

**Must You
“Speak With Other
Tongues”
To be Saved?**



This booklet is a free educational service
in the public interest, published by
The Church of God, International,
P. O. Box 2530, Tyler, Texas 75710

Copyright © 1985, 1994 The Church of God, International, Tyler, Texas
All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.



“Oooooom Oooooom Ooooooom” she muttered, eyes tightly closed, fists clenched and raised to the ceiling. Others nearby were shouting “Praise you Jesus!” and “Hallelujah!” and “Praise the Lord!”

Someone else was saying “Fleegle!” and another, “Dzanjak!” and another, “Mammama ja rungwa thawkiealасendia!”

It was another typical “charismatic” meeting—wherein newly “converted” seekers had finally “found their word,” and were allegedly “speaking in other tongues.” The preacher was ecstatic, as were the regular members of his church. Surely, they thought, what they were witnessing was a direct manifestation from God!

And make no mistake! These people were *sincere*!

Sincerity: The Test of Truth?

Too often, we human beings adopt a hostile attitude toward those with different opinions. Our empirical selves are threatened by contrary ideological, philosophical, political, cultural and spiritual concepts. And what is it, after all, that so completely divides the human race? Is it not *prejudice*, and that along tribal, sociological, cultural and political lines?

“You don’t look like I do; don’t dress the way I do, do not speak the same language, salute the same flag, or believe in the same god, and therefore I *hate* you” might be the way it could be voiced.

Do *you* believe that “speaking with other tongues” is the *only proof* of having been “baptized with the Holy Ghost”? Tens of thousands most sincerely *do*! Notice, I said “most *sincerely*”!

But, no matter what you believe on the tongues question, you will agree with me, I’m sure, that “the majority is not always right.” After all, there are far more Chinese (every fourth human being is Chinese!) than there are English-speaking “Caucasians.” *You* may believe in the “Christian” concept of God, while approximately ONE BILLION Chinese believe in various concepts of Buddha, Confucius, or assorted forms of

ancestor worship. *They* are in the *majority*. But are they *right*?

No, probably you, together with millions of others in the English-speaking world, fervently believe they are *wrong*! But are they *sincere*? Do you give them the "right" of their convictions and beliefs? Of course you do. And of course, they are *sincere*.

Apply the same concept to yourself, or to others around you of differing religious and philosophical convictions. Jesus said, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

"But in vain they *do worship* me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:8,9).

Jesus plainly said it is possible to sincerely *worship* Him, and yet do so in *vain*, so long as we are believing in the doctrines and commandments of *men*.

When Jesus was asked by His disciples *why* He clouded the meaning of His teachings by speaking in parables, He said "Because it is given unto *you* to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is *not given*...And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias [Isaiah], which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and *shall not understand*; and seeing ye shall see and shall not perceive:

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; *lest* at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Matthew 13:10-15).

The Bible plainly shows that Satan the devil has deceived *all nations* (Revelation 12:9, Ephesians 2:2).

Millions are *deceived*, just like all of those *hundreds* of millions of Chinese! But are they "sincere"? *Of course* they are!

You see, sincerity is simply *NOT the test of truth*! It does not matter one whit how honest, heartfelt, dedicated or faithful we may be; it matter not one whit how flawless our character, we are still capable of being *DECEIVED* when it comes to the teaching of God's Word! Jesus Christ plainly said so!

Through Paul, Christ warns "For such are *false apostles*, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

"And no marvel; for *Satan himself is transformed* into an angel of light.

"Therefore it is no great thing if *his ministers* also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (II Corinthians 11:13-15).

Here, the Holy Word of God plainly tells us there ARE "false apostles." It is not for us to engage in name-calling and blame-placing. God has not called His true church to attack others, or go about placing "labels" on various cults, church organizations, or religious television programs. There is an altogether unhealthy amount of bitter criticism, persecution and "labeling" being done by those of many religious organizations who seem to feel it is their righteous responsibility to defame and discredit others.

Nevertheless, your Bible DOES warn about false prophets and false doctrine! You read plainly that Satan DOES have "his ministers." Since you know he *does*—then *who are they*? That is a question YOU must decide!

Christ warned, "Take heed that no man *deceive* you. For many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ; and shall deceive *many*!" (Matthew 24:4,5).

Here, in the famous "Olivet prophecy" Christ said one of the very *first* signs of the the beginning of the *Great Tribulation*, and His eventual return to this earth would be "*many* false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive *MANY*" (Matthew 24:11). Again, notice the word "deceive." A *deceived* person can be the best neighbor you ever had; a good, honest and trustworthy *friend*! A deceived person can be *completely sincere*! A deceived person is utterly unaware that he or she *is* deceived!

After all, what we don't know—we simply don't know that we don't know!

Do you see? A deceived person's beliefs are totally bereft of *evil motive*! Therefore, when you calmly study an issue or doctrine, you should do so *objectively*, not "subjectively," or emotionally, feeling that a contrary approach is, somehow, an attack against your *character*, or your empirical self. Is it remotely possible *you* have been *deceived* about speaking in "*tongues*"?

