

# The Sound of a Mighty Rushing Wind



By  
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# INTRODUCTION

On the day of Pentecost (Acts Chapter Two) there was "a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind." About 160 years ago a small breeze started blowing in England. This breeze has become a great and strong wind. Like many strong winds, this wind has a name. It is called "the Charismatic Renewal." Some would have us believe that these two winds have the same source.

In Acts Chapter Two the sound of a rushing mighty wind announced the receiving of power by the church in Jerusalem. This power to witness was passed on to the other churches born out of this church without any signs.

In I Kings 19:11 we see another wind:

*"And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake."*

God is not always in those things that make the most noise. The wind in this passage was strong enough to violently tear the mountains apart and to break the rocks in pieces. But God was not in the wind, nor was He in the earthquake that followed. As God was not in this wind, we will see that God is not in the wind of "Charismatic Renewal." This movement may be spectacular and it may make some fantastic claims, but it is not a movement that comes from God, nor is it lead by the Holy Spirit.

As I write this book I cannot help but think of the many Baptist churches that are presently troubled by the Charismatic movement. They are confused by its "speaking in tongues" and its "Holy Spirit baptism." I pray that this short work will help them in understanding the truth.

It is not my purpose to attack persons or personalities. The purpose of this book is to discover what the Bible teaches us concerning the doctrines of this movement.

I ask each reader to study this book with his Bible opened and to read each passage in its context. If you really believe that the Bible is the Word of God, if you believe that it is without error, take what it says as being the final authority. If your church, your friends, those for whom you have great respect, or any one else teaches any doctrine (on any subject), compare it with the Bible. Don't take passages out of context, and do consider all the passages that touch the subject. You should not accept what I say or accept my interpretation, you should seek what God says in His Word. You should base your belief on His thoughts and His alone. It is my goal to show you what I found when I took the time to do just that.

Before entering into the subject I would like to tell you why I think that I am qualified to speak on this matter. I was saved in the Four Square Gospel Church of Arlington, California (a Pentecostal church). Shortly after my salvation I spoke in tongues as was the practice in that church. During the following twelve years I continued to hold this doctrine. I would speak in tongues whenever I felt the "spirit" move me.

In 1970 God directed me to the First Baptist Church of Montbello in Denver, Colorado. It was there that I received my first instruction against this teaching. Being confused by these two opposing positions, I started studying my Bible to find the truth. To help me in my study I bought a book written by a Pentecostal. It was written to defend their charismatic doctrine. This book is called "A Handbook on Holy Spirit Baptism". It was in this book that I found the answer. The book gave three tests to determine

if a doctrine is, or is not of God. The first test was: is it in agreement with the Word of God; the second was: does it cause the person to become a better witness for Christ; and the third was: does it glorify Jesus Christ and God. The second and third tests fail in that instead of glorifying Jesus Christ, and witnessing for Him, they glorify and witness for the Holy Spirit. Remember that Jesus said:

*"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." (John 16:13)*

I have seen many people who do not respect the principles of God but think of themselves as "spiritual" because they speak in tongues. This neither glorifies Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit.

I am writing this book in response to the only test that really counts; is this doctrine in agreement with the Holy Scriptures? You will see by the end of this book that the charismatic movement not only disagrees with the Holy Scriptures, but that it violates almost all of the principles set down to govern the use of spiritual gifts.

We live in difficult times. Materialism has failed, science has not given its promised happiness, religion does not meet our needs, and we do not know where to turn. There is a tendency in the modern world towards spiritism. Seers, astrologers, and other fortunetellers are consulted more and more. This tendency has pushed some Christians towards a sort of "Christian spiritism." The tendency is to subordinate the objectivity of divine revelation to the subjectivity of spiritual manifestations and to the emotional experiences that accompany these manifestations. This is extremely dangerous because it opens the door to all sorts of manifestations coming from many different sources.

Each Christian should compare every doctrine and every practice with the Holy Scriptures. Isaiah tells us:

*"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." (Isaiah 8:19-20)*

One who does not speak according to the law and the testimony of God (the Word of God) has no light in him. He hides the light from those he teaches. He leads them into error.

John tells us:

*"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)*

It is not wise to accept without question all that comes from every spirit. One must test everything by the Word of God. This includes spiritual experiences.

Our experience is a useful witness only when it agrees with the Word of God. Every experience that is really from God will always be in perfect agreement with the Word of God. If an experience is not in agreement with the Scriptures, it is the experience that is wrong, and never the Scriptures! A good example of this is the blind man that Jesus healed.

*"He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." (John 9:25)*

The blind man said that Jesus was a prophet of God (v. 17) and the Pharisees said that He was a sinner (vs. 16 and 24). The blind man cited his experience as proof. He applied the Bible principal found in Psalms 66:18 (If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me) to what Jesus had done for him. In essence he said, "If Jesus were a sinner God would not have listened to Him but He did."

I have seen Pentacostals and Charismatics give "interpretations" that contradicted the Word of God. When I showed this to them they were not concerned with what the Word said, they had their "experience" and therefore knew that their "interpretation" was correct.

Paul said to Timothy:

*"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." (II Timothy 4:7)*

Like Paul, we should fight a good fight and finish our course, but we should also keep the faith that is given to us in the Holy Scriptures. Keeping the faith means to faithfully keep the teachings of God as they are found in the Bible. In this same epistle Paul said:

*"And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." (II Timothy 2:5)*

We cannot expect a reward from the Lord if we don't follow the rules set down in His Word. A Christian must not accept something simply because it comes from someone that loves (or at least pretends to love) the Lord. Listen to what Jesus said concerning this subject:

*"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:21-23)*

Don't think that someone speaks in the name of God simply because he uses the name of the Lord, or because he performs miracles. Remember, Satan disguises himself as an angel of light and his servants as ministers of righteousness (II Corinthians 11:14-15).

Paul said to the Thessalonians;

*"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." (II Thessalonians 2:8-10)*

We see that Satan is also capable of performing miracles (lying wonders) that can pass as signs. Men have created a devil with horns, hooved feet and a tail that pushes men to sin. The Devil of the Bible is not at all like this. He disguises himself as an angel of light and his ministers as ministers of righteousness. He wants his disciples to do that which is good. He is a deceiver, and he knows that he cannot deceive the world in openly doing evil. He sees himself as the first born of creation, the heir of God and the true messiah. He does not instigate the vices of this world, he controls its religion.

