

# The True And False Gift Of Tongues

*By Pastor Art Watkins*

As you know the modern day 'Tongues Movement' is spreading throughout local churches in this country with amazing speed. It is creating more excitement than any other religious movement of the 20th century. Thousands of people in almost every denomination say they have spoken in 'tongues'. Speaking in tongues is being used by the religious system to promote the ecumenical movement around the world. Since Pentecostals, 'Baptists,' Presbyterians, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Methodists, and Roman Catholics are claiming to have spoken in tongues; we need to exam this movement in the light of the Bible.

Isaiah 8:20 says; ***"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.***

1 John 4:1 says; ***Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.***

## The Origin of Modern Day Tongues

In 1900 Charles F. Parham opened the Bethel Bible School in Houston, Texas. Under his teaching and ministry, a woman by the name of Agnes Ozman was influenced to speak in so called tongues. Within a short time a dozen more students had this experience. In 1906 the Azusa Street Assembly was founded in Los Angeles by a student of Parham, William Seymour, with a heavy emphasis on speaking in tongues. The modern American Pentecostal movement sprung out of this black holiness church called the Azusa Street church and it has become a powerful religious force in America during the first half of the 20th century. A number of denominations were formed and have flourished including the Assemblies of God, Foursquare Gospel Churches, Church of God in Christ, United Pentecostal and many other smaller groups. These groups have received a steady stream of 'converts' from the main line denominations.

## The Spread of Modern Day Tongues

The last half of the 20th century has produced something new in the tongues movement. In the last 10 to 15 years we have seen the tongues movement move into the main line denominations. In the beginning it was confined to the Pentecostal churches, but now we are hearing Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists and Roman Catholics speaking in so called tongues. There are reports of Jews in Jewish synagogues speaking in tongues. These people are now staying in these denominations and through classes, prayer groups and home studies they are making converts in every denomination.

The Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship with chapters in hundreds of cities, is working on an interdenominational level to make converts for the tongues movement. Their television programs, publications and meetings are recruiting great numbers of people to speak in tongues and become a part of the charismatic movement. The Deeper Life Magazine which features the ministry of Morris Cerullo, openly urges 'Baptists,' Catholics and others to stay in their own denomination and spread the tongues experience throughout their churches.

### **Roman Catholics and Tongues**

One of the amazing things about the modern day tongues movement is its rapid spread through the Roman Catholic Church. A while back 12,000 Roman Catholics from all over the world assembled on the campus of Notre Dame University to promote and be a part of the tongues movement. Many thousands of Roman Catholics claim to have received what they call the baptism of the Holy Ghost and to have spoken in tongues, including many priests and nuns. Some of these have testified that they are now better and more devout Catholics since they have had this experience. Speaking in so called tongues has led them to stay in the Catholic Church instead of leaving.

### **The Ecumenical Movement and Tongues**

The reason I refer to the charismatic movement as a form of ecumenism is that major doctrinal differences are often overlooked by those in the movement as long as a person seemingly experienced the gifts of the Spirit -- particularly the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues.' Pentecostalism is doing more than anything else to bring Catholics and Protestants together.

The Catholic Digest quotes Catholic Bishop Alexander Zaleski as saying: *'Perhaps our most prudent way to judge the validity of the claims of the Pentecostal movement in the Catholic Church is to observe the effects on those who participate in the prayer meetings. ... Those who speak in tongues seem to grow in their attachment to certain established devotional patterns such as DEVOTION TO THE REAL PRESENCE (The Mass) AND THE ROSARY.'*

A Roman Catholic priest of the Camillien Monastery, Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada: said; *When one meets those who have had the Pentecostal experience, whether Catholic or from another Christian Church, we unite together, we are one, for there is no difference. It often happens that I go on Sunday evenings to pray in a French Pentecostal Church. I first fulfill my obligations as a Roman Catholic by worshipping in my own Church in the morning. Then I go pray with other Christians. I don't wear my robes but I do wear my cross and also my ring.'*

