

Why Did God Choose Tongues?

By Fred E. Kinzie

HE WAS A DEACON in a fashionable church, but he did not believe in the Pentecostal doctrine relative to the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Yet he had been exposed to that belief through members of his immediate family. One night, at the close of an evangelistic service in an Apostolic Church, he went forward to pray, and was overwhelmingly filled with the Spirit of God. He spoke in other tongues fluently and was so inundated in the Spirit that even hours later he could not speak English.¹ Definitely, this was a Biblical experience accompanied not only with the speaking in another tongue, but also with the joy and peace of the Holy Ghost.

Millions have experienced this same baptism in the Spirit. Wherever this message is proclaimed concerning the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the question is asked, "Why did God choose speaking in tongues as the initial, physical evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost?" There may be many answers to this question, and I do not claim to know them all. However, some are obvious, and these, all should consider. First, one must recognize the *SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD*. God is not accountable to us for what He chooses to do.

Isaiah asked, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord or being his counselor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding!" (Isa. 40:13, 14). We have no license to question His ways, nor to dispute His actions. His purposes are supreme, His promises sure, His performances sane and sensible. After reading the following scriptures: Isaiah 28:11, 12; Mark 16:16-17; Acts 2:4, 38, 39; 10:46; 19:1-6; Romans 8:15; and Gal. 4:6, anyone with a hungry heart and an open mind will realize that there is a decided connection between speaking with tongues and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Check them out:

"For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing; yet they would not hear." (Isaiah 28:11, 12—My emphasis)

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;" (Mark 16:16,17—My emphasis)

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:4—My emphasis).

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call." (Acts 2:37, 39—My emphasis)

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.* (Acts 10:44-46—My Emphasis)

"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." (Acts 19:1-6—My emphasis)

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father (Romans 8:15)

¹ See "Linda's Page" on www.christsbondservants.org for the true testimony of her experience of being filled with His Spirit, being unable to speak in English for days!

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father.”² (Galatians 4:6)

To you who profess that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is, in fact, the work of demons—you should reconsider. Are you right, or deadly wrong! You face a risk heavier than you can bear!

Why did God choose blood as a basis for atonement? Why did God choose water as the element in baptism? Why did God choose gold as the overlaying metal for the ark of the covenant? Why did God choose stone as the material upon which to record the law of Moses? Why did God choose Jerusalem as the site for His Temple? Why did God choose dust out of which to form man? That there is divine purpose and reason behind each of these choices, I am sure we will all agree. We may not understand it all, but we most certainly would never attempt to deny or disavow God's sovereign right to do as He pleases or to choose what he wishes.

An External Evidence

There is a second vital and important reason why God chose other tongues as the evidence of one's receiving the Holy Ghost. It is an external, outward evidence. There are many evidences of the operation of the Spirit of God in one's life. With some, it is a matter of time before they are manifest; that is, the fruits mentioned in Gal. 5:22, 23. These follow in the wake of the spiritual infilling and are results of it. Peter and the six who went with him to Caesarea knew that the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost, not because of longsuffering, gentleness, meekness or temperance but because they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. He definitely and specifically pointed to the speaking in tongues as his evidence of knowing (Acts 10:46). Such is an outward, external evidence, instantly observable and heard. Peace, joy, righteousness and the fruits of the Spirit are the internal, inward action, and the result of the infilling.

A Uniform Evidence

A third reason why God chose other tongues as the evidence is that it is a uniform evidence. Many who oppose this statement will quote I Cor. 12:30 as the basis of their opposition, "Do all speak with tongues?" However, this is speaking of the gift of tongues, which one may receive at the time of, or subsequent to, the infilling of the Spirit. Though both the speaking in tongues as the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and as a gift, are the same in essence, they are different in administration and operation. This might seem hair-splitting, but the same thing is also true of faith. To be saved, everyone must have a certain degree of faith (Eph. 2:8; John 3:16; Romans 10:9), yet in I Cor. 12:9 we are instructed that there is a special gift of faith, operational over and beyond that which is necessary for salvation. They are the same in essence but different in administration and operation.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. *For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.* (1 Corinthians 12:7-11—My emphasis)