The Day of Pentecost

One of the greatest events of all history was on the day of Pentecost (called "the feast of weeks," or the feast of "firstfruits" in the Old Testament) when the apostles received God's Holy Spirit, and about three thousand individuals were *converted*!

Jesus had said, repeatedly, that He would send the Holy Spirit after He was assumed into heaven, following His resurrection (John 14:16,17; 15:26,27).

As the disciples stood, watching Jesus being taken into the heavens out of their sight, a *miracle* occurred. Jesus had said, "It is not for you to

know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power.

"But ye shall receive *power*, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

"And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

"And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

"Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, *shall so come* in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:7-11).

One quick explanation, as an aside. You will notice I continually refer to the word *Ghost* in the Old King James translation as "Spirit." The word for "spirit" in the Greek is *pneuma* which means "a current of air; breath, breeze, or by analogy or figuratively a *spirit*." Unfortunately, back in 1611 at the time of the translation of the King James Version of the English Bible from the Reims-Douay version, the translators believed in *ghosts*. They substituted the word *Ghost* for "Spirit." This is a very unfortunate substitution, and is not followed by any of the more modern translations. It is definitely *not* the meaning of the Greek word!

The word *ghost* conjures up a vision of a wraith-like creature of some sort, like the "hooded spectre" of death! "Ghosts" are supposedly *evil spirits* which haunt houses and scare little children! Certainly, the very *mind*, life-giving *power* and *Spirit of God* should not be translated into the English language as "ghost"!

Now, back to our text.

Notice that the angels told the disciples they would be imbued with **POWER!** Precisely what did that *mean*? Is "power" mere human *emotion*? Is "power" merely the ability to become overwhelmed *emotionally*, speaking in a series of meaningless, unintelligible sounds, as if in ecstatic joy, having a "religious *experience*"?

We shall see. Actually, the word "power" could be translated "authority," or even "ability"!

They were to receive *power*—power to *do what*? Power to be *witnesses* of Jesus Christ of Nazareth! *Specifically*, they were to be given *power* to be witnesses of *His resurrection!*

Now, turn to and read the all-important passage in the first half of the second chapter of Acts!

"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 Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

"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 marveled, 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.

"And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

"Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

"For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

"But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

"And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

"And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:1-21).

I have included here the entire passage concerning the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit so that you may refer back to it from time to time.

First, notice they were not "tarrying" as if in a *prayer meeting*, attempting to "pray down the spirit"!

The disciples (apostles) had been completely *mystified* by the pronouncement of the angels! They did not know *what* to expect!

However, this was one of God's *annual holy days* which *continued to be observed* by the New Testament church (I Corinthians 5:7,8; 16:8; Acts 27:9)! The meaning of the word "Pentecost" is "fiftieth." Read Leviticus 23:9-21, for a fuller understanding of the way the feast of "weeks" or "Pentecost" had previously been celebrated.

It was called "the feast of weeks" because they were to *count* beginning with the morrow after the Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread until they came *to* the morrow after the *seventh Sabbath*, which would, obviously, be a Sunday, and on that day, the FIFTIETH day following the weekly Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread, they were to celebrate the "firstfruits."

Anciently, the priest went in to the grain field, using a hand sickle, and cut out a swath of the early grain, holding it aloft, waving it as if before God, in thanksgiving, to be accepted of Him. This "wavesheaf" offering typified the very FIRST of the "firstfruits" of the harvest from the *earth*, which was Jesus Christ!

What better day for Almighty God to choose for the *beginning* of His New Testament Church than the feast of Pentecost?

Now, the *risen Christ*, typified by the wavesheaf, had already ascended to heaven! Now, Almighty God would beget, by the power of His Holy Spirit, His twelve apostles (Matthias having been substituted for the deceased Judas Iscariot) and, on that day, His New Testament *church* (group of "called-out ones," or "assembly") would be constituted!

Notice that the *sound* which was audibly *heard* did not come from the throats of the apostles! It did not come "gradually," as one here or there discovered "their word" or began chanting their "mantra."

No, this sound was a *supernatural sound*. It was not a sound manufactured by human voices! It did not come from within the room, but came, *FROM HEAVEN!*

And what did it sound like?

It came with a ROAR, like a rumbling, thunderous sound of many freight trains—like that of a "*rushing mighty wind*"! A rushing, mighty wind is the sound of a *hurricane*, or a *tornado*! The sound was almost

overwhelming, and it "FILLED all the house where they were sitting"!

Notice, too, that they were *sitting*, not standing up, swaying about, holding their arms or their fists in the air, but perhaps quietly chatting among themselves, puzzling over events of the past few months, speaking of the phenomenal miracle of the appearances of Christ and what the angels had said.

Then, there *appeared* unto them "tongues of fire" *equally distributed* among them!

Notice the margin of the King James Version, and, if you have a Ferrar Fenton, James Moffatt, Goodspeed, Ivan Panin Greek Numerics, Diaglott, or any other biblical translations or Bible helps, you should avail yourself of them, and prove to yourself what you are about to read!

