

# Do all Speak with Tongues?

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To the churches of Jesus Christ whose heart is after truth, who have not followed cunningly devised fables but have been witness in heart and by evidence to the wonderful works of God, greetings. The purpose of this writing is to discuss specifically a controversy that has arisen among some of the brethren concerning the promise that Jesus has left to us, departing from this world in physical form that through his Spirit He might rule perpetually over a better Kingdom, being both the occupier of the throne of David and the intercessor for mankind. This is by no means an exhaustive work, for I have learned over the years that there is no limit to the depth of understanding of the things of God. But I would like to bring to the forefront some relevant truths concerning the Holy Ghost wherein I believe some have erred. It is my hope and prayer that this writing would be taken in the spirit that it is written in and that the church may be edified and strengthened in all unity by the truths presented herein.

## **Do All Speak with Tongues?**

Growing up in a Apostolic-Pentecostal household I was always taught that the plan of salvation for mankind was contained in the 38<sup>th</sup> verse of the second chapter of the book of Acts (Acts 2:38) where, having been asked by the multitude, Peter instructs the people that what they need to do is to repent, be baptized in the name of Jesus, and they shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. I was further taught that the initial evidence that one had received the Holy Ghost was the act of the person speaking in another tongue, that is to say a language not naturally acquired by the person speaking. I want to say up front that I do still believe this teaching to be accurate and the testimony of the Holy Scriptures.

It recently came to my attention though, that among some Pentecostal churches who teach the doctrine of salvation found in Acts 2:38 there is disagreement among some as to whether the act of “speaking in tongues” is really the initial evidence of the infilling of the Holy Ghost. I have furthermore encountered individuals who profess to be filled with the Holy Ghost, but have never, by their own admission, personally experienced the supernatural act of speaking in other tongues. When first exposed to this I was a little surprised I must admit, having never considered that some might not believe that tongues were the initial evidence of the Holy Ghost. My personal experience and my observations of congregations which I have visited or have been a part of seemed at odds with this idea.

I began to pray for a deeper understanding of this subject. I have found that when I really needed an answer to something in the Word of God that if I sincerely asked of God, He

would give it to me. James said that if any man lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all men liberally (James 1:5). I believe that scripture so I began to pray and to study on the subject. I believe now that I have received some of the answers that I had asked for and I feel that I can now scripturally answer the question: Do all speak with tongues?

### **What is the Holy Ghost?**

What is the Holy Ghost in the New Testament? Simply put, and by definition we know that the Holy Ghost is quite literally the Spirit that is holy, that is to say the Spirit of God. For we know that none is good but God and that it was the Holy Ghost that overshadowed Mary causing her to conceive in her virginity the Christ child of whom prophecy speaks. I do not believe in the doctrine of the trinity and I know that God is a spirit (John 4:24) so I know that the Holy Ghost is God and has always existed and was long before mankind ever took his first breath. I know also that the Holy Ghost moved on the prophets and entered them that the words that they spoke were not their own but those of God (1 Peter 1:11, 2 Peter 1:21). This is also true of John the Baptist of whom the Bible says was filled with the Holy Ghost in the womb.

So what are we speaking of when we discuss receiving the Holy Ghost in the context of the New Covenant? The difference between God's interaction with mankind from prior to the day of Pentecost described in the second chapter of Acts to after that Pentecost is that now, having shed His blood to cleanse us of our sins, He can continually dwell in us. He had to pay the price first, for without the shedding of blood there is not remission of sins, because He will not dwell in a polluted temple. Observe the following scripture:

**2Cor. 6:15** And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

**2Cor. 6:16** And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

**2Cor. 6:17** Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you,

Note above that the prophecy states that God would dwell and walk in His people. The promise of the Holy Ghost is a permanent dwelling of God in man that was not available to the people of the Old Testament because Christ's blood had not been yet shed and they could not yet be clean:

**Heb. 11:37** They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

**Heb. 11:38** (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth.

**Heb. 11:39** And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

**Heb. 11:40** God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

The “better thing” mentioned above, the promise, is the indwelling gift of the Holy Ghost. The well of living water that abides in us and springs up into eternal life. When Peter answered the crowd on the day of Pentecost he told them what they should do for the remission of their sins, repent and be baptized. But man cannot do anything in himself to remit sins being he is not God. But Peter told them that if they do this for remission of their sins, then they shall receive the Holy Ghost.