Satan tries to take the place of Jesus Christ. He is an extremely powerful being and he has more than 6000 years of experience in deceiving men. God gives us armor capable of protecting us (Ephesians Chapter Six) and a sword capable of defeating the enemy (The Word of God). The only way to

recognize false doctrines is to know the Word of God so well that we are capable of discerning them as soon as they appear.

# SPEAKING IN TONGUES IN HISTORY

## Speaking in tongues by non-Christians

The reliability, or rather the lack of reliability, of experience becomes evident when we realize that this phenomenon is not unique to Christianity. It is practiced by most pagan religions. Speaking in tongues has been observed in the African religions, the Eskimo religions, the religions of Tibet and China, etc. It has also been observed in the diabolic religions in Persia (Iran) and in cults such as the Mormons and Islam.

The writers of antiquity, such as Plato, Virgil, Chrysostom and others tell us in long detail of this phenomenon among the priests and priestesses of pagan gods and among seers and oracles. We cannot know with certainty the source of these manifestations, but we do know that it is not the Holy Spirit of God. They could be the result of the emotions, of a hypnotic trance, or from demonic activity.

We are forced to admit that the phenomenon of speaking in tongues exists where the source cannot be God or the Holy Spirit. We are forced to conclude that the simple fact of speaking in tongues does not give us any proof concerning its origin. Only the Word of God can guide us in this area. Our search for the source, the beginning, the use, the abuse and the ending of this phenomenon must be done uniquely in the light of the Holy Scriptures.

The experience of speaking in tongues cannot be proof that its source is God or that it is not of God. Speaking in tongues exists. It exists and has always existed without any connection to God. The only two sources left are man himself and Satan and his demons.

## Speaking in tongues in the Bible

There is no mention of speaking in tongues in the Old Testament unless it is in Isaiah 8:19 which speaks of wizards that peep and mutter and Isaiah 28:11 which says;

*"For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people."*

There is one other passage that the Charismatic movement likes to use to support their doctrine. It is Joel 2:28-32:

*"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. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call."*

Peter cites this passage in his sermon in Acts Chapter Two. You will notice there is not one mention of speaking in tongues in this passage. This prophecy was at that time only partially fulfilled since the second half is still to come.

There is not one manifestation of speaking in tongues in the four Gospels. There were many people under the influence of the Holy Spirit, but we do not find one manifestation of this phenomenon. Joseph,

Mary, Zachariah, Elizabeth, Anna, Simeon, John the Baptist, and even Jesus were filled with the Holy Spirit without one time speaking in tongues. The only mention we find of this phenomenon in the Gospels is the prophecy of Mark Chapter Sixteen.

Only one of the epistles mentions speaking in tongues, and this was to correct the abuse and misuse of the gift. This abuse resembles very closely that which we see today in the tongues movement. We will look at this epistle a little later in our study.

When we look at the period where this phenomenon is mentioned in our Bibles, we find that it only covers a period of some 25 to 27 years. This period is included between Acts Chapter Two and Acts Chapter Nineteen. Outside of this period there is no mention of this phenomenon nor of the other sign gifts.

It is also interesting to note that four men who were present on the day of Pentecost (Peter, John, James and Jude) wrote books of the New Testament. Even though they mention the Holy Spirit and His work some 27 times, they do not mention speaking in tongues one single time. Paul wrote 14 of the New Testament books (if he is the writer of Hebrews), but he does not mention speaking in tongues in any of them except First Corinthians. This was one of the first of his letters and it was written to correct this and other practices.

### **Speaking in tongues since New Testament times**

With the exception of a few heretical groups (in areas other than tongues) we do not find any group of Christians speaking in tongues from the close of the New Testament until the beginning of the 19th century (early 1800's). Chrysostom (347 -407 AD) wrote the following concerning the subject of first Corinthians 12:1-2:

*"The obscurity of this passage comes from our ignorance of the facts to which it refers, and by their (the sign gifts) having ceased."*

Coming from such a great religious leader, this is an important proof that certain gifts had ceased and were no longer the Christian norm of his time.

Around 1830 a man named Edward Irving, searching for something deeper in his Christian experience, looked for a new Pentecost. Mr. Irving, with a small group of followers, had some sort of "spiritual experience" and began speaking in tongues. This phenomenon was confined to the Pentecostal denominations until the middle 1950's and the early 1960's. In April 1960 the Rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California announced that he had received the "baptism of the Spirit" and that he had spoken in tongues. This was the beginning of the Charismatic movement. This movement has now penetrated all denominations. We find it among the Anglicans, the Methodists, the Reformed churches, the Catholics, and even among the Baptists.

It should be noted that this movement spread the fastest among the groups of professing Christianity that had strayed the farthest from biblical Christianity. Its greatest inroads were among liberals and Catholics where it has the stated goal of uniting all of Christianity under the Pope.

One popular name for this movement is the "Charismatic revival." There is one major difference between this revival and the revivals of the past. In the great revivals of the past either the churches came back to the Bible, or the people left them for churches that were faithful to the Scriptures. Charismatics stay in churches that do not teach Bible doctrine. They even say that this "revival" gives them greater love for some of the unscriptural doctrines of these churches. A striking example is seen among the charismatic Catholics. They say that the Holy Spirit gives them a greater love for the "Holy



Virgin." Any serious student of the Bible knows that the Catholic doctrine of the "Holy Virgin" does not come from the Word of God, and therefore is not of God. We can be certain that the spirit with whom they are dealing is not the Holy Spirit of God.

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

There are only five passages in the Bible that speak to us concerning speaking in tongues: Mark 16:17 - The gift is promised; Acts 2, 10, and 19 - The gift in practice; I Corinthians chapters 12 through 14 - Rules concerning the gift. Since these are the only passages that treat the subject, we will center our study on them.

## THE GOSPELS

### Mark 16:17 - The gift promised

Some would tell us that the last few verses of Mark Chapter Sixteen have been added and are not part of the inspired Scriptures. They therefore lessen the importance of the promise of this gift. It is a paradox that the Charismatics tend to be some of the most insistent on this matter. Reading the context will tell you why.

*"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 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; 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." (Mark 16:15-17)*

Jesus promised that certain signs would follow them that believe. Among these signs we find the gift of tongues. With the exception of drinking "any deadly thing" we see each of these signs within the pages of Scripture. It is possible that one or several of them drank some poison without being aware of it. One must take this passage as a whole. We cannot insist that speaking in tongues and healing are still with us unless we also accept the drinking of poison and the handling of serpents. We can see why the Charismatics would like to get rid of this passage. I think that these verses ARE part of the inspired Word of God because the only manuscripts that do not have them are those that come from Origen. We know that Origen changed the text of the Bible when he did not agree with it.

