

“If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”

- Jesus, Luke 11:13

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Holy Spirit is:

- God (*Genesis 1:2; Acts 5:3, 4*)
- A Person (*Revelation 22:17*)
- The Comforter (*John 16:7 KJV*)
- The Convictor (*John 16:8*)
- The Counselor (*John 16:12-15*)
- The Teacher (*John 14:26; 1 John 2:27*)
- The Empowerer (*Acts 1:8*)
- The Presence of Jesus in the here and now (*Matthew 28:20; 1 Corinthians 5:4*)
- The Sealer who marks us for total salvation and guarantees our inheritance in the life to come (*Ephesians 1:13, 14*)

The Holy Spirit is not:

- A mystical fog (*Isaiah 11:2*)
- An impersonal power source to make meetings better (*John 15:26*)
- Casper the Friendly Ghost (*Acts 5:1-11*)
- A spirit of fear (*Romans 8:15; 2 Timothy 1:7*)
- A power to be used for your own selfish gain (*Acts 8:9-25*)

The Holy Spirit is described as...

- A dove (*Matthew 3:17; Luke 3:22*)
- Fire (*Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16; Acts 2:3*)
- Wind (*John 3:8; Acts 2:2*)
- Water (*John 7:37-39*)
- Oil (*Hebrews 1:9*)
- Wine (*Acts 2:13*)

- A “down payment” guaranteeing our salvation (*2 Corinthians 1:21, 22*)
- A sensitive entity that can be quenched or grieved because of sin (*Ephesians 4:29, 30; 1 Thessalonians 5:18, 19*)

WHAT DOES THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT DO?

- He forms Christ’s character in you (*Isaiah 11:1-5; Galatians 5:22, 23*)
- He clothes us with Christ’s power so that you can do the works that Jesus did, and even greater ones (*Isaiah 61:1-3; Hebrews 2:4*)
- He increases your faith (*Jude 20*)
- He enables you to pray
 - continually (*1 Thessalonians 5:17*)
 - even when you don’t know what to pray (*Romans 8:26, 27*)
- He allows you to receive spiritual gifts from Jesus for the common good (*1 Corinthians chapters 12, 13 & 14*)
- He allows you to operate in specialized spiritual functions (*Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:27-31; Ephesians 4:11-13*)
- He fulfills the prophecy of Joel 2:28-32 (see *Acts 2:16-21*)

BUT DIDN’T I RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT WHEN I GOT SAVED?

- The Holy Spirit:
 - seals you for salvation (one experience)
 - empowers you for service (many experiences)

WHEN YOU BECOME A CHRISTIAN, the Holy Spirit comes to live in you. The Holy Spirit seals you -- He puts the imprint of God upon you, securing your salvation and depositing in you various gifts and revelations of Jesus Christ. These are a down payment on everything you will receive when you are raised from the dead. You know that you are “sealed” in the Holy Spirit when you exhibit faith in Jesus and a love for other Christians (*Romans 8:9-11; Ephesians 1:13- 15*).

But there is more...

The baptism or infilling of the Holy Spirit is more than a one-time experience. In the early church, the same disciples:

- received the Holy Spirit when Jesus breathed on them (*John 20:22*)
- were filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (*Acts 2:4*)
- were filled with the Holy Spirit after prayer (*Acts 4:31*)

Paul viewed the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a necessary qualification for walking out the Christian life. He commands the Ephesian Christians to be filled with the Holy Spirit (*Ephesians 5:18*).

How DID THE FIRST CHRISTIANS RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT?

In the New Testament, it never happened the same way twice:

- (1) Jesus received the Holy Spirit as a dove descending on Him and heard the voice of God declaring His favor on Him (*Matthew 3:16, 17*).
- (2) The first Christians were filled with the Holy Spirit as they waited on the Lord in prayer and worship. They did this in accordance with Jesus' instructions (*Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8*).
- (3) A blinded and humbled Saul was filled with the Holy Spirit when Ananias laid his hands on him. Saul received back his sight, arose, and was baptized (*Acts 9:17, 19*). Saul later became Paul.
- (4) Cornelius' household spontaneously received the gift of the Holy Spirit when Peter preached the gospel to them. They received the Holy Spirit before they were baptized in water (*Acts 10:44-48*).
- (5) Peter and John laid their hands-on believers who had been baptized but had not yet received the Holy Spirit. For these Christians, getting saved and receiving the Holy Spirit were two separate experiences (*Acts 8:14-17; note verse 16*).

