

(cont.) Scriptures, why would we need the gift of tongues? If we are made complete by Scriptures, what need of there is the gift of tongues? The answer is clear: there is no need for this gift.

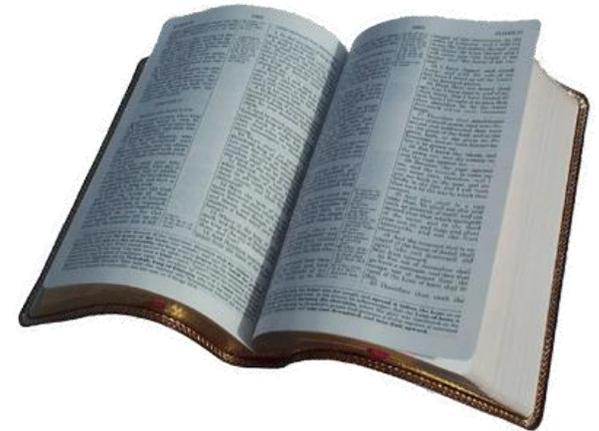
Paul told the Corinthians these things beforehand. In 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 he says "love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away". Of course, that which is perfect is the Scriptures; indeed, the same term describes what the Scriptures accomplish within the man of God, perfection. Here is a direct statement by an apostle that the gift of tongues is going to cease.

Modern speaking in tongues may be demonic: If we are to understand that modern speaking in tongues is not from Scriptures, that it contradicts scriptures, and it is in fact a worldly or carnal practice, another frightening possibility emerges. "The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie" (2 Thessalonians 2:9-11). We are told that deception will come through power, signs and wonders performed by the working of Satan. All of this is because there are those who do not love the word (manifested as the Scriptures, the Word of God) will be sent a strong delusion.

If we know that the Scriptures reveal that modern speaking in tongues is not the same as the early Christian gift of the Holy Spirit; if we know that Scriptures reveal that a spiritual gift cannot be used to verify our salvation, and if we know Scriptures reveal that these gifts were meant to end when the New Testament was completed, then it would follow that anyone who practices modern speaking in tongues does so in opposition to the truth; therefore, they have a distinct and demonstrable lack of love for the truth. It is these that we are told will be deluded by the workings of Satan by signs. Scriptures reveal that he disguises himself as an "angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14). We are told that we must consider all gifts and messages as potentially counterfeit (Galatians 1:8-9, 1 John 4:1). Yet too many accept speaking in tongues without that important test, and may be misled by Satan himself.

We do not practice speaking in tongues. Indeed, we fear such, knowing it is not from God.

Why We Don't Speak in Tongues



SUNSET CHURCH OF CHRIST
WWW.SUNSETCHURCHOFCHRIST.NET
503-726-1847

Speaking in tongues seems to be a fast growing aspect of religion today. Before the 1900s, almost no one claimed to speak in tongues in the manner that many see today. Since 1901 (the beginning of the modern Pentecostal movement), many churches have begun to claim that speaking in tongues is a major part of their spiritual life; indeed, some churches claim that speaking in tongues is a necessary sign of salvation (contrary to the teaching of the Bible in 1 Cor. 12:7-11, 29-30). Today, *speaking in tongues* refers to speaking in an unintelligible muttering that is not a language known in the world.

Why is it that we do not speak in tongues, and believe that no one else does either?

Modern speaking in tongues is unscriptural:

Speaking in tongues was introduced for the first time in Acts 2. There we read the following: *“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance”* (Acts 2:4). This statement makes it clear that speaking in tongues was speaking in a foreign language. If it is not clear here, it is clear subsequently: *“they were amazed and astonished, saying, ‘Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born’”* (Acts 2:7-8). When we see tongues again mentioned in Acts 10:46-47, we are told that this is the same phenomenon as in Acts 2. These are the only two examples of speaking in tongues in the Scriptures, and they both reveal that speaking in tongues means speaking in foreign languages. Even when

Paul instructs the church on how to properly use these gifts in worship in 1 Corinthians 14, it still reveals that these gifts are foreign languages.

Early writers after the end of the first century also confirm that this was the nature of speaking in tongues. Irenaeus (115-202) records this to be the case from his knowledge of the time. Cyril of Alexandria (c. 400AD) did not claim to have direct understanding, but tells us that the common interpretation of speaking in tongues in the New Testament was speaking in foreign languages. Indeed, until the 18th century, speaking in tongues was commonly understood as such; it is only a modern American movement that defines speaking in tongues as speaking a language not known to men. Therefore, modern speaking in tongues is a practice not known to the Scriptures. It is unscriptural (Revelation 22:18-19).

What about 1 Corinthians 13:1? Some point to Paul’s statement *“though I speak in the tongues of angels”* as a testimony of the ability of one to speak in languages that belong to angels, and not men (which is what many claim when speaking in unintelligible utterances). However, most fail to read on where Paul also compares spiritual knowledge with *“knowing ALL mysteries”* and faith with *“removing mountains”*, both things which clearly are not literal experiences. In other words, Paul’s statements are hyperbole, an exaggeration of the example to make a point. Paul’s point was that without love, even an extreme (and non-existent) manifestation of a gift was

meaningless (1 Corinthians 13:1-3). It is a sin to take Scripture out of context for our own justification (2 Peter 1:20-21).

Modern speaking in tongues is unnecessary:

The miraculous spiritual gifts of the first century were given with one purpose: to confirm the message being preached by the Apostles. *“How will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will”* (Hebrews 2:3-4; also Mark 16:20, Acts 2:22, Romans 15:18-19, 1 Corinthians 2:4, etc.). The miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, of which tongues is one, were given to demonstrate that those who spoke did so by the will of God. Yet the New Testament writers made it clear that their time to speak the message was finite; in their lifetimes it would be completed, and these gifts would no longer be needed. Peter said at the end of his life that *“His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of”* Jesus (2 Peter 1:3). Jude said that our faith has been *“once and for all handed down”* (Jude 3). Perhaps most effectively Paul said, at the end of his life, that *“all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work”* (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Paul’s clear statement left no room for anything else to be needed. In other words, if we are thoroughly equipped with the (over)