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## Speaking in Tongues

### Part 1

There is nothing more scriptural than for those who believe upon Jesus Christ to speak in other “tongues.” Shortly before his ascension, Jesus told his disciples, *“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; **they shall speak with new tongues**; ...”* Mark 16:17. You may know those who speak in tongues that are nothing but flesh, hype, pretense, or even demonic, but their error does not disannul the words of Jesus, the Apostles, and the record of the scripture. To deny that speaking in tongues is ordained of God is to deny a very substantial amount of scripture. If a person is comfortable with such denial of God’s word, I doubt there is much I can say which would make any difference to them.

It is clear in the scripture that speaking in “other tongues” (as the Spirit of God gives the utterance) is the witness God gives that a person has received His Spirit. The Bible gives record of four occasions where people received the Holy Ghost Baptism. Let’s look at each of these with an open heart, accepting the word of God for what it says.

## 1. The Day of Pentecost.

Most remember this amazing account of the day the Spirit of God was first poured out upon one hundred and twenty believers. The Bible says, ***“They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”*** Acts 2:4. The tongues they spoke in that day were other languages recognized by people from many different nations. Yet, this is the only occasion recorded where the tongues spoken were reported to be in other known languages.

Some argue that speaking in tongues must be in a known language for the tongue to be of God. But if that is true, why do the Apostles speak of speaking ***“with the tongues of men and of angels?”*** Or why does Paul say, ***“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”?*** I Corinthians 14:2.

## 2. Believers at Ephesus.

When the Apostle Paul met some believers at Ephesus, he asked them, ***“Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed.”*** Acts 19:2. He was not questioning their faith or salvation, but simply wanted to know if they had they received the promised baptism of God’s Spirit since they believed upon Jesus Christ. Like many Christians today, they told him they had never hear of such a thing. The Bible records, ***“And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on***

them; and **they spake with tongues, and prophesied.**" Acts 19:6.

### 3. The House of Cornelius.

Peter, being instructed by the Lord, went into the house of Cornelius who was a gentile, and shared the gospel of Jesus Christ. As Peter was speaking, *"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 Bible is clear that Peter and the Jews with him knew these gentiles received the Holy Ghost that day *"...for they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God."* Again, speaking in tongues was the witness God gave that He had given these new believers His Spirit. Years later, Peter reminds the church leaders in Jerusalem of this, saying, *"And God, which knoweth the hearts, **bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;**"* Acts 15:8. God giving them the Holy Ghost was God's witness that their hearts had been purified by faith in Christ, but speaking in tongues was God's witness that He had given them the Holy Ghost.

### 4. The believers in Samaria.

When Philip preached the gospel in Samaria, great revival broke out with many miracles, wonders and conversions to Jesus Christ. The Bible says, *"But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were*

*baptized, both men and women.”* Acts 8:12. Many people were saved, but as of yet, none had received the Holy Ghost. We know this because the Bible says, *“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, **prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: For as yet he was fallen upon none of them:** only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)”* Acts 8:14-16. The Apostles knew that a person did not receive the Holy Ghost simply because they believed on Jesus Christ for salvation.

By any scriptural measurement, these new believers in Samaria were “saved people.” They believed the gospel Philip preached unto them. They were baptized. They were followers of Christ, but when the Apostles heard the report, they knew even before they came that not a single person among them had received the Holy Ghost. The Bible says, *“**For as yet he was fallen upon none of them.**”* There was an evidence the Apostles looked for that happened every time the Holy Ghost fell on a person. This had not happened to a single believer in Samaria.

After the Apostles arrived in Samaria, they *“laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.”* Acts 8:17. Now the Bible does not tell us exactly what happened, but it was so amazing that *“when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may*

*receive the Holy Ghost.*” Acts 8:18-24. The Apostles strongly rebuked Simon, but the evident point is that everyone could tell when these believers received the Holy Ghost. God again had given His witness! I say, that just as on every other occasion, they were speaking in tongues and glorifying God.

It is evident from the record of the scripture that speaking in tongues is the witness God gives that a person has been filled with the Holy Spirit. This is true evidence because it always happened “*as the Spirit gave them utterance.*” Acts 2:4. This means the Holy Ghost was actually forming the words that came out of their mouth. These people were not coached, primed, or taught. When the Spirit of God came into them, He gave His own witness in other tongues for all to hear.

This great witness of the Holy Ghost baptism brings to light the great error of much of the modern Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. In many circles it is taught that speaking in tongues, as well as prophecy and the other gifts of the Spirit, are all teachable things. If they are, then they give no evidence at all that God’s Spirit has come to that person! It is no longer the witness of God but the witness of religious flesh. Many people have a “tongue” they can turn on at their will regardless of whether the Spirit of God is moving upon them. They believe it is their gift so they can use it at their will. I do not know what they have, but it is not the witness of God’s Spirit.

Even those ministers who tell people to speak words they hear in their head are leading the people into a fallacy. When the Holy Ghost fell on the first believers, God did not put words in their mind. He formed words in their mouth! Your mind may hear the tongues you heard the preacher utter, your grandma utter, or some other conception of your mind. That is not the way the Spirit of God works! This fallacy is not proof of the Holy Spirit baptism, but, if anything, it is proof of the lack of it. I close Part 1 of this article with Paul's question to the believers. *"Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?"*