



Tongues Explained

and committing adultery. "... because they received not the love of the truth ... God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thessalonians 2:11). How do we get a strong delusion? My friend, just go along with a great profession of the power of God when you are not living right. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the

You may not believe the dragon has been loosed, but he **has** been loosed! The first thing he did was kill the realms of Protestantism. After they became dead and cold, he threw in the fires of false Pentecostalism with all this flesh and false power; and millions are being deceived because of the stir there. Someone says, "If you could only feel it, you would know that there is a spirit and power there." I know there is feeling there, and spirits and power, but it is not the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit does not lead contrary to His Word. What are the minds of men thinking? They want to make room for everything. It makes no difference what the teaching is, just move over a little and make room for it. This is the ecumenical spirit that is taking our nation. May God help the church to arise and tell people what the truth is.

It is the serious fault of many to read their Bibles through their experiences instead of evaluating their experiences through their Bibles. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). In every religious body—it makes no difference what their teaching is—there is a spirit that animates that body and keeps it going. Too many people think if you get a thrill, if something warms your heart and makes tears run down your cheek or goose pimples up your back, it is God. No, we cannot tell whether or not it is God by goose bumps. Get back to where we really try the spirits. "Search the scriptures" (John 5:39).

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:24). I do not know of anything that is more deceiving than this false tongueism. It gets people to thinking they have the Holy Ghost because they rattle off some kind of jibber-jabber, all the while smoking cigarettes, drinking beer,

faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (1 Timothy 4:1). I am not branding everybody in it the same. There are some good people there, but just the fact that there are some good, is no proof that the teaching is right.

You can take a Scripture out of the setting and state anything you want. But leave it in the context, and it will say only one thing. Let us get some understanding of Acts 2:38. "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." First of all, we need to understand the difference between the gift of the Spirit and the Spirit's gifts. The gift that God promised is the **indwelling** of the Holy Ghost—not some certain manifestation of Him, but He Himself.

Jesus didn't talk about the Holy Ghost in terms of IT; but as HE. "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may **abide** with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he **dwelleth with you**, and shall be in you" (John 14:15-17). "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

I want to say that the only tarrying they had to do was in Jerusalem until the Day of Pentecost came. Then nowhere in the Bible can anything be found where anyone had to tarry and wait for the Holy Ghost if they met the conditions. Since then, people receive the Holy Ghost instantaneously when they are saved. This thing of having to tarry night after night around an altar and foaming at the mouth is of the devil. Away with this devilish stuff! It throws people into a terrible shape, losing their minds, going insane trying to get religion, and all the time causing a blasphemous work

to be done against the real cause of God. We certainly believe just exactly as the Bible says about speaking in tongues and being baptized with the Holy Ghost, but not this false stuff. Let us lift up a standard against it. This very message is going to judge us in the last day. Let me say again, the gift that God promised is the Holy Ghost. Then **He** is the giver of many gifts.

First Corinthians 12:4 reads, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." Verse 7 tells us, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." What is the manifestation? It is the different ways the Spirit moves or speaks through you as an individual. The Holy Ghost never has you do one thing in a public service because it makes you feel good. Away with this old devilish stuff of going in a frenzy and no one knows what is wrong with you! But you say, "I am feeling good." That isn't the Holy Ghost.

Whenever the Holy Ghost has you move in a public service, it is for everyone's benefit in the service. "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal [everyone]." "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 divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that [by] one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will" (verses 8-11).

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" (verses 28-30). The answer to every one of these is no, no, no. When you have the Holy Ghost, you have the gift of God, and then He passes out the gifts as it pleases Him. So when you receive the Holy Ghost, you do not know what you are going to get in the way of gifts. You should not get down and say, Now Lord, make me jibber-jabber so I will know when I get it. I will be here till I jibber."

Verse 19 states, "And if they were all one member, where were the body?" It takes many members to make up a body. He took a natural body to show the different gifts and working of the Spirit. "If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?" (verse 15). Even so, my friend, if we are going to have a thriving congregation of the church, we must have different gifts of the Spirit, and no member can say, "Because your gift isn't like mine, you are not of the body." That is why it is false to say, "If you don't have the gift of tongues, you are not of the body."

"And these signs [plural] 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 recover" (Mark 16:17-18). Whenever you say, "Unless you speak in an unknown tongue, I am not going to believe you are a believer," I have every right to say, "Unless you handle a snake, I am not going to believe that you are a believer."

