

TONGUES AND HEALING ARE NOT GIFTS FOR TODAY

By Rev. Dr. Jerry Schmoyer jerry@schmoyer.net
<http://www.mainstreetbaptist.org/> - <http://india.mainstreetbaptist.org/>

MIRACLES & HEALING

given as proof the person is from God, like Jesus' miracles
100% totally instantly healed always, not dependent on faith
Today GOD still heals,
but no one can heal everyone anytime like Jesus did

TONGUES: speaking in a known foreign language which
speaker didn't know (Telegu for me)

INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES:
understanding unknown language (English)

PURPOSE:

- To advance gospel quickly (show who had God's approval)
Now watch person's life see God work, no time then
- To show the person is from God and has His power
- As a sign of judgment on the Jews (Isaiah & Jeremiah say this)

PENTECOST: tongues, fire, wind

= to have it today must have all 3 but don't
Then 3,000 salved, but no tongues, fire or wind for them
Only 4 places in Acts, 1 in 1 Corinthians

Acts 2 START of church, show Holy Spirit came

JESUS came glory, stars, angels then stayed w/out it

HOLY SPIRIT came glory, fire, wind, then stayed w/out it Acts 8
start of half Jews & half Gentile church, same group

Acts 10 start of all Gentile church in the land, same group

Acts 19 Start of Gentile church out of the land, same group

All these were to show the same Spirit with all of them

They were all the same group, not Jewish or Gentile ch

CORINTH = only church where tongues is mentioned,
most carnal church in NT

Rule of interpretation: written FOR us but not TO us

Interpret as original recipients would interpret it

*sign of judgment on Jews for weak bel who need 'proof'

*Paul tells them to not seek tongues (I Cor 12:11)

*Paul tells them it is the least of all gifts (I Cor 14:1-5)

-it is self-centered – pride and disunity often result

-it focuses on emotions, feelings as proof

-it can become a substitute for growth

-not meant to be proof of salvation

*it is temporary and will be stilled (I Cor 13:8)

Need for it as a sign of judgment ended in 70 AD

Judgment came, Jeru destroyed, so no sign of J

Not mentioned in rest of NT or by early church

Not mentioned as a qualification pastor or leader

Never used by Jesus

DOES GOD WANT US TO SPEAK IN TONGUES TODAY?

BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT, SECOND BLESSING, TONGUES & SUCH MATTERS What a land-mine this subject is! It gets so divisive. I'm sure God hates to see that among His children. I don't write this to be divisive, but God does require each of us to come to our own conclusions on this matter, based on the Bible. I don't try to explain how or why others feel led as they do, I don't in any way judge or condemn them, I only know how God is leading me from His Word. I have thoroughly studied this whole issue with as open a heart as possible, even wishing there were some higher form of spirituality and victory that would take me to a higher plane. Still, I feel totally convinced God is showing me through His Word that these things are not for me nor the people I shepherd. What is happening in Pentecostal and Charismatic circles I do not know. I only know how He leads me.

The Bible teaches that each believer is **filled with the Holy Spirit** at the moment of salvation (I Cor 10:1ff; 12:3; 6:19; Eph. 4:5; Rom. 5:5). One cannot be saved without the Holy Spirit indwelling them (John 7:37-39; 14:16-17; I Cor 6:19-20). From there on it is not a matter of getting more of the Holy Spirit but of the Holy Spirit getting more of us! As we totally submit and live a holy life He fills and works through us.

Then what about Acts 2, 8, 10 and 19, when the Holy Spirit came on those who were already believers? **Acts 2** is a one-time, non-repeatable experience (not even repeated in Acts 8, 10 or 19). Just like the Second Person of the Trinity made a unique, one-time entrance into the world through a virgin in a stable, so the Third Person made His entrance in a unique, one-time way. When Jesus came back to earth after the resurrection to the apostles, Paul or John on Patmos, He never repeated the virgin-in-a-stable entrance. Acts 2, also, is non-repeatable.

Acts 2 is a transition, from Old Testament law when the Holy Spirit only indwelt some believers some times, to New Testament grace, when the Holy Spirit indwells all believers for their whole life. The apostles had already accepted Jesus' claims and were saved in the old dispensation, then when the new dispensation started and the Spirit came they naturally would be the first to receive Him in that way. That is non-repeatable, too. In **Acts 8** we see this same truth applied to half Jews and half Gentiles, in **Acts 10** to Gentiles in Palestine, and in **Acts 19** to Gentiles outside of Palestine. They were similar to Acts 2 to show that Jews and Gentiles were now equal in the same Body, that the same thing happened to each. Each one showed the changeover from Old Testament law to New Testament grace. There had to be a definite time of change, showing the transfer had been made and those believers accepted. Still, what happened was different enough to show that it wasn't Acts 2 repeated again. Those were the only times anything even resembling Acts 2 happened in Acts, and it only happened once for each new group as the gospel spread from Jerusalem. All others received the Holy Spirit immediately at salvation.

