

**THE BIBLE**

**TRUTH ABOUT**

**MODERN**

**"TONGUES"**

**EARL R. WILSON**

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The express purpose of this work is to examine, by the Bible, in a clear, concise, understandable manner the popular teaching of modern-day "tonguism," or the doctrine that says all who are baptized with the Holy Ghost must speak in tongues as a sign of that baptism.

There are two extremes that definitely must be avoided in any examination of this subject. First, we must not label all occurrences of speaking in tongues as being of the devil. Secondly, neither must we say that all speaking in tongues are of God. The Word and the Spirit are completely capable of showing us the dividing line between that which is false and that which is of God.

We must first state that there is a Bible gift of tongues. In 1 Corinthians, Chapter 12, as Paul listed the gifts of the Spirit, in verse 10 he spoke of "divers kinds of tongues." The essence of this work will be to examine, by the Bible, whether or not the doctrine of modern-day speaking in tongues (as presented mainly by the Pentecostal movement) is the Bible gift of tongues or whether it is a misrepresentation of that gift. There are two facts that we want to face first of all:

1. This doctrine of speaking in tongues as the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost was never heard of before 1900.
2. There is not one place in the New Testament that would lead us to believe the early church ever taught such a doctrine as this.

Those who propagate the teaching of speaking in tongues as the sign of the baptism of the Holy Ghost usually have two basic doctrines: First, they say that speaking in an unknown tongue is the initial, physical evidence of the Holy Ghost. Secondly, they say that there is a difference between speaking in tongues as a sign and the gift of tongues.

To prove this point, I quote from some of their own literature. In a tract entitled *Teachings of the Church of God of Prophecy Explained*, by L. A. Moxley, published by Whitewing Publishing House and Press, Cleveland, Tennessee, under the heading "Speaking in Tongues" I quote: "This is the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The receiving of the Holy Ghost is always evidenced by the speaking in other tongues (languages). Speaking in tongues, not the speaking of a language you have learned from an educational standpoint, is as the Spirit gives utterance." As proof they reference Acts 2:4, 10:44-46.

In yet another publication entitled *Church of God Teachings, Declaration of Faith and Resolution on Holiness*, I quote Number 9 of the teachings listed therein: "The speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, is the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost." Reference texts are John 15:26; Acts 2:4; Acts 10:44-46; Acts 19:1-7.

Another booklet entitled *Speaking in Tongues—Is It God or Nonsense?* by Reverend James L. Beall, of the "America to Your Knees" radio broadcast, states on page 4: "In any study regarding the speaking in tongues, invariably the first question to arise is this, What good or of what benefit is the speaking in tongues? My answer is this, The speaking in tongues is the believer's initial, scriptural sign of the infilling or baptism of the Holy Ghost." It is tragic that intelligent men will assume such a spiritual position that is totally without defense in God's eternal Word.

The position that these men assume from the Bible in stating that speaking in tongues always accompanies the baptism of the Holy Ghost is totally without biblical foundation. We make this statement, but we also shall prove it from the Bible.

Let me make this point for your consideration and study. There is not one single text of Scripture in God's eternal Word which teaches that all who are baptized with the Holy Ghost will speak in tongues as the evidence of that baptism. I have continually in the ten years of my daily radio broadcast challenged those who propagate this doctrine to give me one (not four, five, six, or a dozen—but one) single text of Scripture that proves this doctrine. To this date

(this booklet was first published in May of 1973), I have not received a single text of Scripture to support this teaching. Yet men will go right on standing in the pulpits, preaching and declaring a doctrine they cannot prove from God's eternal Word. We shall now go into the Bible and examine this doctrine, Scripture by Scripture.

In Joel 2:28-29 we have a clear prophecy of the coming of the pouring out of the Spirit of God upon mankind. It states: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit." This text of Scripture speaks nothing whatsoever of anyone speaking in other tongues. It does, however, tell of the sons and daughters prophesying, the old men dreaming dreams, and the young men seeing visions. If the doctrine of speaking in tongues is as important and as necessary as some today would allege, then why do we read nothing of it in this clear prophecy of the great coming, even of the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon humankind?

