



Tongues

**Questions & Answers From The Bible  
Sunday Night Series**

Were The Tongues In  
Scripture “Known  
Languages” Or  
Something Else?

4/2/2023

There is much confusion in the religious world pertaining to the “gift of tongues” mentioned in the New Testament.

## **1 Corinthians 14:33**

For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

# SPEAKING IN TONGUES

- Some say the tongues in the Bible are known earthly languages?
- Some assert that speaking in tongues involved uttering unintelligible gibberish and sounds called “*ecstatic utterances*”
- Are they some heavenly language unknown to people on earth.
- Others maintain this involved receiving miraculous ability to speak in a foreign language previously unknown to the speaker. Hence the phrase, “*unknown tongues*”

# TONGUES IN THE BIBLE

Only 2 books of the Bible mention  
*speaking in tongues.*

## ✓ The Book of Acts

- Chapters 2, 10, 19

## ✓ First Corinthians

- Chapters 12-14

# Tongues Speaking In Acts 2 Indicates Known Languages

**The first recorded episode of tongue-speaking was on the Day of Pentecost.**

- The People Heard the Disciples Speak in Their Own Language or Dialect
- This Was a Miracle
- Jews from Different Nations Were Present
- The People Understood What the Disciples Were Saying
- The Content of Their Speech Was God's Great Works
- People Knew And Understood These Languages The Disciples Were Saying.
- The Miracle Was In Both The Speaking And The Hearing.

**Thus, the first recorded instance of tongue-speaking is clearly an episode of  
people speaking in actual KNOWN EARTHLY LANGUAGES.**

# Tongues Speaking In Acts 10 Indicates Known Languages

When the Gospel went to the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius, Scripture indicates that the tongues were similar to those spoken on the Day of Pentecost.

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

Later, when Peter recounted this episode, he gave this comment on what had transpired with the Gentiles.

- **Acts 11:15** And as I (Peter) began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

“The beginning” is a reference to the Day of Pentecost. The same sign of tongues, as had happened on the Day of Pentecost, was given to the Gentiles in Caesarea when they believed in Jesus.

(KNOWN EARTHLY LANGUAGES)

# Tongues Speaking In Acts 19 Indicates Known Languages

- The third and last occasion in the Book of Acts where tongue-speaking is specifically mentioned is Acts 19. The Bible says the following took place:
- **Acts 19:6** And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

Since the same phrase is used of their experience as in the previous two occasions where the gift of tongues was exercised, it would seem logical to assume that known languages were also spoken on this occasion.

The evidence from the Book of Acts reveals that on each occasion the tongues were KNOWN EARTHLY LANGUAGES.

# Tongues Speaking In 1 Corinthians Indicates Known Languages

- The same Greek words are used to describe both instances
  - ✓ Every time the Greek term *glossa* is used in the New Testament, it refers to a definite known language.
- The prophecy of Isaiah that Paul quotes referred to actual languages:
  - ✓ **1 Corinthians 14:21** *“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.”*
- Isaiah predicted that the Jewish people in captivity would be spoken to in other languages. These spoken languages would constitute a sign of God’s judgment upon them. This was fulfilled with the captivities of Assyria and Babylon and the worldwide dispersion of Israel.

# OTHER REASONS

- **God Would Not Have His People Speak in Meaningless Sounds**

**1 Corinthians 14:8-9** For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? 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.

- **Ecstatic Speech Predates Christianity**

There is also the fact that ecstatic utterances, in a religious context, are not uniquely Christian. Accounts of tongue speaking among pagans go back to over 1,000 years before the time of Jesus Christ. The mystery religions of the Roman Empire, which flourished around the time of Christ, also practiced ecstatic speaking.

# OTHER REASONS

- **Biblical Chronology Solves the Question Too**

Paul's letter predates the writings of Acts by approximately 6 years. Luke, the writer of Acts, would have been familiar with 1st Corinthians and with Paul's usage of the Greek word *glossa* for speaking in tongues.

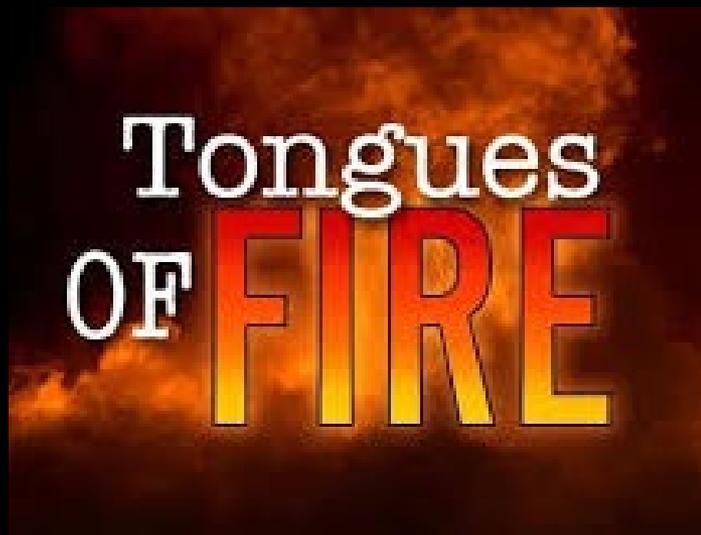
- **The Tongues in Acts and Corinth Were the Same**

Though the situation in Acts and Corinthians are different, the tongues are still the same. Since the first instance of tongue-speaking in Acts refers to known languages, then known languages were spoken in the other instances as well.

