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**Spiritual Gifts, Including
The Gift of Tongues.**

Rev. G. W. Ridout, D.D.,

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Spiritual Gifts, Including The Gift of Tongues.

**A Consideration of
The Gifts of the Spirit and particularly
The Gift of Tongues.**

**The "Pneumatika" and the "Charis-
mata" of I. Corinthians, Chap-
ters 12 and 14 Closely Exam-
ined.**

BY
REV. G. W. RIDOUT, D.D.
Professor Practical Theology and Apologetics
Asbury College, Wilmore, Ky.

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SPIRITUAL GIFTS INCLUDING THE GIFT OF TONGUES.

In our study of the subject of Gifts and Tongues we will go to the Bible and logically we go first to *First Corinthians*.

Spiritual basis for Spiritual Gifts is found in 1 Cor. 12:4—11, also 1 Cor. 14, which is practically an interpretation of the gift of tongues. To understand the Tongues question we need to get this background.

Referring to 1 Cor. 12:4—6, *verse 4*—“diversities of gifts” indicate such abilities as are really gifts of Divine grace and not human attainments. *Verse 5* “diversities or differences of Administration” suggests the means or instruments by which the desired purpose of these gifts is accomplished. *Verse 6* “diversities of operations” indicate the effect produced by the use of these spiritual gifts.

THE NINE GIFTS OF 1 COR. 12.

Dr. Wilson points out the following facts.

1. These gifts are not essential to our salvation.
2. They are not the product of our reasoning powers or the human intellect.
3. They are not instituted to promote any private end or ambition.

4 SPIRITUAL GIFTS, INCLUDING

4. Unlike salvation they serve a purpose and for a time seem to be withdrawn.

5. Human learning or gifts cannot take the place of these gifts of the Spirit.

6. These gifts seem to appear in a more or less degree in great revivals.

A certain writer said that these gifts were accommodative gifts given on certain occasions and for a purpose and were given severally as the Father wills. They were not given to all believers; not constant with those who receive them. No one received them all and they were not essential to salvation.

Note: The subject of Spiritual Gifts is discussed only in Paul's letter to the Church of Corinth. This church was split up into deplorable factions. There were four parties or factions in the Corinthian Church.

1. Cephas (Peter). 2. Apollos. 3. Paul.
4. Christ.

The Corinthian Christians had formerly been idolaters and in the habit of experiencing ecstasies which caused them to lose self control. Counterfeiters abounded who pretended to possess Spiritual gifts and substituted self originated manifestations in the place of Divine and Spiritual manifestations. The disorders in the church at Corinth had sprung from the selfish struggle

of each to show off his own special gift whether tongues, psalm, teaching, or revelation. As a result there was envy, jealousy, pride, strife and a great need that Paul should write two letters to this church to cleanse it of its false pride, to insist upon discipline and to get it thinking on Spiritual Gifts upon a sound Scriptural and Spiritual basis. The church services had degenerated to scenes so wild, noisy, and disorderly, that there were times when any heathen who dropped in could only see that they were all mad. Enthusiasts were on their feet at once pouring forth wild series of sounds which no human being present could understand. Shameful selfishness and disorder were allowed to creep into the love feast and the Lord's Supper, also gluttony, drunkenness and ostentation of the wealthier members.

The nine *Gifts* named have been classified into gifts of

1. Mind.
2. Voice.
3. Action.

A. Under *Mind* are gifts of

1. Wisdom.
2. Knowledge.
3. Faith.
4. Discerning of Spirits.
5. Interpretation.

6 SPIRITUAL GIFTS, INCLUDING

B. Under *Voice* are gifts of (Utterance).

1. Prophecy.
2. Tongues.

C. Gifts of *Action* are:

1. Healing.
2. Working of miracles.

Dr. W. T. Davidson, in his book, "The Indwelling Spirit," says the following upon the gifts:

"We find, however, the following distinctions more or less clearly appearing—

"1. Gifts which would now be described as supernatural: Prophecy. Tongues; interpretation of tongues; and, perhaps, discerning of spirits. Healings. Miracles, generally.

"2. Gifts which might be described as extraordinary endowments, such as: Wisdom, Visions. Wonder-working Faith.

"3. Gifts which were granted for the purpose of service, such as: Helps. Governments. Ministries.

"4. Gifts such as would now be called graces of character, imparted in an extraordinary degree, but of an ethical and spiritual kind, due to the faithful use of natural gifts and faculties.."

