

18 STEPS SPEAKING IN TONGUES

I CORINTHIANS 14

Rules for the speaker:

1. Must be pursuing love while zealously eager to preach, vv. 1 & 39.
2. Must consider the uncertainty of the experience of the carnal Corinthians. Were they speaking to God, or to “a god”? Was the origin of their experience in their human spirit or of the Holy Spirit? v. 2. (similar language construction in Acts 17:23).
3. Must consider Paul’s clear distinction between one who edifies himself and one who edifies the church, v. 4 & I Corinthians 12:7.
4. Must profit the church by expounding the Word of God, v. 6.
5. Must be speech that is clearly understood, vv. 7-9 & 19. God did not give two kinds of tongues (one intelligible and one not intelligible). The sign gift of tongues was a distinct dialect or language - see Acts 2.

6. Must realize the exercise of this gift was to be in the context of a local church, v. 23.
7. Must not be more than three who speak with tongues in a service, v. 27.
8. Must speak in consecutive order, not all speaking at once, vv. 27 & 40.
9. Must be certain an interpreter is present **before** beginning to speak, vv. 28.
10. Must maintain complete self-control while speaking, v. 32.
11. Must not be a woman, v. 34.

Rules for the Church:

1. Message must edify the church, vv.12 & 26.
2. Message must be intelligible to the church, vv. 6-9 & 19.
3. Messenger must understand the sign gifts were especially given for the unbelieving Jews. *“In the law it is written, with men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people...”* vv. 21-22 & I Cor. 1:22.
4. Messenger must recognize an interpreter is

present in the service **before** he exercises the gift of tongues, vv. 27-28.

5. Messenger must not create confusion in the church service, v. 33.
6. Messenger must not be a woman, v. 34.
7. Messenger must submit to the authority of the commandments of the Lord. They supersede our emotions and feelings, v. 37.

10 Things To Consider

1. If the above **18 SCRIPTURAL CONDITIONS** are not met, then the experience one may have is not the spiritual gift of tongues.
2. Acts 2, on the day of Pentecost, was the first historical manifestation of tongues. It is clearly revealed that they spoke in known languages or dialects, Acts 2:6 & 8.
3. The word, “*unknown*” is italicized because it is not in the original text in I Corinthians 14. The wonder of Acts 2 is that the Galileans were speaking known languages they had not learned.
4. What the tongues experience of chapter 14 was, is unexplained apart from the Acts 2 historical account of Pentecost. Paul, with-

out explanation or definition, laid down the ground rules for the genuine exercise of the sign gift in the Church.

5. The question of whether the gift of tongues was to be temporary or permanent throughout this dispensation, must be settled only on the basis of Scripture. For example: Paul's explanation is found in I Corinthians 13:8-13.
6. The first task of a missionary in a foreign country is to learn the language. Would it not be more advantageous that these dedicated servants should receive the gift of tongues rather than spend months in language study?
7. The so-called "modern day gift of tongues" can only come from one of three sources:
 - A gift from God which can only be experienced when the biblical conditions are met. The Holy Spirit never works contrary to the Word of God.
 - A psychological phenomenon.
 - It may be demon oppression or possession. Satan is a master counterfeiter.
8. For one to claim they have had an experience

of speaking in tongues, and yet disregard the scriptural conditions, is falling into the trap of interpreting the Bible by experience, rather than interpreting one's experience by the Bible.

9. Experience always possesses two fatal grounds for error:
 - misunderstanding of the experience itself, in its content and origin; and
 - a questionable conclusion regarding the doctrinal meaning of the experience.
10. I Peter 4:10-11 is a fitting conclusion of the exercise of spiritual gifts in the Bible. The Apostle Peter admonishes us to conversationally speak (laleo) the oracles of God, and to perform menial service (diakonea) as God gives ability ...*"that God in all things may be glorified through Christ Jesus."*

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Hebrews 12:2

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