The correct translation of that verse should read: "And there appeared unto them *tongues of fire equally distributed among them*, and it sat upon each of them!" You see, we often speak of flames of fire as "tongues of fire." This is merely a metaphorical statement in the English language, and is of common usage. What actually *appeared* before the startled eyes of the apostles themselves and hundreds of onlookers (perhaps the entire 120, including Philip, Stephen and others were present) was that flickering flames, like leaping "tongues" of fire appeared like radiant, flickering, brilliantly illuminated *crowns* on the head of each of the apostles!

Now let's *understand* what happened!

"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance!" (Acts 2:4).

Read, again, what all of the Parthians, Cappadocians, Egyptians, Romans and Arabians said! Here were represented more than *sixteen* separate languages and dialects! Yet, each of these people were able to say "We do hear them speak in *our languages* the wonderful works of God!"

The Meaning of the Word "Tongue"

The word "tongue" in the English language is used as a *synonym* for the "language." It is the same in many other languages. *Strongs Exhaustive Concordance* explains that the Greek word *glossa* means "the tongue; by implication a *language*—tongue." The transliterated Greek word is found in our English language in several forms, among them "glossary," which means a list of difficult, technical, or foreign terms with various definitions or translations.

Actually, both the Greek and the English words are completely interchangeable; that is, they may refer *either* to the organ of speech in

our mouths, or the language that is *spoken*. Notice carefully both verse 6 and verse 8! In verse 6, we read that they were confounded because "every man heard them speak *in his own language*," and in verse 8 we read, "And how hear we every man *in our own tongue*...?" Yet, in both of these verses, a completely *different* Greek word was used! It is *dialektos* from which we take the English word "dialect" or "language."

Notice how the translators felt perfectly free to interchange the two Greek words. *Glossa* or "tongue," can be rendered *either way*—"language" or "tongue." The same with *dialektos*—it may be translated either way. Here, *glossa* is rendered "language," and *dialektos* is rendered "tongue," yet *each* rendering obviously refers to a known, intelligible, spoken language.

It is obvious to anyone that these startled visitors to Jerusalem, representing perhaps *sixteen different dialects* and languages, *plainly heard* shocking and completely *intelligible* statements made by the apostles!

What statements? The Bible says they heard "the *wonderful works of God!*" Read the rest of the chapter, and you will see, as if a summary of the messages spoken by *all* of the apostles, the famous sermon by Peter on the day of Pentecost!

And what did he preach? He preached about the *resurrection of Christ*; that Jesus, by being born of God by a *resurrection from the dead* was now *very Christ*, and that his audience should "repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

What was the greatest event in all history up to this time? It was the FACT of Christ's resurrection!

Christ had commanded His disciples to be "witnesses unto me"—i.e., of His life, His gospel, His example, and His death, burial and resurrection!

Later, the apostle Paul, summarizing the *gospel* he preached to the Gentiles, wrote "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you *the gospel* which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

"By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain.

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, *how that Christ died* for our sins according to the scriptures;

"And that He was *buried*, and that He *rose again* the *third day* according to the scriptures;

"And that He was seen of Cephas [Peter], then of the twelve;

"After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of

whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

"After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

"And last of all He was seen of me also, as one born [Greek: *gennaos*, meaning "begotten"] out of due time" (I Corinthians 15:1-8).

The *main thrust* of their message was the FACT of Christ's *resurrection!*

This was an *astounding* announcement to these startled Gentiles, Jews and proselytes from nations all over the Mediterranean region!

They had *never heard* of such a thing!

As a result, not because of the *manner* of the apostles, but as a direct result of WHAT THEY SAID, some of them "mocked," and accused the apostles of being *drunk!*

Just as someone would disparagingly discard or reject a statement you might make, saying, "You must be off your rocker," "You must be drunk," or "You've got to be crazy," using the modern vernacular, so these startled listeners to the pronouncements of the apostles said, "These men must be *drunk!*"

Read the context!

It is important for you to note that these listeners and viewers did *not* assume the apostles were drunk *because of the manner in which they ACTED—but because of what they said!*

Peter's retort is plain. He went on to explain that, since it was only about nine o'clock in the morning, and the wine shops were *closed*; that it was contrary to Jewish *law* for anyone to drink at this time of the day, that these men were not "drunken," but that this was the fulfillment (as a previous type) of a prophecy uttered by Joel, which Peter proceeded to expound.

Now, an important point: Did all the apostles *speak at once?*

Remember, the Bible interprets the Bible! The Bible is a completely harmonious, interdependent, *perfect* book, representing the divine Word of Almighty God! It does not contradict itself.

The apostle Paul plainly said, "If any man speak *in a language* [correct translation], let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that BY COURSE [meaning, *one after the other*]; and let one interpret!"

He went on to say: "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* [only ONE was to talk at one time].

"For ye [all of you ministers or prophets] may all prophesy [including inspired *preaching*] ONE BY ONE, that all may *learn* and all may be

comforted...For God is not the author of *confusion*, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (I Corinthians 14:27-33).

