



SR Stance on Speaking in Tongues

At Solid Rock Church, we consider our *doctrine* to be our primary beliefs that unify us as a church, and we consider our *stances* to be guidelines on practical, tertiary issues that guide our practices but do not divide us as a church. Our *doctrine*, or non-negotiable beliefs expressed in our Statement of Faith, is derived from clear, Biblical teachings and mandates. We consider our *stances* to be tertiary and based on careful and prayerful study of the Scriptures. It is our practice to avoid division over tertiary issues in order to maintain the unity we have in Christ and pursue our main task of making disciples for Jesus for the glory of God. Our *stances* address theological or ecclesiological issues that are tertiary, yet necessary for functioning as the body of Christ. Our *stances* represent our best application of Biblical wisdom and Holy Spirit guidance in practical matters that aren't explicitly mandated in the Scriptures. At Solid Rock Church, speaking in tongues is a tertiary issue. This means that we don't consider it a primary *doctrine* necessary for a unity of faith.

At Solid Rock, we believe that the Holy Spirit, being fully God and proceeding from the Father, is the presence of God in spirit form. He reveals the will of God in unification with God's character and the truth of the Scriptures. He leads sinners to salvation by opening their eyes to see and stirring their hearts to believe the truth of the Gospel. For those who believe, He is the indwelling presence of God, He guides through the life-long journey of sanctification, and He eternally seals and guarantees the inheritance of the saints. He empowers believers for Christ-like living and equips believers with spiritual gifts, including the miraculous spiritual gifts listed in the Scriptures, for the edification and unification of the church, and for living the mission of Jesus to make disciples of the nations (Ephesians 1:11-14, 16-18; 2 Corinthians 1:22, 3:14-16; John 3:3-8, 14:26, 15:26-27, 16:7-8, 16:12-14; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13; Romans 8:9-11, 14-17, 26-27; Acts 1:8, 11:15-18, 26:15-20; Philippians 1:6; 1 Peter 1:3-5). This is our doctrinal position on the person and role of the Holy Spirit.

In Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12-14, and Ephesians 4, Paul provides a comprehensive teaching on the use of spiritual gifts given to believers by the Holy Spirit. Here are 7 Biblical principles outlined by the Apostle Paul that apply to the use of all spiritual gifts:

1. *Spiritual gifts are an indication of God's specific design and function for the believer in serving the church. (Romans 12:4-6)*
2. *God disperses spiritual gifts to all believers according to His will. (1 Corinthians 12:7,11)*
3. *All spiritual gifts are dispersed by the same Holy Spirit, therefore spiritual gifts should lead to unity rather than division. (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)*



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4. *All spiritual gifts are dispersed to edify and build up the body as a whole. (1 Corinthians 12:7)*
5. *Spiritual gifts are mutually dependent on one another for a church to fully function as one body. (1 Corinthians 12:12-26, Ephesians)*
6. *When believers use their spiritual gifts together for the edification of the church, the church grows towards maturity in Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-16)*
7. *The use of spiritual gifts without love has no value. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)*

In the Christian church today, there is much disagreement about how the Holy Spirit fills and empowers believers with spiritual gifts. The greatest variance among Christian churches on the use of spiritual gifts is the use of speaking in tongues. The Apostle Paul refers to issues that are not prescribed by God as disputable matters or matters of opinion (Romans 14:1 ESV & NIV). In disputable matters, the Apostle Paul encourages a simple and helpful grid through which to determine what is right in any given situation. Paul's advice is to consider whether or not a situation is beneficial rather than simply permissible. In Paul's letters, he mentions multiple issues that fall into the category of disputable matters, such as the day of the week on which Christians worship, eating certain foods and drinking alcohol. In these situations, Paul encourages the church to refrain from only asking what is permissible. He states that, in all these situations, all things are permissible but, for the Christ follower, the love of Christ should compel us to ask the greater question, "Is this beneficial?" (1 Corinthians 10:23).

"All things are lawful," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful," but not all things build up." 1 Corinthians 10:23

In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul spends a great deal of energy providing specific precautions and instructions regarding the use of speaking in tongues within large worship gatherings where both believers and unbelievers are present. In 1 Corinthians 14, the Apostle Paul doesn't forbid the use of speaking in tongues in public worship. Instead, he presents cautions regarding the use of speaking in tongues in public worship settings, in order to edify all who are present by avoiding confusion. Paul's main concern is not what is permissible, but instead he is most concerned with what is beneficial or helpful to lead unbelievers to faith in Jesus and build up the church. He lays out 5 primary Biblical parameters for the use of tongues in public worship gatherings:



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1. *The use of speaking in tongues must edify the body.*
2. *Speaking in turn, no more than 2-3 people should speak in tongues in one service.*
3. *In order for the message presented in tongues to be edifying to other believers, there must be an interpreter that accompanies the use of tongues.*
4. *The interpretation of tongues must be weighed against the truth of Scripture for validation.*
5. *Overall, it's better to avoid the use of speaking in tongues in gatherings where there are unbelievers.*

With these Biblical parameters in mind, the Elders of Solid Rock have concluded that the spiritual gift of speaking in tongues is a valid manifestation of the Holy Spirit's presence and power in an individual believer. Speaking in tongues is imparted, according to God's will, to certain believers for the purpose of mutual edification and building up the church. As with all spiritual gifts, the use of speaking in tongues should result in unity in the body rather than confusion or division. Speaking in tongues is most beneficial when accompanied by the spiritual gift of interpreting tongues, in order to present a clear message that can be measured against the truth of Scripture. Additionally, the use of the spiritual gift of speaking in tongues apart from a genuine love for one another can cause confusion and disunity. Paul's primary point in 1 Corinthians 14 seems to be that it's better to avoid the use of speaking in tongues in gatherings where there are unbelievers. Considering the Biblical parameters and potential liabilities associated with the spiritual gift of speaking in tongues, it is the *stance* of the Solid Rock Elders to discourage the use of speaking in tongues in large worship gatherings. We encourage those who have been given the spiritual gift of tongues to use this gift in private and personal settings or within a small group where those present are believers who are walking in a covenant relationship with one another and where there is an interpreter so that what is spoken may be understood and measured against Scripture in order to edify and build up all who are present.