"Nothing in later history," says Davidson, "warrants the idea of the continuance of this

charism (tongues). St. Paul's account shows why it is comparatively useless. What he himself saw in ecstasy, 2 Cor. 12, he did not attempt to repeat. Rapture is not inspiration. Ecstasy (as in the case of St. Catharine) injures the body, disturbs the mental balance."

Of these special gifts are, according to the Greek, called "charismata" (special endowments of supernatural energy). Dean Stanley says that, "Before this consciousness of a higher power than their own, the ordinary and natural faculties of the human mind seemed to retire to make way for loftier aspirations, more immediate intimations of the divine will, more visible manifestations of the divine power. It resembles in some degree the inspiration of the Jewish judges, psalmists and prophets. It may be illustrated by the ecstasies and visions of prophets in all religions but in its energy and universality it was peculiar to the Christian society of the Apostolic Age."

GIFTS IN THEIR ORDER.

I. Wisdom.

This gift implies right judgment concerning spiritual things. This is used in contrast with human philosophy. It enables the believer to enunciate, elucidate and apply the higher Christian wisdom.

8 SPIRITUAL GIFTS, INCLUDING

II. Knowledge.

This means an imparted knowledge of spiritual mysteries, also a spiritual impartation of the verity of divine truth.

III. Faith.

1. It is a special divine endowment of the faith faculty.

2. It is a peculiar impulse that comes to the believer when any difficult matter is to be performed.

3. It is an undoubtable and divinely wrought conviction that its object shall be realized, accompanied by a sure consciousness of the presence and possession of a supernatural power to accomplish its object.

4. It is superadded to ordinary Christian faith.

5. It operates in spheres which are not available to saving faith or to the fulness of faith. It apprehends results which only the supernatural illuminations of the Holy Spirit reveal to the soul as possible to faith.

6. The Bible clearly teaches that aside from ordinary saving faith there is this divinely bestowed or begotten faith.

IV. Healing.

When this exists it is a specific gift and not a state of faith awaiting opportunity for service. Geo. W. Wilson says, page 173, in

his book, "I believe in divine healing divinely attested, and insist that where the divine gift of healing exists it is not a state of faith from which acts of healing spring but a direct immediate divine persuasion that this subject or candidate is to be healed by divine power and where it exists it never fails."

V. *Miracles or Powers.*

This means the ability to handle divine power to a wise end. It is to make use of the dynamite of the Gospel in such a manner as to promote the work and the glory of God and not personal prominence or aggrandizement.

Geo. W. Wilson—"A marked characteristic of the teaching of many who exercise gifts is an absence of unctious testimony to glorious subjective workings of the power of the Holy Ghost. Gifts are not bestowed to be prated about or to make invidious comparisons with those who do not possess them, while ignoring those who do possess them."

VI. *Prophecy.*

Observe Paul urges the possession of this gift next to love. As contrasted with tongues he says, "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification but he that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself."

10 SPIRITUAL GIFTS, INCLUDING

“Prophecy in the New Testament sense is not the mere foretelling of the future but utterance under immediate divine inspiration delivering inspired exhortations, preachments, instructions, warnings.”—Benson.

VII. Discerning of Spirits.

The ability to discriminate between the false and the true. In John 4:1 we are exhorted to try the spirits. This is an important gift, especially to believers. It is exceedingly desirable to have the gift whereby one can detect a false spirit coming under the name of the Lord.

VIII. Tongues.

IX. Interpretation of Tongues.

These latter two will be discussed at length.

John Wesley wrote in 1772 concerning George Bell and those who professed to have had extraordinary revelations and manifestations from God. He said, “By this very thing Satan beguiled them from the simplicity that is in Christ by insensible degrees. They were led to value these extraordinary gifts more than the ordinary grace of God and I could not convince them that a grain of humble love was better than all these gifts put together.”

THE GIFT OF TONGUES AND SPURIOUS TONGUES
PARTICULARLY EXAMINED.

We must study this subject in the light of the 12th and 14th chapters of 1st Corinthians. You will observe that among the nine gifts named in 1st Corinthians that the gift of tongues is named last. Note two expressions, verse 10, "divers kinds of tongues," also "interpretation of tongues." It is evident that the gift of tongues is Scriptural: Acts 2:4, 6, 8, 11; Acts 10:46, 19:6; 1 Cor. 12th and 14th chapters.

Observe, that the gifts of tongues aside from the Acts is taught only in Corinthians.

Note some characteristics of the Corinthian Church: "When they were worshippers of dumb idols they had been accustomed to the false inspiration of the Pythia or the Sibyl which expressed itself in broken utterances, streaming hair, and foaming lips, and the wrapped utterances of self-induced emotions, mechanical and self-induced frenzy of feminine feebleness or hypocritical superstition."—Farrar.

Evans said that the Corinthian church had formerly been idolaters which were in the habit of experiencing ecstasies which caused them to lose self control and which were similar to the manifestations of the professed tongues then existing in the Church of Corinth.

12 SPIRITUAL GIFTS, INCLUDING

The Corinthian Christians were in danger of over emphasizing these showy gifts which appealed to the senses and emotions and manifested themselves in ecstatic displays and there was grave danger of confounding genuine inspiration with fanatical excitement.

Referring now to 1st Corinthians 14 which really is an interpretation of the 12th chapter on the question of tongues we find the following:

1. Prophecy is put before tongues. Verse 1. (Note: In the N. T. prophecy means the gifts of utterance, preaching, testifying, etc.)

2. Speaking in tongues is unto God and not to man. Verse 2.

3. Speaking in tongues is not for edification. Verse 4.

4. The gifts of tongues of no avail when compared to revelation, knowledge, prophesying, doctrine. Verse 6.

5. Tongues may be a matter of (hot) air. Verse 9.

6. Paul who could speak more tongues than all of them made no boast of it and took no pride in unknown tongues. Verses 18, 19.

7. Tongues lead to confusion and tumult, (verse 23) and to misinterpretation of worship.

8. Tongues do not lead to conversion like preaching. Verses 24-25.

9. Tongues not permissible unless an interpreter be present. Verses 27, 28.

10. The Tongues Movement has developed more among women than men. Verse 34.

11. Tongues is not a modern doctrine. As a doctrine it has appeared at various times in the Church.

12. The Tongues question has done irreparable damage to the cause of Christian holiness. It has lent itself to fanaticism and not infrequently it has broken out into unseemly behavior.

13. The theory of tongues has not been proved or practical on foreign mission fields.

14. Tongues produce dissensions, and disruptions and is largely possessed of a harsh, unteachable denunciatory and insubordinate spirit.

Note. Rev. W. H. Budd calls attention to the following: "St. Paul visited and planted churches in not less than twenty-three countries and districts, forty-nine cities and towns, and organized churches in eleven cities, that were essentially Pauline in spirit, and yet in only two of them is speaking in tongues mentioned. Once only in Ephesus. Although he wrote an epistle to this church, praying some high things for them, he does

14 SPIRITUAL GIFTS, INCLUDING

not mention tongues, or pray that they may again speak in tongues. Jesus in Rev. 2:1-7, says some good things about this church, but fails to mention tongues as one." The other church was Corinth. And in his epistle to this church, St. Paul makes clear the use and abuse of tongues. With him tongues are for a sign to unbelievers, not an evidence to believers." (Cor. 14:22).

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS.

Some who have professed to speak in tongues have confessed that they lost their sanctification or Pentecostal blessing, but they still could speak in tongues. A minister asked one such, "If you could still speak in tongues without your pentecostal experience, how can speaking in tongues be the evidence that you have such an experience?"

Another told his friend that he had lost the power of the Holy Ghost but could still speak with tongues. The same question was put to him as to how speaking with tongues could be the evidence of Pentecostal power? He answered, "It cannot be."

Rev. P. Wiseman, of Canada, after a very exact examination of the Tongues Movement makes this very pertinent observation: "If people without grace or power could speak in tongues, if a Mohammedan in his religious frenzy can speak in tongues as is reputed he

does; if a Mormon with his diabolical practice of polygamy can speak in tongues; if people can change their doctrines at will, and believe about as they like and still speak in tongues; then speaking in tongues is no evidence that one has the sacred experience received by the apostles and disciples on the day of Pentecost. That which may be possessed without grace or power cannot be an evidence of either."

Rev. S. E. Polovina, "Sam the Methodist," who is known as being quite a linguist relates the following experience with a certain wing of the Tongues Movement:

"Sometime ago these people were carrying a meeting on, and claiming they were receiving the gift of tongues, and that they could speak foreign languages. As I am a foreigner myself and speaking five or six languages, I desired to be in one of their meetings and see if they got the gift of any language that I could speak. I went to their meeting and took the front seat that I might be sure to hear what they spoke, but to my surprise they never spoke a sound of any language I ever heard. I have heard numbers of languages in my travels through Europe and Asia, and have heard and seen many different nationalities of people. But among all these peoples I never heard any such jabbering as that before in my life.