In speaking about being born of the Spirit, Jesus states in John 3:8, "*The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.*" Certainly this is uniformity. By carefully analyzing this verse, you will see that Jesus places emphasis upon the word "sound." You hear the sound of the wind blowing, and this is evidence of its presence. It is not seeing nor feeling that is important, though these evidences may be present, but hearing the sound. Some may conclude that this means the experience at Pentecost where they heard the sound as of a rushing mighty wind. However, this rushing mighty wind was not spoken of in Acts 10:46 or in 19:6, but speaking in tongues was. Hence, we must conclude that the important phase of the Spirit's evidence at Pentecost was the speaking in other tongues. The WIND WAS IMPERSONAL; the SPEAKING WAS PERSONAL.

At Caesarea all who heard the Word were filled (Acts 10:44-48), and *all* who heard the Word spoke in tongues.

²Christians know God as our Father. 2 signs of the Spirit's work in us are the natural/willing cry to God as "Father" and the natural/willing obedience to Jesus as "Lord". Once filled with His Spirit, Jesus yearns that He (The Spirit) remain with the Church till we meet face to face with Jesus Christ.

The "them" in verse 46 is the same "them" in verse 44. All twelve men mentioned in Acts 19:6 had a uniform experience. Do you think that if ten of the twelve had spoken in tongues, and the other two had not, Paul would have believed the two had received the Holy Ghost the same as the ten? Certainly not! Paul would never have accepted the credence of their experience if they had failed to exhibit *this same* uniform evidence. (My emphasis')

Complete Control

The speaking in tongues symbolizes God's complete control of the believer. Perhaps this is one of the most outstanding reasons why God chose speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the Holy Ghost baptism. James gives us more information about the tongue than any writer in the New Testament. This teaching is very revealing about the nature of the tongue. (Read the third chapter of James.) *First*, the tongue is capable of defiling the whole body. If it is capable of this action, is it incredible to claim that it also is capable of sanctifying the whole body? *Second*, though it is a small member, it has never been tamed of mankind. It is the most unruly member of the body. If this be true about the tongue, would it not be necessary that it be tamed before the whole body could be consecrated to God? James illustrated the importance of the tongue by comparing it to the bit in a horse's mouth which gives the driver complete control over the horse. Also, the helm of a large vessel gives the governor full command of the ship. *The comparison is that whoever controls the tongue of a man, controls him.*

The tongue takes on great importance when we understand these things. **YOU CANNOT TAME IT YOURSELF; ONLY GOD CAN DO THIS.** In Matt. 12:29 Jesus tells us that before you can enter a strong man's house and spoil or plunder his goods, you must first bind the strong man. The **STRONG MAN OF YOUR HOUSE IS YOUR TONGUE.** That is what James declares. You can tame every member of your body but this one. When God tames your tongue, you are under the control of the great God of the heavens, you are in the hands of the Almighty and conquered by Christ, you are endued with a spiritual force from on high and empowered for His service.

Man's Greatest Expression

The tongue is man's greatest expression of his spirit. Man is a spiritual creature; he is emotional. Because he is emotional, he must give expression to these emotions. The ability and power to co-ordinate thought and tongue into intelligent speech is one of the highest prerogatives of man. This elevates him above the beast of the field. This makes him superior to any of God's creation. This is the most distinguishing feature of his being. The tongue becomes the vehicle of expression for the spirit. All of the emotions, such as love, hate, anger, sorrow, joy, happiness, relief, serenity are communicated through the tongue. It is the gateway to your heart, your feelings, your spirit and attitudes.

All these things being true, it is not difficult to see why God would use the speaking in tongues to express the greatest, most wonderful experience that mortal man could receive. In the baptism of the Holy Ghost, His Spirit and yours become one. He uses your tongue and voice to express it. It is a wonder of wonders, chosen not by man, but by God, the sovereign ruler of the universe. Why be found fighting against Him? Believe His Word, accept what He says and you too can receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost (Luke 11:13).

Is It Scriptural for the Church?