### **A Powerful Argument Against Tongues**

The above examples of the influence of the modern day tongue movements in the various denominations are one of the most powerful arguments against the unscriptural tongues movement. If Catholics and members of modernistic denominations were really receiving a scriptural Holy Spirit experience from God, THEY WOULD BE COMING OUT OF THESE UNSCRIPTURAL ORGANIZATIONS just as the Bible commands us to do in II Corinthians 6:17-18. If these people were really receiving the Holy Spirit, they would be led to obey the Word of God. Also the fact that Roman Catholics speak in tongues should automatically throw up a red flag that it's of the Devil for the Roman Catholic Church preaches salvation by faith and works. Catholics who speak in tongues do not believe in salvation by grace apart from works according to the Bible. They also worship Idols, pray to Mary and the dead saints, believe the Pope is infallible, claim to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, observe the mass, believe priests can forgive their sins, etc..

The doctrine of the Catholic Church is a doctrine of devils and it is leading millions to hell including Catholics who claim they can speak in tongues. The Pentecostals see nothing wrong with Catholics speaking in tongues for they also preach salvation by faith and works.

### **Three Examples of Tongues in the Bible**

To listen to the talk of the tongues movement people, you would think there would be many instances of speaking in tongues in the Bible. But there are only 3 examples of God giving people power to speak in a tongue (language) that they did not already know.

#### **Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost**

Acts 2:1-4 says: ***And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.***

***And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.***

The day of Pentecost was an annual feast day of the Jews that came every year 50 days after the Passover. There has never been another Pentecost like the one in Acts 2, and we are not taught to look for another one. On the day of Pentecost, the prophecy of John the Baptist was fulfilled. In Matt.3:11 he said; ***I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.*** Peter said also in Acts 2:16-21 that the events of that day were a fulfillment of Joel's prophesy of Joel 2:28-32. There is no record that the Jerusalem Church ever had another service where the gift of tongues was exercised. Much is said about this Church and her services, but nothing more about tongues.

#### **Three Years Later At the House of Cornelius.**

Acts 10:44-48 says; ***While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.***

In Acts 11:15 Peter rehearsed what happened in Acts 10. He said; ***And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?***

The reason the Jews knew that the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost was because they heard them speak in tongues. And when Cornelius spoke in tongues, Peter compared it to what happened to the Jews in Acts 2. He said; As I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, **as on us** at the beginning. He said; God gave them the like gift **as he did unto us.**

The purpose of tongues was to prove that both Jews and the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel 2 and the promise of Christ in Acts 1. Joel prophesied that God would pour out his Spirit upon all flesh. In Acts 1 Jesus promised the Apostles that they would be baptized with the Holy Ghost in a few days. The prophecy of Joel and the promise of Christ came to pass in Acts 2 and Acts 10. But how did they know the prophecy and the promise had come to pass? When they heard them speak with tongues. In Acts 2 tongues was a sign that Joel 2 and Acts 1:5 had come to pass. But who received the Holy Ghost and spoke in tongues in Acts 2? The Jews.

When did the Gentiles receive the Holy Ghost? In Acts 10. How did they know they had received the Holy Ghost? When they heard them speak in tongues.

Therefore the prophecy of Joel 2 and the promise of Christ of Acts 1:5 have been fulfilled for both Jews and Gentiles. The proof they were fulfilled is when they both spoke in tongues. The purpose of tongues was to prove the prophecy of Joel 2 and the promise of Christ in Acts 1:5 have come to pass.

#### **Twenty Two Years Later At Ephesus.**

***Acts 19:1-7 says: And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.***

Twelve men in the city of Ephesus claimed to be disciples and to have received the baptism of John the Baptist. But Paul must have doubted their salvation when he asked them; "*Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?*" These men were sincere, but they were ignorant of John's preaching. This is proven by their answer, "*We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.*" Had they really known John's preaching and John's baptism, they would have known about the Holy Spirit and Jesus, for John preached both. (See John 1:26-34)

These men were not saved and so Paul preached unto them Christ and they believed and were saved. Then Paul: "*laid his hands upon them and the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.*" They did not seek to speak in tongues, but rather it was a sign to the Jews as the other two instances.

These are the three records of men speaking in tongues in Acts. In Acts 2 to prove the Jews had received the Holy Ghost. In Acts 10 to prove the Gentiles had received the

Holy Ghost. In Acts 19 to prove the disciples of John the Baptist had received the Holy Ghost.

