

session 4 study guide

experiencing God's love

the gift of miracles, the gift of healing,
the gift of tongues and
the interpretation of tongues

dig

the gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues

“To one there is given through the Spirit . . . speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues” (1 Corinthians 12:8,10).

In the Christian faith, speaking in tongues and the interpretation of tongues are perhaps the most widely debated and misunderstood gifts of the Spirit. Some say speaking in tongues is not a spiritual gift; others say it is a gift. Some say the gift was only for the first-century Church; others believe tongues to be evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Let's investigate what the Bible has to say about this interesting gift so that we can begin to develop our own biblical opinion on the subject.

1. Based on what you know, what is the gift of tongues?

It is evident that in the Early Church, many men and women spoke in tongues. The book of Acts, written by Luke, contains the most references to speaking in tongues in the Bible. As Acts begins, we find Jesus' disciples gathered together in the city of Jerusalem during the Pentecost holiday. (Pentecost was a celebration of the anniversary of the giving of the Ten Commandments to Moses at Mount Sinai.) Read Acts 2:1-13.

2. When Moses came face to face with God in the Old Testament, the Bible says that Moses heard a "still, small voice" (1 Kings 19:12, *KJV*). How is the Holy Spirit's arrival described in these verses in Acts?

3. What does the Holy Spirit bring to the disciples?

4. Sometimes people assume that speaking in tongues is gibberish—perhaps divinely inspired, but still nonsense. According to Acts 2, does "gibberish" or "nonsense" describe what the disciples were speaking after the Holy Spirit came? According to this passage in Acts, what were the disciples saying?

5. How did the people who witnessed this event respond?

6. How would you have responded?

7. Read the following passages. What are some of the circumstances that lead up to people speaking in tongues?

Acts 10:44-46:

Acts 19:1-7:

use

Read 1 Corinthians 14:6-12. Summarize this passage. What is Paul saying about the speaking and interpretation of tongues?

purpose

1. A sign. Read 1 Corinthians 14:22 and recall the passage we read from Acts 2. Who is speaking in tongues a sign for?

What is the purpose of the sign?

2. Edification (building up the Body of Christ). Read 1 Corinthians 14:4-5. These verses distinguish between tongues and prophecy (interpreted tongues). Who is edified when speaking in tongues is interpreted? (Also see verse 26.)

Who is built up if the tongues are not interpreted?

3. Prayer. Read 1 Corinthians 14:14. Do you think speaking in tongues is a form of prayer?

biblical guidelines

Paul gave the church at Corinth instructions for speaking in tongues. He wanted to make it quite clear that the gift of tongues was no greater than the other gifts of the Spirit. Read 1 Corinthians 14:26-28,33,40 and then list Paul's rules:

1. _____
 _____ (verse 26)
2. _____
 _____ (verse 27)
3. _____
 _____ (verses 27-28)
4. _____
 _____ (verses 33,40)

the gift of healing

"To another gifts of healing by that one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:9).

At one time or another, you may have prayed for healing either for yourself or for a loved one. God doesn't always choose to answer these prayers the way we would like, yet we've all heard stories of miraculous healings, unexplained by modern medicine. In addition to the miracles Jesus performed, the Gospels and the book of Acts are filled with examples of God's servants bringing healing and wholeness to those in need.

1. Read the verses below and write down the person who had the gift of healing and what or who they healed. (Note that this is not a complete list.)

PASSAGE	HEALER	WHO/WHAT WAS HEALED
Matthew 8:1-4	_____	_____
Acts 3:2-8	_____	_____
Mark 7:31-37	_____	_____

PASSAGE	HEALER	WHO/WHAT WAS HEALED
Acts 8:6-8	_____	_____
John 5:1-9	_____	_____
Scts 14:8-10	_____	_____

These are all examples of physical healing, but it is also possible to experience emotional healing. When Jesus announced the beginning of His ministry in the synagogue in Nazareth, He quoted these words from the prophet Isaiah:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised (Luke 4:18, *KJV*).

The word translated “broken-hearted” refers to those who are emotionally and mentally shattered. In fact, the last phrase of this quotation, “to set at liberty them that are bruised,” also refers to emotional healing.

2. How might someone need emotional healing?

3. What occupations are aimed at providing emotional healing?

4. There is also another form of healing called spiritual healing. Read Matthew 13:14-15. These verses reference a prophecy from Isaiah 6:9-10. How are these verses about Jesus bringing spiritual healing?

5. First Peter 2:24 says, "Christ himself carried our sins on his body to the cross, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed" (*TEV*). According to this verse, why are we healed?

6. How are we healed?

reflect

1. Do the miraculous gifts of healing and tongues have a place in the Church today? Why or why not?

2. Have you ever witnessed someone speaking in tongues or being healed? What was the experience like?

3. How did it impact your faith?

4. Whether or not you have the gift of healing, what can you be doing to help heal people with physical, emotional and spiritual needs?

5. In Matthew 12:38-39, we read that the Pharisees asked Jesus, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign." Jesus rebuked them for asking: "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign." Yet earlier in Matthew 7, Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find. . . . For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds" (vv. 7-8). How can we reconcile these two verses?

6. Is it acceptable to ask for a miracle? Why or why not?

7. What miracles, if any, have taken place in your own life?

8. What miracles would you like to take place in your life?

meditation



You are the God who performs miracles;
you display your power among the peoples.

PSALM 77:14