Furthermore, believers are ahead of the signs. In Mark 16:17, Christ said that these signs would *follow* them that believe. Also in 1 Corinthians 14:22 Paul said, "Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not." Why? Believers do not need any signs on what the Bible says. You are getting in bad shape whenever you let the devil work on you till you must have tokens to know that you are saved. Does the Scripture say that the just shall live by signs? No, the just shall live by faith! This work that I am denouncing is nothing more than a work of Satan that has turned people from faith to the flesh. Signs are for unbelievers, but even after unbelievers see signs, they are not going to be saved just because they saw signs. They must come to the place that they believe the Word of God if they are ever to be saved.

There are three instances in the Bible when people were baptized with the Holy Ghost and spoke in tongues, or the Greek says *languages*. Acts, Chapter 2 (on the Day of Pentecost); Acts, Chapter 10 (at Cornelius' house); and Acts, Chapter 10 (the Samaritans down at Ephesus). In every instance where the gift of tongues was given, they spoke in an understandable language of the day. They needed no interpreter. That is what the gift is for. When God could not find any man to talk to Balaam and He wanted to straighten him out, He talked through a mule and the mule spoke in the Hebrew tongue. "And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?" (Numbers 22:28). He did not have to get another mule to interpret it. Now if that dumb mule can do it right, we ought to.

There are many instances in the Bible where individuals were filled with the Holy Ghost and did not speak in tongues. The reason is that there was no need for it. I do not need to go back into the Old Testament, but we know that the prophets possessed the Holy Ghost and did not speak in tongues. Now let us look at some of the instances in the New Testament: Zacharias, who was John the Baptist's father, was filled with the Holy Ghost—Luke 1:67. John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb—Luke 1:15. Also, Elisabeth, John the Baptist's mother, was filled with the Holy Ghost—Luke 1:41. Another example is Mary, the mother of Jesus—Luke 1:35. Jesus Christ Himself was filled with the Holy Ghost—Luke 4:1. My friend, Jesus never spoke in tongues. Why did He never speak in tongues? He came to His own. He spoke the language of His own

people. My! How these preachers blaspheme—saying no one is ever filled with the Holy Ghost unless he speaks in tongues.

In Acts 6:3-8 we read of people filled with the Holy Ghost, and they did not speak in tongues. Acts 8:14-17 gives another instance. In Acts 9:17-18 Paul was filled with the Holy Ghost, and scales fell from his eyes. In Acts 4:31 a multitude was filled with the Holy Ghost, and they did not speak in tongues.

My friend, the Holy Ghost manifests Himself in speaking in tongues only where there is a need. I just want to make this clear. You can be filled with the Holy Ghost, but as long as you work with English-speaking people, you will never have the manifestation of the Spirit in speaking in another language.

Let us go to Acts 2:1-4: "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. [Now it was not a wind that blew and almost blew the windows out as preachers tell you. No, it was **as** of a mighty rushing wind—a noise, a power.] And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." Those tongues like as of fire simply show the purifying work. Remember, John the Baptist said in Matthew 3:11, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Let us read the Bible just as it is.

We read in 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." The first thing that we learn from verse 4 is this: they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, but they did not all speak in tongues. They only spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance. It does not say that they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and they all spoke in tongues. Also the very fact that they spoke in **other** tongues shows that they had been speaking in tongues before. They had been speaking in the Galilean language before that.

When the Holy Ghost uttered through them, they spoke in another understandable language according to the need of the hearers. "Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language" (Acts 2:6).

Back in this period of time (A.D. 33), there was a different dialect every twenty, thirty, or forty miles. There were eighteen different nationalities there that day, including the Galileans, who were in walking distance from Jerusalem.

Notice as we study Acts, Chapter 2, that they did not ask for or expect tongues on Pentecost. The Spirit merely allowed them to express their gratitude for God in another language so the other people could under-

stand and hear them magnify the Lord. The same is true in the other two instances in the Scriptures where they spoke in tongues.

We need to realize that the Bible teaches basically three languages. First, there is the language of the soul. "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" (Romans 8:26). Someone said, "That is it; that is the unknown tongue." No, no, no. Acts 2:4 says that they spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance. They spoke in languages. Here is a picture of an individual praying, and he does not know what the will of God is. Since he does not know the will of God, the Spirit of God will help him. Have you ever been under a burden like that—where all you could do is just groan?

The next language is our native language. This is the one that we were born with or learned through education. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14:18, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all." Did you ever study the life of Paul? He spoke many different languages which he learned through education.

The third language that the Bible talks about is a language that is given by the supernatural working of God's Holy Spirit. Now this gift, or this speaking in what you might call an unknown tongue, is that caused the trouble at Corinth. Corinth was a commerce city with a great populous. Men and women flocked in there from everywhere with every kind of language imaginable. Then in church these people were wanting to pray and testify, but they spoke in a language that none of the congregation could understand. This is why Paul, in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 14, talks about an unknown tongue—not unknown to the one that is speaking, but unknown to the audience.