It is obvious, since God is not the author of *confusion*, and since each of these visitors to Jerusalem *clearly understood* the points the apostles were making, that each of the apostles spoke *one by one—one at a time!*

We have no knowledge of who began speaking first, or who followed, or even whether or not, in fact, Peter's sermon was the *final* message of that day!

We DO know that a great *miracle* occurred; we know that the miracle was BOTH the speaking AND the hearing.

How do we know this?

Simply because those representing approximately sixteen languages and dialects plainly said *they*, ALL of them, heard EACH of the apostles speaking in *their* (meaning ALL of their), languages!

In other words, even though one man was speaking at a time, say, James, the brother of Jesus Christ, giving witness to Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead, each one of these individuals, numbering into the thousands and representing perhaps sixteen dialects and languages, *clearly understood* everything James was saying! Yet, James was perhaps *unaware* that he was doing anything other than speaking in *his own language!* Almighty God inspired his speech; and, by a *miracle* in *both* his speaking and the hearing, allowed each of these individuals to *understand!*

Notice there was *reason* involved. There was *order*. Each man spoke *one by one*, and as a result of this *orderly* progression and development of *ideas*; as a direct result of this great *witness* given by these men who had SEEN Jesus killed, and had then *seen* Him *alive*, thousands were *converted!*

There is *not one statement* in the book of Acts that ANY of these very *first converts* to the New Testament Church "*spoke in tongues!*" The Bible merely tells us, "Then they that gladly *received his Word* [intelligently given, and intelligently received] were *baptized*: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls [Greek: *psuche*, meaning beings, or individuals]" (Acts 2:41). Later, we see these throngs of visitors who had come to Jerusalem for the "feast of firstfruits" *remained* for quite a number of days, until they had to sell properties or possessions, giving them into a common pool, so that they might continue "daily in the temple" and "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved!" (verses 42-47).

The Gift of Speaking in Foreign Language— A Tool of Evangelism!

Jesus Christ said, "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). The Greek word for "church" is *ekklesia*, which should better be rendered "*assembly*," for it connotes the "body of believers" or the *group* of specially selected individuals who would repent, be baptized, and receive God's Holy Spirit for the *purpose* of conducting the *work* of that assembly, or group of converted individuals.

With the passing centuries, the word "church" has become corrupted.

To many, it means the "building" in which the assembly of people *meets*. Commonly, people say, "I was married in the *church*," or, "the *church* on the corner of Fifth and Main Streets." But the Greek word used by Jesus Christ had nothing to do with the *building*. It meant a group of called and chosen *individuals* who, collectively, form a *spiritual organism* called the *ekklesia*, or church.

For a fuller understanding of the *job* the church is to perform, write for my free booklet *Where Is the True Church?* and a reprint article, *What is the WORK of the Church?*

Jesus Christ *commissioned* His group of specially called and trained disciples (which means "students" or "learners")—gave them a mission to perform.

He said, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

"Go ye therefore, and *teach all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit:

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:18-20).

Luke's account of the same event is also revealing:

"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name *among all nations*, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47).

HOW are they to "baptize them that believe" among *all nations* of the world without first *reaching their minds?*

What are the major *barriers* between you and, say, the Russian people, or the Vietnamese, Japanese, the Chinese, or the members of any other race who speak a *different language* from yours?

Notwithstanding the economic, geographical, political and cultural difficulties, the one *main barrier* is that of *language*. Naturally, as time went on, God's true church, or the "assembly" of called-out individuals,

would grow to include members of *many races*, many *languages*.

It is *obvious* WHY Almighty God caused the powerful demonstration of His Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost when you think about it deeply! There were present *thousands* representing perhaps SIXTEEN separate languages and dialects! While *most of them were Jews*, they included "*proselytes*" A *proselyte* was a Gentile who had become circumcised and embraced the religion of the Jews. Yet, such an individual would have retained his native tongue.

Thus, by causing above *three thousand* to be *converted* on the day of Pentecost, God saw to it that the miraculous events of that day and the powerful sermons of the apostles would be *repeated*, by these converts, over and over again through the ensuing years in *every one* of the nations and provinces from which these visitors came! No doubt, many of them went on to become members of the ministry. What better way to *begin* the fulfillment of the great commission, which charged the apostles with GOING into "all nations" to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God as a witness and a warning?

Within a few weeks, *thousands* of elated, excited, wondering Jews and proselytes would be returning to Crete, Rome, Arabia, Cappadocia and Bithynia, and many points in between! They would carry with them all that they had seen, heard and learned in *weeks* of some of the most exciting, profoundly shaking and sobering experiences of their *lives!*

"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 [judged, or condemned].

"And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name they shall cast out devils [demons]; they shall speak with new tongues [languages]; 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 16:15-18).

Much is made, by many leaders in the "charismatic" branches of professing Christianity of the statement that these signs "shall follow them that believe." Deeply desirous of healing for the crippled, the elderly and infirm; seeking to display the "gift of speaking in other languages," many have allowed themselves to become completely *deceived* over the true meaning, purpose, and present-day application of these spiritual gifts.

Unfortunately, many a church organization has drifted into a collective guilt complex over the *absence* of sensational miracles, signs, healings, or tongues-speaking; and try to *manufacture* these signs by various

emotion-charged "revivals" and powerful condemnation of their followers for being "unspiritual."

Earlier, Jesus had said to His disciples, "And as ye go, preach, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, *raise the dead*, cast out devils [demons]; freely ye have received, freely give!" (Matthew 10:7,8). In this chapter, as He called His twelve disciples He "gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease" (verse 1).

Being *practical* with the Scriptures, let's ask *how many dead were raised* in the entire New Testament experience of God's true church? Jesus Christ miraculously raised *Lazarus* from the dead! (God the Father accomplished the miracle, though Jesus Christ issued the *command*, following prayer). Peter raised Dorcas, and when the apostle Paul prayed for a young lad who fell out of an upper balcony during a long sermon, though he was pronounced dead, he miraculously became alive. The Bible says many of the saints who had died in preceding years were resurrected at the time of Christ's death, though it does not tell us how many. These individuals, including Lazarus, Dorcas, and the unnamed young boy whom Paul was used to raise up were resurrected to human, physical lifespans and, eventually, died a natural death.

There is no record that James, Bartholomew, Simon, Andrew, Matthias, or others of the apostles, save Peter and Paul, were used as an instrument of God to raise anyone from the dead.

Yet, we read how Peter, under the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, gave a command, and a crippled man was instantly healed at the gate called "Beautiful" leading into the temple (Acts 3:7,8). So great was the fervent belief and *faith* on the part of those in Jerusalem who witnessed the many miracles being accomplished that it was said even Peter's *shadow* passing over them caused them to be healed of sicknesses and disease (Acts 5:15).

The apostle Paul, shipwrecked en route to incarceration in Rome, was cast ashore on the Island of *Malta*. You read of this in Acts 28. "And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand.

"And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live.

"And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm.

"Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said he was a god.

"In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us [wrote Luke], and lodged us three days courteously.

"And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of bloody flux; to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him.

"So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed" (Acts 28:2-9).

Notice that this is the only case in the recorded history of the New Testament church where an apostle was bitten by a serpent! It was a *total accident*. Paul had no knowledge whatsoever that, as he picked up an armload of branches and sticks to place on a fire, a *snake* had coiled itself among them!

Here, Almighty God performed a *miracle*, sparing Paul's life! Those who seek to *pervert* and *twist* this experience of Paul's into justifying "snake handling," as if such an abominable custom is honored by God, do so at their own peril! It is sheer ignorance to claim God was commanding His true servants to "handle snakes," as some cults have been known to do (and frequent snakebite, and even *death*, has been the result in some cases).

The point is, God was promising *protection* for His apostles, so long as their lives were still useful to Him; so long as their personal destinies were yet to be fulfilled!

On this occasion, Paul's life was spared. God wanted him to testify in Rome, before the court of Nero himself. Later, however, Paul was allowed to be *martyred* for his faith. He may have died in the Colosseum in Rome, though there is no proof of either the place or the manner of his death.

God continually spared the lives of His true servants when they anointed and prayed for the *sick*, laying hands on them. When coming into such close physical proximity with those possessed of extremely virulent, contagious diseases. God gave them *immunity*. There is no record of the death of God's servants following prayer for a victim of a contagious disease.

What is the "Baptism of Fire"?

Our English word "fire" is utilized in many forms of metaphor. A county-western song says, "My Heart's *on Fire* for Elvira." People are said to have a "fiery temper," and a basketball or football team is said to be "fired up." Terminations of an employee is called a "firing."

But what is the "baptism with *fire*"? Those who believe in the

"charismatic" or "pentecostal" manifestations of the professing Christian religion borrow a phrase from a statement made by John the Baptist, nearly two thousand years ago, and urge their followers to receive the "baptism with FIRE!"

Apparently, what is meant by all this is that, upon receiving the "baptism with the Holy Ghost" a person *feels* especially "fired up!" The person feels heightened *emotion*, which is illustrated by garbled gibberish, "ecstatic" utterances, unintelligible sounds, accompanied by, perhaps, frantic jerks, twitches, gyrations, contortions and violent movements of the body.

But is this what John the Baptist meant? Is it what the Bible *says*?

Let's see: "But when he [John the Baptist] saw many of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees* come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

"And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

"And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

"Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matthew 3:7-12).

Now, let's understand what this passage plainly *does say*, and what it does NOT say!

First, notice that, when John saw the leaders of the two major, opposing religions of his time, the Pharisees and Sadducees, he was moved to indignation! He referred to them exactly as did Jesus (Matthew 23) as a "generation of *vipers*!" Literally translated, he was not merely calling them "snakes" but "*venomous* snakes"! He then ordered them to bring forth *fruit* which would *prove* that they were really repenting! He told them not to argue along racial, tribal and historical lines, claiming "We have Abraham for our father," and said that God was able of the stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Then, John the Baptist used the *analogy* of a forester hewing down trees! It is obvious that when John said "the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn

down, and cast into the fire," John was referring to the *destruction of unfruitful trees!*

He speaks of the *same thing* in a different analogy (verse 12).

Notice! "Whose fan [winnowing shovel] is in His hand, and He will thoroughly PURGE His floor [threshing floor] and gather His wheat into the garner, but He will BURN UP the chaff with *unquenchable fire*" (Matthew 3:12).

Both analogies, the one wherein the forester hews down unfruitful trees, and the other where the thresher gathers up chaff to burn it, are immediately obvious to any individual sincerely thirsting to understand the Word of God.

What happens when you hew down a useless, unfruitful tree, chop it up, and cast it into *fire*? Naturally, you DESTROY the tree; you *burn it up!*

And *what happens* when you use a fan, or winnowing shovel, to separate wheat from the chaff and then cast the chaff into a *fire* which you *refuse to put out*? As John said, you will "BURN UP the chaff"!

At this confrontation, John was speaking to *two groups* of people. Previous verses tell us of the *greatness* of the ministry of John the Baptist; how citizens from many provinces around came to him to hear his preaching, and to be baptized of him in the river Jordan. It then tells us that some of the Christ-rejecting Pharisees and Sadducees came also among the others. John was speaking to TWO groups of people! On the one hand, he was speaking to those who came sincerely thirsting for his message; those who would repent upon being convicted, and would be baptized with *water*, as a symbol of death and burial of the *old self*, and their commitment to begin walking in "newness of life."

To them, he spoke of the *baptism of the Holy Spirit!*

But he *also* addressed a *separate, different* group! Sadducees and Pharisees! Even as, with both analogies, he indicated there would be some trees (those *bearing fruit*) which would be spared by the axmen, and also indicated that the *wheat* would be gathered into the barn while the chaff was *destroyed*, so he said to this *whole group* that SOME of them would be baptized with the "Holy Spirit" and OTHERS would be baptized with "FIRE"!

What kind of fire?

The kind of fire which he called "UNQUENCHABLE"! And what is unquenchable fire?

You can find out, in your own home, if you have a woodburning stove or a fireplace. Simply light a fire and decide not to *quench it!* Do not put on water, do not smother it, or use a CO₂ bottle, or in any way interfere

with the fire you have lit! That is an unquenchable fire!

Notice the biblical usage of the term! When Jesus rebuked the citizens of Capernaum, saying unto them, "If the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day," He spoke of the fact of the DESTRUCTION of ancient Sodom! As you know, Almighty God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah with *fire!* This fire was from a *divine* source, and is actually a *type* of the "Gehenna fire" of which Jesus Christ spoke. He said, "...but rather *fear Him* [God] which is able to DESTROY both soul [Greek: *psuche*] and body [Greek: *soma*] in *Gehenna*" (Matthew 10:28).

If you have not yet read my free booklets on the subject of an "ever-burning hell" or about the "immortality of the soul" then write for *both* immediately! Ask for *Is There Really a Hell-Fire?* and *Do You Have an Immortal Soul?*

As you will see explained in the booklet on "the soul," man IS a *living soul*. When an individual (referred to as a "soul" in some cases in the Bible) *sins*, that individual will reap the "wages of sin" which is death! (Romans 6:23).

Read Ezekiel 18:4 and 20! "The soul that sinneth IT shall DIE"!

The incorrigibly wicked are to be cast into "Gehenna fire" which is described as a *lake of fire* which "burns them up"! Read Malachi 4:1! God says, "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall *burn as an oven*; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be *stubble* ["chaff," the *same analogy* used by John the Baptist] and the day that that cometh shall *burn them up* saith the Eternal of hosts, that it shall leave them neither *root nor branch*"! Again, notice the direct repetition of the same analogies used by John! Referring to being left neither "root nor branch" is obviously referring to growing stalks, or trees.

God's Word goes on to say, "And ye shall tread down the *wicked*; for they shall be ashes *under the soles of your feet* in the day that I shall do this, saith the Eternal of hosts" (Malachi 4:3).

Now notice *what happened* to Sodom and Gomorrah!

God's Word says, "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, *suffering the vengeance of eternal fire*" (Jude, verse 7)!

And what IS this "unquenchable fire" or "eternal fire" which *destroyed* Sodom and Gomorrah?

Probably, it was like a *nuclear bomb!* It came from God, out of heaven, and completely DESTROYED both cities! As such, it was like a *type*, or forerunner of the "Gehenna fire" of which Jesus plainly warned!

Notice that the fire is *not STILL burning*.

John the Baptist *warned* the murder-plotting, sinning Sadducees and Pharisees that they represented the unfruitful trees which were being *hewn down!* He said if they were hewn down they would be *cast into the fire* and BURNED UP! He said they represented the "chaff" which would be separated *from* the "wheat," cast into the FIRE, and BURNED UP!