It is interesting to note that none of the sign gifts are mentioned in any epistle written after I Corinthians. There are, however, passages written after that time which show that the gift of healing, even by the apostles, was no longer active. (See II Corinthians 12:8-9, Galatians 4:12-14, Philippians 2:26-30, I Timothy 5:23, and II Timothy 4:20) This indicates that certain gifts had ceased.

It must also be remembered that the gifts mentioned in Mark Chapter Sixteen are not signs of spiritual maturity or of the filling of the Holy Spirit. These were signs that were to follow those who believed without any other qualifications. Those who teach that speaking in tongues is a sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit have absolutely no biblical basis.

## THE BOOK OF ACTS

### Acts Chapter Two - The fulfillment

Acts Chapter Two gives us the fulfillment of the promise of Mark Chapter Sixteen.

*"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)*

On the day of Pentecost there were four miracles: 1) The sound of a rushing mighty wind, 2) Tongues of fire, 3) The filling of the Holy Spirit, 4) Speaking in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

It is important to note that there were four manifestations because the Charismatics and the Pentecostals, who desire a new Pentecost, only seek the last two. Why do you suppose that they do not seek the sound of a rushing mighty wind or the tongues of fire? The answer is simple; one can imitate the speaking in tongues by saying that their gibberish is a heavenly language. They can claim that it is the sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit, but one cannot imitate the sound of a wind or the tongues of fire.

Another important point in this passage is that they were filled with the Holy Ghost, AND they began to speak with other tongues. These two events were distinct one from the other. We find nothing in the text that ties these two together any more than the others. To say that the speaking in tongues is the sign that they were filled with the Holy Ghost is an assumption totally without foundation.

The following verses teach us two important facts concerning our subject: 1) These signs were given to the Jews, 2) The languages that were spoken that day were languages which were understood by those who heard them.

*"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." (Acts 2:5-11)*

You will notice that all of those who heard this preaching were Jews. In the Bible, signs always were for the Jews because the other nations did not have the Holy Scriptures and therefore could not recognize or understand the signs that had been predicted by the prophets of God. A sign has no value unless it is understood and it cannot be understood without a divine explanation. For our study we must insist on a biblical explanation and interpretation, the thoughts of men are of no interest. Isaiah 28:11 says:

*"For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people."*

The sign of speaking in another tongue was given to the Jews so they could recognize the Messiah. The sign of speaking in tongues was given to the Jews and not to the gentiles. We will see that every time tongues are spoken in the Bible, we find that Jews are present and God is teaching them something new about the Gospel.

You will also notice that those who heard them understood the languages spoken. There are at least 15 languages mentioned in this passage. We will see that in each passage where tongues are spoken, someone present understood them. We do not find any teaching in the Bible stating that we should speak in a heavenly language, or in an angelic language. We will look at I Corinthians 13:1 later and we will see that those who draw this teaching from this passage have not interpreted it correctly.

The tongues movement would have us to believe that they are either speaking in an earthly language that is not understood by any of the listeners, or that they are speaking in a heavenly language. Linguistic scholars tell us that the tongues of this movement do not resemble any spoken language. Mosiman studied many of the cases where someone was supposed to have spoken an earthly language and did not find one case to be authentic.

William Welms, professor of African Languages at UCLA said:

*"...I must report without reservation that my sample does not sound like a language structurally. There can be no more than two contrasting vowel sounds, and a most peculiarly restricted set of consonant sounds; these combine into a very few syllable clusters which recur many times in various orders. The consonants and vowels do not all sound like English (the glossolalic's native language), but the intonation patterns are so completely American English that the total effect is a bit ludicrous."*

He called the modern phenomenon a linguistic fraud and monstrosity.

Eugene Nida, a linguist of the American Bible Society, came to the following conclusion:

*"The types of inventory and distributions would indicate clearly that this recording bears no resemblance to any actual language which has ever been treated by linguists... On the basis of what I have learned about this type of phenomena of "tongues" in other parts of the world, apparently there is the same tendency to employ one's own inventory of sounds, in nonsense combinations, but with simulated "foreign" features."*

One must draw the conclusion that modern tongues is nothing but gibberish without any real language structure or distinguishable vocabulary.

It would probably be a good idea to look at the theory that the miracle in Acts Chapter Two was a miracle of hearing (each heard in his own tongue). This theory is without foundation because verse four says that they began to SPEAK with other tongues. The promise of Mark 16:17 was that they would SPEAK. It is clear in all of the other passages touching this subject that they SPOKE in other tongues. Why should we seek any other interpretation here? The miracle in this passage is that they spoke in languages that they had never learned.

## **Acts Chapter Ten - The Gospel for the Gentiles**

Acts Chapter Ten tells of the first time that the Gospel was taken to the Gentiles. The Jews believed that the work that Christ had done on the Cross was only for them. They needed a sign to show them that it was for the whole world, Jews and Gentiles alike. Let's pick up the story at the end of Peter's message:

*"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)*

The sign was not for those who spoke, it was for the Jews (they of the circumcision) that were present. The tongues spoken were understood by those who were present, otherwise how would they have known that they magnified God? In this passage we see the same thing that we saw in Acts Chapter Two: 1) it was a sign for the Jews, 2) they spoke with tongues that were understood by those who were present.

The Jews considered the Gentiles as being inferior. They would never have taken the Gospel to them if God had not given them a sign. To keep the Jews from treating the Gentile Christians as second class Christians, the same sign was given to the Gentiles as was given to the Jews. The Bible confirms this in Acts 11:15 where Peter tells the other apostles what had happened:

*"And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning."*

This passage teaches us another important fact in our study. Peter and his companions were surprised when this phenomenon was repeated. It was not the norm!

### **Acts Chapter Nineteen - Believers who did not believe**

*"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. And all the men were about twelve." (Acts 19:1-7)*

In this passage we see a dozen disciples that had never heard of the Holy Spirit. They thought that they were disciples of John the Baptist, but this could not have been since he taught on the Holy Spirit. We can also see that these were not true disciples of John the Baptist because Paul baptized them. This is the only case in all of the New Testament where someone claiming the baptism of John was "rebaptized". For Jesus and His apostles, the baptism of John was sufficient. These disciples believed in God and did their best to serve Him. They did not know that salvation was by faith in Jesus Christ. Paul taught them the truth and they accepted it, after which they were baptized. God gave them a sign to show them that salvation was by faith and not by doing your best. These disciples were Jews, and they were understood when they spoke in tongues.

We have looked at the only three examples of speaking in tongues in the Bible. In each of them Jews were present, there was something that God wanted them to learn, and each time those who were with them understood what they said, that is, they spoke in a language that was understood by men and not a heavenly language.