How many times did the Apostles have to speak in tongues to prove the Jews had received the Holy Ghost? How many times did Cornelius have to speak in tongues to prove the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost? How many times does God have to do something to get you to believe him? Why would God give the gift of tongues to any one today to prove he has poured out the Holy Ghost on both Jews and Gentiles when he has already proven that in Acts 2, 10 and 19?

In this article it is not my intention to fully explain everything the Bible says about tongues. My intention is to point out the outstanding facts of tongues as found mainly in I Corinthians 14. This chapter tells us everything we need to know about tongues in a simple straight forward way.

What I have to say about the subject will be confined to the Scriptures. I am not interested in what men and women think, feel, say or have written about the subject. The opinions of men differ and contradict, but the word of God is clear and simple.

It's amazing to me how clear the scriptures are concerning the doctrine of tongues, and yet how confused men are. Of all the doctrines in the Bible, you would think men would get this one right. God has laid it out in simple terms but Satan and his ministers have taken this simple doctrine and perverted so that what most people believe about tongues today bears no resemblance to what the Bible says about the subject.

In 2 Timothy 3:8-9 Paul predicted men in the last days would deceive many with satanic signs, wonders and gifts and so did Jesus Christ. In Matthew.24:24 he said: ***For there shall arise false christ's, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.***

We are witnessing the devil's counterfeit signs and wonders he warned us about today. In view of this, God led Paul to devote three chapters in the epistle of 1 Corinthians (12-14) to define the true sign gifts so you would not be deceived by the false ones. 1 Corinthians chapter 14 is devoted completely to the gift of tongues and this article is based upon what God says in this chapter. It will help you to read 1 Corinthians 14 before you read this article.

## **THE DEFINITION OF TONGUES**

There is a law of Bible study called: "The law of first mention". The way something appears for the first time in the Bible fixes its definition for the rest of the Bible. Its first mention fixes its definition from that time forward. The first time men were given the gift of tongues was in Jerusalem in 33 A.D. That event is recorded in Acts chapter 2. What God says about the gift of tongues in Acts chapter 2, fixes the definition of tongues for the rest of the Bible. The true gift of tongues in the Bible are those of Acts 2. If they are not the same as Acts 2, they are not the true gift of tongues.

It says in Acts 2:1-8 ***And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it set upon each of***

***them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?"***

According to verse. 5 on the day of Pentecost, there were a great number of Jews and Gentile proselytes gathered together in Jerusalem out of every nation under heaven. Because they were many nations and nationalities present that day, there were also many different languages spoken. In order for all these men out of every nation under heaven to believe the gospel they had to hear it preached in their own language. Therefore, God gave the 12 Apostles the gift of tongues and according to verse 4 when they spoke in tongues, they spoke in the language of everyone present in Jerusalem.

In vs. 4 it says that **"they began to speak with other TONGUES"**

In vs. 6 it says: **"every man heard them speak in his own LANGUAGE"**

In the Bible, when men spoke in tongues, they spoke in languages that could be interpreted and understood. That's why the words ***tongues and languages*** are used interchangeably in Acts 2:4-6. Another example of how they are used interchangeably in the Bible is by comparing Deuteronomy 28:49 with Jeremiah. 5:15.

***The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the LORD: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say.***

Throughout the Bible the word language and tongues are used interchangeably as in Acts 2. Make no mistake about it, when the Apostles spoke in tongues, they did not speak in vain babblings or mindless gibberish. They spoke in foreign languages understood by men out of every nation under heaven. Every nationality present in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost heard the gospel preached in their own language or tongue

There are many people who try to get around the fact that tongues are languages, by saying the tongues in 1 Corinthians 14 are different from the tongues in Acts 2 because they are called "*unknown tongues*" and they needed an interpreter, whereas the tongues in Acts 2 did not need an interpreter and they are not called "unknown tongues". The answer to this objection is simple: The tongues spoken by the apostles in Acts 2 were not unknown because they were spoken in the language of everyone present. Acts 2:6 says: ***that every man heard them speak IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE***". The twelve apostles spoke in the language of every man present in Jerusalem that day, therefore, those tongues were not unknown. And because every man heard them speak in his own language, there was no need of an interpreter.

