

# 1 Corinthians 12:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

## Analysis

---

**And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers**—Etheto ("has placed, appointed")—God sovereignly establishes roles in the church, listed with numerical order (prōton, deuteron, triton—first, second, third). Apostoloi (ἀπόστολοι, "sent ones") are Christ's commissioned representatives with foundational authority (Ephesians 2:20). Prophētai (προφῆται) speak God's word to the church. Didaskaloi (διδάσκαλοι, "teachers") explain and apply Scripture. These three are person-offices, ongoing roles.

**After that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues**—The list shifts from offices to functions: dynameis (miracles), charismata iamatōn (healing gifts), antilēmpseis (ἀντιλήμψεις, "helps"—practical service, assistance), kyberneseis (κυβερνήσεις, "governments/administration"—from kybernētēs, ship's pilot, suggesting leadership/guidance), genē glōssōn (tongues). Notice Paul places tongues last, countering Corinthian overvaluation. Helps and administration receive equal footing with spectacular gifts—God values unglamorous service.

## Historical Context

---

Apostles like Paul, Peter, and the Twelve exercised unique foundational authority in establishing churches and writing Scripture. Prophets like Agabus delivered God's revelatory messages. Teachers like Apollos explained Scripture systematically. The Corinthians had all these ministries but misused them through gift-competition.

## Related Passages

---

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

---

1. Why might Paul list apostles, prophets, and teachers 'first, second, third' while leaving other gifts unnumbered?
2. How should churches today honor 'helps' and 'governments' (administration) as much as prophecy or teaching?
3. What does placing tongues last communicate about its relative importance compared to Corinthian assumptions?

## Interlinear Text

---

καὶ οὓς μὲν ἔθετο ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρῶτον  
And G3739 some hath set G3588 God in G3588 the church first  
G2532 G3303 G5087 G2316 G1722 G1577 G4412

ἀποστόλους δεύτερον προφήτας τρίτον διδασκάλους  
apostles secondarily prophets thirdly teachers  
G652 G1208 G4396 G5154 G1320

ἔπειτα δυνάμεις εἶτα χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων ἀντιλήψεις,  
after that miracles then gifts of healings helps  
G1899 G1411 G1534 G5486 G2386 G484

κυβερνήσεις γένη γλωσσῶν  
governments diversities of tongues  
G2941 G1085 G1100

## Additional Cross-References

---

**1 Corinthians 12:18** (References God): But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

**Ephesians 3:5** (Prophecy): Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

**Hebrews 13:24** (Parallel theme): Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.

**Hebrews 13:17** (Parallel theme): Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

**Acts 20:28** (References God): Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

**Ephesians 2:20** (Prophecy): And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

**1 Timothy 5:17** (Parallel theme): Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

---

From KJV Study • [kjvstudy.org](http://kjvstudy.org)