Tongues is not proof of Spirit baptism. Many received the Holy Spirit but not tongues: 3,000 on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38-41), early church believers (Acts 4:31), Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17), Paul (Acts 9:17-18), John the Baptist (Luke 1:15-16), Jesus (Lk. 3:21-22; 4:1,14,18,21) and many others (Acts 4:8,31; 6:5; 7:55; 11:24; 13:9,52). Speaking in tongues is never mentioned in the leadership qualities in Titus or I Timothy. The Bible makes it clear that obedience is the proof of the Holy Spirit's indwelling, not tongues (Eph 5:18f).

Tongues in Acts and Corinth were the same. The same Greek word ('glossa' meaning 'tongue, to speak, language') is always used of known foreign languages and is used in both Acts (2:6-11, etc) and Corinth (I Cor 14:21; 12:10). In Acts is it obvious that the listeners heard known languages spoken by those who had no previous knowledge of the language. There is no indication that what Corinth experienced was different. It is only the church at Corinth that is mentioned as using tongues, and then many corrections were needed because it was a very carnal church (I Cor. 3:1-3).

The purpose of tongues was to show Jews that God's judgment was on them. They were to spread God's message to Gentiles but failed. God would show He was judging them for that by bringing His word to them by Gentiles in Gentile languages. This was prophesied in Isa. 28:9-12; 33:19f; Deut 28:49; and Jer 5:15. Paul said tongues fulfilled those prophecies (I Cor 14:21-22). When the Jews didn't heed this sign and repent, God's judgment came upon them in 70 AD when Jerusalem was destroyed. After 70 AD there is no instance of tongues being used in the early church. Signs are placed before what they are to mark, not after! Paul said (I Cor. 13:8-12) that tongues "will be stilled." The Greek word, 'pauo,' is in the middle voice; they will stop by themselves and not start again. History records only a very few, very isolated, very minor outbreak of tongues from Acts to the present. These groups were often heretical in some or all of their other beliefs. Obviously tongues did stop. There is nothing to indicate that they would ever begin again, for their purpose has been fulfilled. When Joel 2 talks about the Holy Spirit coming back after the Tribulation, there is no mention of tongues!

Then what about those with the gift of interpretation? First, the Greek word for this refers to someone who interprets known languages, like from Spanish to German. The use of foreign languages was to show God's judgment to the Jews present. The content of the message was God's good news, which the Jews should have been spreading. Since speaking in an unknown language would mean nothing to Gentiles present, Paul said there had to be an interpreter present when the gift was used (I Cor 14:26-28). This was necessary for the weak and immature Corinthian believers (14:20-22)

who were ignorant of God's truth (12:13). It was to be kept to a minimum (14:6-12) because it was an inferior gift (I Cor. 14:4). Paul himself only used his ability to speak in unknown languages in Jewish synagogues, not Jewish services (14:39).

Applying these criteria to tongues today (known foreign language, showing God's judgment on the Jews, used only with Jews present, sees as a lesser/minor gift whose use was to be kept to a minimum, etc.) shows that what is happening today is different from what happened back then.

Tongues are not a heavenly language. The Greek word makes it clear they are a KNOWN language (Acts 2:6-11; I Cor 14:21; 12:10). This is different than the 'groanings' of Romans 8:26 for those are clearly said to be unutterable (not able to be spoken). The "tongues of angels" (I Cor. 13:1) is a hyperbole (overemphasis to make a point) like "faith to move mountains." Besides, when angels spoke in the Bible, it was always in the known language of those to whom they were speaking.

Tongues are not a private prayer language. All spiritual gifts are given for the sake of others, not the one having the gift (I Cor 12:7, 12f; 14:19,27), that's why an interpreter had to always be present in Corinth (I Cor 14:26-28). Every time the gift of tongues was given in the Bible it was given to a group, not an individual. It was always used in a group, too, no instance of private use is recorded. The tongue is to be controlled by the speaker, not beyond his control (I Cor. 14:28-33). Plus, tongues were to be a sign to unbelievers, not believers (I Cor 14:22). Jesus Himself warned about praying words we don't understand (Mt 6:7). Paul said he always understood what he said when he prayed, even in tongues (I Cor 14:15). When asked how to pray Jesus gave the Lord's Prayer, not tongues.

Dangers of speaking in tongues today. Paul warns about Satan's ability to counterfeit this (I Cor 12:2-3) as he has in other religions and cults today. Tongues is said to be an inferior gift because it is self-centered (I Cor 14:4) and leads to emphasis being put on emotions which can lead people astray (II Cor 6:11-12; Rom 16:17-18). We are told to pray with understanding (I Cor 14:13-17) and control our spiritual gift (I Cor 14:28-40). God arbitrarily chooses which gifts to give to whom (I Cor 12:7,11,18,28). We are told to not seek any particular gift (I Cor 12:31; 14:1-4). Tongues speaking can become a substitute for spirituality (I Cor 14:26-28). Worse of all, it can produce a false security by those who put faith in it as proof that God loves and accepts them. Most who practice tongues-speaking do not believe in eternal security of salvation, so their speaking in tongues becomes their proof of acceptance by God. Our faith must be in Jesus' work on the cross, not in our ability to speak in 'tongues.' Those without the gift can feel pressured to fit in with the rest of the group.