And so, the *only reference* to this "baptism with fire" in all the Bible, where John the Baptist sternly WARNS sinning, evil men about the coming of *Gehenna fire*, has to do with the threat of the DESTRUCTION of the wicked, and most certainly NOT some ecstatic, emotional "experience" one might feel in a church service or a revival!

You had better PRAY that the Eternal God *never selects YOU* for the kind of "baptism with fire" John warned the Sadducees and Pharisees about!

The Spiritual Gifts

Read the entire twelfth chapter of I Corinthians. Here is a chapter in which the apostle Paul explains how God has established *His* form of loving, caring and merciful *government* in His church! God is not the "author of confusion" but of *order* (I Corinthians 14:33).

Then, he shows how certain "spiritual gifts" would be miraculously *added* to the natural talents and abilities of the leaders in the church. He said: "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant...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 [languages]; to another the *interpretation* of tongues [languages]:

"But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will" (I Corinthians 12:1,8-11).

Notice carefully the *order of importance* of these spiritual gifts!

God places *wisdom first*. That gift is followed by *knowledge*, then by *faith*, healing, miracle-working, and prophecy, or inspired speaking and preaching. Then comes the "discerning of spirits" and, at the very tag-end of these spiritual gifts He lists "kinds of tongues" and "the interpretation of tongues." There are *nine* "spiritual gifts" in all.

In the order of *importance*, God shows that speaking with various kinds of *languages* and then being able to *interpret* to others those languages are listed eighth and ninth!

Now, notice a *very important point*:

Only on the day of Pentecost was there a DOUBLE miracle performed! As you have learned, the miracle was in BOTH the speaking AND the hearing. However, from that time onward, the *double* miracle of affecting the *hearing* of the audience as well as the *speaking* of those doing the preaching *no longer occurred!* It was absolutely UNIQUE to the manifestation of God's Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

From that time onward, the miracle of *hearing* "every man in his own tongue," as exclaimed the startled Parthians, Medians, Persians and Arabs, was not utilized.

Here, God says there are *two* gifts involved in "tongues."

The first (listed *eighth* in the order of spiritual gifts) is "speaking with other languages." Then, as a *separate* spiritual gift, perhaps *not given* to the one with the gift of speaking in languages, but given to a *different* individual, is "the interpretation of languages"!

Let us note how the apostle Paul said these are to be *used*. "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 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.

"There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is with 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" (I Corinthians 14:1-13).

Read that entire passage, which I have included here, with this clarification: The *added* word "unknown" is *italicized* in the King James Version. Printing the word in *italics* meant that the word was *supplied* by the translators! It *does not appear* in the original Greek, and is obviously a direct contradiction within the scripture itself! Notice the proof! "I would that ye all spake with languages, but *rather* that ye prophesied [spoke under inspiration]: for *greater* is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with languages, EXCEPT HE INTERPRET, that the church may receive edifying" (verse 5).

Obviously, then, the "tongue" or "language" being utilized would be a language KNOWN by someone present! Though *most* present might not understand it, and, indeed, perhaps NO ONE present understood it, yet it would be a definite *language* spoken, written, understood and presently *extant* somewhere among the human family.

And so, the apostle Paul clearly said that one who had been given the gift of speaking in other (foreign) languages should *refrain* from exercising that gift unless there was someone there with the gift of "interpretation"! *Why?* Simply because they *would not understand*. Paul *himself* said he had been given the gift of speaking with other languages. He said, "I thank my God I speak with languages 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 a tongue" (I Corinthians 14:18,19, correct translation).

Is this true of those who diligently *seek* after the supposed "gift of glossolalia" or "speaking in other tongue"? Usually not. Very few of them would ever say they would far rather speak only *five words* in a plain, easily understandable language than *ten thousand words* in a "tongue" spoken by foreigners or people of another language.

After quoting the prophecy of Isaiah 28:11,12, Paul said, "Wherefore tongues [foreign languages] are for a SIGN, NOT TO THEM THAT BELIEVE but to them that BELIEVE NOT: but prophesying [inspired preaching or teaching] serveth not for them which believe not, but for them which *believe*"!

Do you see?

Thousands of people in the professing Christian religion which embrace the "pentecostal" emotionalism of "tongues speaking" parade it

before each other IN THE CHURCH!

But has there EVER been a case where a minister, perhaps speaking on television on an international satellite network, spoke in only *one* language, and was automatically understood by twenty, thirty, fifty or more *different* languages?

You have never heard of such a thing!

Clearly, the gift of speaking in "tongues" is a divinely imparted gift of speaking in *known, foreign languages* which are spoken by other races and nations.

It is a *tool of evangelism*, added to God's church for the *furtherance of the gospel!*

Spiritual gifts were not given for *personal decoration!* They are not spiritual "badges" or "medals" to *decorate* the leaders in the church. They are not for personal gratification, or for "comparing with others," to cause ego and *vanity!*

Rather, they are miraculously-given divine GIFTS of God's Holy Spirit, and are utilized as a sign for UNBELIEVERS as a method to *convict* and to *convert* them, calling them to repentance and a knowledge of the truth!

