

**Series** - Be Wise (19 of 22)  
**Topic** - The Proper Use of Our Spiritual Gifts

**Date** - 27 Oct 2019  
**Speaker** - Pastor Lionel Goh

---

## WELCOME [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

[Ice Breakers 1](#)

[Ice Breakers 2](#)

---

## WORSHIP [15 min]

You may select songs like

1. Spirit Touch Your Church
2. Come Holy Spirit

---

## WORD [45 min]

### **Spiritual Objectives**

At the end of the sermon discussion, cell members will:

1. Earnestly desire spiritual gifts.
2. Understand the nature and functions of spiritual gifts.
3. Use spiritual gifts appropriately to build the Body of Christ.

### **Sermon Summary**

The following are the key points of the sermon:

1. Our spiritual gifts are to be used properly to build up God's people.
2. Speaking of tongues is for a private setting.
3. In a public setting, it must be accompanied by an interpretation which then becomes a prophetic word for the Body of Christ.
4. Spiritual gifts must be used in an orderly fashion.

### **Sermon Recap (Full Summary)**

This is the fourth instalment of the topic on spiritual gifts. The earlier 3 sermons touched on understanding spiritual gifts, understanding love in the context of serving, and using our spiritual gifts to serve others in love. In this week's sermon, Pastor Lionel touched on the proper use of spiritual gifts.

### **The abuse of spiritual gifts**

1 Corinthians 12 describes how the members of the Corinthian church had gifts, but didn't see the need to serve others with their gifts. Instead they flaunted their spiritual gifts to draw attention to themselves. The Corinthians abused the spiritual gifts that they had. In chapter 14, Paul addresses this not by restricting the use of spiritual gifts, but by teaching

them the nature of these gifts (1 Cor 14:1-25), and their proper usage (1 Cor 14:26-33). This passage touches on 3 gifts: tongues, interpretation and prophecy.

### **The gift of tongues**

A “tongue” (Greek: *glossa*) is a language inspired by the Holy Spirit, not learnt by the speaker. It can be a human language (*xenoglossa*) or an angelic language (*glossolalia*) (1 Cor 13:1). In some cases, it may be a mysterious utterance understood only by God Himself (1 Cor 14:2).

The proper uses of tongues, as taught by the apostle Paul, are as a private prayer language, as a prophetic word to believers, and as a sign to unbelievers.

#### Tongues as a private prayer language

Tongues can be used in private prayer, when one is praying alone to God (1 Cor 14:4a). Pastor Lionel listed these advantages of praying in tongues:

- It edifies the speaker.
- It connects the speaker with God intimately, helped by the Holy Spirit.
- It helps the speaker to pray in accordance with the will of God.
- It sharpens the speaker’s spirit.

Importantly, the apostle Paul endorses the use of tongues as a private prayer language (1 Cor 14: 18, 39).

#### Tongues as a prophetic word to believers

The speaking of tongues, if used in a public setting, can be God’s prophetic word to believers, after it is interpreted (1 Cor 14:13, 27).

#### Tongues as a sign to unbelievers

Tongues can also act as a sign to unbelievers (1 Cor 14:22), particularly when the tongue is a foreign language that the unbeliever understands, and he/she knows that the speaker did not learn the language (Acts 2:7-8, 11).

### **The gift of interpretation**

The gift of interpretation is the supernatural ability to interpret a spoken tongue without having to learn the tongue. When the tongue is interpreted, it becomes a prophetic word (*rhema*) from God to the listeners. It is useful to note that an interpretation is not a word-for-word translation of the tongue that was spoken, but rather a general description of the meaning of the tongue that was just spoken.

### **The gift of prophecy**

Prophecy is the supernatural ability to speak forth the *rhema* word of God to others. It can be a foretelling of an event to happen in the future, or a telling of God’s heart and purposes for His people. The gift of prophecy can be used to strengthen, encourage, or comfort people (1 Cor 14:3), as well as for instruction (1 Cor 14:31).

### **The orderly use of spiritual gifts**

Pastor Lionel pointed us to 1 Corinthians 14: 26-33 where Paul instructs on the orderly use of these gifts in the church. In summary, all gifts are to be used in an orderly fashion to build up the Body of Christ. If anybody wants to speak a tongue out loud as part of the prophetic ministry, they should queue and wait their turn to speak. A maximum of 3 persons are to speak aloud in tongues and after each person has spoken, someone must

give an interpretation to the tongue. If there is no interpretation, the speaker must keep silent and pray quietly to God. When a tongue is interpreted, the interpretation is to be weighed and deemed whether valid for the Body of Christ, or not.

In closing, Pastor Lionel exhorted us with 1 Corinthians 14:1 – to earnestly desire spiritual gifts.

