

**Please fill in the blank spaces using the King James Version.**

Matthew 3:11 King James Version (KJV)

<sup>11</sup>I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_, and with fire:

Mark 1:8 King James Version (KJV)

<sup>8</sup>I indeed have baptized you \_\_\_\_\_: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

Luke 3:16 King James Version (KJV)

<sup>16</sup>John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall \_\_\_\_\_ with the Holy Ghost and with \_\_\_\_\_:

John 1:33 King James Version (KJV)

<sup>33</sup>And I knew him not: but he that sent me to \_\_\_\_\_, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

Acts 1:5 King James Version (KJV)

<sup>5</sup>For John truly baptized \_\_\_\_\_; but ye shall be baptized with the \_\_\_\_\_ not many days hence.

Acts 11:16 King James Version (KJV)

<sup>16</sup>Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed \_\_\_\_\_ with water; but ye shall be \_\_\_\_\_ with the Holy Ghost.

# Tongues the “Spiritual Gift” vs Tongues the “Prayer Language”

Posted [May 11, 2014](#) by [Neal Leazer](#)

In this post, I am addressing one of the biggest points of confusion that I find when discussing the Baptism with the Holy Spirit with people. It is the misunderstanding of the use of speaking in tongues.

There is an entire chapter devoted to this subject in the Bible, and it should not be confusing at all. However, because of wrong teaching (or a lack of teaching) there seems to be a large number of Christians that really do not understand this very important subject.

I believe that once you see and understand it the first time you will say “...this is so simple, why did I not see this before?”

Let’s begin with a couple of definitions that will help make things clearer.

## Tongues as a “Prayer Language”

*(Note: Although the term “prayer language” is not completely accurate, I am using it here because so many people are familiar with it.)*

When a Christian receives the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, he (or she) receives the power and ability to speak in tongues ([Acts 1:5](#), [Acts 1:8](#), [Acts 2:4](#)) any time he or she wishes ([1 Cor 14:14-15](#)). It is a new way for us to speak and to communicate with God ([1 Cor 14:2](#)) that goes beyond our natural intellect ([1 Cor 14:14](#)). For this reason, many people also call this a “prayer language” even though it can be used for things other than just prayer.

The Bible tells us in several places that we should make use of this ability as often as possible ([1 Cor 14:14-15](#), [Eph 6:18](#), [Jude 1:20](#), etc). It also tells us of many ways that it **benefits the person that is doing it**. We are specifically told that no one will understand this language. It is meant for communication between you and the Lord.

**[1 Corinthians 14:2](#)** – *For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.*

This is a faith activity between you and God. If other people don’t understand what you are saying, it is not an issue because what you are saying is not intended for them. When you are using your “prayer language,” no

interpretation is required or expected. If someone complains, just say “I wasn’t talking to you.”

In the Bible, we are told that sometimes in our midst there will be people that don’t understand, or that don’t believe. It says that people like this may think we are “out of our minds” when we are doing this. The implication is that it would usually be better to avoid doing this in front of them ([1 Cor 14:23](#)). But, on the other hand, if you are around other Christians that understand and believe the Bible, then it is OK to do it in a group setting ([Acts 19:6-7](#)) – assuming that you are doing it for the right reasons. Personally, I don’t do it in front of non-Christians, and I don’t go out of my way to do it in front of Christians that don’t understand it. But a group of Christians that believe the Bible should be comfortable with this. If not, then something is wrong somewhere.

## Tongues as a “Spiritual Gift”

According to [1 Corinthians 12:7-11](#), there are nine gifts of the Holy Spirit that are called “manifestations of the Spirit.” These are instances where the Holy Spirit makes Himself known to us in supernatural ways. He gives you a temporary “burst of power” to do something that goes beyond your normal ability in order to accomplish something for Him.

**[1 Corinthians 12:7](#)** – *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all*

When one of these “gifts” (aka manifestations) is given to a person, and that person exercises that gift in faith, then other people receive a divine benefit. The purpose of these gifts is for the believer to cooperate with the Holy Spirit to bless others.

Included in these nine “manifestations of the Spirit” or “spiritual gifts” are three that have been called the “speaking” or “vocal gifts.” These are:

- Prophecy
- Diversities of Tongues
- Interpretation of Tongues

These three temporary abilities only come when the Holy Spirit gives them to someone to use them ([1 Cor 12:11](#)). The purpose of these temporary abilities is to bless other people ([1 Cor 12:7](#)).

When the gift of prophecy is given, a person will generally speak a message from God under divine influence, and the message will be given in the language of the intended audience.

In general, when the gifts of “diversities of tongues” and “interpretation of tongues” are given, a person will speak a message from God under divine influence, but it will usually be a language unknown to the intended audience. This is “diversities of tongues.”

Then that same person (or someone else present) will be given the meaning or “interpretation” of that message by the Holy Spirit. That person will then speak out the interpretation in the language of the intended audience. The end result is that the people get a message from God that they understand.

In both cases, a message from God is delivered *through* a person to another person or to a group of people. The message will come from God, but it will be delivered by the person(s) that received the gift(s). The result is that others are blessed by the Lord. God speaks through someone in order to bless another person or a group of people.

## Similarities between the two

In both the “prayer language” and the “spiritual gift,” the speaker will be speaking in a language that he/she does not understand.

Both the “prayer language” and the “spiritual gift” will require the speaker to act in faith.

## Differences between the two

In the “prayer language,” you are the one that usually initiates it. In the “spiritual gift” it is the Holy Spirit that initiates it.

In the “prayer language” the speaker is the main beneficiary. In the “spiritual gift, other people are the main beneficiaries.

In the “prayer language” you are talking to God. In the “spiritual gift” God is talking to others through you.

In the “prayer language” you are encouraged to do it all the time. In the “spiritual gift” you only do it when the Holy Spirit tells you to.

In the “prayer language” no interpretation is needed or expected because God is the intended audience and He understands it. In the “spiritual gift,” the gift of interpretation of tongues will likely be given so that the people can understand the message and receive the benefit God intended for them.