Yet, many have *perverted* the simple truth about "speaking in tongues," and made it into a matter of mere human EMOTION, and in some cases, outright gibberish; making no sense whatsoever!

"The Only Evidence?"

Some have claimed "speaking in tongues" is the *only proof* one has the Holy Spirit.

NONSENSE!

Plainly, the scripture says "For to ONE is given by the Spirit the gift of wisdom; to ANOTHER [a different person] the word of wisdom...to ANOTHER [still a *different* person!] kinds of tongues [languages]..." (I Corinthians 12:8-10).

Paul said, "There are *diversities* of gifts, but the same Spirit" (verse 4).

Clearly, some had superior gifts of the Spirit, such as wisdom, knowledge, or faith. Others had gifts of inspired preaching. Others the gift of healing, and perhaps another the gift of discernment of spirits. Still another had the gift of tongues, or speaking in other, known, intelligible *languages*. Paul shows NOT ALL of them possessed *all* the gifts! "Have *all* the gifts of healing? Do *all* speak with tongues? Do *all* interpret?" (I Corinthians 12:30).

God says, "By ONE SPIRIT are we all baptized into *one body*..." (I Corinthians 12:13). He says, "*Repent*, and be baptized every one of you

for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38)! Write for the free booklet *Why Should You REPENT?* and learn what repentance *is*; what you do when you repent—how you *know* you have repented.

WHEN we repent, and are baptized, God promises to give us His Holy Spirit. The *proof* of the Holy Spirit is said to be "LOVE, JOY, PEACE, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance..." (Galatians 5:22).

Must You "Speak in Tongues"?

Jesus said, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the Kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Luke 13:28).

But Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—NONE of them, ever "spoke in tongues"! Jesus said, "all the prophets" shall be in His Kingdom—but NONE of them ever spoke in "tongues"!

DAVID is prophesied to be the future KING OF ISRAEL in Christ's one thousand year reign here on this earth! See Jeremiah 30:9. But King David, a "man after God's own heart" never spoke one word in "tongues"!

Now, let's review what we have learned:

1) The *first time in all history* anyone spoke with "other languages" as a divine miracle from God; *communicating*, intelligibly, to those of a foreign, different language as a result of a *spiritual gift* was when the *apostles* spoke of the *resurrection of Christ* on the day of Pentecost!

2) The miracle was in *both* the speaking and the hearing.

3) The *sound* they heard came *from heaven*, and not from the throats of men and women!

4) From that time onward, even though there were several instances of God granting the gift of "tongues" when *Gentiles* would receive His Holy Spirit, the miracle was in the *speaking ONLY*, and was not a *double* miracle, but would have required a *translator* unless there had been those present who understood the language being spoken.

5) "Tongues-speaking" is a divinely-given spiritual GIFT, having nothing to do with one's natural abilities.

6) It is listed eighth among the spiritual gifts; meaning that the spiritual gifts of wisdom, knowledge, faith, discernment of spirits and *healing* are more to be desired!

7) Yet, "more excellent" than "all these" (I Corinthians 13) according to your Bible, is to be filled with the *love* of God as defined in the "love chapter."

8) Clearly, "speaking in languages" is a TOOL OF EVANGELISM, and is listed as a "sign to the *unbeliever*"!

9) Paul said he would rather speak five words, and be *understood*, than exercise the spiritual gift of "tongues" if no one understood what he said!

10) Paul ordered those who had the spiritual gift of "tongues" to *refrain* from using that gift unless there was an *interpreter* present!

11) "Speaking in tongues" is NOT the *only evidence* of having God's Holy Spirit!

12) John the Baptist, said by Jesus Christ to have been one of the greatest men to have ever lived, and a man who came in the "power and spirit of Elijah," *never spoke in tongues*, yet will be IN God's Kingdom!

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; all the prophets, King David, Moses, Elijah and many, many others (see Hebrews 11) will be *in God's Kingdom* yet NONE ever spoke with "tongues."

The real "fruit" of the Holy Spirit is LOVE and it is *far more important* to manifest the *love of God* (I John 5:3) in your daily life than it is to have one of the spiritual gifts, no matter which one it may be!

It is sad that many thousands, seeking for a "deeper" or more "fulfilling" religious *experience* have allowed themselves to be *blinded* by a *cheap imitation* called the "charismatic movement." They seek a "spiritual high," and believe that the most important manifestation of God's Holy Spirit is exercising what they call "speaking in unknown tongues."

True to the prediction of Jesus Christ, the MANY are being deceived!

I have spoken with individuals who were counseled to just "let their minds go" and think of "their word," which they would be encouraged to begin to *repeat*, endlessly, over and over again! This is merely a form of *self-hypnosis*, and, in my opinion, DANGEROUS, for it may invite "spiritual participation" from unwanted, and dangerous quarters!

Surely, such people are *sincere*. But sincerity, remember, is not the test of TRUTH! You have read the *truth* about "speaking with tongues" in this booklet. May God give you the grace and humility to accept it. □