(6) Paul laid his hands-on men who had just been saved, and they received the gift of the Holy Spirit. These men told Paul, “We have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit” (Acts 19:1-7).

Though the manner was different, each person receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit manifested at least one of five things:

- **Boldness** (the ability to do the will of the Lord in the face of fear)
Acts 4:31
- **Joy** (real joy based on a knowledge of God, not on feelings or circumstances)
Acts 13:5
- **Tongues** (other languages, both natural and supernatural in dialect)
Acts 2:4-11; Acts 10:46; Acts 19:6; 1 Corinthians 14:2
- **Supernatural power** to do the works of Jesus (such as loving one another, healings and the casting out of unclean spirits) Acts 4:33- 35; Mark 16:17, 18
- **Prophecy** (speaking the thoughts of God in love) Acts 19:6; 1 Corinthians 14:3

How Do I RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT?

1. Open our hands heart, empty ourselves (Psalms 139:23-24)
2. Confess our sins, receive His forgiveness (1 John 1:9)
3. Tell Him our need and desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit and all His gifts (Luke 11:9-13, Matthew 6:8)
4. Receive His filling by faith with gratitude and thanksgiving (Galatians 3:2, 14; Romans 1:17)
5. Continue to worship God with gratitude and thanksgiving day by day (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18; Ephesians 5:18-20).

***This can be done individually and/or by the laying on of hands by someone mature in faith as we see in the book of Acts to impart the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17; Acts 19:6; 2 Timothy 1:6)**

The Holy Spirit will not forcibly compel you to do anything. You have to eagerly desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit. As the Holy Spirit responds to your hunger, you respond to His presence in faith and with a sincere heart.

It is good to communicate...

With the Holy Spirit comes new experiences in spiritual gifts and the uncomfortable process of being baptized in God's cleansing fire (Matthew 3:11-12). Communicate with someone more mature in the Lord as you experience these things so that you can get answers to your questions.

On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood up and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit has not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

- John 7:37-39

Praying For Healing: Prayer Process

What does praying for the sick look like? As believers, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to pray for healing for one another. We pray for the sick because the centrality is always that Jesus is Lord and compassion is central in how we move to pray for one another. We want to receive His gifts and freely give them away. Here is a simple process in praying for the sick:

1. **Ask what the problem is:** ask them what is going on and what their need is. While they're telling you their problem, be prayerful about what the Holy Spirit is highlighting.
2. **Ask how and when it happened:** listen to their story with compassion and see what the Holy Spirit highlights; you can ask the Holy Spirit how to pray for them specifically. This is compassionate and the Lord can give words of knowledge in these moments.
3. **Pray for healing and pray for comfort:** this is where you'd pray for their healing and anything the Lord might have highlighted to you. This is also where you can ask if they know the Lord if you sense they're not a believer. Be asking the Holy Spirit to lead you as you pray!
4. **Ask how they feel:** after you're done praying, boldly asking how they're feeling! You're not trying to prove anything--it's not about you, it's about God and His grace and mercy for us.
5. **Pray again:** Jesus even demonstrated this in scripture. It's okay to pray again if you feel led or if they respond that nothing changed. All of this in humility and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Encourage and then and thank God for what he is doing and then connect them with help where needed. Nothing comes back void; the goal would be that at the least, they would feel intimately known and loved by God.

THE BASICS OF PROPHECY

WHAT IS PROPHECY?

Prophecy is the supernaturally imparted ability to receive communications from the Holy Spirit and communicate them to others. This communication reveals the heart, mind or counsel of God. It is not a skill, aptitude, or talent.