There are some other important facts in all of these passages. There is nothing to lead us to believe that those who spoke in tongues sought to do so. To the contrary, we see that they were surprised by the phenomenon. The gift was given to all who were concerned and not to a spiritual elite. The gift was not given because of their spiritual maturity or their progress in the Christian life. The examples of modern speaking in tongues resembles more that which was and is done in pagan religions than these biblical examples.

### **What we have learned**

We have looked at all of the biblical passages in the Gospels and in the book of Acts that concern the doctrine of speaking in tongues. This is a good place to review what we have learned. We will then look at what Paul teaches us in his first epistle to the Corinthians.

1. Mark Chapter sixteen gives us a promise of some signs that will follow them that believe. Among these signs we find the ability to "speak with new tongues." The Greek word for "new" does not speak of something that never existed before. It speaks of something new to the person concerned. To indicate a new language that did not exist before, Paul would have had to use another Greek word.

2. This promise was fulfilled in Acts Chapter Two when the Holy Spirit gave the disciples the ability to communicate the message of God to all who were in Jerusalem, each one in his own language. The only languages spoken were those of the listeners.

3. There is nothing in the two other examples of speaking in tongues (Acts Chapter Ten and Acts Chapter Nineteen) that leads us to believe that they were any different from what we found in Acts Chapter Two. When Peter explained to the other apostles what had happened he said, "The Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning." which leads us to believe that the experience was the same.

4. We find nothing in the pages of the Bible to lead us to seek the "baptism of the Holy Ghost." Ephesians 1:13 tells us that we are sealed by the Holy Spirit when we are saved; Ephesians 5:18 tells us that we should be constantly controlled (filled) by the Holy Spirit; Romans 8:15 tells us that we should be led by the Spirit; but there is not one place where we are commanded to seek the "baptism of the Holy Spirit." We receive the Holy Spirit in all of His fullness when we are saved. The only question is whether or not we allow Him full control.

## **SPEAKING IN TONGUES IN THE EPISTLES**

We have looked at every mention of this phenomenon in the Bible from Genesis to Acts. We are now going to look at what is said in the epistles. A careful reading of the epistles will teach us several interesting facts.

Four men who were present at the Pentecostal experience were also authors of books of the New Testament. Two of them were apostles (Peter and John) and two were probably half brothers of Jesus (James and Jude). These men do not mention speaking in tongues one single time in their writings. This is even more noteworthy when we realize that they have much to say about the Holy Spirit and His work.

The apostle Paul wrote 14 New Testament books (if he is the writer of Hebrews). He only speaks of this phenomenon in his first epistle to the Corinthians. The purpose of his discourse in this epistle was not to encourage them to speak in tongues or to speak of its importance. He taught exactly the opposite. Instead of teaching that their speaking in tongues was a sign of their being filled with the Spirit or of their spiritual maturity, he taught that it was a proof of their spiritual immaturity.

The first epistle to the Corinthians was written about 57 AD. This was during the transition period of 25 to 27 years that I mentioned earlier. The miracle gifts were still active. We must remember that all the gifts were not given to everyone. Some had one gift, others had another, and some had several. All that God said through Paul in this epistle was said to correct a wrong use of these gifts, a use that looks strangely like the practice we see among the Pentecostals and Charismatics of our day.

Let's take a look at what Paul has to say to us on this subject.

### **I Corinthians Chapter Twelve**

I Corinthians 12:1 tells us why Paul wrote that which follows in the next three chapters.

*"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant."*

This indicates that their wrong use of the gifts came from their ignorance concerning the gifts.

The first thing that they did not know, and which is not understood today by those who speak in tongues, was the diversity of the gifts. Listen to the following:

*"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. 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." (I Corinthians 12:4-11)*

We learn from this passage that there is not one gift that is for everyone. The Holy Spirit gives the gifts as He wills and to whom He will. The gifts are not for the benefit of the one who receives them, but for the benefit of the group as a whole (this is the meaning of "to profit withal"). I think that it is reasonable to believe that the Holy Spirit, seeing a need in a church, chooses someone in that church who will be faithful in the exercise of the gift, and then gives him the gift necessary to meet the need. For our study, the two most important things we learn from this passage are that there is a diversity of gifts, that is to say, that not everyone receives the same gift. Secondly, it is the Holy Spirit that determines who will receive which gift. This idea that each Christian should have the same gift to prove his spirituality, or for any other reason, has no biblical basis at all.

Verses 12 to 26 compare a church with a body having need of all of its members (with their differing gifts) to function correctly. In passing I would like for you to notice that Paul speaks of a body that functions together. Each member is aware of the others and has need of them. The image does not fit the idea of a "universal invisible church" that is spreading among Christians today. Verse 27 confirms this thought by saying:

*"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."*

Paul said that the church at Corinth was "the body of Christ", and the members of this church were the members of this body. If Paul spoke of a universal church, he would have said "we are."

Verses 28 through 31 speak of certain gifts given to a church. If we suppose that the list is given in order of importance, which is normally the case in the Scriptures, we can assume that the most important gifts are the gifts of apostle, prophet and teacher. This would agree with the teaching of other passages. Verses 29 and 30 ask the question,

*"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?"*

The obvious answer is NO! Verse 31 says,

*"But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."*

We are told to seek the best gifts, the gifts of an apostle (one who is sent to establish a church), of a prophet (one who preaches the Word of God to the people of God), and of a teacher. He finishes the chapter by saying that he will show us a more excellent way than to seek gifts.

## **I Corinthians Chapter Thirteen**

Chapter Thirteen is the shortest of the chapters that Paul wrote concerning the use of spiritual gifts. It is also the most important. This chapter gives us the proper perspective by teaching us that it is not our gifts that show our spirituality, it is our love for God and for others. It is not what we do that is important, it is our attitude. Listen to the first paragraph of this chapter:

*"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. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." (I Corinthians 13:1-3)*

To properly understand this passage one must first understand the meaning of the word "charity". The Greek word used here is "agape" which means our love for God and for our neighbor. This word indicates the highest kind of love, a self-sacrificing love.

It is this love that shows the level of spirituality of a child of God, and not the gifts that he may have. Jesus confirms this idea in John 13:35:

*"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."*

It must be noted that Paul did not say that he spoke in the tongues of angels. He said, "Though I speak." This means, "if I should speak." This is a conditional statement that we could rephrase to say, "Though I should speak, if ever it were to happen." One cannot use this passage to teach that the tongues spoken today are heavenly languages. A careful study of the Bible concerning the tongues of angels shows us angels always spoke languages that could be understood by those to whom they spoke. Remember that angels are spiritual beings and therefore can communicate by thought. They have no need of spoken language.