This great question is probably attracting more attention today than at any time in the history of the world. In I Cor. 12:28, we read:

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

Is it not true that many professing Christians show by their words and actions that they actually despise the speaking with other tongues that is accompanying the marvelous outpouring of the Spirit which is falling on many thousands of believers throughout the world in these last days? Nevertheless we see the scriptures clearly teach that God hath set diversities of tongues in the church. This we cannot deny, and His people will do well if they acknowledge it even by taking the attitude of Peter.

Peter

He had thought this the beginning of the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy to be for the Jews only. To his utter astonishment it "fell" on the Gentiles also. Telling how he knew, he said, "For we heard them speak with tongues and magnify God" (Acts 10:46). He further adds, "*The Holy Ghost fell on them as on us at the beginning*" (day of Pentecost). The R. V. says, "*God gave unto them the like gift as He did unto us.*" When he realized this, he said, "*What was I that I could withstand God?*" (Acts 11:17).

A Recognized Sign of the Receiving of the Holy Ghost

We note in the first Bible record of anyone receiving the Holy Ghost as promised by our Lord that the initial sign or evidence of speaking with tongues accompanied. Speaking with tongues accompanied When the Holy Ghost first fell on the Gentiles. The same is true of the disciples that Paul met at Ephesus, where he asked them, "*Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?*" Here we have the Bible pattern of how the Jew, the Gentile and those who had never seen anyone baptized with the Holy Spirit, received the Holy Ghost.

In Mark 16:17, Jesus says, "*And these signs shall follow them that believe . . . They shall speak with new tongues.*" Now if Jesus said this, is it not the heritage of believers to speak with new tongues? Would Paul have said, "*I would that ye all spake with tongues,*" if it were only for a chosen few?

Someone has said if a real language was spoken, foreign to the speaker but understood by someone present, they could believe it. Numbers of instances have occurred in this great revival where believers, having received the Holy Ghost, have spoken in languages foreign to themselves, yet understood by one or more present. The Word does not teach that all the speaking with tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, or the gift of tongues, must necessarily be an understood language. Even on the day of Pentecost when the 120 were filled with the spirit, the sign of speaking with other tongues accompanied before it was noised abroad or the multitude gathered together.

There is nothing to indicate that, when the Holy Ghost first fell on the Gentiles at Cornelius' house, or at Ephesus, the speaking in tongues which accompanied was understood by any, though it certainly was a sign to Peter and to the six Jews who accompanied him, and later to the objectors at Jerusalem, that the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost.

Now if the speaking with tongues was a sign to them, why not a sign to us today? No matter what interpretation we place on the speaking with tongues, whether we believe it is the initial sign or evidence accompanying the gift of the Holy Ghost (which we do, if, as the Spirit gives utterance), or whether we believe it is solely the gift of tongues, we cannot fail to see that God hath placed it in the church, and this for a diversity of purposes.

Diversities of Tongues

Dr. E. W. Bullinger, in his *Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*, in explaining the meaning of "diversities" in this connection, gives "genus, that which has several species under it; or, sort, to separate and place in different divisions." It is important that we note that in the world there are suggested a number of different purposes for the speaking with tongues other than speaking a language as on the day of Pentecost.

In I Cor. 14:2, we read, "*He that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto man but unto God, for (note here "no man") no man understandeth him; howbeit, in the Spirit he speaketh mysteries.*" In verse 5, Paul says, "*I would that ye all spake with tongues.*" He surely must have meant "all." Then he added, "but rather that ye prophesied, for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues (so many stop here, but Paul added), except he interpret, that he church may receive edifying." Now, many interpretations are being given these days, and when interpretation is given, who can say prophecy is greater? If the Corinthian believers could receive and give interpretation, why not the believers of today? In verse 13, we are especially told to pray that we may interpret.

In verse 14, Paul says, *"If I pray in an unknown tongue my spirit prayeth but my understanding is unfruitful."* Did Paul stop praying in the unknown tongue because his understanding was unfruitful? Positively no, for in verse 15 he said, following this, "I will pray with the spirit (unknown tongue) and I will pray with the understanding also." He said "I thank my God I speak with tongues more than ye all." He must have spoken in tongues a great deal, for apparently the Corinthians did considerable speaking in tongues themselves, since so much regulating was required.