Jesus also illustrated the difference between how the Holy Ghost would dwell in His people in the New Testament as opposed to how the Holy Ghost moved on the prophets of the Old Testament when he spoke to the woman at the well:

**Joh 4:10** Jesus answered and said unto her, **If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.**

**Joh 4:11** The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

**Joh 4:12** Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

**Joh 4:13** Jesus answered and said unto her, **Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:**

**Joh 4:14** **But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.**

Again, the Holy Ghost did move upon and in the hearts of the prophets, but they thirsted again because they did not have the well of water, the source of the water if you will, springing up continually in them to quench their thirst. God has a more permanent fellowship planned with His people, but first He had to take the punishment for their sins, washing them away with His own blood, that he might have a clean temple in which to dwell. Additionally, the following scripture shows conclusively that the indwelling Holy Ghost of the New Testament could not have taken place in the prophets or John the Baptist because they lived and died prior to Christ’s sacrifice and subsequent glorification:

**Joh 7:36** What *manner of saying* is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me*: and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come?

**Joh 7:37** In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, **If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.**

**Joh 7:38** **He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.**

**Joh 7:39** (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Notice in verse 39 that the Holy Ghost was not given yet and could not be until Christ was glorified. The Holy Ghost moved on and into people to speak through them God's Words, but it could not be a gift that they could have inside them continually until Christ was glorified.

### **Tongues on the Day of Pentecost**

In Acts chapter two we find the apostles and others gathered together in one mind and one accord. Jesus had already risen and instructed them to wait for the promise of the Father and that they would be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence (Acts 1:4-5). It's important I think to understand that the Holy Ghost was the promise that was to come and not some added blessing or specific gift or ministration of God. As we'll see it is something that was broadly promised by God to mankind. Now observe the following scripture:

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

**Acts 2:2** And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

**Acts 2:3** And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

Notice the word "cloven" I underlined in the scripture. The word is translated from the Greek word "diamerizō," which according to the Strong's Greek Dictionary means "to partition thoroughly." It is also notable that nowhere else in the New Testament is this word translated "cloven." In every other instance it is translated as "parted" or "divided." Also, the word "tongues" that I underlined is a word that is regularly used not just a physical tongue, but a language and is used again in that very sense in the next verse. Finally, the third verse does not say that they saw fiery forked tongues. It says the tongues were like fire, a simile, as in they were intense. If you take from the context of the very next verse that these tongues were languages, then it becomes clear that this scripture is saying that there appeared unto them divided languages, really intense, on each of them.

**Acts 2:4** And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Above, in the very next verse it says that they were filled with the Holy Ghost and tells what happened when they were filled. I underlined the word "other" in the verse above because it is translated from the Greek word "heteros" which means "other" or "different." The meaning of this scripture is that they began speaking different tongues, languages, from each other. They were aware of the fact that they were speaking these other tongues because it said, as I discussed, in the previous verse that these divided tongues appeared unto them. They observed that there were different tongues being spoken as they were being given the utterance by the Spirit.

The reason that I am belaboring this point is because I have had it suggested to me that those present weren't really speaking different languages but that God was just translating their words for the benefit of those in the city that heard them on the day of Pentecost. But I think that it is very clear now from examining verses three and four that they were speaking in different languages, there was division among the languages that they were speaking, and that they were in fact observing this as the divided languages appeared unto them as the Holy Ghost sat upon them and gave them utterance. We will also see later that the way that the people received the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost was indeed the way they received it later.

### **The Promise Seen and Heard**

In Acts chapter two verses five through thirteen we find that a crowd starts to gather to hear what is going on. This crowd begins to marvel because it is filled with Jews who reside in various far lands who are in Jerusalem for the feast and they all hear their homeland tongues coming from the congregation that was gathered with the apostles. You'll notice in verse thirteen that some men mocked and supposed that they were literally drunk. This tends to reinforce the fact that there were different languages coming from the group as most of it would sound like drunken gibberish to those listening to the ones speaking languages they didn't understand. Also, since none of the multitude seems to be astonished at the appearance of literal fiery forked tongues, it is apparent that the interpretation mentioned above about the "cloven tongues" being divided languages is correct.

Peter gets up in the next few verses and states that these people were not drunken, but that what the city was seeing was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel that in the last days God would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh. Notice verse thirty-three:

[Acts 2:33](#) Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

Notice I underlined the word "hear." This thing that they were seeing was the promise, it was the Holy Ghost, and it was something that they saw and something that they heard! According to this scripture, the infilling of the Holy Ghost, the promise, is not a silent thing, but rather something that can be heard. What are they hearing? They are hearing different tongues, that is to say different languages. Since the pouring out of the Holy Ghost is something that we can hear, then we can hear it when people receive it. If someone never speaks in other tongues, then we have never heard the sound of the promise being poured out on them.