---

### **Discussion Questions**

- 1. Do you have the gift of speaking in tongues? Share any experiences you have about speaking in tongues or how you received it. How did it encourage/build up your spirit?** [15 min]

#### **Leader's Notes:**

*This is a relate question for members to share about exercising their gift of tongues. This discussion is useful to encourage members who do not have the gift of speaking in tongues, to desire it. Leaders can facilitate the sharing by guiding it away from self-glorification (how well one is able to utilise the gift) to how using the gift has benefitted my life. Leaders can recap on the advantages of using tongue as a private prayer language: (a) it edifies the speaker; (b) it connects the speaker to God intimately; (c) it helps the speaker to pray in accordance with God's will; and (d) it sharpens the speaker's spirit to operate in the spirit realm.*

*The following resource by John Piper has a further discussion on receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, in particular to questions such as "what if I don't speak in tongues? Can I receive the Holy Spirit without speaking in tongues?"*

*(<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/how-to-receive-the-gift-of-the-holy-spirit>)*

#### **Transition (Wrapping Up & Moving to The Next Question)**

We can see that the gift of tongues surely benefits the speaker is his/her personal life. When appropriately used, it can also benefit the Body of Christ at large.

- 2. 1 Corinthians 14:26-33 instructs the church on the orderly use of spiritual gifts. What do you think is/are the main principle of these instructions? Can these key principles be applied to other areas of our lives?** [15 min]

#### **Leader's Notes:**

*A reflect question. This discussion is meant to draw out the key principles on the orderly use of spiritual gifts. First, understanding the main intention of these instructions will avoid approaching them legalistically. Second, the main intention of these instructions is that everything we do should be done in love, and are meant to build up the Body of Christ. Helping members see this point and expanding it to other areas of our lives (essentially, everything we do should be done in love) will help us be more loving as a community, and avoid a legalistic view to life.*

#### **Transition (Wrapping Up & Moving to The Next Question)**

Everything we do should be done in love and to build others up. God has given all of us spiritual gifts.

3. Ps Lionel taught on the interplay of the 3 spiritual gifts, namely, tongues, interpretation and prophecy. In 1 Corinthians 14:1, the apostle Paul exhorts that we desire spiritual gifts to build up the church. Do you desire the gift of speaking in tongues or interpretation? Share with the cell how these gifts can be used in the church by you and others. [15 min]

**Leader's Notes:**

*This is a call to action to earnestly desire the spiritual gifts. Members who want these gifts can... The leader can close with a prayer for all those who desire spiritual gifts.*

*On the use of the gift of tongues, members can share on the three aspects that Ps Lionel mentioned in his sermon (i.e., as a private prayer language, as a prophetic word to believers and as a sign to unbelievers). In these ways, the Body of Christ is edified through the exercise of the gift. For the gifts of interpretation and prophecy, members can talk through how the use of such gifts can strengthen, encourage, comfort and instruct the Christian community.*

**Transition (Wrapping Up, Vision Casting to Cell & Closing The Discussion)**

Let's remember to use our gifts in love, and for the benefit of the Body of Christ!

*You may want to end the cell session by praying for those who are desiring certain gifts such as the gift of prophecy and tongues and challenge them to start using these gifts to build up fellow believers within the cell. When you pray, do remember that you are not the one giving the gift; that is the role of the Holy Spirit. However, we pray as a form of interceding on behalf of a fellow brother or sister to receive their desired gifts. Do not feel discouraged when certain gifts are not received (esp. gift of tongues). The Holy Spirit distributes these gifts as He desires. The key is to use whatever gifts that we currently have for the extension of His kingdom and the edification of the body.*

---

## **WORKS** [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. RiverLifers be eager to have spiritual gifts and desire to use them to build up the Body of Christ.

---

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **1) Cell Outreach**

- Start encouraging your members to think of people they want to reach this Christmas.
- Every cell will be planning a Cell Outreach this Christmas. So, they can start thinking of ideas on how they want to do their cell outreach.
- Encourage them not to underestimate what God can do through them!

## 2) 2019 Equipping Weekends (season 2)

### Introduction to biblical interpretation

Sun, 10 Nov | 2-5pm | Victory Chapel

Registration can be done online at [bit.ly/rfcequipping2019](http://bit.ly/rfcequipping2019)

### 3) Joining The Family

Sat, 16 Nov | 10am-1pm | Faith Chapel

Becoming a church member means making RiverLife your spiritual home and committing to what God is doing here. This is an invitation to a solid commitment and influence as we follow Christ together and share in God's movements in Singapore.

Sign up online at [bit.ly/rlcjoiningthefamily](http://bit.ly/rlcjoiningthefamily) by Sun, 10 Nov. For more information, please contact Karen Koh at [karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg](mailto:karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg).

### 4) RiverLife Serves

Sign up to serve at [bit.ly/riverlifeserves](http://bit.ly/riverlifeserves)

#### Church Vision

"A radiant disciple-making church catalysing Kingdom transformation in our communities and the nations."

#### Mission

We exist to make disciples who behold Christ and reveal Him.