All gifts are without importance if there is no love for God and for others. Even that which we call charity today, that is the giving of our goods to meet the needs of the poor, is useless without this love.

The second paragraph of this chapter gives us a description of charity:

*"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." I Corinthians 13:4-7)*

I will not take the time to expose all of these points; we will only look at the four that directly concern the subject at hand. First, charity envieth not. It does not look at the gifts of others, to desire them. Secondly, charity vaunteth not itself. It does not say, "Look at me and the gift that God has given me." Thirdly, it is not puffed up. It does not say "I am more spiritual than you because I speak in tongues." And finally it does not seek its own interest. It is more concerned for the needs of others than for its own needs and desires.



If speaking in tongues were really the sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit we would never find these things in those who speak in tongues. The sad truth is quite the opposite. Many of those who speak in tongues brag about being more spiritual than those who don't speak in tongues. They think that churches that don't teach this doctrine are dead. They seek to speak in tongues for their personal benefit, but we will see in Chapter Fourteen that this is not the purpose of the gifts.

The third paragraph tells us that certain gifts will disappear:

*"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. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." (I Corinthians 13:8-12)*

These verses tell us that the gifts of predictive prophecy, speaking in tongues, and special knowledge will end. The question is not "Will they end?" it is "When will they end?" The text says they will end when "that which is perfect is come." Those who speak in tongues tell us that this means when Christ returns. This interpretation is not possible because of the little word "that". This word is neuter. If Paul spoke of Jesus Christ, he would have had to use the masculine gender. James tells us what "that which is perfect" is:

*"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." (James 1:25)*

The context of this verse shows us that which is perfect is the Word of God. This passage tells us that the miraculous sign gifts will end when the Bible is completed.

The Greek word translated as "perfect" in these passages is "teleios". This word carries the meaning of perfect in the sense of being complete or mature. Paul used it one other time in the context of speaking in tongues (I Corinthians 14:20).

*"Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men."*

The word "men" in this passage is a translation of the word "teleios". He is teaching us to be mature men and not children. Paul used the word in Hebrews 5:14 where it is translated "full age". From these examples it can be seen that the word "teleios" speaks of perfection in the sense of having grown into a mature or completed state as opposed to being morally perfect by nature. The phrase "that which is perfect" refers to something that has grown to reach its perfect state. It could not be the Lord Jesus Christ because He is the eternally perfect God. The Bible, however, is the result of progressive revelation. It became more perfect (teleios) with the writing of each book. It became completely perfect with the writing of the book of the Revelation.

In the second part of this paragraph Paul tells us that he who is a spiritual adult doesn't need the childish things of his childhood. The Charismatics tell us that the gifts, especially the gift of tongues, are a sign of spiritual maturity but Paul indicates that they are signs of childhood. He who can take what God says in his word, without needing signs, is more mature than he who needs a sign to prove his spirituality. Those who need a sign demonstrate their spiritual immaturity.

In Matthew 12:38 Jesus tells us:

*"But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:"*

Those who require a sign are called an evil and adulterous generation. This means that they follow another spirit.

The conclusion of this chapter says:

*"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." (I Corinthians 13:13)*

He tells us that there are three things that count: Faith - a belief that causes us to act according to the Word of God; Hope - a patient waiting for the fulfillment of the promises of God in His Word; Charity - a love for God and neighbor based on the love of God revealed in the Bible. Of these three things, charity is the most important.

In order to have these things in their fullness, one must have the complete revelation of God. Faith is a belief based on the Word that causes us to live by the Word. We cannot have a mature faith without the completed Word. Since Christian hope is based on the promises of the Word, the completed Word is needed for strong hope. True charity cannot exist without the revelation of God's charity (love) for us and therefore needs the completed Word. This shows us why the sign gifts were necessary until the completion of the divine revelation, and why they are no longer necessary.

Our interpretation is supported by historical evidence. The gifts of prophecy, speaking in tongues and special knowledge were not seen for 1700 years. It was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that the modern Pentecostal movement revived these gifts. As we have already seen the "gifts" of this movement resemble more that which we see in pagan religions than that which we see in the Bible.

## **I Corinthians Chapter Fourteen**

I Corinthians Chapter Fourteen gives us the rules concerning the use of spiritual gifts. One must remember that this chapter was written while these gifts were still in operation.

The first paragraph of this chapter tells us:

*"Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. 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; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. " (I Corinthians 14:1-4)*

Since Chapter Thirteen told us that all gifts are useless without charity, it is obvious that we should first seek after charity. He who speaks in tongues to edify himself is not demonstrating charity; he is showing his selfishness. Love will use the gifts for their intended purpose.

The gift of prophecy edifies the church but the gift of tongues (exercised in the services of the church) edifies the one who speaks. One should first of all seek after prophecy. The gift of prophecy has two aspects, first there is the aspect of foretelling (the part that is most often thought of), and then there is the aspect of speaking forth (like a press secretary). In the Bible the predictive aspect is the least important. The work of a prophet is not to predict the future; it is to carry the Word of God to the people

of God to build them up, to exhort them and to comfort them. This is much more useful in a church than speaking in a tongue that no one can understand.

The second paragraph of this chapter shows us the uselessness of the gibberish that passes for the modern speaking in tongues:

*"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. 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." (I Corinthians 14:5-9)*

Paul starts by saying that he would that all speak in tongues. We must keep this in the context of the total Bible teaching on tongues. He is speaking of the real gift that speaks in a language that has never been learned by the speaker for the instruction of listeners who do not speak his language (like Acts Chapter Two). He is not speaking of the modern gibberish we see today. He goes on to say that he would rather that they all prophesy (preach) since it is of more value to the assembly.

If, in the assembly, someone speaks in tongues, he (or she) should be able to give the interpretation for the edification of the church. When I was a member of a Pentecostal church it was never done this way. Someone would speak in tongues and then wait for someone else to give the interpretation. The one who spoke in tongues never gave the interpretation. I must add that the interpretations often had parts that contradicted the Scriptures. If someone speaks in tongues without giving the interpretation he is speaking into the air, it is totally useless.

*"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 pray that he may interpret. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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." (I Corinthians 14:10-25)*

This third paragraph starts with the idea that he who speaks in a language that is not understood by the listeners is nothing but a barbarian. What advantage is there for the church, for the listener, or for the one who speaks, if what is said is not understood? Remember that according to Pentecostal and Charismatic doctrine even the one who is speaking in tongues does not understand what he is saying.