Jesus promised that his followers would “...*speak with new tongues*” (Mark 16:17).

This was fulfilled in the early days of the church...

- Acts 2... on the Day of Pentecost
- Acts 10... at the house of Cornelius
- Acts 19 ... with the Ephesian believers
- 1 Corinthians 12-14... with the  
Corinthians



# TONGUES SHALL CEASE

- The gift of tongues served their purpose to confirm the Word of God (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3,4).

## Mark 16:20

And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and **confirming the word with signs** following. Amen.

## Hebrews 2:3-4

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and **was confirmed unto us** by them that heard *him*;

**God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost**, according to his own will?

- The gift of tongues are no longer needed today. Paul makes this clear in 1 Corinthians 13:8-13.

# TONGUES SHALL CEASE

## 1 Corinthians 13:8-10

Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; **whether there be tongues, they shall cease**; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

But when **THAT which is perfect is come**, then that which is in part shall be done away.

- Once the New Testament revelation was complete, these “signs” would cease.
- Tongues would cease “*when that which is perfect is come*”. Literally, this is - the complete revelation of God... **The BIBLE!!**

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# CONCLUSION:

- It is clear that what is occurring in the modern tongues movement is not supported by the New Testament as being what happened the early church.
- Once the New Testament canon was complete there was no further need of “sign” gifts and they ceased.
- It can be concluded that modern day tongues is not of God, because it is not supported by the New Testament.
- Further, what is occurring seems to be learned or contrived emotional experiences prompted by the denominations who teach this doctrine.

# What, then, is the Modern Tongues Movement?

**First**, the *Modern Tongues Movement* is the penetration and presence of the charismatic movement within historic churches and is not a spontaneous movement from within, but rather an active recruitment from without.

**Second**, the *Modern Tongues Movement* is an essential part of the ecumenical atmosphere.

**Third**, the *Modern Tongues Movement* reflects a confusion and ignorance of Biblical doctrine.

**Fourth**, the *Modern Tongues Movement* is based upon experience, not doctrine. The Bible must forever be the basis of faith and practice. It must always judge experiences to determine their validity.

**On the one hand**, an experience supposedly of divine origin may be purely psychological, or worse, a deceiving device of Satan himself.

**On the other hand**, a genuine experience may be misunderstood and mislabeled, as the common confusion of terms of “*the filling of the Spirit*” with “*the baptism of the Spirit.*”

The modern tongues movement is guilty of both of these errors.

We conclude by quoting Paul, who said: “Tongues shall cease” (1 Cor. 13:8). **They have.**

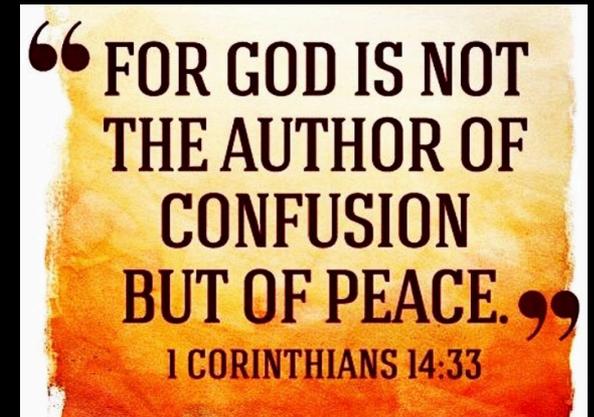
# BIBLICAL GUIDELINES

## 1-Preaching Has Priority Over Tongues

- v. 3-5 In most charismatic churches...not all...but most...when the tongues begin, the preaching stops!...or, never even starts!
- v. 19 5 words of preaching better than 10,000 in tongues

## 2-No More Than 3, And Only 1 At A Time

- v. 27 “by course”=1 at a time  
More than 3? Not of God.  
God doesn’t contradict His Word!  
All at once? Not of God.



## 3-Must Not Cause Confusion

- 7-17 Look at on your own.
- v. 23 Mad... 1 Cor. 14:23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, ...will they not say that ye are mad?
- v. 40 Decently and in order

## 4-Always An Interpreter v. 27

## 5-No Women v. 34

What is the entirety of ch. 14 about? Tongues.

Some use this verse to say that women should not speak in church, and that is out of context!

*The majority of today's tongues speakers are women (more emotional)...and if that one rule were to be applied today, the modern-day tongues movement would probably die overnight.*

## Are these 5 things suggestions or commands?

1 Cor. 14:36 What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

1 Cor. 14:37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the lord.

1 Cor. 14:38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

**“FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST”**  
**But No Speaking In Tongues:**

**Acts 4:8** Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, **(NO TONGUES)**

**Acts 4:31** 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. **(NO TONGUES)**

**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. **(NO TONGUES)**

**Acts 13:9** Then Saul, (who also *is called* Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, **(NO TONGUES)**

**Acts 13:52** And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost. **(NO TONGUES)**

In conclusion, consider the verse, “*by their fruits ye shall know them*”.

Apply the principle of the fruits to anything, or any movement.

CONFUSION  
DIVISION  
SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS

