

VOCAL GIFT

Introduction

“Speaking in tongues”, “Interpreting the tongues” and “Prophecy” are called as vocal gifts because these gifts are operating through man’s vocal chords. Spoken words are the centre of these gifts.

While the implementation of revelation & power gifts are still under the control of God - at a certain degree, the vocal gifts are under the control of men, even though men still need to be responsible for their words. We have to learn from the Word of God – the purposes of vocal gift, how to operate this gift in a correct way, and when we should not use this gift. (1Cor. 14).

Paul taught us how and when we should and should not use this gift. Usually in a meeting, 2-3 people will speak in tongue and prophecy. If someone speaks in tongue, the other needs to interpret it; if not, then he should not speak. In other words, we are responsible to control this vocal gift.

Discussion

1. Speaking in tongues – 1 Cor. 12:10

This kind of tongue is different from the tongue received by us during the Holy Spirit’s baptism. The tongue that we receive when we are baptized by Holy Spirit is the tongue that we use to speak to God to build our faith. But the tongue in a meeting is meant to build the congregation. This is not personal gift; rather, it is a gift for public.

Below are the kinds of gift of tongue:

a. Praise

The spirit of human which reveres, lifts up and worships God. Other people in the meeting will then praise & worship Jesus together. Interpretation is not needed here.

b. Intercession

This will happen when a group of people pray for someone or a situation, but it seems that they could not achieve victory in that prayer, or they do not know the correct way to pray for that matter.

In this situation, Holy Spirit might give someone words or intercession in the form of a specific prayer which is needed by that person. It could also be in the form of united prayer which is according to God’s will. Often this will be followed by prophecy.

c. Rebuke

If we read in the Bible, there were times when Jesus rebuked, for example when Jesus rebuked Simon mother in law’s fever. (Luke 4:38-39). We do not rebuke a person’s situation or personality. Jesus rebuked the storm (Mark 4:35-41) because it was the work of the devil spirit. Sometimes we will feel ashamed when we need to rebuke, but if we obey this feeling, we could accidentally extinguish the gifts of Holy Spirit.

d. Advice

Holy Spirit gives advice to a group of people. There must be someone who is able to interpret the advice in human language so that the message could be understood.

2. Interpret the tongue – 1 Cor 14:5

This is the ability given by Holy Spirit to speak in a language that could be understood, from the words in language that could not be understood. (tongue). Interpreting the tongue is not the same as translating the tongue; it’s not necessary for us to translate word by word, the most important thing is the whole meaning of the tongue.

Below are some different ways to receive interpretation:

- a. We receive one or two words or a strong sentence, and when we speak it, the other words will follow. Many people do not want to speak without receiving the whole words. But we must have the courage to start, if not, the other words will not be given.

- b. We have a pressure or feeling that God wants to do something. Then few words or verses from the Bible come to our mind. If this happens, we have to speak those words or verses so that we could flow with the whole interpretation.
- c. We are given a thought as an inspiration and then we express it with our own words.
- d. We hear words, see words or see a vision.

In 1 Cor. 14:12-13 Paul said that whoever speaks in tongue should pray so that he is given the gift to interpret it too. We have to start interpreting if we speak in tongue and long to be able to interpret it.

How do we know that our interpretation is correct?

If we ask the correct things to God, we will not receive the wrong things from God. This is faith.

3. Prophecy – 1 Cor. 14:1

It is the gift of Holy Spirit to speak in a language which could be understood by believers; these words are the Holy Spirit's inspiration. Acts 2:17-18

Acts 2:17-18.. In the last days, God's people will be restored through the manifestation of Holy Spirit: prophecy. Prophecy is words for believers, for the redeemed people. When we prophesy, we speak to man; it builds, advises, and comforts (1 Cor. 14:3). God will not let the believers fall.

Prophecy builds and strengthens, makes us feel better, gives us advice, encourages, and comforts us. Sometimes prophecy comes in the form of rebuke and admonishment...but not as an accusation. (Romans 8:1). Sometimes people misuse prophecy by pointing our finger to other people and say: "God said..." Treating other people unfairly in the name of God is not the purpose of prophecy. The important thing that we have to remember regarding this gift is people who prophesy do not do it on behalf of themselves, they are the prophets who are part of the body of Christ and function as the part of the body of Christ and relate with other body of Christ.

1Tes 5:19-20, 1John 4:1 – we do not test the person who prophesies but we test the spirit who speaks through that person.

These are ways to test a prophecy:

a. Does the prophecy build or accuse us?

While it is true that sometimes God admonishes and chastens His children, it is not the end of His words...His last words will always build and plant. (Jer. 1:5 , 9-10)

b. Does the prophecy in line with the Bible?

God will never say "this matter" one day and say another thing the next day. (2 Cor. 1:17-20)

c. What is the relationship between people who prophesy and Christ?

The characteristic of Holy Spirit is always to glorify our Lord Jesus Christ. (John 16:13-14)

d. Do the prophecy and person who prophesies bear fruit? (Matthew 7:16 , 21-23)

e. Do the prophecies happen? (Deut 18:20-22)

f. Does the prophecy increase our obedience to God?(Deut 13:1-5)

g. Does the prophecy bring freedom and peace? (2 Cor. 3:17 , 1 Cor. 14:33 , 2 Tim1:7)

h. Is the prophecy in line with God's will? Does it bring life?

i. Does the prophecy remind us of something?

This test is subjective, and not objective. The purpose of it is to remind us personally.

These 9 tests will help us to know whether the prophecy is correct or false.

Closing

"Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress." 1 Tim4:14-15

This is Paul's advice to Timothy. All glory belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ.