

# Do All Speak With Tongues?

**1Co 12:28** And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues.

**1Co 12:29** Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?

**1Co 12:30** Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

**1Co 12:31** But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

Question - If everyone spoke in tongues, why would we need interpreters?

(RJB)

**Mar 16:17** And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues;

**Act 2:4** And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

“...all filled ...” As distinct from just the Apostles (RJB)

**Act 2:11** both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians--we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God."

**Act 10:46** For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared,

**Act 19:6** And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.

**1Co 12:10** to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

**1Co 12:28** And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues.

**1Co 12:30** Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

The questioning in vv 29 & 30 is very important. It is put forth with the negative particle *me* which expects a negative answer. What we have as a question “Are all apostles?” actually could be taken as a negative statement “Not all are apostles! ....” (Spiros Zodihates Hebrew Greek Key Study Bible p 1403) Therefore the statement “Not all speak in tongues” is a valid reading (RJB)

The use of the word *me* is a way (different to our language) that the Greeks made a statement into a negative sentence or an inferred (suggested) question. So maybe a good English rendition of this statement might be “No, not everyone speaks in tongues (do they)?” (RJB)

(role play example “you’re not going to buy that”)

**1Co 13:1** *If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.*

**1Co 13:8** *Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.*

**1Co 14:1** *Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.*

**but rather that you may prophesy:** of all the gifts of the Spirit, the apostle prefers prophesying, and recommends this to the Corinthians, as what they should be chiefly desirous of, and **more desirous of than of speaking with tongues**, which many among them were so very fond of:

by which (Prophecy) he means, **not so much the gift of foretelling future events**, though there was such a gift bestowed on some persons in those times, and, in certain cases, was very profitable to the churches; **but a gift of preaching the word, or explaining the prophecies of the Old Testament, and of praying and singing of psalms, all which, as appears from some following parts of this chapter, were included in it**; and that not in an ordinary, but in an extraordinary way; a person possessed of this gift could at once, without the use of means, or help of study, preach the word, and open the more difficult parts of Scripture; he had an extraordinary gift of prayer, which he could make use of when he pleased, and at once compose and deliver out a psalm, or hymn, in the public congregation. (Gill)

**but rather that you prophesied;** he wished them all prophets, as Moses did all the Lord's people; he was not against their speaking with tongues, but this was the most eligible, for which he gives this reason: (Gill)

**1Co 14:2** *For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit.*

**1Co 14:3** *On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation.*

**1Co 14:4** *The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.*

**1Co 14:5** *Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.*

*for greater is he that prophesies, than he that speaks with tongues; that is, he is more useful and profitable to men, and so consequently more honourable, in higher esteem, and more valued, and in greater dignity, being in a more serviceable post and office, and which is more beneficial and advantageous to mankind: (Gill)*

What holds the last and lowest rank in this enumeration is diversity of tongues. It is by itself the most useless and insignificant of all these gifts. Healing diseases, relieving the poor, helping the sick, have their use: but how vain a thing is it to speak languages, if a man does it merely to amuse or boast himself! This may indeed raise the admiration, but cannot promote the edification, of the hearers, nor do them any good. And yet it is manifest (obvious) from ch. 14 that the Corinthians valued themselves exceedingly on this gift. Note, How proper a method it is to beat down pride to let persons know the true value of what they pride themselves in! It is but too common a thing for men to value themselves most on what is least worth: and it is of great use to bring them to a sober mind by letting them know how much they are mistaken (Matthew Henry)

**1Co 14:6** Now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching?

**1Co 14:18** I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.

**1Co 14:21** In the Law it is written, "By people of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord."

**1Co 14:22** Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers.

**1Co 14:23** If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds?

**1Co 14:26** What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

**1Co 14:27** If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret.

**1Co 14:28** But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God.

**1Co 14:39** So, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.