

8 Reasons for You to Speak in Tongues

If a person were to ask, “Why speak in tongues?” couldn’t we also ask, “Why pray?”

The Word of God shows a definite value in praying with an unknown tongue. Jesus tells us that “it is necessary always to pray” (Luke 18:1, MEV). Later, in speaking of prayer, Paul mentions two types of praying. There is praying with the understanding, when our minds guide the prayer in asking petitions from God.

Then there is praying in an unknown tongue, in which case the Holy Spirit guides the prayer in utterances unknown to the human mind. Paul tells us, “I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the understanding” (1 Cor. 14:15, MEV). Both kinds of prayer are important, but praying in the Spirit will often be more efficacious in accomplishing the will of God.

The value of praying in the Spirit is emphasized by Paul who clarifies that the Holy Spirit “helps us in our weaknesses, for we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us” (Rom. 8:26, MEV). Since we do not know what to pray for, the Holy Spirit Himself helps us know what to pray for.

He makes intercession according to the will of God. There we have the two-fold privilege of the baptized believer—we can pray with our own understanding, or we can allow the Holy Spirit to guide the prayer according to His own will.

The last mention of tongues in scripture is Jude 20 where it says not to stop. After Jude we have the Revelation of Jesus Christ to St. John the Divine, but it is not discussed there. The command to continue speaking in tongues in Jude was given in AD 70, 37 years after the church was established on the day

of Pentecost. So if tongues ceased, where is the historical line drawn in scripture where it says "stop?"

The New Testament era continues from the Revelation of Jesus Christ onward, and it is not over until Jesus returns. The Second Coming is the event at which the apostle Paul said that prophecy and tongues will cease (1 Cor. 13:8).

In AD 54, Paul commands the Church to speak in tongues in Eph. 6:18, 21 years after the day of Pentecost, showing continuance as Jude shows 16 years later. When one says "Tongues was only for the establishment of the Church," we can reply, "Not 21 or 37 years after it was established."

If we can say that Jesus was a "lunatic, liar or the Lord," for claiming to be God, certainly we can say that pastors who decry tongues are "lunatics, liars or loutish" for denying that this present age is the New Testament era.

Any Bible scholar—liberal, evangelical or fundamentalist—will tell you that the New Testament era remains from the day of Pentecost to the Second Coming. But unlike standards of centuries ago when all pastors were Bible scholars, today many pastors decry scholarship and know little about it. Because we are in the New Testament era, every teaching, exhortation and command in the New Testament is relevant for the church today. Many pastors have "thrown scholarship under the bus" and teach false doctrine.

So, what is the value of speaking with tongues? Speaking in tongues is in the Bible for a reason. God will hold each of us responsible to answer whether our own lives have been lived in accordance with the Word of God. Speaking in tongues, sometimes referred to as praying in the Spirit (the terms can be used interchangeably), is a form of prayer.

In this prayer, a Christian yields completely to the Holy Spirit in worshipping Christ and receives from the Spirit a supernatural language. Speaking in tongues is a way of praying

which frees the Spirit to operate within the speaker.

Speaking in tongues also carries responsibility. When most people think of glossolalia, or tongue speaking or the language of the Holy Spirit, they have a tendency to ask what the purposes might be for such a supernatural manifestation. The specific biblical purposes for such a language are many. Harold Horton, in his book *The Gifts of the Spirit*, page 31, presents eight scriptural purposes for speaking with tongues:

1. It is the scriptural evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4, 19:6)
2. It is a means for men to speak supernaturally to God (I Cor. 14:2)
3. It is a way for believers to magnify God (Acts 10:46)
4. It is a means for men to edify themselves (I Cor. 14:4)
5. It is a way for our spirits as distinct from our understandings to pray (I Cor. 14:14)
6. It is part of the gift of interpretation of tongues that edifies the church (I Cor. 14:12, 13, 26)
7. It is a sign to them that do not believe (I Cor. 14:22)
8. It is one of the gifts divinely appointed for our profit, as a manifestation of the Spirit (I Cor. 12:7, Acts 2:4).

The prayer in an unknown tongue does not necessarily have to be an utterance in a language understood by someone present to hear it. Sometimes that happens, and the one hearing the language is spoken to directly by God. But the Word of God is quite explicit that anyone “who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit” (I Cor. 14:2). When we speak with a tongue given us by the Holy Spirit, we are speaking directly to God and He is the only one who needs to understand

us.

Dr. Jonathan Goforth, missionary of the Canadian Presbyterian Church and used mightily of God in Manchuria, wrote, "the Scriptures convey no other meaning than that the Lord Jesus planned that the Holy Spirit should continue among us in as mighty manifestation as at Pentecost."

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