Prophecy exceeds what the natural mind can conceive. It is speaking forth words given by the Holy Spirit. *In short, prophecy is hearing what is on God's heart and giving it away in love.*

PURPOSE OF PROPHECY:

- For the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the people of God (1 Corinthians 14:3)
- To convict people of sin leading to repentance and reconciliation (1 Corinthians 14:24-25)
- To instruct and learn God's heart in a matter (1 Corinthians 14:31)
- To impart, discern and confirm callings and giftings (1 Timothy 4:14-15)
- Confirmation of mission or ministry (Acts 13:1)
- Exposure of Satan's tactics (Acts 5:3)
- A Testimony of and from Jesus – People will realize that Jesus is near (Revelation 19:10; 1 Corinthians 14:25)

PROPHECY HAS THREE DISTINCT COMPONENTS:

- Revelation – information revealed to you by God
- Interpretation – understanding the revelation in light of Scripture, God's character and doctrine
- Application – wisdom to know what to do with the prophetic word

COMMON FORMS OF PROPHECY:

- Personal Prophecy – common mode of communication for the prophetic
- Exhortation – stirring up courage and wisdom, decrees things with authority
- Prayer – revelatory prayer, God-directed prayer
- Dreams and Visions – given the word in pictures and images instead of words
- Action – making gestures and actions to communicate the prophetic word
- Song – spontaneously inspired, poetic, praise or worship

WHO CAN PROPHESY? ALL CAN:

- You are called to prophesy. "For you can all prophesy in turn..." (1 Corinthians 14:31, Acts 2:17, Joel 2:28-32)

- Because God still speaks today (*John 10:27, Hebrews 12:25, Job 33:14-17*)
- When you “earnestly desire” the gift of Prophecy (*1 Corinthians 14:1*)
- Moses “wished that all the Lord’s people were prophets...[would prophesy]” (*Numbers 11:29*)

HOW TO GROW IN PROPHECY:

- Saturate yourself with Scripture – linger with God and get to know what His Word says.
- Fast for the purpose of drawing close to God. Allow God to have His way in you first.
- Worship
- Cultivate a still spirit. Learn to wait on God in a state of prayer without worshipping or speaking. Come to know His still small voice. (*1 Samuel 3:1-10*)
- Immediately write down anything you feel God is suggesting to you. Pray over it and ask for his guidance and confirmation.
- Be willing to take risks – fruit is born out on a limb. (*Hebrews 11:6*)
- Believe God when He says His thoughts toward us outnumber the sands of the seashore. All you need to do is still your mind and receive one grain, one thought and speak it. (*Psalms 139:17-18*)
- Ask your pastor or a prophetically gifted person to lay hands on you to receive the gift. The Holy Spirit ultimately distributes gifts according to his sovereign plan (*1 Corinthians 12:11*) but often the laying on of hands does have something to do with the impartation of a spiritual gift. (*Romans 1:11; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6*)

HOW A PROPHECY MIGHT COME:

- Scripture, as text or reference
- Pictures in mind’s eye, moving or still
- Seeing words superimposed over natural vision
- Phrase pops into your head
- Impressions
- Sympathetic sensations in your body
- Dreams
- Emotions
- Smells / Tastes / Colors

HOW TO DELIVER A PROPHETIC WORD

- Pray – seems obvious but ask God if you’re supposed to share the word or just pray over it. Some words are meant for intercession only.
- Love – love must be at the center; it shares only what a person can bear. Jesus said he wanted to say more but people couldn’t bear it (*1 Corinthians 13, John 16:12*)

- Humility – remember it is not about you but about God and the person you are ministering to.
- Be responsible – own the weight of the words you give; don't get offended if feedback is given or questions asked.
- Speak normally – be yourself in giving the word; Saying "Thus saith the Lord" is not needed to validate the word
- Honor authority – respect the structure and submit to the designated authority present
- Be brief and amazing – this is not counseling, allow others the chance to pray you'll be surprised what they add. If it's a long word record it or write it down to give later.
- Discipline – correction should come from the scripture or relationship – not your prophecy (*2 Timothy 3:16*)
- Be Sensitive – Do not give words about dates, mates, direction, correction, or babies. These are sensitive topics. If you receive a word like this write it down, pray and submit it to the authority in the room.
- Prophesy life – the Lord may show you negative things, but it is your responsibility to extract the precious from the worthless and speak words of life (*Jeremiah 15:19*)
- Lastly remember – all our words need to line up with God's written word, His nature, and His love for us

RECEIVING A PROPHETIC WORD:

It is important to have a heart of receptivity to what the Lord wants to tell you. He only has your good in mind. The word we receive should be tested to find the truth in what God is saying to you.