But, the tongues spoken by the men in the church of Corinth were unknown to some people, because they did not speak in the language of everyone present. Only **three men** could speak in tongues in the church at Corinth, whereas, twelve men spoke in tongues in Acts 2. And because only three men could speak in the church, there was

always someone present who did not hear his language spoken, and to them everything that was spoken was an unknown tongue. (Jer.5:15) And due to that fact, there was always a need for an interpreter in Corinth for those who did not hear their language spoken.

### **Illustration**

Suppose there was a Russian, a Chinese and a Japanese present in your Church. You got up and quoted John 3:16 in Russian, someone else quoted John 3:16 in Chinese, then someone else got up and quoted it in Japanese. Would there be a need of an interpreter? No. Everyman heard John 3:16 in his own language. If we quote John 3:16 in the tongue of all three nationalities, have we spoken in an unknown tongue? No, everything we said was understood by all men, because we spoke in the language of every man. That's the way it was in Acts 2.

But suppose there was a Russian, Chinese and Japanese present and someone got up and quoted John 3:16 in Russian, someone else got up and quoted it in Chinese, but no one quoted it in Japanese. Have we spoken in an unknown tongue? Yes. Unknown to who? The Japanese. Would there be a need of an interpreter? Yes. For who? For the Japanese. That's the way it was in Corinth.

In Jerusalem in Acts 2 there was no need for an interpreter because the twelve apostles spoke in the languages of everyone present

In Corinth there was a need of an interpreter because the two or three men who spoke, did not speak in the languages of everyone present

In Jerusalem in Acts 2 the tongues spoken were not unknown, for everyman heard them speak in his own language

In Corinth the tongues spoken were unknown to some people, because the two or three men who spoke, did not speak in the language of everyone present. (The City of Corinth, was a cosmopolitan city with men and women of many nationalities and tongues. No doubt it was quite probable that the Church at Corinth had in the congregation individuals who spoke many languages other than Greek).

But in any case, whether known or unknown, whether an interpreter was needed or not, tongues are languages and languages are tongues. And every tongue can be interpreted. And if that which is spoken cannot be interpreted, then it is not a tongue.

### **THE ACQUISITION OF TONGUES**

In 1 Corinthians 12:1 and 14:1 tongues like the other signs and wonders are called spiritual gifts and all spiritual gifts were given to men freely by the Spirit of God. Those who had the gifts of the Spirit, like speaking in tongues, didn't work themselves into an emotional frenzy to receive the gifts. They didn't bring in a choir, a band and a song leader to whip up the crowd into a state of ecstasy to receive the gifts. They didn't pray and agonize at an altar for hours, days, weeks and months to receive the gifts. They didn't deny themselves food and water by fasting to receive the gifts. They didn't cry and

beg God for the gifts. If they had to do these things to acquire the gifts of the Spirit, they would not be gifts or spiritual.

Also, the apostles didn't spend years in language school to acquire the ability to speak in foreign languages. The gifts were given to them freely and miraculously by the grace of God without prior study or education. And those who spoke in tongues did so without help, aid or education of any kind.

Isn't it strange that before these people who claim to have the gift of tongues today are sent to foreign countries as missionaries that they spend years in language school learning the tongues of the people they will preach to? And isn't it strange, that when these same people preach in foreign countries, they all speak through a translator because they are unable to speak in the tongues of the people? The Apostles, who had the ***real genuine*** gift of tongues, didn't spend one second in language school, or require a translator.

### THE IMPERFECTIONS OF TONGUES

The gift of tongues had disadvantages and imperfections that other spiritual gifts did not have.

#### ***(a) Other gifts were greater than tongues***

Of the gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12, tongues were ranked last. See 1 Corinthians 12:28.

1 Corinthians 14:5 says: ***For greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues.*** Isn't it strange how men seek after this gift and not the others that were far superior?

#### ***(b) Tongues did not edify the church as the other gifts***

1 Corinthians 14:4 says: ***He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.***

The work of the ministry is the edifying of the church which is body of Christ. (Eph. 4:11-13) The will of God is the edifying of the church. Without an interpreter tongues did not edify the church, which means those who spoke without an interpreter could not do the work of the ministry nor do the will of God.