It seems that Acts, Chapter 2, is often referred to more than any other text of Scripture in an effort to prove this doctrine. Let us examine carefully just exactly what did take place in Acts, Chapter 2. May I state before we look into it, that if we are going to prove a doctrine of speaking in tongues as the initial, physical evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost from Acts, Chapter 2, then we are going to have to follow without any deviation the pattern that is laid down.

Acts 2:1-13 reads: "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. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 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 marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine."

Notice that we have a picture here of the Jewish men, devout men out of every nation under heaven, gathered for the Feast of Pentecost at Jerusalem. It was on this day that God chose to pour out His Spirit upon the group of believers gathered in that upper room in one accord, or in one place. As we read the account, we can see that as they were gathered there, there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house. The Scripture teaches us that there appeared cloven tongues like as of fire that sat upon each of them. Verse 4 clearly teaches us that they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, but I want to make a positive statement right here: It does not say that they all spoke in tongues. To teach this is to wrest the Scripture.

Notice carefully that the Scripture teaches that they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. They did not speak, but only as the Spirit gave them utterance, and they spake with other tongues. The phrase "other tongues" proves something very clearly to us. It proves that the language they spoke in was not unknown gibberish of some kind, but it was comparable to the language they spoke in their everyday communications. For example: I speak in the English language, but should God give me the ability to speak in the German language, I would be speaking in "*other* tongues," not *unknown* tongues, because German would be clearly understandable to anyone who understood German, whether by a natural process of acquiring it or by an educational process.

Was this language a language unknown to those that were there and listening? We must naturally say no, because the Bible says no. In verse 6 we see that as the multitude came together, their testimony was that they heard every

man speak in his own language. Notice please that the gift was given to the *speakers* and not to the *hearers*. God certainly does not bestow spiritual gifts upon sinners, and every one of the listeners were sinners. The crowd was further amazed because we read in verses 7-8 that they reasoned among themselves, and they said, "Are not all these which speak Galilaeans?" Yet they were hearing these men speak in their own tongue wherein they were born.

I call your attention to the fact that everyone who spake, as the Spirit gave them utterance, were Galilaeans. When they spoke, the hearers were able to clearly understand what they said without the aid of an interpreter. To our Pentecostal friends, I set forth this challenge: If you are going to use Acts, Chapter 2, as the basis for your doctrine that all who are baptized with the Holy Ghost will speak with other tongues, then when you speak, the listeners must be able to hear and understand without the aid of an interpreter. If this is not the case, you are clearly out of the order of God. Again, in verse 11 these men said, "We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God."

I call your attention to the seventh verse, where the hearers said that every one who spoke was a Galilaean. Now it is a documented, historical fact that the Galilaeans spoke the Aramaic language.

In the list of countries in verses 9-11, we find in verse 9 that there were men present from Judaea. It is interesting to note that Judaea and Galilee were both provinces of the land of Palestine and both the Judaeans and the Galilaeans spoke the Aramaic language. According to Scripture, the Judaeans heard these Galilaeans speak the wonderful works of God. But did they speak in other tongues? No, for they both spoke the same language. Thus we have conclusive proof that not everybody spake with "other tongues" on the Day of Pentecost. Perhaps one of the greatest miracles on the Day of Pentecost is overlooked. In verse 14 we can determine from Scripture that every nation represented evidently heard Peter speak in their own language. Here God took the speech of Peter and caused it to fall upon these men from different countries in such a manner that they all heard in their own particular language.

These facts are quite evident from Acts, Chapter 2:

1. The language that was spoken on that day was not unknown but was clearly understood by the hearers.
2. There was absolutely no interpreter present.
3. It is impossible to prove that all of the 120 spake in other tongues.

Acts, Chapter 2, is definitely the example of God's setting in the church the gift of tongues. Why did He choose this day? It is quite evident. For they were gathered together, devout Jews, men out of every nation under heaven, and God desired for the Gospel message to be carried back into all of these countries. So He gave these Galilaeans the ability—the supernatural ability—to speak the language of those Jews. The results were that three thousand men were converted and went back into their countries preaching and carrying the message of a resurrected Jesus Christ.

Let us look at some other instances where people were baptized with the Holy Ghost and did not speak with tongues. In Acts 4:31 we read, "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." There is no mention, whatsoever, of tongues here.

In Acts 8:14-17 we read: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." Note here, also, that when they received the Holy Ghost, no tongues were mentioned.