There was an interesting thing that happened at a Charismatic church in Denver. At a Wednesday night prayer meeting a man from Greece was praying in his native language, a lady stood up behind him and started speaking in King James English. He asked her what she was doing. She answered, "You were praying in tongues and I am giving the interpretation." He told her that he was simply praying in Greek because it was easier for him. Needless to say her "interpretation" had nothing to do with what he really said.

The goal of spiritual gifts is the edification of the church. Paul tells us that if we desire to have a spiritual gift it should be for this same goal. He who seeks to speak in tongues because he needs proof of his spirituality or to show others his spiritual maturity in reality shows his immaturity and his lack of faith.

Verse thirteen tells us that he who speaks in tongues should also interpret. We saw this same idea in verse five.

Verses fourteen to nineteen show us the uselessness of praying or singing in a language that is not understood by those who hear. Again I would like to remind you that these verses were written at a time when the sign gifts were still active. Those who spoke in tongues spoke in real languages, not in the gibberish of the modern tongues movement. Paul tells us that it is better to speak five words in the church that can be understood than to speak 10,000 words that are not understood. If these things are true for someone who speaks in a language that he understands or that someone in the audience can understand, are they not even more so for someone who pretends to speak in a heavenly language that no one, including the speaker, can understand?

Verse twenty returns to the idea of immature children and mature men. The implication of this verse is that he who insists on using a gift that only edifies himself has the judgment of a child. A mature man will have the good sense to judge this sort of exercise as useless.

Verses twenty-one and twenty-two show the results of a good and a bad use of the gifts. The first thing that we see in this passage is that speaking in tongues is a sign to convince unbelieving Jews. Paul uses the prophecy of Isaiah to show that the gift of tongues was for the Jews (this people). If you have need of a sign, especially the sign of speaking in tongues, it shows a lack of faith. The fact that God says something in His Word should suffice for a mature Christian. Are you believing or unbelieving? Our text says that if you need a sign you are unbelieving. This does not mean that you are not saved; it means that you do not take God's Word at its face value and that you need a sign to confirm it.

When tongues are spoken in a church those who visit will think that those in the church are insane. I remember the first time I took my wife to the Pentecostal church where I was a member. That is exactly what she thought. I should add that she never again visited that church. It is certain that we can draw some people who are seeking a hyper experience by this phenomenon but this type of manifestation will turn off most.

The sign of a church that is faithful to God is prophecy (preaching of the Word of God). If an unbeliever enters a church where there is good preaching he will be convinced in his heart, but if he enters a church where there is speaking in tongues he will be turned off. It is the preaching of the Word that gives proof of God's presence in a church.

The fourth paragraph speaks of how God wants the services of a church conducted. It should be in an orderly fashion.

*"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, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. 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. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." (I Corinthians 14:26-33)*

All that is done in the church should be done for the edification of the church. The gifts are under the control of the one who has them. He who speaks in tongues can, and should, restrain himself from speaking if he does not know that there is someone who can interpret what he says. Only one person at a time is allowed to speak. If there is speaking in tongues, either the one who speaks must interpret, or there must be a designated interpreter, someone who can translate the language spoken into the language of the audience.

In February 1990 I visited the service of a church in France called "Eglise Evangelique Baptiste" (Evangelical Baptist Church). Fifteen years ago I visited the same church. This church is no longer a Baptist Church; it has become a Charismatic Church. Fifteen years ago the services were conducted in an orderly manner, but that day it was complete disorder. We had no idea what would happen next, one moment someone would start to pray aloud, the next moment another would start to sing, and the next someone spoke in tongues. They interrupted the flow of the service whenever they felt like it. If the Holy Spirit is the author of the verses we just read, it is not the Holy Spirit who inspired the services in this church.

The last paragraph in this chapter gives us some very important information for our study:

*"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? 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. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order." (I Corinthians 14:34-40)*

In this passage we find one of the greatest proofs that the tongues movement is not of God. I have observed this movement for some thirty years and each time that I was in one of their meetings, women have spoken in tongues. In the church I mentioned earlier, a woman ran the service for more than 45 minutes. Each interruption in the service, whether for prayer, for singing or for speaking in tongues, was by a woman. It is not possible that God inspired Paul to write that women should be silent in church and that the Holy Spirit led these women to speak.

I don't want you to think that women are inferior to men. This is not at all the meaning of this passage. Women are made for an occupation that is different from that for which men are made. The Bible teaches that a woman is made for keeping the home (Titus 2:3-5). What could be more important than that? In order to equip the woman for this important position, God gave her a highly developed emotional sensibility. This gives her the ability to sense the needs of her husband and her children

before they would be evident to a man. Because of this, the woman tends to be run more by her emotions than by her logic. This also makes her more easily fooled by the tricks of Satan.

This idea is seen more clearly in I Timothy 2:9-15:

*"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."*

I know that what I have just said is not what we want to hear in this time of women's liberation, but Paul said that he (or she) who is directed by God will accept this as a commandment of the Lord. What more can I say?

There is the small phrase "forbid not to speak with tongues" that seems to come to the aid of those who speak in tongues. We must put this in its historical context. Speaking in tongues was a valid gift that God had given to verify the authenticity of the Gospel. As we have seen, each time there is enough evidence to judge, it was a language that some human could understand. From Chapter Thirteen we have seen that this was a temporary gift and that it would cease. I would be the first to encourage the speaking in tongues if it was more than a poor and weak imitation of what we find in the pages of Scripture.

Paul ends this chapter, and his discourse on spiritual gifts, by saying that we should first seek after the gift of prophecy (preaching), and that all should be done decently and in order. This is the contrary of what we see with the tongues speakers of our day. They seek first to speak in tongues, and most of their services are always conducted with a certain disorder (they can be interrupted at any time by speaking in tongues).

### **The rules for speaking in tongues**

1. It must be for the edification of the church (I Corinthians 14:4, 5, 26)
2. The women should be silent in the church (I Corinthians 14:34)
3. One must not speak in tongues in the church if there is no interpreter present (I Corinthians 14:28)
4. Even with an interpreter, there must not be more than one who speaks at a time, and no more than three in a service (I Corinthians 14:27)
5. Speaking in tongues must always bring a message and never be gibberish (I Corinthians 14:23, etc.)
6. Speaking in tongues is not a sign for believers, but for unbelievers (I Corinthians 14:22)

Paul gives us the rules for the speaking in tongues in public. Following these rules would probably eliminate all tongues speaking.