#### ***(c) Tongues did not exhort and comfort the saints as the other gifts.***

1 Corinthians 14:3 says: ***But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.***

The man who prophesied edified, exhorted and comforted the church, not the man who spoke in tongues.

#### ***(d) According to 1 Corinthians 14 without an interpreter;***

Did not edify the church – Verse 5

Was indistinguishable from noise. Verse 7

Did not prepare the saints for the battle Verse 8

Was wasted time and words – Verse 9

Sounded barbaric – Verse 11

Was unfruitful to the understanding Verse 14

Hindered lost people from being saved - Verses 23-25

Caused confusion in the church -Verse 33

In 1 Corinthians 14:19 Paul said that a man who spoke just 5 words the church could understand was better than a man who spoke 10,000 words in an unknown tongue. This breaks down to a ratio of 2,000 to 1. In other words, if a man spoke just **ONE WORD** the Church could understand was better than a man who spoke 2,000 words in an unknown tongue.

The disadvantages of the gift of tongues far outweighed the advantages. The gift of tongues was an **imperfect gift** with an interpreter and a **useless gift** without one.

**(e) The majority of the statements Paul makes about the gift of tongues are negative.**

See 1 Corinthians 14: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 19, 23, 28, and 34.

### THE RESTRICTIONS OF TONGUES

At the time God gave the gift of tongues, he also placed a number of controls or restrictions upon the use of the gift. Those who had the gift of tongues were required to follow a strict set of guide lines when exercising the gift. No other gift of the Spirit had as many restrictions as the gift of tongues. These restrictions were necessary, due to its widespread misuse and because Satan counterfeited this particular gift.

#### The Restrictions

In 1 Corinthians 14 God said:

**Verse 27: If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.**

**Verse 28: But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.**

**Verse 34: Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law."**

**(a) There was a restricted number who could speak in tongues**

In verse 27 he said: If **any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three.**

When God gave the gift of tongues, the most who could speak in tongues in any assembly was **three**. And if God said at the most by three, then he did not lead 4 or 5 or 10 to speak in tongues in any assembly. If God led more than three men to speak in tongues in the assembly, he would have contradicted his own Word.

**(b) There was a restriction as to when they could speak in tongues**

In verse 27 God said: **If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most three, AND THAT BY COURSE.**

When men spoke in tongues, they spoke **BY COURSE**, that is, they spoke in an orderly manner, one following the other. In the assembly, the three men who were led to speak in tongues did not all speak at the same time. They spoke by course: The first man stood up, spoke in tongues and then sat down. The second man got up, spoke and sat down. Finally, the third man stood up, spoke in tongues and sat down, and they were all that were allowed to speak in tongues in that assembly. Never, at any time did God ever lead those three men to speak in tongues at the same time.

### **(c) There was a restriction upon who could speak in tongues**

There were two people who were expressly forbidden from speaking in tongues in the church.

A man could not speak in tongues if he did not have an interpreter. Verse 28 says: ***But if there be no interpreter, LET HIM KEEP SILENCE in the church.*** Under no circumstances was a man allowed to speak in tongues without someone to interpret what he was saying. If he did not have an interpreter, he was commanded to keep silent.

Under **NO CIRCUMSTANCES** was a **WOMAN** ever allowed to speak in tongues. In verse 34 God said: ***Let your women keep silence in the churches: For it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the Law.***

When God said for the women not to speak and to keep silence in verse 34, there is no doubt whatsoever, he is referring to speaking in tongues. Tongues is the subject of chapters 12-13-14. In chapter 14 alone the word "tongues" appears **15 times**. Therefore, when he said for a woman not to speak and to keep silence; that is a command for a woman not to speak in tongues. Under no circumstances was a woman ever allowed to speak in tongues in the assembly. God never gave a woman the gift to speak in tongues.

God foreknew that without controls and restrictions, the gift of tongues would be misused, counterfeited and would lead to confusion and chaos in the Church. That's why he in his infinite wisdom, placed these controls on the exercise of the gift for he is a God of order and organization, not chaos and confusion. The only way the church could be edified was for these restrictions to be strictly enforced.