First Corinthians 14:1 says, "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." Every gift that the Spirit gives is for one purpose—the forwarding of the Gospel. Too many people understand prophesying to mean only the foretelling of some future event. Webster says that *prophesying* is "preaching the Gospel in an understandable language."

First Corinthians 14:2-4 reads: "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. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself [no one gets help but him]." Remember, we learned in 1 Corinthians 12:7 that every manifestation of the Spirit is to profit withal (everyone). Every manifestation of the Spirit profits the whole church and edifies the whole body. So what is Paul talking about when he speaks of an "unknown" tongue here? For example, suppose I enter your congregation and begin to testify in the Italian language, which you

do not understand. Now God understands me. He understands all languages. So I am just speaking to God and not to men, and Paul said that he did not want any just speaking to God in the congregation. The things I am saying are mysteries as far as you are concerned because you cannot understand my language. It is "unknown" to you.

In verse 5 Paul said, "I would that ye all spake with tongues [other languages], 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." For example, let us say that I spoke Russian and came into your English congregation. I can neither speak nor understand your language. But there is another person there who can speak both English and Russian. Paul was saying he should not speak anything to me in the public service unless he interprets to the congregation what he is saying.

Now let us consider why they spoke in "other" tongues down at Cornelius' house when they were filled with the Holy Ghost. Acts, Chapter 10, says that Cornelius' house was full of Italians. Acts 10:1 lets us know, "There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band." They spoke the Italian language. Peter was a Galilean, and he did not believe that the Gentiles could receive the Holy Ghost. So God baptized them with the Holy Ghost right in front of his eyes, and then let them magnify the Lord in a language that Peter could understand. "For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God" (Acts 10:46).

First Corinthians 14:6-13 reads: "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? 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. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification. 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. Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue [not unknown to himself, but unknown to the congregation] pray that he may interpret [speak in their language]."

Verse 14 states, "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." My, how they twist this Scripture! Away they

go in tongues; and they say, "My spirit is praying but my understanding is unfruitful; I do not know what I am saying." That is not what Paul said at all. Paul was saying that if I pray in the congregation in an unknown tongue which you people cannot understand, my understanding (I understand) is unfruitful. How does my understanding become fruitful? When you understand what I understand.

First Corinthians 14:15 says, "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." The next verse also shows that the understanding and fruitfulness he is talking about is in regard to the others listening. "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? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified" (verses 16-17).

Verse 18 tells us, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all." Remember that Paul learned many languages through education, and he may have spoken others as a gift. There was not any man who needed to speak in tongues more than Paul. He traveled on one missionary journey right after another where there were different languages of every kind. Listen to him, though. I want you to get this. "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" (verse 19). Putting five words up against ten thousand is a pretty good percentage.

We read in verse 20, "Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." That is just exactly what a lot of this is, just giving away to emotions and acting like a bunch of children. It is surprising how much of that has to be worked up. There is not very much of it brought from home. There has to be some singing and clapping of the hands to get it going.

Corinth's mistake was stressing gifts above love to all, holiness of heart, and Christian living. This led to one mass of confusion. "... Yet show I unto you a more excellent way"—LOVE (1 Corinthians 12:31). He described something better than tongues. He showed them a more excellent way to keep the church in harmony as a working force. He put love at the top. Tongues were the lease of the gifts. The first fruit of the Spirit is love. Gifts are only secondary. Love, heart purity, and holiness of life are held high, above all manifestations of the Spirit of God.

Recently, a sister wanted to testify in one of our services. I asked her privately what she was going to testify about. She said, "Salvation." I asked, "Are you saved?" She answered, "I've got the Holy Ghost." I said, "How do you know that you have the Holy Ghost?" She replied, "Because I can talk in tongues."

"Well," I said, "Have you been saved from sin?" She answered, "All but the cigarettes; I still smoke cigarettes." I replied, "Smoking cigarettes and filled with the Holy Ghost? That is not the Holy Ghost in you; that is another ghost. The Holy Ghost doesn't live in an unclean place." She had been duped. Her heart was heavy. This is the thing that grieves me. While she was seeking help, the wrong people got hold of her and got her tarrying until she got this jibber-jabber, but there was no power in it to live a clean life. I began to teach her about the thing that Jesus came to do: first of all, to set her free from sin, to break the chains and the habits, and to give her victory. That is just one case. I could go on and on.