Here are some guidelines to consider:

- Every prophetic word given by someone is a mixture that contains God's words expressed through that person. (*1 Corinthians 13:9*)
- Evaluate the prophesy with sincerity and love, an open heart, and with confidence to discern good from bad for yourself.
- True prophesy is a revelation inspired by the Spirit of God and has power to produce godly fruit. False prophesy is inspired by an evil spirit and is twisted in content or tone and is damaging. Non-prophesy is a message that comes from the thoughts of the speaker rather than the inspiration of the Lord. It produces nothing, has no power, and will fall flat as it is delivered.
- Test the content of the prophesy – keep what is good. Test the prophesy against Scripture – don't throw it out because it doesn't match your view of Scripture. Test the benefit of the prophecy – does it affirm what God has already been speaking, initiate a flood of God speaking, or give peace to your inner man?

- Pray over the prophecy and allow God to bring the fulfillment. Remember God's timing is different from ours.
- Hold onto the word with open expectancy. Hold onto the good things communicated and separate it from the tone in which it was given.
- Prophetic words are sometimes invitations to repent, believe, obey and preserve, and may have conditions. They can lead to new opportunities into discipleship or for you to do something to see fulfillment. Most prophetic words won't happen automatically.
- Never make major decision on one prophetic word alone without getting confirmation from spiritual leaders, your spouse, personal inner witness of the Spirit and the Bible.

A Biblical Framework for the Gift of Tongues

WHAT ARE TONGUES?

Tongues (Greek “glossalalia”) are other languages both natural and supernatural in dialect. In the New Testament, they are received as a gift from the Holy Spirit – speaking in another language without having learned it previously, meant to build up the believer, reach the non-believer and edify the church when it is interpreted.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES?

Individual worship & personal edification:

- It facilitates intimate communication with God (*1 Corinthians 14:1-5, 28*)
- It builds your faith (*Jude 20*)
- You utter mysteries, whereby God’s will and knowledge are progressively revealed to you (*1 Corinthians 14:2*)

Intercession:

- It enables you to pray for yourself and others more effectively -- even when you do not know what to pray (*Romans 8:26, 27*)
- It enables you to pray continually (*1 Thessalonians 5:17*)

Witness (*1 Corinthians 14:22*):

- You are submitting the unruliest member of your body -- the tongue -- to the Lord’s complete control (*James 3:3-12*).

Edification of Church (*1 Corinthians 14:23-26*).

WHY IS IT A GOOD THING TO SPEAK IN TONGUES?

- Jesus said you would (*Mark 16:17*)
- Paul endorses it as a blessing (*1 Corinthians 14:18*)
- Isaiah prophesied you would (*Isaiah 28:11-13; explained in 1 Corinthians 14:21, 22*)
- It edifies the believer (*1 Corinthians 14:4*)
- You may also sing in tongues (*1 Corinthians 14:15*)

How DID THE FIRST CHRISTIANS RECEIVE THE GIFT OF TONGUES?

- The first Christians were filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other early languages after they had waited on the Lord in prayer and worship (Acts 2:4-11).
- Cornelius' household spontaneously received the gift of the Holy Spirit when Peter preached the gospel to them. They spoke in tongues and praised God. They received the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues before they were baptized in water (Acts 10:44-48).
- Paul laid his hands on men who had just been saved and baptized in water and the Holy Spirit came upon them. They began to speak in tongues and to speak the thoughts of God or ("prophesy"). These men had told Paul, "We have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." (Acts 19:1-7).
- Paul told the Corinthian Christians that he earnestly desired all of them to speak in tongues. Even more, he wanted them to prophesy in their native language (1 Corinthians 14:5). Paul thanked God that he spoke in tongues more than any of the Corinthian Christians, but even more he wanted to speak to them in a language they could understand (1 Corinthians 14:18, 19).

Speaking in a tongue: The Difference between Devotional Tongues and Corporate Tongues

Devotional tongues are for speaking to yourself and to God; no interpretation is required (1 Corinthians 14:2, 4, 5, 13, 26). They can be best exercised in your private times of worship and prayer.

