

# 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 (προφήται) 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 (ἀντιλήψεις, "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

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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

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

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

## Study Questions

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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

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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	εἴτα	χαρίσματα	ιαμάτων	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

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**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.

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