“But to investigate more thoroughly than that, next day I went and gathered seven more foreigners, those who can speak a number of languages. I told the boys just what I wanted them to do, to be sure and watch when they began jabbering, and see if they could catch just one word in any language. So that night we went to their church, and took front seats. After they had a few songs, and prayer, they had a testimony service before the preaching. They also had a man who claimed that he had received the gift of interpretation, and could interpret everything they said when they spoke in that ‘unknown tongue.’ They began to testify in the English language, but they soon turned into that jabbering. When one would get through with his ‘unknown tongue,’ this man, who claimed to be an interpreter, would tell them what they had said, and what language they had spoken in. And behold the first interpretation he made he lied. He told the man that he spoke in the Russian language, and I know he did not, because I can speak Russian just as good or possibly a little better than he could English. I never said anything, and let them all testify and him interpret. He interpreted them one by one, and told them they spoke in different foreign languages. So it happened that every language that he said they spoke, one of us boys knew that lan-

guage, but we failed to catch one single word.

“So when they had all finished testifying, I arose to my feet and began to testify, saying in the English language, ‘I love to praise God’s name for saving and sanctifying power, then I changed right into my language, and quoted part of the third verse of the third chapter of John: ‘Zaista, gaista ti kazem: ako se ko nanovo ne rodi, ne moize vidjeti carstva Bozyega.’ Then I turned to him and asked him what I had spoken and what language, and he told me that I had spoken in French, and that I quoted the nineteenth chapter of Acts, and the second verse, ‘Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?’

“Then I said to him, ‘Brother, that is the biggest lie you ever told since you came into the world. I quoted part of the third verse of the third chapter of John in the Austrian language. Not only did you misinterpret this testimony, but every testimony that was given here tonight.’ Then he said to me, ‘How do you know?’ I said, ‘There are eight of us boys here, who can speak all these languages you have referred to. We are willing for you to take us before any consul and let you find out that we can speak these languages, if you don’t believe we can.’

“So when the old boy saw what he was up against, he left the country, and never did he

show up again, at least in Southern Illinois. So as we left the mission a lady jumped up to me and said that she could speak every language in the world. Then I offered her \$20 if she could only tell me how many languages there were in the world. She could not."

FURTHER OBSERVATION.

The mail brought to me recently the following letter:

"Rev. G. W. Ridout, D.D.,

 "Wilmore, Ky.

"Dear Sir and Brother:

"I am seeking information. There are certain preachers that are preaching throughout this section who belong to what is now known as the 'Church of God' or 'Assembly of God' who are preaching the Baptism of the Holy Ghost as a third blessing evidenced by the gift of Tongues. They go so far as to say no one has the real gift of Tongues Baptism of the Holy Ghost unless they 'Speak with Tongues.' When I speak of tongues I mean the commonly called 'Unknown Tongues.'

"They are now telling the people that John Wesley and Chas. G. Finney had this gift of tongues, spake with them as they are now teaching. I will appreciate it if you will furnish me with this information."

It is sad indeed, the extent to which fanatical preachers will go in the interest of their fanatical doctrines. This letter furnishes a sample of the cheap, trashy, deceptive, stuff that some of those ignorant preachers will get off in the name of "Holiness" and the "Pentecost."

To say that John Wesley and Charles Finney spoke with "tongues" is to put a libel upon history, and to charge the Methodist movement and Finney's Evangelism with something that never happened. No, emphatically No! Wesley never professed or taught or preached the experience of tongues, nor did Finney, but both men were baptized with the Holy Ghost and the Pentecostal Power and stirred two Continents for God.

Both Wesley and Finney *warned against the dangers of fanaticism*.—Read Wesley's advice to the sanctified where he exhorts his people to beware of fanaticism, and he says, "Beware of imagining you have the gift of spirits—prophesying or discerning of spirits—beware of judging people to be either right or wrong by your own feelings—all visions, revelations, manifestations whatever are little compared to love." He further says:

"Do not, therefore, say to any that would advise or reprove you, 'You are blind; you cannot teach me;' do not say, 'This is your wisdom, your carnal reason;' but calmly

weigh the thing before God. Always remember much grace does not imply much light. These do not always go together. As there may be much light where there is little love, so there may be much love where there is little light."

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