit.

I have prayed in the Spirit at times and that has led to receiving prophetic words, eg. I once prayed thus for a friend who was serving in a church as an assistant pastor and after praying in tongues received a short word in the understanding that he should: step up and step out. Shortly after he indeed did step out and start his own congregation in another town and the Lord has blessed the work

So, short answer? *öŸ*, I believe you can operate as suggested. We need not limit the Spirit's working. Practice in private and become more effective in public.

Blessings,

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**Re: - posted by dolfan (), on: 2017/1/24 13:25**

It is a valid question for sure.

I pray in tongues. I do not remember ever having asked for an interpretation in any instance of doing it in private, but I have thought and said to the Lord that I would like to know what was being said.

But, as I understand the Bible, whenever a tongue/interpretation were to occur in an assembly, it was closely akin --- perhaps equal to --- a word of prophecy/knowledge/wisdom/teaching from the Lord for the benefit of the assembly. Being as it is tied as it is to the benefit of the whole body, I read the passages in 1 Cor. as applying that gift in the assembly.

Praying in a tongue, though, is not functionally the same as the tongue and interpretation in 1 Corinthians. As the Spirit speaks through the praying believer in private, something other than a God-to-church communication is happening. Although God can surely reveal or inform the believer who prays in tongues what the substance of the utterances are, it doesn't find a direct match in the tongues/interpretation passages in 1 Corinthians.

What is currently a blessing in my own life --- and I do not make this a doctrinal matter for everyone's consumption --- is the knowledge that as I pray in the Spirit in tongues, I can also at the same time in my mind pray with understanding (being words in English in my mind on a thought track seemingly divorced from the movements of my own mouth). It is as if --- again, my experience, not doctrine --- I pray in the Spirit and with my own mind and understanding parallel to each other but not necessarily the same content (since the prayer in tongues is an utterance I do not understand directly). It is not an everyday occurrence by any means. Whether it should be, I don't know.

**Re: Interpretation of tongues only for the large assembly? - posted by Lysa (), on: 2017/1/24 13:37**

Quote:  
-----by docs  
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Praise God for Derek Prince and his experiences. I never thought about interpreting my own tongues until I listened to that same sermon!! So, I have been praying for this gift.

It is a gift, Paul said to desire spiritual gifts! If you have the gift of interpretation and the Lord wants you to know what you've prayed, He will give you the interpretation of it.

God bless,  
Lisa

**Re: - posted by docs (), on: 2017/1/24 13:45**

/I pray in tongues. I do not remember ever having asked for an interpretation in any instance of doing it in private, but I have thought and said to the Lord that I would like to know what was being said./

It's the same with me. I really don't remember actively asking for an interpretation in my private time of praying in the Spirit but nevertheless, is it out of bounds to do so? It seems I can remember a few times where I have ended up prophesying to myself during a private time. Yet Paul said we should not just go off speaking in tongues in the assembly without praying for an interpreter. He said five words with the understanding is better than that but yet he still said he prayed in tongues more than any of them. I just wonder now what went on in his private devotions.

**Re: Interpretation of tongues only for the large assembly? - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/1/24 14:34**

What I am going to bring up may be side issue- not sure. But it may apply.

Consider this passage: 1 Corinthians 14:22-25 v 22 "Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers. v 23 If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds? But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you. "

I am going to say something fairly controversial here, but I think Paul made a "slip of the pen" or mis-dictated, or his scriber erred, in vs 22. That verse makes no sense in the context of the following verses. I think he reversed what he intended to say, namely that prophecy was for unbelievers and tongues for believers.

**Re: - posted by TrueWitness, on: 2017/1/24 15:13**

You are right Todd, what you are suggesting is controversial. So much so that most expositors go through mental gymnastics trying to explain that passage as it is written. Here is J. B. Phillips translation of the passage:

That means that tongues are a sign of God's power, not for those who are unbelievers but for those who already believe. Preaching the word of God, on the other hand, is a sign of God's power to those who do not believe rather than to believers. So that, if at a full church meeting you are all speaking with tongues and men come in who are uninstructed or without faith, will they not say that you are insane? But if you are preaching God's word and such a man should come in to your meeting, he is convicted and challenged by your united speaking of the truth. His secrets are exposed and he will fall on his knees acknowledging God and saying that God is truly among you!

You see, Phillips switched believers and unbelievers in the first part of the passage like you suggested. I don't want to be one on here throwing a cat among pigeons so however you feel about this is fine with me. I am not dogmatic about it. It is somewhat mysterious and I'll just leave it at that.

-Daniel

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/1/24 15:35**

I forgot that JB did that! I have an old PHILLIPS translation that belonged to my grandfather and I always felt it made a lot more sense.

I hope no one gets the idea that I don't think the Bible is inspired and all. I do think it may be possible that there may have been some copying errors here and there.

But this thread is not about that so let's not discuss it.

I remember hearing a teaching where the speaker said he would pray in tongues over scripture he read and almost always it opened up the scripture to him so that he had greater insight.

**Re: Interpretation of tongues only for the large assembly? - posted by twayneb (), on: 2017/1/24 18:25**

docs: I would be really interested in seeing this "research" that the brother refers to. I don't see how he can come to the conclusion that the Corinthians were wanting Paul to come and prove his conversion with signs from the Biblical text. Does he have some sort of solid extra-biblical evidence? I just find that interpretation a little off into left field in my opinion.

As to interpreting tongues as we pray, I have had that experience just a few times. It happened this way. I was praying in tongues and suddenly the Holy Spirit gave me a clear impression of what it was that I was praying about. It was not a transliteration of my words, nor was it a translation of the meaning of what I was saying. It was a very clear impression of what it was that was the subject of my prayers. I just suddenly knew what it was that I was praying about, without a doubt.

I think Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians applies to the operation of the gift of tongues and the gift of interpretation in the assembly for the sake of supernatural ministry by the Holy Spirit. But I think the principle is applicable to our personal prayer.

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/1/24 20:55**

Travis wrote:

"It was not a transliteration of my words, nor was it a translation of the meaning of what I was saying. It was a very clear impression of what it was that was the subject of my prayers. I just suddenly knew what it was that I was praying about, without a doubt."

I have had similar experience but I am not sure of the significance. Is it a case of "not knowing how to pray" so we pray in tongues and then the HS reveals how we were praying? Is it meant to be a faith builder or an encouragement?

**Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2017/1/25 0:51**

I heard an audio of Jackie Pulinger from SI in which she speaks in tongue and someone in the meeting interprets it. I have never interpreted my own tongue but I feel it is tongue used to praise God.

Yes I believe Bible can be interpreted so many different ways, I also believe that we can pray for interpretation of our tongues uttered by us.

**Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2017/1/25 11:41**

Todd: Agreed. It is a faith builder for sure. We cannot under-estimate the desire that God has to bring us more and more into conformity with His image and likeness and to teach us to trust Him and walk in faith.