Today there is also the speaking in tongues in private. What should we say about that? When we remember that the purpose of spiritual gifts is the edification of the church, and the object of a language is communications, we are forced to ask what is the benefit of speaking in tongues in private (when there is no church to edify and no understanding of what was said)? This is the height of selfishness. It is totally useless and senseless.

# WHY THE ATTRACTION?

Why are so many drawn into this movement? Since this movement is totally void of any biblical foundation we must conclude that those who join it are either ignorant of biblical principles or choose to place some other authority over that of the Bible.

## **Easy-Believism**

One of the major reasons is the "easy-believism" method of evangelizing that is so common today. This leads people to a shallow, empty profession of faith without any substance. Although we must admit that many Charismatics are truly born again, we must also admit that the vast majority of them show little evidence of a true conversion.

The shallowness of their "salvation experience" and the lack of any real spiritual satisfaction cause them to seek something additional. They seek after satisfaction through miracles and wonders of various sorts (tongues, healings, new revelations, etc).

## **Lack of spiritual satisfaction**

Another reason for the growth of this movement is the lack of spiritual satisfaction in most Christian denominations. Many pastors deny all the fundamentals of the faith. This leaves a spiritual vacuum that can be filled (or probably more correctly, hidden) by the emotionalism (and some times demonic influence) of the so-called Charismatic gifts.

## **Instant coffee**

A third reason for this movement's attraction is our society of instant everything. We start the morning with instant coffee, we go to a fast food for lunch, and we end the day with instant microwave TV dinners. In the Charismatic movement one can become an instant "spiritual Christian" by simply speaking in tongues. I once had a Charismatic tell me that he did not have to prove what he believed by the Scriptures because he had the Holy Spirit. They don't have to worry about searching the Scriptures to learn the principles of God and then learning to apply them in their lives. They have the Holy Spirit and therefore know instinctively what is right. No work, no pain, just feelings, instant Christianity.

## **A confused age**

A fourth reason so many people fall prey to this movement is the spirit of our present age. I mentioned this in the introduction but I would like to reiterate here because I think that it is something that must be understood. Science and materialism have failed leaving us with emptiness in our souls. This explains why we see such a revival of the occult and the interest in the para-normal. The lost world is seeking spiritual fulfillment and shallow Christianity is following this same path. Man is a spiritual being and cannot live without spiritual activity in his life. If he does not find it within his relationship to his god he will seek it elsewhere.

# THE DANGER OF THIS MOVEMENT

One could ask the question, "Why all of this fuss over a movement that harms no one?" The truth is that this movement does much harm to the cause of Christ. I will limit myself to only seven of the things that hinder the work of God.

## Two classes of Christians

The Charismatic movement creates two classes of Christians. There are those who have the Holy Spirit as manifest by tongues, and those who do not. For this movement, those who do not speak in tongues do not have the Holy Spirit (or at least the fullness of the Spirit), and are therefore second class Christians. A Charismatic recently told a friend of mine that his church was dead because it did not have the Holy Spirit manifested by speaking in tongues. If you search the Scriptures you will not find one passage that teaches that the speaking in tongues is a sign of having the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches that we receive the Holy Spirit when we are saved. Paul said:

*"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Romans 8:9)*

All who belong to Christ have the Holy Spirit.

The danger in this division is that instead of seeking fellowship with Christ, one gives himself to seeking an emotional state of exaltation that is confused with the fullness of the Spirit. The biblical method of being filled with the Spirit is to be filled with the Word of God. The biblical sign of this fullness is a powerful witness for Christ.

## Fellowship

When one believes that speaking in tongues is the sign of being filled with the Spirit of God, one must also accept that all who speak in tongues are their spiritual brothers. He cannot refuse them Christian fellowship. What do we do with the Catholics that speak in tongues and still adore statues and have a greater love for the "Holy Virgin"? What do we do with the Mormons who believe that God is only an evolved man, and that we can become as He is. (Yes, the Mormons also speak in tongues as a sign of the filling of the Spirit.)

Those who speak in tongues will tell us that Satan has a counterfeit for everything. They would have us believe that the Mormons and other cults who speak in tongues are that counterfeit. How do you tell the difference? How do we know that the Charismatic movement is not that counterfeit? It violates all of the rules given by Paul concerning this gift. What difference is there between the two?

The Charismatic movement is at the center of the ecumenical movement that is trying to unify all religions. Listen to the words of the apostle Paul:

*"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the*



*unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (II Corinthians 6:14-18)*

How can we have fellowship with idolaters (the Catholics) and infidels (the Mormons) and be faithful to God?

### **Divine revelation**

Our Bibles end with a very important principle and the transgression of this principle is very dangerous.

*"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: 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, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Revelation 22:18-19)*

God terminated His revelation to man with the book of the Revelation. Each time someone speaks in tongues in church it is supposed that he received a revelation from God. He is guilty of transgressing the principle of this passage.

Sometimes the so-called revelations of those who speak in tongues contradict the Word of God. This cannot come from God because God never contradicts Himself. A well-known Pentecostal preacher pretended to have received a revelation from God saying there would be a great world wide spiritual revival in 1979. What did we see? We saw nothing at all, if not a continual sliding in the other direction. This revelation was not from God, this man is not a prophet of God.

In the book "Pigs In The Parlor" by Frank and Ida Mae Hammond, the twenty-first chapter is the supposed explanation of a revelation from God concerning the nature and cure for schizophrenia. It is a well-documented fact the schizophrenia is not caused by demons, it is caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain.

### **Authority**

For the Christian there is only one final authority, the Word of God. The Charismatics have added another, their personal experience. My daughter had a Charismatic friend at school. She showed her friend from the Bible that her doctrine was false. The friend's answer was "According to the Bible you are right, but I will trust my experience." It is rare that a Charismatic or a Pentecostal will accept the authority of the Bible when it is in opposition to their experience.

### **Gullibility**

There is a tendency among those who have been programmed by the Charismatic movement to believe the most incredible things. The spiritual discernment of most Charismatics is almost zero. You only have to listen to the things that are said by those who are involved to see the truth of this.

One example of the above can be seen by what we were told by some Charismatics in France. (They were not even saved because I led them to the Lord at a later date.) They told us that when their daughter-in-law was baptized they saw the Holy Spirit come down in the form of a dove. They even showed us a photograph to prove it. The "dove" in the photograph was nothing more than a reflection of the sun on the lens of the camera.

Another example is the great amount of money that is sent to radio and television preachers as "seed faith." We are told that if we will send them our "seed faith" gift that God will solve all of our financial problems. In their next breath they tell us that if we don't send them the money they will be forced off the air. Many Charismatics swallow this hook, line, and sinker. I ask you, where is the "seed faith" of the preacher? And why doesn't his god meet his need?