Corporate tongues are for speaking to a group of people; an interpretation is required (1 Corinthians 14:13). They are meant to edify yourself and are messages given to a public gathering of believers. Once the person gives the message in the tongue, he or another believer gives the interpretation (not translation) of what was spoken. The purpose of the tongue and interpretation is to encourage the believers by communicating a message to them that is directly from God (1 Corinthians 14:13, 26-28). A corporate tongue can also be a language that is known by someone who is present so that they may know and understand the gospel (Acts 2).

How DO I RECEIVE THE GIFT OF TONGUES?

- Cultivate a hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5:6)
- Cultivate an eager desire for spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 14:1)

- Purpose in your heart to do the most important thing first -- to love others (*1 Corinthians 13:1, 2*)
- Confess your sins and drop every wall (*Romans 8:15; 2 Timothy 1:6, 7*)
*You may want to have someone more mature in the Lord lay his hands on you and pray (*Acts 8:17; Acts 19:6; 2 Timothy 1:6*)
- Approach the Lord with faith that He eagerly desires to give you the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues when you ask Him (*Luke 11:9-13*)
- Ask and receive (*Matthew 7:7-11*)
- Look to God and begin with praise and thanksgiving (*Ephesians 5:18-20*)
- You speak in tongues by faith; just as you first became a Christian by faith (*Galatians 3:2, 14; Romans 1:17*). To speak in tongues by faith means that you are trusting that God clearly understands and responds to what you are speaking, even though your mind does not understand. (*1 Corinthians 14:14*)

Do I HAVE TO SPEAK IN TONGUES?

No, but we should desire the gifts God has for us. Tongues is ‘a’ gift, not ‘the’ gift. When you are filled with the Holy Spirit, one of the manifestations can be speaking in tongues.

SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER....

The Holy Spirit will not compel you to speak in tongues. As the Holy Spirit responds to your hunger, you respond to His presence in faith and with a sincere heart. Jesus said, “Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks” (*Matthew 12:35*).

You are not speaking to men, nor are you just speaking into the air. You are edifying yourself and to God (*1 Corinthians 14:28*).

Speaking in tongues does not depend on feelings; it is a gift you elect to operate by an act of your will as the Holy Spirit gives utterance. (*1 Corinthians 14:15*; note the words “*I will...*”).

It is good to communicate...

With the gift of tongues comes new experiences which may be unfamiliar to you. Communicate with someone more mature in the Lord as you experience these things so that you can get answers to your questions.

When you begin speaking in tongues, you may be very preoccupied at first with what the tongues sound like, what they mean and wondering if they are valid. But as you exercise the gift God has given you, tongues will become more of a natural part of your prayer and devotional life, such that you will be able to again focus on the Lord.

WHERE AND WHEN IS IT APPROPRIATE TO SPEAK IN TONGUES?

- Your own prayer and worship times (1 Corinthians 14:2 & 4)
- In a corporate gathering so that it might be interpreted and build up the body of Christ or reveal God's grace to an unbeliever
- In a time of intercession with other believers who have the gift or feel comfortable in that environment (Romans 8:26, 27)
- Note: In accordance with 1 Corinthians 14:23, 28, in a corporate gathering we discourage speaking in tongues except for the edification of the Body in order not to distract those who do not speak in tongues or are unbelievers

Words of Wisdom and Knowledge: How To Practice

Word of wisdom – hearing God’s supernatural wisdom for a specific situation. See what God is saying and say what God is saying.

Words of knowledge – a supernatural revelation from God about someone or something apart from having learned it (to activate grace or put Grace into action).

How to receive and share words of knowledge or words of wisdom?

1. **Think it:** when I’m trying to hear God, I may see something or think in my mind a thought that notices something and aligns with God’s character. It is supernatural (*Romans 12:1-2*).
2. **Feel it:** you might feel something in your physical body—that is God showing you that someone has a need that is specific in their body. You might have a sense for something, an urge of pain or compassion (*Matthew 9:36*).
3. **See it:** the eyes of our hearts will be enlightened; pictures or words might be visualized in the natural. You can ask God more about when and how to share these (*Ephesians 1:17-19*).
4. **Humbly submit it:** humbly yourself and what you’re thinking or feeling under the mighty hand of God, and scripture. We do all things to serve and love people graciously (*Philippians 2:1-5*).
5. **Keep praying for people:** they need it and He is worth it (*James 5:16*). We pray that God would speak and fulfill His purpose in the lives around us through the unique words of wisdom and knowledge He gives us!