It has not been very long ago that a young man came to the altar. The minute he started praying I saw what kind of a spirit he was under because he went into that jerking that they go into. I went over and asked him what he needed. He replied that he wanted to get saved. Then I asked him on purpose if he was ever saved before. He reared back and said, "Saved! Man, I preached the Gospel, I spoke in tongues." I said, "But were you ever saved?" He said, "Well, I never did get victory over my cigarettes. I didn't smoke them publicly, but I still smoked them on the side." Still, he continued to speak in tongues. He told me how the spirit would wake him up in the middle of the night even while he was out in sin; he would lose control of himself and go through that terrible frenzy that they go through. Friend, that is the work of Satan. That is not of God. My! my! my!

First Corinthians 14:21 says, "In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord." This refers to Isaiah 28:11, which reads, "For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people." This again proves that when God speaks through other tongues, it is not some ecstasy—just speaking unto God. It was a language that spoken to the people.

Verse 22 states, "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." You should be able to see that tongues, my friend, were never designed to benefit those that believe. Someone said, "You can talk all you want. I am not going to give up my tongues. There is too much of a blessing in it." I just read with you that tongues were never designed to be a benefit or blessing to the individual. Tongues were designed for you to speak in the language of some unlearned person and tell him about God.

Verses 26-27 tells us: "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 [not edifying yourself, but edifying the church]. If any

man speak in an unknown tongue [a tongue unknown to the audience], let it be by two, or at the most by three [sentences—according to the Greek], and that by course; and let one interpret. That is exactly the way that you work with an interpreter. You speak, and he interprets two or three sentences at a time. Verse 28 states, "But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God." Now, if God would give him the gift of tongues he would speak in the language of the people. No interpreter would be needed.

First Corinthians 14:29-32 reads: "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." This shows that whenever a spirit gets hold of you that you cannot control, it is of the devil. Someone asks, "Don't you think that the Spirit of God would take hold of you in such a way that you would lose all control of yourself?" No sir! God never does take away your free moral agency until we come to final judgment.

Nowhere in the Bible, where anyone received the Holy Ghost, did they fall on the floor or ground, powerless. Read Mark, Chapter 9. It will tell you about someone who did fall on the ground, foamed at the mouth, and made noises like a hog. He was possessed with devils, and Jesus cast them out. Then he stood upright, and walked like a man. I am not saying that everyone who gets in that frenzy are all devil possessed. Some people just get into a nervous hysteria that is worked up by those that have supposedly spoken in tongues. They work them up at an altar, getting them into a nervous hysteria till they do not know what they are saying. As long as they can jibber a little and even if they never do it again, they are accepted.

Brother Brown, an educated man, wanted to know firsthand what was going on. So he attended many services. To convince himself and to be able to write in a convincing manner, he took a man who could speak seven languages with him, and sat in several services. This man said, "There isn't anything being said in any language that I know." Mr. Brown took two others that knew a good number of languages. One of them said, "One woman said two or three words in Russian." The preacher supposedly interpreted it. So one of these gentlemen with Brother Brown stood up and gave the preacher a Scripture in a certain language and said, "Now tell me what language I spoke in, and what Scripture did I speak?" The preacher thought he had spoken a Scripture in Romans: but he had quoted from 1 John. Also, he thought he had spoken French, but that was not the case. Brother Brown's companion said, "You missed it a hundred percent." About this time a woman went into a frenzy and carried on and

one of the men with Brother Brown said, "She's speaking in Chinese, and I wouldn't repeat the vulgar words that are coming out of her mouth." So they took her aside and looked into her case. Brother Brown realized the fact that you can pick up things in your subconscious mind. And when you get worked up in a hysteria, they will come out. When they began to question the woman, they found out that she lived in an apartment in Chinatown, in Los Angeles. Day after day, year after year, she would hear the Chinese on the streets below in the markets. They were cussing and ripping at each other. She did not know what they were saying, but it made an imprint in her subconscious mind. When they got her to the altar and got her worked up, she began to rattle out these Chinese words.

Another false teaching is: if you ever say that speaking in tongues is of the devil, you blaspheme the Holy Ghost. Well, I have said it several times now and I have not blasphemed the Holy Ghost. I have given you God's eternal Word.

Friend, the devil has worked a terrible work. This tongues movement is spreading even into Roman Catholicism and many false cults, and they are being accepted as saved; all the while continuing in their idolatry and doctrines of devils. I feel sorry for the people who are deceived by this false movement. You and I are held responsible by God to warn those who are in error and to give them the truth of God's eternal Word. "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book [Bible]: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life" (Revelation 22:18-19).

Emerson A. Wilson

Printed by:

**Church of God, God's Acres
675 N. Cedar Street
Newark, OH 43055**

www.GodsAcres.org

Copyright © 2004 All rights reserved.