### **Receiving the Holy Ghost Just As We Did**

In the tenth chapter of the book of Acts we find Peter being sent by God to preach to a gentile by the name of Cornelius and his household. Upon arriving and preaching to them they receive the Holy Ghost and speak with other tongues. Observe the following scripture:

**Acts 10:44** While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

**Acts 10:45** 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.

**Acts 10:46** For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

Notice the word “For” that I underlined in verse forty-six. That word is translated from the Greek word “gar” which according to *Strong’s* means “to assign reason” as in an argument or explanation. In other words those of the circumcision were astonished that these Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost because they heard them speak with tongues. The act of speaking with tongues was the reason, or dare I say evidence, that caused these circumcised Jews to believe that the Holy Ghost had been poured out upon the Gentiles. But there’s more. Peter went back to Judea and told his story to the brethren and said the following:

**Act 11:16** 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.**

**Act 11:17** 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?

Notice the word “as” in the seventeenth verse. It is translated from the word “hōs” which *Strong’s* defines as “which how, that is, in that manner.” So the Gentiles received the Holy Ghost by speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance in that same manner that the apostles received it. Peter essentially repeats this again in Acts 15:8 saying again that the Gentiles received it like the apostles did:

**Act 15:8** And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us;

**Act 15:9** And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

So for the second time we find Peter using his experience at Cornelius’ home to drive home the point that the gentiles received the Holy Ghost exactly as He and the other apostles did pointing out that there was no difference put between themselves and those gentiles. He says that God bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost. Did you catch that? People being given the Holy Ghost by God is something that can be witnessed.

## Can we just live a Good Life?

I have encountered some people who believe that they have the Holy Ghost because they live a good life or because they quit doing some of the sin that they used to do. Some seem to believe that if they can just start coming to church and participating in church activities then they will somehow gradually be filled with the Holy Ghost without themselves or anyone else knowing exactly when it happened. I would like to remove this notion by illustrating that in the book of Acts, immediate evidence was expected. This is the Bible example.

**Acts 8:5** Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

**Acts 8:6** And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

**Acts 8:7** For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed *with them*: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

**Acts 8:8** And there was great joy in that city.

Here we see that Philip went down to the city of Samaria and had a large revival with the people of the city giving heed to Philip's message with one accord. Miracles were being performed and joy spread through the city. Now let's drop down a little bit and read some more.

**Acts 8:14** Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

**Acts 8:15** Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

**Acts 8:16** (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

**Acts 8:17** Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

Notice verse sixteen above. How did the author of the book of Acts know that the Holy Ghost had not fallen on anyone of all of the many people that were participating in this great revival? Did the author have time to watch the individual lives of every single person to try to interpret their behavior whether they acted like they had received it or not? Was he able to live in the households of every citizen and watch their lives to make this determination? No, the author of the book of Acts knew that they had not received the Holy Ghost because no one at the revival in Samaria had exhibited the initial evidence of being filled with the Holy Ghost. No one had spoken in tongues. When Peter and John laid hands on the people and prayed, they received the Holy Ghost and it was immediately apparent. If you read through the story you'll find that the evidence was so profound that even Simon the sorcerer recognized that something had happened and tried to purchase the ability to lay hands on people and cause them to receive

the Holy Ghost. You see, when someone receives the Holy Ghost, it's obvious to even the sinner.

Another note on this point is the fact that the Bible provides numerous examples of people who lived "good" lives prior to the Holy Ghost being given. Take Job for example:

**Job 1:1** There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

Now the Paul said that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and Isaiah said that our righteousness is as filthy rags unto God. Therefore Job was not without sin, but Job, prior to God giving His Holy Ghost, conducted himself righteously and withheld his hands from evil. Job didn't have the promise of God living down inside of him. He didn't have the living water that Jesus spoke of to the woman at the well springing up within him and cleansing him from within and yet outwardly he apparently did not sin. Remember, the people of the Old Testament were commanded not to sin and there were righteous men such as Daniel, Joseph, and Enoch that did live good lives. Here is a little more of the chapter I cited earlier in Hebrews:

**Heb 11:32** And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and *of* Barak, and *of* Samson, and *of* Jephthae; *of* David also, and Samuel, and *of* the prophets:

**Heb 11:33** Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

**Heb 11:34** Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

**Heb 11:35** Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

**Heb 11:36** And others had trial of *cruel* mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

**Heb 11:37** They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

**Heb 11:38** (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth.

**Heb 11:39** And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

**Heb 11:40** God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Above we find record of people who were stoned, sawed asunder, mocked, etc... and yet, as verse 39 points out, did not have the promise. They had a good report, but not the promise. Therefore a good report in itself is not evidence that someone has the promise, the Holy Ghost.

The world was unworthy of these people, but God had something better for us. Job was called perfect, but he was not greater than John the Baptist of whom Jesus said there was none born of woman greater, and yet the least in the Kingdom of God was greater than he (Mat 11:11). What does this show? It shows the acts of living a good life are not in themselves evidence that a person has the Holy Ghost. The people of the Old Testament were expected to live a good life.

People with the Holy Ghost will live a good life or lose it, as God will not dwell in an unclean temple, but the witness that God gives of His promise goes beyond what is naturally possible with men. On the inside it cleans the heart and washes away the deceits of human flesh, and on the outside it bares record with that which is not the natural acts of human flesh, but the witness of a supernatural God. This begins with the evidence of speaking in other tongues.

### **But Paul said that we don't all Speak in Tongues Right?**

The apostle Paul, in his letters to the church, often covered some very deep aspects of Spiritual Life and the workings of the Holy Ghost within the church. His writings are very context driven at times and often address very specific issues that are of immediate concern to the particular church he's writing to. One of the most typical ways that many false doctrines are argued by their supporters these days seem to be to take something that Paul said, pull it out of context, and shoehorn it into whatever pet doctrine even if it contradicts other scripture.

Peter even warned that many of the things that Paul wrote were hard to understand and that the unstable wrest them to their own destruction(2Peter 3:16). So I think that when we read Paul's letters we need to take a very mature attitude about the context in which he is speaking and refrain from jumping to conclusions, as many do, that don't really mesh well with the rest of the body of scripture. So without further ado, let's take a look at the scripture in question:

**1Cor. 12:30** Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

Well, there you have it right? Paul seems to be lumping "speaking in tongues" in with the gifts of healing and tongues interpretation and asking a rhetorical question about whether everybody actually does these things. We know that not everybody has every gift, so then speaking in tongues must be only for some people right? Case closed right? Except, if that were really the case, it would seem at conflict with the rest of the scripture that we have already covered where it has been made plain that the members of the early church regarded tongues as evidence of the infilling the Holy Ghost, yea even an essential part as Peter told the people that what they saw and what they heard was the promise, the Holy Ghost, that God had given unto mankind, pouring his Spirit upon all flesh. So let me be clear, if Paul is saying that the promise comes without being heard, then he is defining the Holy Ghost differently from the other apostles and scripture and is thereby a false witness and accursed. Paul even said himself that if even one of the apostles came preaching any other gospel then let them be accursed(Gal. 1:8).

So what shall we say then? Did Paul miss God when he wrote these passages? Is this set of scripture unworthy of the other text in our Bible? No, Paul was speaking of Spiritual gifts and special operations of the Spirit in individuals as he makes clear in the first verse of the

chapter (1 Cor. 12:1). Notice that in verse ten that he Paul writes of one gift being “diverse kinds of tongues.” These scriptures in the beginning to middle of the chapter list in a bit greater detail gifts that Paul mentions again at the end of the chapter, including our afore mentioned passage in verse 30. Further proof of this is found in verse nine:

**1Co 12:9** To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

Now, unless we are to believe that only certain Christians have faith, then we must conclude that Paul is speaking of a special manifestation of faith. James said that without faith it is impossible to please God and I don't think that only Christians with a specific gift can be pleasing to God. I am not even persuaded that though I have never manifested the gift of healing that I can't pray for someone's healing. The point is that Paul is not saying that only some speak in tongues, or only some have faith, or only some can pray for someone's healing. He's talking about special gifts, manifestations, and operations of the Spirit that are beyond the evidence manifested in all Christians. To try to pull this out of context and cause it to speak to something that it does not, and in conflict with the body of scripture, is error.

Paul even points out in verse seven of chapter 12 that the manifestation of the Spirit is given unto every man:

**1Co 12:7** But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

The word manifestation means “exhibition” or “expression” according to the *Strongs' Dictionary*. This even further clarifies that Paul was not suggesting that only some Christians would receive a manifestation of the Spirit:

**1Co 12:13** For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Paul in this chapter was describing gifts that were in addition to the manifestation of the Spirit common among all of the saints.

### **But won't Tongues Cease?**

Immediately following Paul's discussion in the twelfth chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians where he writes of Spiritual Gifts he continues in the next chapter charity, or love, on context with his ongoing discussion of gifts. He begins to relate how that he if he had all of these great gifts and manifestations of the Spirit that without charity, it would not measure up very well. Then he writes the following:

**1Co 13:8** 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.

I have heard some say that this scripture conveys that speaking in other tongues will cease sometime before Jesus returns at the end of time and therefore, since it's all going away anyway we shouldn't think that tongues is the evidence of the Holy Ghost. Now there are several things wrong with this assertion that are born out in the context.