The next instance we find is in Acts 9:17-18. It reads: "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. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." Here we find

Saul, who was to become Paul after having been struck down on the road to Damascus, was baptized with the Holy Ghost, and yet there was no mention, whatsoever, of tongues. I think, also, of John the Baptist, who the Scripture said was filled with the Holy Ghost and leapt in his mother's womb, and yet he never spoke in tongues. I think of Elizabeth, Zachariah, Mary, and Jesus—all of these the Bible says were filled with the Holy Ghost and yet we have no recorded instance of them ever speaking in tongues.

In all fairness, let us now examine two texts of Scripture where people were baptized with the Holy Ghost and did speak in tongues. Acts 10:44-46 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." Here we find Peter at Cornelius' house, and as he began to preach unto them, the Holy Ghost fell on them.

The Scripture lets us know that "they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter" (verse 45). Cornelius was an Italian. Peter and those of the circumcision spoke the Aramic language, and yet when Cornelius and his household began to speak with tongues, Peter and those with him clearly understood what they said. Please note that they understood without an interpreter. Does this prove the doctrine that all who are baptized with the Holy Ghost speak with other tongues? NO.

The last instance we want to look at is in Acts 19:1-6, which states: "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."

Notice in verse 6 when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them and they spake with tongues and prophesied. Here we find two gifts were given. Again I call your attention to the fact that there was no interpreter present. Consider please, if you will, that each time the gift of tongues was given, there was a necessity, or a need, for there were those present who needed to hear the Gospel message or needed to understand what God was doing through His wonderful works. Each time it was *without* the aid of an interpreter. In none of these instances we have thus far looked into was there an interpreter required to bring forth the meaning of the word spoken by those who received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. I leave it to the intelligence of the reader to determine if these texts of Scripture that we have examined would warrant the preaching of such doctrine as is being taught today by those who promote modern "tonguism."

"Tongues people" hold that the incident in Acts, Chapter 2, on Pentecost was the sign or the initial, physical evidence of the baptism with the Holy Ghost. If this be so, I again want to state and challenge you that it must be carried out just exactly as it was in Acts, Chapter 2. The speaker must speak an intelligible language that the hearers understand without the aid of an interpreter. All clear-thinking people will readily see that if everyone present spoke the same language, there would be absolutely no need for tongues.

Remember that in each instance where those who were baptized with the Holy Ghost spake in tongues, it was because there were those present who needed to have the message conveyed to them. The Jews at Pentecost needed to hear about Christ. Peter, who was prejudiced against the Gentiles, needed to know that God had a gift for them also.

As we consider the thought of signs in the Bible, let us look at Mark 16:17-18: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." We have no authority to pick out any one of these and say that it is the sign that we have received the Holy Spirit.

In Matthew 12:39 the Bible teaches us that it is an evil and adulterous generation that seeketh after a sign. Again in John 4:46-48 Christ let us know that there was a people who unless they saw signs and wonders would not believe. Is this not the kind of people that we have today, people who are seeking after the sign of tongues? A little thought can show us that seeking for a sign is proof of a lack of faith.

The term initial, physical evidence is nowhere found in the Bible. As a matter of fact, the word *evidence* only appears once in the New Testament and that is in Hebrews 11:1, where we read, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." This Scripture certainly contradicts the thought of God giving everyone the same sign that is baptized with the Holy Ghost. This is an act of faith, not signs.

I think we would be much safer to base our doctrine on what appears in the Bible rather than on that which does not appear. When confronted with actual cases of people who speak in tongues and yet live a sinful life, we find that modern-tongues people tell us that the devil can counterfeit tongues. It seems to me that it would be a very dangerous thing to have as an only sign something that the devil could counterfeit. If we are going to seek signs, let us seek something that the devil cannot counterfeit. Certainly the devil cannot counterfeit a purified heart and a clean life everyday before God and man. Is it not rather strange that the Old Testament is entirely silent on the coming of speaking in tongues as a sign, if it is as important as some say it is? It speaks plainly of the coming of many other things—healing, for example—but the Old Testament is silent as far as the coming of any doctrine of tongues as an evidence.

The Old Testament is not, however, silent on the contrary subject. We read in Isaiah 8:19-20: "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." We are thus admonished by the Prophet Isaiah not to seek after those that peep and mutter or, as the Hebrew would say, chatter.