IS IT GOD'S WILL FOR EVERYONE TO BE HEALED TODAY?

There are those today who believe that Jesus not only paid for sin on the cross, but that He also paid for our sickness. They say that each is received by faith, if you have enough faith to receive it. Loss of faith, then, causes the loss of these benefits of faith. They claim some are especially gifted in healing and can heal those who come to them. They say God did miracles in the Bible and he is still a miracle-working God today.

What about this? Is this true? This is not just one peripheral issue, but stands very central in our salvation and Christian life. Is God's sovereignty or man's free will the final and ultimate deciding factor? It must be God's sovereignty. The motive for living for Jesus should not be fear of losing our salvation. The goal of living for Jesus should not be a problem free life. Pain and suffering isn't to be faced by whipping up enough 'faith' so that God removes it (or living with the feelings of failure and guilt if it isn't removed and we believe that is our fault by not having enough faith). What about these claims of 'faith healers'? What does the Bible say?

IS THE GIFT OF HEALING FOR TODAY? While it's true that Jesus and the Apostles healed, it was done as a sign to authenticate that they were from God (Mt 12:39). This was God's way having people listen to them instead of all the counterfeits around. When they were fully authenticated, there was no longer any reason for the sign. In AD 35 all were healed but by AD 60 some were not (Epaphroditus, Paul's thorn in the flesh). Then by AD 67 very few were being healed (Trophimus was left at Miletus sick, Timothy's stomach was unhealed, etc.). Jerusalem, the scene of many early

miracles, had not one miracle done in it after Stephen was stoned. The people had the evidence but rejected it. James, the oldest book in the Bible, says that if someone is sick we are to pray for them (James 5:14).

SHOULD WE SEE MIRACLES TODAY LIKE IN BIBLE TIMES? Actually if you list all the miracles in the Bible you will find almost all of them fit three time periods. They aren't evenly spread out throughout history but cluster in the times of Moses/Joshua, Elijah/Elisha and Jesus/apostles. In each of these times a new mess had developed so God sent a new message through a new messenger whom He authenticated by miracles ("signs"). One more time of miracles is coming, called the Tribulation.

IS FAITH A PREREQUISITE FOR HEALING? Jesus didn't make faith a requirement for healing. Many that He healed didn't have faith. The impotent man at the pool didn't even know who He was. The man with the withered hand and the man with dropsy were healed as a sign to religious leaders who were present, they didn't ask to be healed. The cripple that Peter and Paul healed outside the temple didn't exercise any faith. Of course the demoniacs who were delivered and those brought back from the dead didn't exercise faith. Then there are others who had strong faith but weren't healed: Stephen, Paul, Timothy, Job, David, Elisha, etc.

IS 'HEALING' TODAY THE SAME AS IN BIBLE TIMES? Today's 'healers' must meet the same characteristics of Jesus and the apostles to claim they are doing what was done then. Jesus and the apostles healed with a word or touch wherever and whenever. There was no special place or time, no chants or music, no gimmicks, nothing. Do today's faith healers walk down the hall in a hospital and empty every room? That's how Jesus and Peter did it. Also, Bible miracles were done instantly, not gradually or slowly. There was no healing to 'claim' or lose. Healing was then done totally, not partially, and it was never lost. Everyone was healed. There was no screening done. 100% of every one, no matter the need, was healed. Organic diseases were healed: limbs grew back instantly, strong enough to walk on, eyes were open, leprosy instantly gone and healthy flesh grown. Then, too, the dead were raised. Today's faith healing doesn't nearly meet these characteristics.

DOES GOD NOT HEAL? Yes, a sovereign God can always heal. He is always able to heal, but He is not always willing. Healing isn't guaranteed. Healing isn't based on our having enough faith. Miracles by Jesus and the apostles were done as a sign to authenticate the One who could heal an unseen soul. God can and does heal, but He doesn't gift others to do it, nor does He say that is the recommended norm for His people.

WHAT ARE WE TO DO WHEN SICK? When we are sick its good to first make sure it isn't for sin or disobedience. If there is sin that God is using the sickness to point out, confess it and God will forgive and then use that illness for good (Romans 8:28). It's fine to pray, asking God to heal if that is His will. We are to submit to His will, not demand He do what we want. Ask Him to use the pain and suffering for His glory (that we and others can see His greatness through His provision and peace) and our growth(make us trust Him more and become more like Jesus). Use the best available resources: diet, rest, exercise and medical help. Realize that all healing does ultimately come from God. Leave the results to His will, though.

Granted, this whole subject of faith and healing can be a confusing and guilt-producing area. Specific verses can be found to seemingly support most any view. However an overview of the Bible and it's teaching about these things definitely seems to substantiate the above view of healing. Always remember, our faith must be in Jesus. HE is the object of our faith, never a human person or group. Put faith in Jesus, not faith in your faith! HE is the one we are to look to and glorify. Always keep your eyes on Him. Trust and serve Him no matter what.