### **THE INTENTION OF TONGUES**

In 1 Corinthians 14:21-22 God says: ***In the law it is written, with men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that they will not hear me, saith the Lord. Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.***

In these verses is found the main intention of tongues. They show us the scriptural reason God gave men the gift to speak in tongues or foreign languages. Verse 22 is *the verse* in the New Testament that defines once for all time the purpose and intention of the gift of tongues. According to verse 22 tongues were for a **sign**. What is a sign? A sign in the Bible was a miracle, wonder or something supernatural to draw men's attention to what had happen, what was being said or to something that was coming.

Who were tongues a sign to? The gift of tongues was a sign to unbelievers. Comparing scripture with scripture there is one group of people who did not believe, who always required a sign to provoke them to believe and those people were the Jews. Please note in 1 Corinthians 14:21 Paul is quoting Isaiah 28:11 and when you read the context of Isaiah 28:11-14 it clearly identifies the "people" of 1 Corinthians 14:21 as Israel, the Jews. They always required a sign to provoke them to believe.

In 1 Corinthians 1:22 Paul said concerning the Jews: ***The JEWS require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom.***

In John 4:48 Jesus said to the Jews in Galilee: ***Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe.***

In Isaiah 8:18 Isaiah prophesying of Christ and his Apostles said: ***Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me (the 12 Apostles) are for signs and wonders in Israel.***

In Deuteronomy 4:34 Moses said to Israel: ***Hath God taken him a nation from the midst of another by temptations, by signs and by wonders...According to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?"***

In Acts 2:22 Peter said: ***Ye men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you."***

Jesus Christ, the Prophets and the Apostles worked signs, wonders and miracles to provoke the Jews to believe their message. Tongues were not a sign to the Gentiles for Paul said: ***The JEWS require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom.***

Tongues were not a sign to the Church for Paul said: ***Wherefore tongues are for a sign, NOT TO THEM THAT BELIEVE,*** but the church is made up of believers.

Gentiles spoke in tongues, but they did so for the sake of the Jews present to convince them that the gentiles had received the Spirit. See Acts 10:45-46.

Tongues were first, last and always a sign to provoke unbelieving Jews to believe the gospel, for except they saw signs and wonders they would not believe. It was also given to the apostles to prove their apostleship. See 1 Corinthians 12:12.

### THE DURATION OF TONGUES

1 Corinthians 13:8-13 says: ***Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.***

Verse 8 clearly states that when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians he expected the time would come that tongues and the other sign gifts would cease.

In verse 10 Paul said that tongues would cease when that which is perfect is come. The word translated perfect here is also translated complete, mature, full grown, and entire in other verses in the Bible. See Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 2:6, 1 Corinthians 14:20, Colossians 1:28, 4:12, Hebrews 5:14.

In 1 Corinthians 13 Paul uses an illustration to help us understand the word perfect or perfection. He uses the illustration of a child who is immature, but who grows up to be a mature full grown man. And when the child becomes a mature full grown man he no longer speaks as a child, understands as a child or thinks as a child. The illustration is

of something growing and changing as it grows, as a child grows up to become a man. This illustration helps us to understand what Paul means when he uses the word perfect as you will see.

In verse 9 he says: he knew *"in part"*. In verse 12 he said: *"I know in part"*. The words *"in part"* are used in contrast with the word "perfect" in verse 10. Something that is in part is not finished or complete, but something that is perfect is finished, whole and complete. In the context, that which was in part was knowledge. He said: we **know** in part in verse 9. In verse 12 he said; I **know** in part. According to the context in which it appears, the word "perfect" in verse 10 is the opposite of "in part" which is partial and incomplete knowledge. Therefore, that which is perfect is full and complete knowledge of something. This agrees with the example he gives in verse 11.

Comparing the words perfect and in part with one another Paul is saying; that when full and complete knowledge comes such things as tongues and the sign gifts would cease. But what knowledge was in part that Paul expected to be perfected, made whole, completed or finished? It was the Word of God. In Colossians 1:24-26 he wrote: ***Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:***

The Pauline epistles fulfilled, filled up and perfected the word of God. The word of God was not complete until God through Paul's writings revealed the mystery concerning the salvation of gentiles. The Pauline epistles reveal what God is doing today among the gentiles and until this truth was written down the word of God was not fulfilled, complete or perfect. Once Paul committed it to writing he filled up and completed the word of God.