We read in Isaiah 32:1-4: "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly." Certainly this is just the exact opposite of that which is going on in modern-day "tonguism."

In Isaiah 33:17-19 we read: "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off. Thine heart shall meditate terror. Where is the scribe? where is the receiver? where is he that counted the towers? Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand." Again this is the exact opposite of that which we see taking place in religious denominations that are promoting speaking in tongues as the evidence. It would be good to add right here that this doctrine of speaking in tongues as the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost is no longer confined to the Pentecostal movements, but has spread out into various denominations, including many of the old-line denominations and, even in some cases, into Roman Catholicism.

What is the gift of tongues for anyway? Tongues people tell us that there are two phases to it: one in which you speak as evidence and the other is for private use in devotions and for personal edification. Again we turn to the

Bible, the final authority in all spiritual matters. We read in Romans 8:26, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." It would seem to me that if we cannot utter these groanings, we had best stop trying.

The same theme continually repeats itself in their books, articles, and so forth. It is a doctrine totally without foundation in the Bible, when we view what actually happened on the Day of Pentecost in comparison to what they say happened, which is used to support their teachings of today. I am glad for Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 3:12, when he said, "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech."

If we are to believe that one aspect of speaking in tongues is for private use and devotions and for our personal edification, does it not seem strange that we never read in the Bible where we are instructed to speak in tongues in private? Or is there one recorded instance of anyone speaking tongues in private? It is always in the presence of other people.

When Christ ascended, the ministry of His Word spread to the entire world, and there was a need for the ability to speak the Gospel to people of other lands and languages. The gift of tongues is just that supernatural bestowing of ability by the power of the Holy Ghost upon men in order that they might take the message of the Gospel to those of other lands. Tongues is never used nor given except there be those present that cannot speak the language of the speaker.

Isaiah, in Isaiah 28:11, enlightened us along this thought of using tongues in our private use or devotions. He said, "For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people." This clearly teaches us that God speaks to His people through stammering lips and another tongue; it is not us speaking to God. This is very, very clear and will warrant some careful consideration. Nowhere in God's Word does it state that the Spirit gives utterance to people to speak to God. Tongues is always used for communication between human beings.

If Acts, Chapter 2, is not the picture of the gift of tongues being set in the church, where in the Bible is the record of that gift being set in the church? In Galatians 5:22-23 is listed the fruit of the Spirit, but not one time is *tongues* mentioned. It would behoove our tongues friends to carefully consider 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, which reads: "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."

Notice that verse 7 says the "manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." In other words, everybody has the Spirit of God manifested through them that they might profit everyone else. Beginning in verse 8 Paul listed the various ways that the Spirit of God manifests Himself through every man. He taught us here that to one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, and so forth. Never do we read, my friend, that the same gift is always given to each and every man. Verse 11 clearly tells us that God divides, through His Spirit, these gifts to every man severally as He will.

Again in the latter part of 1 Corinthians, Chapter 12, we find recorded that Paul asked the question beginning in verse 29, "Are all apostles? are all prophets?" and so forth. Then in verse 30 he asked, "Do all speak with tongues?" Naturally the answer must be no to each and every one of these questions. For no place in the Bible do we read that each and every individual who is baptized with the Holy Ghost will have the same identical manifestation of the Spirit. I, again, challenge anyone to produce one text of Scripture that so teaches.



The gifts of the Spirit are not given outside of the body of Christ, the church. If you cannot qualify as the church that Jesus Christ built, you do not have a God-given gift. Gifts are given by the Spirit to build up the body of Christ, the Church of God, and not some denomination or organization.

Again some would say that tongues is a heavenly language, and they refer to the first verse of 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13, which reads, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." It would do us good to stop right here and see just exactly how angels talk. In Daniel 9:21-22 we read: "Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding." Notice that when Gabriel came to speak to Daniel, he spoke in a language that Daniel clearly understood. In Genesis, Chapter 18, we have an account of angels, or heavenly visitors, visiting Abraham. The conversation that was held was clearly understood by Abraham and the angels. They were fully able to converse with one another.