In verse 22 (R. V.) we read, *"Tongues are for a sign . . . to the unbelieving."* See Isaiah 28:11, 12. also in this regard, *"yet for all that will they not hear Me, saith the Lord."* Are there not many like that today? Specially note, Even though some do not accept the speaking with tongues as a sign or evidence accompanying the gift of the Holy Ghost, we cannot fail to see it is a sign to the unbeliever. If God's people fail to give this sign to the unbeliever, who will?

Notice verse 26, *"When you come together everyone of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation."* In closing this chapter, Paul sounds a warning, saying, *"Forbid not to speak with tongues."* How many need to heed this warning. If the exhortations to the Corinthians are not to be heeded by us today what scriptures are?

Many bring up verse 19 as an argument against the value of speaking with tongues. Here Paul says, *"Yet in the Church I had rather speak fire words with my understanding that by my voice I might (note his purpose) teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."*

There is no argument against the speaking in tongues here, for we readily believe with Paul that this is true when teaching others. Yet while it is true of teaching, it cannot apply to the speaking in tongues which accompanied the baptism of the Spirit; or the sign following the believer; or the sign or warning to the unbeliever, or for the edification or when used in worship as in verses 15 and 26, or the speaking in the unknown tongue to God. These diversities of purposes in speaking with tongues are very important, in fact so much so that God hath placed them in the church; and if so how can the church ever become normal without them? When the gift of tongues, which is given only to some, is used at will (verse 27), not more than two or three at the most should speak, and that by course, and one should interpret. It is different with the sign accompanying the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Specially note that there were 120 on the day of Pentecost, all at the home of Cornelius, and twelve at Ephesus, who were *all* filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues. (My emphasis)

How will the church get back to the order in which God set it, if we refuse to recognize His Word? While some writers and opposers talk about this out-pouring of the Spirit and the speaking with tongues that is accompanying as a counterfeit, and pick out a few here and there that have failed God, or abused the gifts, or possibly are counterfeits, there is a mighty army of men and women throughout the world that have received the genuine, according to the Bible pattern, and are standing on God's Word, a sure foundation, and, contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, they are not disappointed. The Lord Jesus said, *"These signs shall follow (note who) them that believe."* We receive because we believe.

THE TRUTH ABOUT SPEAKING IN TONGUES

by Eddie Jones

(Biblical and Historical Proof)

The Pentecostal phenomenon of "speaking in tongues" has created widespread controversy among modern Christendom today. Without the knowledge of the truth, which only comes to an honest heart by divine revelation, many have misunderstood the purpose of tongues. Do not be confused by theories and ideas of men: learn the truth about this important subject.

The Bible teaches three principal ways in which tongues are manifested: as the initial evidence of the Holy Spirit baptism as one of the nine gifts of the Spirit in the church, and in a believer's personal devotion to God.

Initial Evidence Of The Holy Spirit Baptism

Isaiah prophesied, "With stammering lips and ANOTHER TONGUE will he speak to this people." Is. 28:11. In the great commission, Jesus said, "And these signs shall follow them that believe...they shall speak with NEW TONGUES." Mark 16:17.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the SOUND thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." John 3:8. As the sound of wind blowing is the evidence of its presence, so is the sound of speaking in tongues evidence of the Holy Spirit baptism.

"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." Acts 2:1-4. The initial evidence of the Holy Ghost, upon the 120 disciples, was witnessed by devout Jews, out of every nation. They said 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?" Acts 2:6-8. Then Peter preached,

"But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel (See Joel 2:28). And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh...Having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he (Jesus) hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." Acts 2:16-33.

Cornelius and his household spoke in tongues when they were baptized with the Holy Ghost. "They of the circumcision which believe were astonished...because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. FOR THEY HEARD THEM SPEAK WITH TONGUES..." Acts 10:45-48. Peter confirmed, "...The Holy Ghost fell on them as on us at the beginning." Acts 11:15.

The believers at Ephesus spoke in tongues when they received the Holy Ghost baptism. "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake in tongues, and prophesied." Acts 19:1-6.

