

## How does 'speaking in tongues' with prayer ministry or altar ministry help or hinder?

When we pray for others during altar prayer time, or any time when they hear what we are saying in prayer, we must remember that we are not only conversing with God. They are a part of the conversation. We need to consider what kind of a witness our words and actions will be. In addition, if we are working with other people in prayer ministry, we must make sure that we work in unity.

Praying in tongues can be a great blessing, and if the person being prayed for and those on the ministry team understand and can be in unity in that prayer, then go ahead. But if there is any question about either the witness or unity, then pray in plain language. Someone who doesn't understand what you are doing could be confused or driven away. It is all about bringing the one **needing** ministry closer to Jesus.

This Pamphlet Provided  
Courtesy of:

**Spiritual Gifts:  
Speaking in Tongues**

## Spiritual Gifts:

# Speaking in Tongues

What if I could speak all languages of humans and of angels? If I did not love others, I would be nothing more than a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

1 Corinthians 13:1

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***In certain ways we are weak, but the Spirit is here to help us. For example, when we don't know what to pray for, the Spirit prays for us in ways that cannot be put into words. All of our thoughts are known to God. He can understand what is in the mind of the Spirit, as the Spirit prays for God's people.***  
***-- Romans 8:26-27***

### **What does it mean to 'speak in tongues'?**

There are differences of opinion as to precisely what the gift of tongues is. Some believe it is only speaking in foreign languages for purposes of evangelism. This is the manifestation that occurred on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Others believe that there is a spiritual prayer language that each person receives when they are baptized in (or into) the Holy Spirit, and that this is separate from a gift of speaking in foreign languages. In 1 Corinthians 14, when Paul discusses church order, he seems to be speaking about this type of prayer language.

Because there are scriptures that speak of both kinds of activity, and because the precise definition of "speaking in tongues" is controversial, it is a good idea to be gentle, patient and tolerant in using and speaking about this gift. Love and unity is more important.

A person's prayer language is very precious, and allows an expression of the heart to God without

intervention of our limited understanding. This has value in itself. Rejoice at the freedom God has given you for prayer, but always be aware of church order and the unity of the Body (see below).

### **Paul talks about 'speaking in tongues' and the need for 'interpretation' in 1 Corinthians 14. Can you give some insight into what that all means in our church today?**

The key question in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians was "What is it that makes somebody spiritual?" Some thought it was the person who had brought them the gospel, some thought it was their freedom and rights, others thought it was their gifts.

In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul outlines the various gifts and shows how they must work together. God brings different gifts together in the Body to make a whole body with all the abilities needed to accomplish His work. In chapter 13, Paul tells us that the prime consideration in everything that we do in ministry is how it relates to love. In chapter 14,

he discusses our spiritual gifts in relation to meeting for worship.

### **How can many different people with different gifts and interests get together and worship in a way that builds up the church, and is a good witness to other people?**

Paul tells us that we can control the way we behave, and that we need to do so in order to provide a good witness. He is concerned that the use of spiritual gifts in the worship service both serve to build up the church, and also serve as a witness to others (1 Corinthians 14:23).

*My friends, when you meet to worship, you must do everything for the good of everyone there. That's how it should be when someone sings or teaches or tells what God has said or speaks an unknown language or explains what the language means. - 1 Corinthians 14:26*

Many wonder what Paul means by "decently and in order" (verse 40). But he has already defined it: Whatever is done to build the entire Church.