In the Acts period when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians the only scriptures available were some of the Old Testament scriptures. The Bible as we have it today in one volume with all 66 books did not exist till 200-300 A.D. No one in the Act period had the full, complete, perfect revelation of the word of God. They had it in part, but not in its fullness. Consequently, their knowledge was limited and in part and when the Apostles preached they needed signs and wonders to convince the people that what they were saying was true. Many of the doctrines they preached such as the New Covenant and the salvation of heathen gentiles was new to their ears, so the people needed signs to convince them that what the apostles said was true.

Today, we have the full, complete, perfect revelation of the word of God. We have all 66 books that make up the canon of scripture. We have the full and perfect revelation of God. That which is perfect has come and it's the Bible we have in our possession. Therefore, we don't need signs and wonders any longer as the church did in the Acts period. The church during the Acts period was like a child who spoke as a child, whose knowledge was in part as a child, who thought as a child. But now that we have the full and perfect revelation of God written down in the scriptures, the church is as a man who no longer needs the things that children need. A child learns what is right and wrong and what is true and false through physical means. All a man needs is the word to show

him what is true. A child's knowledge is limited. A man's knowledge is full. A child sees through a glass darkly which limits his sight and knowledge. A man sees the full complete picture, so his knowledge is greater than a child. Until the word of God was completed there was a need for the sign gifts to convince people that what the apostles preached was true. But now, the sign gifts have served their purpose and are no longer needed.

### THE DECEPTION OF TONGUES

In 2 Timothy 3 Paul describes the perilous times of the last days. In verses 8-9 there is a warning that in the last days we will witness the emergence of men who will deceive multitudes by miracles, signs and wonders.

Verses 8-9 says: ***Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.***

Jannes and Jambres were among the wise men, sorcerers and magicians of Egypt who withstood Moses and Aaron. The way they withstood Moses and the truth was by working miracles. Please take the time to read Exodus chapters 7 and 8. These men empowered by the spirit of Satan worked signs and wonders in Egypt to withstand Moses. And Paul warns us that in the last days there will be men like Jannes and Jambres, who will turn away many from the gospel of grace and sound doctrine and they will do it the same way Jannes and Jambres did: by working signs and wonders and miracles.

We see this prediction coming to pass today in the charismatic movement. Speaking in so-called tongues is the favorite bait used by them to lure men and women into this religious movement. It is a dangerous movement because of its gospel of works and extreme false doctrines.

I have never known anyone in the so called tongues movement who preached true salvation by grace without works or the eternal security of the believer. Many of them also believe that the Bible is not the complete and final revelation of truth from God. I heard one say on national TV that God speaks outside of the pages of the Bible and what he says through men is just as inspired as the words the apostles and prophets wrote in the Bible. For these reasons alone this movement is a dangerous religious movement, as predicted by Paul.

There are 1,000's of people being sucked into this movement by the allurement of speaking in "so-called" tongues. But are the tongues we hear today the real thing or a counterfeit? Are they gifts of God, or of Satan? The answer is: they are counterfeit and satanic and this is nothing new or strange. In the Acts period, when God gave men the gift of tongues, Satan also gave men the gift of tongues. In 1 Corinthians 12:1-3 Paul writing about spiritual gifts including tongues said:

***Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you to ignorant. Ye know that ye were Gentiles carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man SPEAKING by the Spirit of God CALLETH Jesus Christ accursed: and that no man can SAY that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.***

In these verses, we learn something shocking about the spiritual gifts. There were counterfeit gifts. Evidently, there were some in the Corinthian Church who were speaking under the influence of evil spirits, because when they spoke in tongues, they were calling Jesus Christ accursed. Paul said: ***no man SPEAKING by the Spirit of God CALLETH Jesus Christ accursed:***

There were people in the church in Corinth speaking in tongues and when they spoke in tongues they called Jesus Christ accursed! They claimed to speak under the influence of the Spirit of God, but Paul said that no man speaking (in tongues) by the Spirit of God would call Jesus Christ accursed. This shows us that Satan has the ability to cause people to speak in tongues to cause them to blaspheme Jesus Christ. That's the deception of tongues. When a person seeks after the "so-called" gift of tongues today, what they get is a counterfeit from Satan. They lose control of their mouths and vocal chords and then Satan takes control and uses them to blaspheme and curse Jesus Christ. The person is unaware of what they are saying; for they are deceived into thinking they are speaking by the Spirit of God.