When the Samaritans received the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the apostles' hands, there was a miraculous evidence of God's power which exceeded the miracles and signs already experienced. This prompted Simon the sorcerer to offer money to buy this power: that on whomsoever he laid hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. According to the Biblical signs that follow believers, and the experiences received at Pentecost, Caesarea and Ephesus, there should be no doubt that the Samaritans received the Holy Ghost with the same initial evidence of speaking in tongues. Acts 8:5-25.

The apostle Paul was filled with the Holy Ghost and spoke in tongues. Acts 9:17, I Cor. 14:18.

And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. (Acts 9:17)

And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. (I Cor. 14:18)

History also proves that speaking in tongues was the evidence of the Holy Spirit baptism in the early church, and has not ceased to be a Biblical experience among believers today.

Encyclopedia Britannica, 1972 Edition, Vol. W, p. 75 - Tongue-speaking manifested itself early in the Christian experience. At Pentecost (Acts 2) the gift appeared as a sign of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which marked the character of the earliest Christians...During later church history, glossolalia (speaking in tongues) occurred among the mendicant friars of the 13th century, little prophets of Cevennes, the Jansenists, and the Irvingites.

Tongues were found also among the early Quakers, as well as among the converts of John Wesley and George Whitefield...In modern times glossolalia has been found chiefly among Holiness and Pentecostal groups.

The Saturday Evening Post, May 16, 1964, p. 32 - Praying in tongues has recurred at intervals throughout the Christian era, although it did not affect large masses until early in this century. Its advocates were quickly expelled from the established churches, whereupon they established the Pentecostal churches. For 50 years it remained the almost exclusive possession of the Pentecostal churches.

Newsweek, June 25, 1973, p. 80 - The Pentecostal phenomenon has spread with surprising speed through all of the world's major Christian churches.

Why did God choose tongues for the initial evidence of the Holy Spirit baptism? Note the following reasons: Isaiah asked, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being His counselor hath taught Him?" Is. 40:13. God is sovereign to choose as He will without being accountable to anyone!

Such a marvelous experience as the baptism of the Holy Ghost demands a marvelous evidence. So God chose to speak through the believer in a language foreign to him as the outward evidence of the marvelous infilling of the Holy Ghost!

The tongue is the most unruly member of the body and full of deadly poison, which no man can tame. It is a world of iniquity and is set on fire of hell. Therefore, the tongue is capable of defiling the entire body. James 3:6. Before man can be fully sanctified, the tongue, which defileth, must be brought under control. Who can tame the tongue? James compares the tongue to the bit in a horse's mouth which gives the driver complete control. James 3:3. So whoever controls the tongue controls the person. How beautiful is this glorious truth! God chose tongues, as evidence of the Holy Spirit baptism, to symbolize His complete control of a believer. And this is important for the sanctification of the individual's body.

Although other signs were manifested at Pentecost, God chose tongues for the uniform sign of the Holy Spirit baptism. (Compare Acts 2:2-4, 10:46, 19:6.) Jesus said that this SIGN shall follow every believer of the gospel. Mark 16:16,17. The Jews were convinced that the Gentiles at Cesarea had received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, FOR THEY HEARD THEM SPEAK WITH TONGUES. Acts 10:45-47.

Gift Of Tongues In The Church

"For by ONE SPIRIT are we ALL BAPTIZED into one body." I Cor. 12:13. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." I Cor. 12:4. The gifts of the Spirit are as follows: "the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, the gifts of healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues and the interpretation of tongues. But by one and the selfsame Spirit, God divides these gifts severally to every man as He will". I Cor. 12:8-11.

Since the gift of tongues is a manifestation of the Spirit (I Cor. 12:7,11), it cannot operate in a person without the Holy Ghost being resident within him. Therefore this gift is only given to believers who have been baptized into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit evidenced by tongue-speaking.

The gift of tongues is different from the tongues as the initial evidence of the Holy Spirit baptism. Compare the following:

- 1. These tongues differ in purpose. The gift of tongues along with the gift of interpretation of tongues has been give unto some in the church to convey a message from God to the congregation as the need requires. I Cor. 12:7, 27, 28. But the tongues as evidence of receiving the Holy Ghost, is the believers personal experience with God, and is not designed to convey a message to the church.
- 2. Also these tongues differ in operation. The gift of tongues in the church is limited to two or three messages and that by course: and one must interpret I Cor. 14:27. But the tongues as evidence of the Holy Spirit baptism is

an unlimited manifestation and requires no interpretation.

