

Tongues and Interpretation (Part 2)

My own search

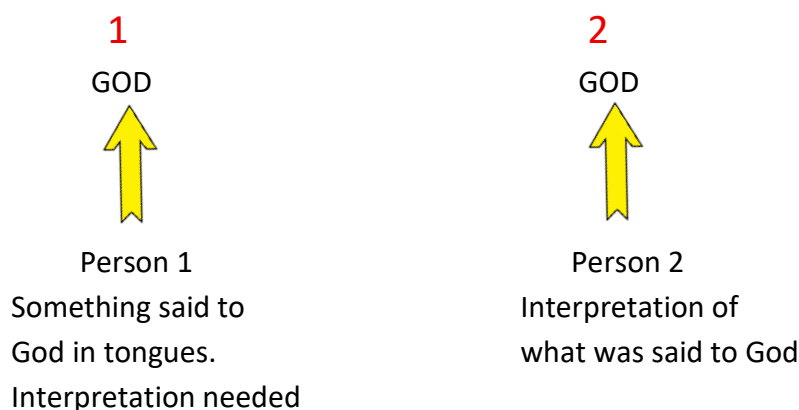
I had been a Christian for a long time before being aware of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and all of the blessings that it brings. I was absolutely appalled at having not seen, for all those years, something that is so obvious in God's Word. As a result of this I avidly set out to find out all I could about using the Spiritual Gifts. When there was something spoken in tongues, an interpretation or a prophecy I would speak to the person whom God had used, in order to obtain as clear a picture as possible as to how God uses these gifts to build up the Church.

I would like to share the conclusions I came to with regard to interpretation. I do not know if you will agree with what I am going to write, but, feel that it is an important issue because of the division and disunity that can result. I pray that it will help you to grow in your own faith as you think about it and that it will also enable you to help others who might be confused.

Scripture

From Paul's writing in **1 Corin. 14:2**, *'One who speaks in an unknown tongue does not speak to men but to God. No-one understands him because he is speaking to God in the power of the Spirit.'*

This is what we have:-



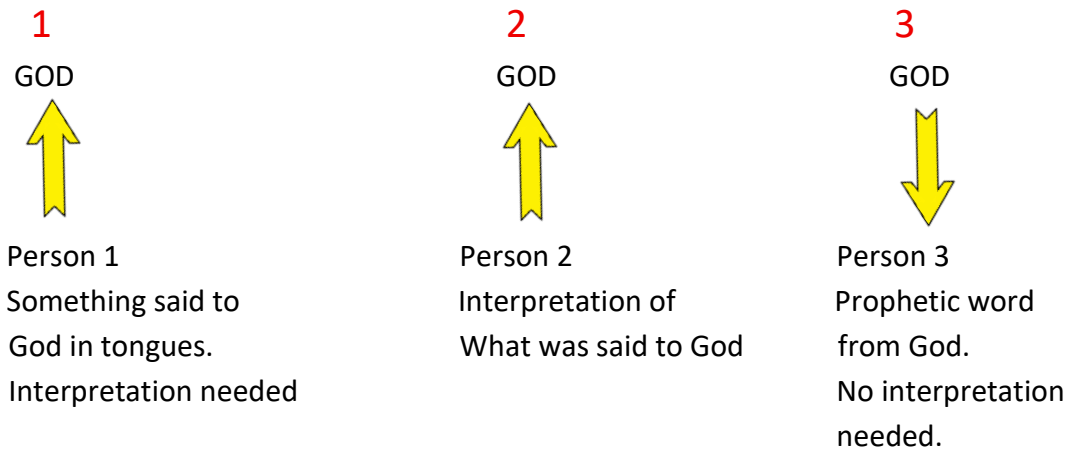
Different thoughts

There appears to be two lines of thought concerning interpretation. I think that this arises because different denominations do not quite see things in the same way. When members from each of these groups attend the same service then a problem can arise because of the different views.

Sometimes the interpretation is given as something that has been said to God, but, at other times it is given as a prophetic word. This causes confusion because people are not certain what has actually happened.

As mentioned in the previous Growing Strong, the 'quickening' that happens within individuals causes other gifts to be released so the tongues and interpretation are often followed by a prophetic word.

This is then what we have:-



The conclusion I came to was that often, because of the quickening and the release of the Gifts, Person 3 receives a prophetic word, but, gives it before the interpretation of the tongues has been given. Instead of having:- **1 2 3** we then have:- **1 3** and the interpretation of the tongues has been omitted, however, because it has followed on from the tongues, it is taken as an interpretation of the tongues.

My view

I personally cannot see a prophetic word being an interpretation because it states quite clearly in God's Word that speaking in tongues is speaking **TO** God. If tongues is saying something **TO** God, then surely the interpretation must also be saying something **TO** God. Prophecy on the other hand, most definitely comes **FROM** God and is when God speaks to us.

Everything in order

I would say that when a prophetic word has followed directly after tongues, then the person leading the service should say something like:- "We thank you for that prophetic word, but can we go back a step and someone please give us the interpretation of what was said in tongues." This then makes it clear to the congregation exactly what is happening.

Results of division concerning interpretation

In this sort of situation the prophecies gradually have less and less impact. Those who are normally used by God for saying something in tongues, interpretation or prophecy, stop using the Gifts, which of course, then leads to the other Gifts of the Spirit not being used. This means that the members of the congregation are missing out and are not growing spiritually as God intended. How sad. God is not a God of confusion but of peace. If there is a disunity in the Church then there is something not quite right somewhere and the Church will not progress spiritually until the issue is resolved.

We would not expect God to do something in the service that is divisive as He is a God of order. Having said this however, we need to remain open to God to do whatever He wishes in any way that He thinks fit; we cannot dictate to Him about how He chooses to allocate the Gifts of the Spirit. His desire is to see the people in His Church grow and be built up spiritually. Pray that God will use you and draw you close to Himself as you use His Gifts.