

You never have to advertise a fire. Everyone comes running when there's a fire. Likewise, if your church is on fire, you will not have to advertise it. The community will already know it.

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Prayer Study 302

MORE ON TONGUES

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In the New Testament the Greek word translated as tongues is *glossolalia*. *Glosso* means *language* or *tongue*. *Lalia* means *speech*. Thus glossolalia has to do with spoken languages. Only one other time is a word in the New Testament translated as tongues. In 1st Corinthians 14:21 the word used is *heteroglossos* which means *other-tongued* or *a foreigner*: *In the law it is written: "With men of other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people: And yet, for all that, they will not hear Me," says the Lord.*

Many Bible scholars believe that there is a progression in the Bible concerning "tongues," and that tongues were such an important part of Pentecost because they reversed the sign of judgment at the Tower of Babel where the language was confused so that everyone spoke a different language and thus were scattered over all the face of the earth. Tongues at Pentecost came as a result of obedience to the Word of God and as a blessing, not a curse.

Why did God choose Speaking in Tongues?

By Kevin Conner

1. **His love for all nations.** At Pentecost He reverse the sign of judgment of tongues at Babel, and the Door of Salvation opened to all nations. God originated all languages! God can speak any and all languages! He can understand, at the same time, all languages! It has pleased God to choose 'tongues' as the distinct New Testament sign of Pentecost & the evidence of receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.
2. **The Tongue Tamed.** Note James 3, the chapter on "The Tongue." NO MAN can tame the human tongue. James 3:6. *And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members that it defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.* On the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came, He tamed the untamable and uncontrollable human tongue. He

sat upon each of them, men and women, as a “Tongue of Fire-set on Fire of Heaven.” The tongue of fire sat on each of them in order to purify them, burning up the dross and chaff that they might become the fuel of the Divine Fire, that men may see them as a Tongue of Fire, in witnessing, convicting and converting power. As God was seen in the Sign of Tongues at Babel, spoke to the Prophet Balaam, and convicted the King Belshazzar, so God would be seen in the Sign of Tongues here; to those who believe and to those who believe not!

3. **The Evidence of the Baptism of the Spirit in Acts.** In the Book of Acts “speaking with other tongues” was the distinct and unique sign, and evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. If the Church today had but the record of the Books of Acts and cast aside the traditional teaching and books of men, we would have to admit that The Evidence in Acts of the reception of the Spirit was this sign! Why must we go outside of the Scripture? Note in every case in Acts that it gives or suggests this evidence.
 - a. **Acts 21-4.** Speaking in tongues was the evidence to both the individual and the hearer on the Day of Pentecost that they had been filled with the Spirit.
 - b. **Acts 8:5-13, 14-24.** The Samaritans received the Holy Spirit through the Laying on of Hands. There must have been some distinct visible or audible evidence and sign that made Simon desire this power, yet not desire the power that Philip had manifested in previous miracles, healings, etc.
 - c. **Acts 9:17-19.** Paul, the Chosen Apostle, received the Holy Spirit through the Laying on of Hands. Though it is not recorded in Acts that he spoke in tongues, we have his testimony concerning the use of the Gift in 1st Corinthians 14:18, “I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all.”
 - d. **Acts 10:44-48; 11:15-17.** The Gentiles received the Holy Spirit as Peter ministered the Word of Salvation to them. Peter’s testimony to the Council at Jerusalem was that the Holy Spirit “fell on them as on us at the beginning.” This outpouring was a number of years later than Pentecost. How did Peter know that the Gentiles had received the Spirit? Because they heard them speak with tongues!
 - e. **Acts 19:1-7.** The Ephesian disciples received the Holy Spirit through the Laying on of Hands by Paul. How did Paul detect they had not received the Spirit? When they did receive the

Spirit, they spoke with tongues and prophesied-the sign and evidence to speakers and hearers that the Holy Spirit had come.

- f. **Acts 18:1-11; 1st Corinthians 14.** Although it is not recorded in the Acts, it is evident that the Corinthians received the Holy Spirit and the Sign and Gift of other tongues was manifested there in the believers and the Local Church.

Conner seems to believe that the sign of tongues is the initial evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit calling tongues *“the accepted witness and evidence of the Spirit’s reception in Acts.”* Furthermore, Conner says that *“Acts is the Divine Pattern for the whole of this Church Age!”* He believes that in all six cases in Acts where people received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit that tongues is mentioned or suggested by Scripture. He does, however, seem to hedge a little later in this discussion when he says, “Thus all did and may speak with tongues today, in receiving the Baptism of the Spirit.

We must remember two things. First, holy living is the evidence, not tongues, of walking in the Spirit and living out the Spirit-filled life. We know that others, such as Samson in the Old Testament and believers in the Corinthians Church had the Spirit but did not always walk in the Spirit.

Secondly, there is a distinction between the SIGN of tongues and the GIFT of tongues, similarly to the distinction between being a PROPHET or having the GIFT of prophecy. The SIGN correlates to what we call an individual believer’s prayer language and is not under the rules of the Gift of Tongues where a message in tongues is not to be given unless there is an interpret present. Sometimes, however, a message is given in tongues and no one interprets. The fault in some cases lies with the interpreter. I have been in meetings where people later asked forgiveness from the Body because they were given the interpretation but were too shy to give it. So let’s be careful when we start judging believers who have gifts.

In conclusion, *you* must decide about tongues. First, is it the initial and necessary sign of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit? Or can a person with other gifts who has never spoken in tongues still be considered by the Body as one who has been baptized in the Holy Spirit? Considering all of this, it is good to emphasize once more that Jesus is the one who baptizes in the Spirit. I find it offensive when well-meaning ministers try to coach people into speaking in tongues, and I don’t believe that everyone who speaks some syllables under pressure of an evangelist or minister has really received the Baptism.

Neither Do I Condemn Thee
By Carol and Jimmy Snow
(1963)

Chorus

“Neither do I condemn thee,” precious words divine;
From the lips of mercy like the sweetest chimes.
Wonderful words of Jesus, sing them o’er and o’er;
“Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more.”

By the crowd of worshipers, sorry for their sings,
Was a poor wanderer, rudely brought in;
Scribes came and Pharisees, anxious to see
What the meek Nazarene’s verdict would be.

They told of her wanderings, making each flaw,
Spoke of her punishment, quoting the law.
Writing upon the ground, sadly and slow,
But said He unheedingly, head bending low:

Still cried the Pharisees, “Pray, Master, pray,
What shall we do with her? What doth Thou say?”
Then said He rebukingly, “Let the first stone
Come from the sinless hands, hence and alone.”

Cheeks flushing with the shame, turning about,
And from His presence, walking slowly out.
Then saw we standing there, head bending low,
He who the world despised bade her sin no more.

Spoke He most tenderly, “Pray, woman, pray,
Hast thou no accusers?” “Nay, Master, nay.”
“Neither do I condemn thee, soul, sick and sore;
Go forth-I pardon thee-go and sin no more.”