Someone may ask, "But what of 1 Corinthians, Chapter 14? Surely this chapter proves speaking in tongues as the evidence." Let us check this chapter carefully and study it and see just exactly what Paul was saying in his writing. If you will carefully check your Bible, you will find that in most Bibles the word "unknown," as it appears in 1 Corinthians 14:2, is in italics. This means to the reader that this is a word that was added by the translators. The word "unknown" absolutely does not appear in the original Greek manuscript from which the New Testament was written. Let us examine it verse by verse. Verse 1 says, "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." Paul's admonition was that men, if they are going to desire spiritual gifts, should desire to prophesy. Verse 2 says, "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." We must consider to whom this letter was written, under what circumstances, and why it was written. The city of Corinth was a metropolis. It was a melting pot of culture. It was the crossroads of commerce and trade. In this town lived many different people with as many different languages. These people were converted to Christianity, and they came together in the Church of God to worship in Spirit and in truth.

We shall prove to you that 1 Corinthians, Chapter 14, is not dealing with the gift of tongues, but with the speaking in a foreign language by saints in the Church of God at Corinth. Other members of the congregation were not able to understand their language, and thus Paul was giving some rules of conduct in the worship services. He stated in verse 2, "For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue [Remember that the word *unknown* does not appear in the original Greek. Therefore, the verse is saying, 'He that speaketh in a tongue'; and if we look into the Greek, we would find that it means a language.] speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries." This is not hard to understand if we will consider the fact that the various nationalities with their different languages were involved in this congregation at Corinth. When one would stand to praise God or to testify, those that were not of that nationality certainly could not understand. Thus the speaker spoke to God and not to man.

Paul continued in verses 3-4: "But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church." Now notice Paul's desire for this people in verse 5: "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." Here Paul stated a preference for people to prophesy rather than to speak with tongues. This seems to me to be a hard blow to the prominence given to the speaking in tongues in many religious assemblies.

Verses 6-8 read: "Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine? And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped

or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" Here Paul reasoned with these people, telling them that it was better for them to speak so that others could understand. It is better that the sounds they make have a distinction rather than the sounding of a trumpet, for example, that gives an uncertain sound. He nailed it down, so to speak, in verse 9 when he said, "So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air." I think that we had best take note of Paul's admonition, lest we wind up speaking to the air and profiting no one.

Verse 10 says, "There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification." I might add here that "tongues" is without any signification whatsoever as it is used in modern-day assemblies. Verse 11 says, "Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me." It would seem here that in many places we have barbarians speaking to barbarians. We just might give that thought serious consideration. Verse 12 says, "Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church." Paul did not chastise them for seeking spiritual gifts, but told them that they should seek that gift which may excel to the edifying of the church. What gift is that? According to verse 4, "He that prophesieth edifieth the church." The gift of prophesy, not the gift of tongues, edifies the church.

Now in verse 13 we are introduced to something far different than that which took place in Chapters 2 and 10 of Acts. For here Paul stated, "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret." Previous to this in our study, we have not found one single instance where an interpreter was needed. Now why does Paul speak of a need for an interpreter here? For the simple reason that these are foreign languages that are being spoken by these people of God in the church at Corinth. Therefore it was necessary that they have an interpreter. In other words, Paul was saying if you are going to speak in a foreign language, you had better be able to interpret so that others around you will be able to understand it.

Verses 14-15 read: "For 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." Here Paul stressed the thought of praying with understanding and singing with understanding. This is far removed from that which is propagated and presented by tongues people when they say they cannot help themselves, and they readily admit that they cannot understand what they are saying.

Now carefully consider verse 16 with me: "Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?" This clearly shows us that those who were speaking with tongues were speaking in a foreign language, one that could be learned in an educational process. This is evident from the fact that Paul taught us in verse 16 that if one occupies the room of the unlearned, he will not be able to understand what the speaker says. This, therefore, is definitely not an unknown heavenly gibberish of some kind, but is an example of an individual speaking in his native dialect. Those individuals who did not understand the native's dialect, were unable to say Amen at the giving of thanks.

Verses 17-19 say: "For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified. I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: 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." Many would jump to the conclusion that Paul said he spoke in tongues, as they teach it today, but we must recognize that Paul was a highly educated man, capable, we are told, of speaking nine different languages. We can readily see this when we trace his missionary trips and journeys from country to country. This does not say that Paul ever spoke in tongues as the Bible gift. We have no Bible to prove that Paul did speak in tongues as the Bible gift of the Spirit. He clearly let us know that he would rather speak five words with understanding in the church so that people might be able to understand and be taught. He compared speaking five clear words to speaking ten thousand words in a tongue. What a comparison!

