

## Speaking In Tongues

It will not be long until our Pentecostal friends come to Lufkin for their annual Bible camp. One of the key doctrines that Pentecostals believe is the ability to speak in tongues, which they refer to as "glossolalia" (from Greek *glossa* meaning "tongue or language" and *lalia* meaning "to talk"). They claim that these unintelligible utterances are proofs of Holy Spirit baptism. But are they really?

In Acts 2:8, the people remarked that they heard the apostles in their own tongue. To reinforce this point, vss. 9-12 list 15 different nations of people who heard the gospel, not in an unintelligible utterance, but in an understandable language! So "glossolalia" cannot be unintelligible. In order for it to mimic the New Testament, it must be to where someone can understand. Paul wrote, *"Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful"* (1 Corinthians 14:13-14). Tongue speaking did no one any good if it was unintelligible!

But Paul also wrote in 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 that spiritual gifts (including tongue-speaking) would be done away. The context shows that Paul was discussing the end of the manifestations which were used for the confirmation of God's word (cf. Mark 16:17-20; Hebrews 2:1-4). When the word was fully revealed, there was no further need of miraculous gifts (including speaking in tongues). Pentecostals are behind the times, for they attempt to do something which God said is finished! No one can miraculously speak in an unknown tongue today. Those gifts are gone, but the word of God abides forever!

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