Paul said, "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. I would that ye all spake with tongues but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues EXCEPT he interpret that the church may receive edifying." I Cor. 14:4,5. Certainly the apostle did not try to discredit or do away with the importance of tongues. Because, in comparison, he illustrated that the less honorable members of the body are necessary, and receive more abundant honor. I Cor. 12:22,23.

Each gift of the Spirit has as its proper time and place in the church, and when tongues is interpreted they become as important as prophecy! So Paul emphasized, "...Let all things be done unto edifying." I Cor. 14:26. To edify the church, the gift of tongues must be coupled with the gift of interpretation of tongues. To avoid confusion, Paul gave instructions to follow for the use of tongues and interpretation of tongues in the church. (See I Cor. 14:27) He said, "If there be no interpretation let him keep silence in the church: and let him speak to himself, and to to God." I Cor. 14:28. Also he said, "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." I Cor. 14:19. It is better for the edification of the church to speak five words of understanding than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue without a divinely inspired interpretation. However, lest anyone misunderstand the importance of tongues, Paul concluded, "Wherefore brethren, covet to prophesy, and FORBID NOT TO SPEAK WITH TONGUES." I Cor. 14:19.

"Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not..." I Cor. 14:22. This Scripture deals with God's speaking to man. (See I Cor. 14:21.) Of course, the believer should know when the Lord speaks, whether by tongues or not. But as a proof to the unbeliever, or anyone who doubts the Word of God, tongues are manifested for a miraculous sign of His presence.

Paul asked the question, "Do all speak with tongues?..." I Cor. 12:30. The context of this Scripture requires a negative answer, because Paul is discussing Tongues as a gift of the Spirit only, and not as the evidence of the Holy Spirit baptism. (See I Cor. 12:28.) The gift of tongues is in addition to the tongues experienced with the baptism of the Holy Ghost. (By the same rule, the gift of faith is in addition to the measure of faith given a person to be saved, Compare Rom. 12:3, I Cor. 12:9.) So everyone may not receive the gift of tongues. But in every case, where the initial evidence of the Holy Spirit baptism is recorded, "ALL" spoke in tongues. (For examples see Acts 2:4, 10:44, 19:7.)

Personal Devotion To God

Tongues are also manifested in a believer's personal life of prayer and worship. They serve as a means of his secret communication with God in the Spirit. These tongues are not meant to be understood by men: therefore, they need no interpretation. "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." I Cor. 14:2. "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Rom. 8:26. Paul said, "If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. 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." I Cor. 14:14,15.

These devotional tongues are also for the personal edification of the believer. They are for self-encouragement and uplifting of his spirit. Paul said, "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself..." I Cor. 14:4. So the apostle gladly stated, "I think my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all." I Cor. 14:18.

How long will tongues continue to be manifested?

"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." I Cor. 13:8-10. The phrase, "when that which is perfect is come," is translated from the Greek phrase "to teleion". The word "teleion" is a singular neuter term which refers to Jesus Christ. Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, p. 618, defines the phrase "to teleion" as used in I Cor. 13:10:

"The perfect state of all things, to be ushered in by the return of Christ from heaven." Paul said, "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part: but then (when that which is perfect is come) shall I know even as also I am known." I Cor. 13:12. When the church, having reached her state of perfection, stands face to face in the presence of God, there will be no need for prophecies, tongues and knowledge. But until that which is perfect (Jesus Christ) is come, that which is in part will remain. And as long as there remains prophecies and knowledge, tongues shall not cease. So Paul instructed the church to COME BEHIND IN NO GIFT, WAITING FOR THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. I Cor. 1:7.

Believe the Truth! The Pentecostal phenomenon is for you today! If you desire the greatest experience God has offered to mankind, I urge you to repent, and be baptized with water in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, evidenced by speaking in tongues!
Acts 2:4,38,39