A Christian man who moved here from Holland told me that when his parents from Holland visited him in Indianapolis they all went to church together. It was a church that claimed to have the gift of tongues. When they began to speak in so called tongues that morning, he said his father suddenly got up and in a very loud voice spoke up and said: *I will not stay here and let my family listen to such vile language!* He then motioned to the family to follow him and he left the church with his family. When they got outside, he asked his father what was the matter? His father told him that the people who spoke in "tongues" had spoken in his language (Dutch) and had cursed Christ so horribly that he would not dare to repeat what was said. He told his son that he had never heard such blasphemous, vile cursing and blasphemy in all his life.

I read an account recently of how a missionary discovered a tribe of idol-worshipping savages deep in the jungles of Africa. While he was among them, they held a religious service (all heathen are highly religious) and to this missionary's amazement, part of the ceremony was casting out devils, laying on of hands, healing the sick and **SPEAKING IN TONGUES**. He said the words they uttered were identical to those he heard in churches in America. These people worshiped idols of wood and stone and spoke in tongues while they did it! And no doubt the devil gave them this satanic gift to blaspheme God and Christ and they were not even aware of it.

If you study this phenomena you will learn that demon possessed people have received the satanic gift to speak in tongues throughout history and the devil uses them to blaspheme Jesus Christ when they speak.

Various studies have revealed that speaking in tongues is present in non-Christian religions around the world. It is practiced in China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, Siberia, Arabia, Burma, and Arctic regions just to name a few. Speaking in so called tongues is found among idol worshipping Eskimos, Japanese séances in Hokkaido, Tibetan Monks who are Buddhists, the shamans in Ethiopia, in Haitian Voodoo ceremonies and is also found in African tribal religions and even among Muslims.

And no doubt this is what we are witnessing today in the modern charismatic movement. Satan has given them his counterfeit gift of tongues and when they speak they blaspheme the Lord Jesus Christ and they don't even know it. They are deceived into believing they are speaking by the Spirit of God.

My advice to anyone today who claims to have the gift is to read what the Bible actually says about the gift and believe what you read and if you are honest you will be convinced that what you have did not come from God.

### **The True Gift of Tongues**

\*The gift of tongues was the supernatural ability that God gave to certain men to speak in foreign languages without prior knowledge that could be interpreted and understood.

\*God gave these men the ability to speak in foreign languages as a gift. The gift was freely given without works or agonizing at an "old time altar" or fasting and praying or going to language school for 4 years.

\*God placed many restrictions upon the use of the gift. Only three men could speak in tongues in any assembly. The ones who spoke could not all speak at the same time. They spoke by course, that is, one following the other.

\*A man could not speak in tongues if he did not have an interpreter. Women were forbidden to speak in tongues period.

\*Paul said the time would come that tongues and the other sign gifts would cease. He said they would cease when that which is perfect came. It came when the full and complete and perfect revelation of God was written down in the word of God.

Personally speaking, I wish I had the real gift of tongues for my church is surrounded by men of many nationalities and languages. But I am like you; I must speak to them through a translator or send and support someone else to speak to them who can speak their language. But the apostles could speak in the language of any and all nations they were sent to. And when they spoke in tongues, they preached the gospel. To preach the gospel to every creature in all the world, God gave the apostles the ability to preach the gospel in every language in all the world and they did. In Colossians 1:23 Paul said: ***Be not moved away from the hope of the gospel: which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.***

Paul could have never preached the gospel of grace to every creature under heaven whereof he was made a minister, without the supernatural gift to speak in the tongues and languages of the nations God sent him to. Those who had the true gift of tongues preached the gospel to sinners in all the world. It was a tool of evangelism not chaos and confusion.

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