

SPEAKING IN TONGUES **(Acts 2:1-4)**

I. The meaning of speaking in tongues.

- A. The term “glossolalia” is used in reference to this movement.
 - 1. This is the joining of two Greek words.
 - 2. “Glossa” means “language, tongue” and “lalia” means “speech.”
 - 3. It means speaking in languages or tongues.
- B. Another term that is used is ecstatic utterances.
- C. The only reference to speaking in tongues in the Gospel accounts is found in Mark 16:17.
 - 1. Jesus said that those that followed Him would be able to speak in “new tongues.”
 - 2. New refers to new to the one speaking and tongues refers to a language one had been unable to speak but now can - which would be miraculous in nature.
 - 3. Some of those that hold to speaking in tongues today say the word “new” refers to a whole new language.
- D. A similar phrase is found in Acts 2:4 where the apostles are said to have been spoken in “other tongues.”
 - 1. Other is a different word than new.
 - 2. This word means “foreign or strange.”
 - 3. It simply means they spoke in languages that were strange to the apostles, ones they had never spoken.
 - 4. The context bears this out because we are told that people from all over the known world heard their languages being spoken.
 - 5. If one were to believe that this is some type of ecstatic utterance, he would have to believe there was a miracle performed upon the hearers there, which is exactly what they do believe.
 - 6. What is interesting is that “tongues” in vs. 4 is different from “tongue” in vs. 8.
 - 7. The word in vs. 8 is the Greek word from which we get our English word “dialect.”
 - 8. These two words are used interchangeably showing the apostles were not speaking new languages but ones which had not been previously known to them.
 - 9. In fact vs. 9-11 identify the languages that were spoken.
- E. The words “tongue” or “tongues” are found numerous times in the book of Revelation and the context shows that each instance is a reference to known languages (7:9;10:11; 17:15).
- F. The problem often arises when discussing 1 Corinthians 12-14.
 - 1. The problem is because of the word “unknown” found several times before “tongue” (14:2, 14, 27).
 - 2. If you notice the word “unknown” is in italics, which means it was added by the translators and that it does not appear in any Greek manuscripts.

- G. There is no place found in the New Testament where references to speaking in tongues is any type of new language that is incomprehensible to anyone on earth.

II. The purpose of speaking in tongues.

- A. It is very important to understand why speaking in tongues was a gift given by the Holy Spirit during the miraculous age.
- B. The first reason for this gift was to allow the gospel to be spoken to non-believers (1 Corinthians 14:22).
 - 1. This was prophesied in the Old Testament (Isaiah 28:12).
 - 2. This is seen to be the case in Acts (2:5; Acts 10:44-46; 19:6).
 - 3. Besides what is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12-14, we don't read of speaking in tongues anywhere else.
- C. The second purpose of speaking in tongues was to confirm the gospel message (2 Corinthians 12:12).
 - 1. There was no New Testament to which people could turn and look up something.
 - 2. Thus, speaking in tongues was used to show that what was being said was from God.

III. The problems with speaking in tongues today.

- A. Paul had to address problems about the use of spiritual gifts with brethren that had spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1).
- B. The sad fact is there are still people that have problems understanding them and that they no longer exist.
- C. They do not understand there is no such thing as Holy Spirit baptism today so there is no tie to speaking in tongues.
 - 1. Paul said there is one baptism (Ephesians 4:5).
 - 2. That baptism is immersion for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).
- D. They make the mistake of affiliating speaking in tongues with being filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - 1. All Christians are to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).
 - 2. Nowhere in scripture are we commanded to speak in tongues.
- E. They believe that speaking in tongues is a fruit of the Spirit.
 - 1. Galatians 5:22-23 - none of these are miraculous.
 - 2. Being spiritual is not tied to speaking in tongues.
- F. It is mistaken to think that speaking in tongues is evidence of faith.
 - 1. Seeking a sign is a lack of faith.
 - 2. 1 Corinthians 14:22.
- G. It is wrong to seek the gift of speaking in tongues.
 - 1. Notice how the Spirit gave the gifts (1 Corinthians 12:18).
 - 2. These gifts were divinely bestowed.
 - 3. This gift was listed nearly last when it was possible to have it.
 - 4. Some say it is self-edifying but Paul said to seek to edify the church (1 Corinthians 14:12).
- H. They have to deal with the problem of gifts not being for today.
 - 1. This is not a subjective idea but must be dealt with objectively from God's word.

2. Paul stated tongues would cease (1 Corinthians 13:8).
3. Why would other miraculous gifts cease while the 8th listed gift remained?
4. There is no need for miraculous confirmation any longer.
5. When the New Testament was completed the gifts were done away with (1 Corinthians 13:10).