First of all, this scripture also mentions that knowledge shall vanish away. If we are to take it out of context and claim that Paul is speaking of sometime before Christ's return then at some point we will no longer be able to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ as Peter instructs in his epistle (2 Pe 3:18). Is Paul saying that we will get to a point to where suddenly no one has knowledge from God? God forbid.

Also, even if one were to believe that tongues will pass away at some point before Christ's return, I can testify most assuredly that as of this writing tongues are still very much with us. So how then does this scripture somehow prove that tongues are not the initial evidence of the Holy Ghost. Simply put, it doesn't.

So what was Paul talking about when he wrote this in his epistle to the Corinthians? First let's remember that this follows his conversation about special Spiritual gifts in the twelfth chapter. Paul was just communicating to the church that in the body of Christ there are diversity of gifts and that these all work together for the service of the body. In the thirteenth chapter he communicates that while these gifts are good, the underlying attribute that a Christian must have is that of charity, or love, and that without charity in our hearts, these gifts are dysfunctional.

Additionally, Paul let's us know about the time of which he is speaking when these gifts will cease. Below is the scripture in context:

**1Co 13:8** 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.

**1Co 13:9** For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

**1Co 13:10** But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

**1Co 13:11** 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.

**1Co 13:12** 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 twelve makes it clear that Paul is talking about a time after Jesus' return as he says that he shall be face to face and know even as he is know. He is saying that after this world passes away and the special gifts are no longer operating as they do currently charity, love, will still remain in that heavenly land. Why will they cease? Because, as verse ten makes clear, they are only a part of God's glory and manifestation and at that time we will be witness to God's full glory and manifestation. This set of scriptures does not say that God will stop baring record of His Holy Ghost through tongues prior to His final return.

## Aren't Tongues Just for a Sign to the Unbeliever?

**1Co 14:22** 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 the above scripture Paul declares that tongues are for a sign to them that believe not. This is true. One should not lose sight of the fact that when a person speaks in tongues by the Holy Ghost that it is a supernatural miracle. Jesus even essentially told his disciples that if nothing else they should believe him for His works' sake:

**Joh 14:11** Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

Tongues, along with healing or any other supernatural work of God, aren't a sign to them that believe, because they already believe (that's why they receive). Remember, it is the evil and adulterous that need a sign ( Matt 12:39). But does that mean that it would be a good thing to stop praying for sick saints that they may be healed unless there are unbelievers present to witness the sign? God forbid. Believers who are sick still need healing. Likewise, they still need to speak in tongues.

Paul said also that when a man speaks in tongues is not speaking to mankind but unto God:

**1Co 14:2** For he that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth *him*; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.

It is good for a man to speak to God. Paul is not saying that the saints should not speak in tongues, but that when they come to church it was more profitable to the whole assembly when they prophesied as opposed to them just edifying themselves:

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

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

And then:

**1Co 14:18** I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:

**1Co 14:19** Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that *by my voice* I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue.

Notice the phrase "Yet in the church" underlined in the scripture above. Paul understood that church was a place of teaching, preaching, and prophesying for the edification of the body and that this should be carried out and is needful in addition to praying in the spirit unto God:

**1Co 14:14** For if I pray in an *unknown* tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.

**1Co 14:15** What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

## Summary

It is my hope and prayer that this writing is helpful to the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ that their footing may be sure in the doctrine and faith that was once delivered unto the saints. It is my firm belief that the Bible makes it clear that the early church expected that the infilling of the Holy Ghost would be accompanied by the recipient speaking in other tongues to the extent that the early church took this as the initial evidence that the person has indeed received that better thing that God promised us.

It is my belief that nothing in the scripture, either in the epistles to the churches, word of the prophets, or the rest of the body of scripture ever contradicts or casts doubt on the doctrine that tongues are the universal initial evidence of the Holy Ghost coming into a person to dwell. Much to the contrary I believe that the epistles, prophecies, and various scripture reinforce and establish the doctrine as I have endeavored to outline in this writing.

I pray that the reader would approach this writing with a mind open not to the prejudices of the flesh, but to the Spirit of Truth, who is the very Christ. That all concerns other than the careful study of God's Word be laid aside that the reader may work out his or her own salvation with fear and trembling as the Bible instructs (**Php 2:12**), and that he or she might walk in truth and be the elect.

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