### **Demon Activity**

The Charismatic movement creates an interest in demons and demonic activity. Many of them start blaming everything on demons, sickness, sin, mental illness, etc. I have seen some go so far as to say that illnesses like a cold or the flu are caused by a demon.

One charismatic lady in France was convinced that her grandson was possessed by a demon because he was an active child who was difficult to control. The main reason for his being difficult to control was the lack of consistent discipline in the home.

Here are some of the things that are considered to be cause by demons or to actually be demons: Bitterness, self-will, inferiority, shyness, fear of rejection, day dreaming, ineptness, sleepiness, etc. If these are demons, then most, if not all, of us are demon possessed.

### **False Security**

The greatest danger of this movement is that emotional experience is often confused with salvation. I have met many Charismatics who, when asked about their salvation, never mentioned faith in Christ. They told of their "charismatic experience".

One couple we talked to in Denver expressed there salvation this way: They were driving to a charismatic meeting in another town and as they came over the top of a mountain they suddenly felt a warmth that started in their feet. This warmth slowly moved up through their whole bodies. Anyone who knows the Bible plan of salvation can see the error of this statement. This couple was not saved but they have a false security because of their experience.

Another lady we dealt with in France, when asked about her salvation, would always refer to the revelation she received when she was "filled with the Spirit". She finally realized that she was not saved and we were able to win her to the Lord.

This false security can, and will, lead many directly to Hell. We must do all we can to show these people their error and to save them from eternal damnation.

# CONCLUSION

In our study we have seen that it is not the gift that we have that counts, it is our attitude, our love for God and for our neighbor. Our love for God is seen in our obedience to His Word and His commandments. Jesus said:

*"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." (I John 5:3)*

He that loves God will search the Scriptures to find the truth concerning spiritual gifts. He will not trust the thoughts of men. He will consider each passage in its context and in the context of the whole Bible. This is what I have tried to do in this booklet.

We are nearing the end of the age, the beginning of the end for Satan. He is very active and would do all to keep us from living for our Lord. Remember, his ministers disguise themselves as ministers of righteousness (II Corinthians 11:14-15). The Bible commands us to try the spirits to see if they are of God (I John 4:1). Satan is capable of producing miracles to fool the world. Don't let him fool you.

Tongues are spoken in the religions of Africa, of the Eskimos, the religions of Tibet and China. Even the Iranians and the Mormons speak in tongues. The fact of speaking in tongues does not tell us its source. Our only faithful guide is the Bible.

We have looked at all of the passages in the Bible that concern the subject of speaking in tongues without finding the least support for the Charismatic movement. This movement pretends to speak in tongues as a sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit, but we have seen from the Scriptures that tongues were a sign for a generation of unbelieving Jews. It teaches that every Christian should speak in tongues, but the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit gives gifts to whom He will, and this for the edification of the church. The Charismatic movement cannot give one single verse (in context) to support its doctrine yet gullible Christians blindly accept its teachings.

In our study we have seen that the period of miraculous gifts was very short, only 25 to 27 years. For 1700 years following the death of the apostles these gifts were not active and were not the norm. It is not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that the modern Pentecostal movement was born. These facts agree with our interpretation of I Corinthians Chapter Thirteen that says that these gifts will cease.

Paul gives us the rules concerning spiritual gifts in Chapters Twelve, Thirteen, and Fourteen of his first epistle to the Corinthians. This movement that pretends to be inspired of God transgresses all these rules. In my 30 years of observing this movement I have never seen a Pentecostal or Charismatic church that does not teach that speaking in tongues is for the edification of the one who speaks. They nearly all teach that women can speak in tongues in the assembly. They speak without knowing in advance that there is someone who can interpret. I have never heard of a confirmable case of someone speaking in a language that was comprehensible to the listeners. Speaking in tongues for them is always a sign for the believers. How can we believe that a movement that breaks all of the biblical rules concerning speaking in tongues is of God?

Paul speaks of the uselessness of speaking in a language that is not understood by the listeners. It is better to speak five words that are understood than to speak 10,000 that are not.

It is true that speaking in tongues can draw those who seek an exalting experience but most people, if they enter into a church where tongues are being spoken, will be turned off.

The greatest dangers of this movement are:

1. The division of Christians into two classes.
2. It encourages fellowship with all who speak in tongues.
3. It adds to the revelation of the Bible.
4. It places the authority of experience over that of the Word of God.
5. The gullibility of those who follow this teaching.
6. Demonic activity
7. False security concerning salvation.

This movement is not, and could not be, inspired of God because it is totally contrary to the teachings of the Bible.

Today men are seeking a spectacular demonstration. All we need is the Word of God, but many seek the spectacular and the sensational to satisfy the lust of the flesh.

God gave the power of the Holy Spirit to men so they could win souls to Christ. The manifestation of this power is powerful preaching and witnessing for the Lord. The result is souls being saved. God does not give the Holy Spirit so one can brag about his experience and his gift in saying, "I have something that you don't have."

Any sign other than that of a powerful witness is contrary to the Word of God. The Christian should be submitted to the power of the Holy Spirit in order to witness effectively.

We must remember that the Holy Spirit does not speak of Himself, but of Christ. Jesus said:

*"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." (John 16:13-14)*

The Charismatic movement glorifies the Holy Spirit in a way that was never intended by God. The Holy Spirit always directs us to Christ, not to Himself.

If we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we glorify Jesus Christ. The Charismatic movement glorifies the one who speaks in tongues. They often have an attitude of spiritual superiority, vaunting themselves for having something that others do not have. This is in total opposition to biblical teaching.

Those who desire the sensational should remember Psalms 105:15:

*"And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul."*

We should pray that God would give us the grace to take His Word as our only authority. We need the Holy Spirit and His power to do the work of God. We must assure ourselves that what we do is in accordance with His Word and that our practice follows the scriptural example.

The Bible shows us that speaking in tongues is not for the present time. We must try the spirits to see if they are of God and not trust every wind that blows. We must turn from the voice of experience, and turn to the voice of the Word of God. A movement is not right because everybody is doing it, or because someone who seems godly says it is of God. It is right because it follows the Word of God.

To be pleasing to God we must by faith offer our bodies as a living sacrifice unto God (Romans 12:1-2); manifest the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23); and be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). The only sign of a life filled with the Holy Spirit is the sign of a godly life with a powerful witness for God.

If you would like more information on this subject, or if you have any comments you can contact the author through:

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