

THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (continued) - "Do all speak with tongues?"

(1 Corinthians 12:30) - The negative answer Paul obviously expects to this question has confused more people on the subject of baptism in the Holy Spirit than perhaps any other issue. The main thesis of today's lesson is simply this - not all the references to **speaking in tongues** in the Scriptures describe the same thing. While my labels aren't used in any text, there are two distinct types of tongues in the New Testament. First, there is the **personal sign of tongues given to the Spirit baptized believer that can and should find expression in the ongoing devotional life to build up and edify the one speaking in tongues.** Then, second, there is the **specifically named gift of tongues**, which is to always be exercised in connection with the **gift of interpretation**. The purpose of this gift is the **edification of the entire church Body as they are assembled for corporate worship**. If these distinctions are kept in mind I think you will see them manifested consistently this way in the Scriptures. The terms I'm going to use, again, not taken from the Scriptures, are **personal tongues** (to describe the experience of tongues at Spirit baptism and in personal prayer) and **congregational tongues** (describing the **gift** of tongues from 1 Corinthians 12 and 14) used in the corporate gatherings of believers with the gift of interpretation of tongues.

- 1) **PERSONAL TONGUES - all spoke in tongues simultaneously - Acts 2:1-4, 10:44-46, 19:1-7 -** "[2:1-4] When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. [2] And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. [3] And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. [4] And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance....." [10:44-46]....[44] "While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. [45] And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. [46] For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God.....[19:1-7]...."And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. [2] And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." [3] And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." [4] And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." [5] On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. [6] And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. [7] There were about twelve men in all."

This is a strong evidence for the argument that Luke considered speaking in tongues as the **initial physical evidence** (not the **only** evidence) of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. In each case where tongues is specifically mentioned Luke is careful to make clear **no one was left out**.

CONGREGATIONAL TONGUES - One person at a time is to speak - 1 Corinthians 14:26-27 - "What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. [27] If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret."

- 2) **PERSONAL TONGUES - No mention is made that tongues need to be interpreted - Acts 10:44-47, Acts 19:1-7 -** "[10:44-47] While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. [45] And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. [46] For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, [47] "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"....[19:1-7]...."And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. [2] And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." [3] And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." [4] And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." [5] On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. [6] And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. [7] There were about twelve men in all."

The emphasis is on the **active Presence of the Spirit manifesting Himself**. He had come and indeed baptized each one. The benefit was to the **individual baptized**. A miracle was on each one's lips in an unforgettable manner.

CONGREGATIONAL TONGUES - The gift of interpretation is required - 1 Corinthians 14:27-28 - "If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. [28] But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God."

No ministry to the **Body** takes place until the **content of the speaking is made clear** to the rest of the Church. This kind of instruction was never given in **any** of the passages in Acts where the Holy Spirit was poured out because the **purpose** of those events was totally different.

- 3) **PERSONAL TONGUES - tongues are spoken for personal edification - 1 Corinthians 14:4-5 -** "The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. [5] Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up."

Paul stresses that, **unless interpreted**, the speaker in tongues edifies only himself. Paul does not say that this is wrong. Indeed, **he wished for more speaking in tongues** (14:5). He spoke in tongues more than anyone else (14:18). Yet he clearly recognized that this was not at all helpful to the rest of the church. The thrust of the whole fourteenth chapter is that **this is selfish and inadequate in the worship service**. One must strive to edify the Body. Hence, the superiority of prophecy.

CONGREGATIONAL TONGUES - The clear purpose of congregational tongues is the edifying of the whole church body - 1 Corinthians 14:12-13 - "So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church. [13] Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret." Like all the other gifts, the goal is the selfless, loving attitude of 1 Corinthians 13.

- 4) **PERSONAL TONGUES - The baptism in the Holy Spirit, evidenced by speaking in tongues, is for all believers - Acts 2:1-4 -** "When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. [2] And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. [3] And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. [4] And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance."

Note Luke's deliberate repetition of that word "*all*." We will look at this in more detail in future study. For now, simply notice that whenever Luke writes of somebody being baptized in the Holy Spirit, whether tongues is mentioned or not, ***he is able to tell that they were baptized immediately.*** Like it or not, there are absolutely no exceptions to this rule in Scripture. Both the one filled with the Spirit and, even more significantly, those who ***saw*** someone baptized with the Spirit knew the event had taken place. Whatever else may be questioned, in every case mentioned in the Scriptures Spirit baptism was both ***time specific*** and ***observable***.

CONGREGATIONAL TONGUES - Paul teaches that the gift of tongues, for congregational ministry, is not available to everyone - 1 Corinthians 12:30 - "Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?" Like the rest of the gifts, it is given to those whom the Spirit Himself chooses, when He chooses (see **1 Corinthians 12:7-11**).

- 5) **PERSONAL TONGUES - The giver is the Father through the Son - Acts 2:32-33** - "[32] This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. [33] Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing."

CONGREGATIONAL TONGUES - Paul teaches that the giver of spiritual gifts is the Holy Spirit, Himself - 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 - "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. [8] To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, [9] to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, [10] to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. [11] All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills."

CONCLUDING NOTE: This division of tongues between ***universal availability*** and ***more limited access for ministry*** fits in perfectly with the pattern of how ***all the spiritual gifts work***. Scriptures teach that all Christians should give. All should show mercy. All should help others. All should learn to serve. ***Yet the Bible also teaches that there are special ministry gifts in each of these areas (Romans 12:3-8)***. In other words, all Christians should be involved in each of these areas even though some people will be specially gifted by the Spirit Himself