Paul continually stressed the thought of understanding. In verses 20-21 he said: "Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. 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 will they not hear me, saith the Lord." This text of Scripture is taken from Isaiah 28:11-12, which we have quoted previously.

Verse 22 says, "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." This is absolutely contrary to the teachings of modern-day tongues people. They teach that you first must be a believer and then secondly you must be filled with the Spirit of God with tongues as a sign. Here Paul clearly taught us that tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe but to them that believe not. Piece by piece, bit by bit, Paul tore down and destroyed the very foundation that modern-day tongues people base their doctrine on.

Verses 23-25 tell us: "If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth." Now we are told today by tongues people that speaking in tongues is the evidence that the Spirit of God is in you. Here Paul refuted this by telling us that the unbelievers will know that "God is in you of a truth" when you prophesy so that people may believe, hear, and understand.

Again in verse 23 Paul stressed the thought that if people come in who are unlearned and you speak in tongues or other languages, they will say that you are mad. Why? Because they simply cannot understand and therefore can receive absolutely no good whatsoever. In verses 26-27 we read: "How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. If any man speak in an unknown tongue [or a foreign language], let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret." Here again we see that this is a much different instance than that which took place in Acts, Chapter 2, for the simple reason that an interpreter was required.

In verse 27 of The Emphatic Diaglott we read, "And if anyone speak in a foreign Language, let it be by two, or at MOST three [sentences] and in succession, and let one interpret." Anyone who has ever heard preaching done in this manner knows this is exactly the way it is carried out. The speaker speaks two or three sentences, and then the interpreter interprets those sentences. If this were speaking of the gift of tongues as set forth in the Bible, there would be no need for an interpreter, for God could bestow upon the speaker a God-given ability to speak in the language of the hearers.

Paul further stated in verse 28, "But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God." This is a far cry from the "can't-help-its" that Pentecostal people seem to have. The fact of the matter is that God will never give us the "can't-help-its." For God desires us to have full control of our faculties at all times that we may exercise our free moral agency in serving Him and giving Him glory and honor. If there is no one to interpret, Paul let us know that the speaker should speak to himself and to God. Verses 29-32 say: "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." We are told that the gift of prophesy is a greater gift than the gift of tongues, and the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. Yet men who have a lesser gift, in the thought of tongues, say that they have no control over it.

Paul pretty well summed it up in verse 33 when he said, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." Dropping down to verse 39 we read, "Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues." Paul let us know that we should not forbid people to speak with tongues, but they

are to be governed by the rules and regulations that he laid down in this chapter. Lest we forget, he was talking about speaking in a *foreign language*, not in some kind of *unknown language*. The fallacy of it all, calling it an "unknown tongue." If it is unknown, how do we know that it is a tongue? If it is a tongue, then it would not be unknown. Verse 40 says, "Let all things be done decently and in order."

We have thus looked at all the Scriptures relating to the subject of speaking in tongues, and in all fairness we must come to this conclusion: There is not one single text of Scripture which teaches that everyone who is baptized with the Holy Ghost will speak with other tongues. There is not one text of Scripture which states that speaking in tongues is the initial, physical evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. There is not one text of Scripture that makes a distinction between tongues as a sign and tongues as a gift. Are we to blindly follow the teachings of men based on things the Bible does not say, or will we follow Christ and walk in light and truth?

We believe we have been fair and plain in the handling of these Scriptures concerning this doctrine. If those who believe that tongues is the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost feel that the truth in this booklet is incorrect, let them step forward with biblical truths that plainly and clearly state the position that they have assumed. Alas, the position that they maintain is totally without defense and without any basis in God's Holy Word.

If you know of anyone who has been ensnared by this teaching or anyone who is considering joining themselves to a religious assembly that preaches and practices speaking in tongues, why not give them a copy of this booklet and ask them to carefully and prayerfully consider its contents. Having seen many delivered from the bondage of this spirit and having personally laid hands upon some and cast this spirit out, we have a sincere desire to see even yet others delivered from the bondage of modern "tonguism." John 8:32 says, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."