

Lesson 17

Why is it Necessary to Speak in Tongues?

Introduction:

This topic has become a common issue with other believers who contest that Speaking in Tongues is not necessary or is not required for salvation. This lesson is focused on providing Biblical foundation on the validity of speaking in tongues.

You will deal with at least two types of believers who question the necessity of speaking in tongues:

1. **The Simple Believers:** Those who believe in God but do not possess a strong knowledge of the Bible and base their view on what appears to be strange and uncommon to them. These are also the ones who may label us as a cult.
2. **The Indoctrinated:** Believers who claim to study the Bible but confuse the initial sign of speaking in tongues when one is filled with the Holy Ghost (Book of Acts) with the gift of tongues, one of the nine gifts of the spirit (1 Corinthians 12-14).

You will need to address each type of believer differently. However, if you have a mixed group or you don't know what type of believers they are, just start with the first Bible Study (for the SIMPLE Believers) and then go from there, as needed.

Bible Study for the SIMPLE Believers:

Introduction: This helps to set the right tone and foundation for your Bible Study.

- Express that you love God and that you choose to obey what is written in the Word of God/Bible.
- State that the Word of God teaches us about the importance and purpose of speaking in tongues. And that you plan to cover those teachings in your Bible Study.

NOTES

This Bible Study is very basic wherein a new convert would be able to teach it. And the more advanced teachers can add to it.

Make sure that you have a Bible available for them to read the verses.

- Admit to them that the experience seemed very strange for you at first time because it was supernatural!

Thus, it was not intended to feel like a “normal” human experience. And share that God desires for us to speak in tongues because it is a real way for us to connect with Him supernaturally. And since this experience is so wonderful and life-changing - you want to share it with everyone you love!

1. **The Bible records believers speaking in other tongues.**

- a) **On the Day of Pentecost** (Acts 2:1-4) - **Jesus’ disciples and other believers** (120, including Mary) spoke in tongues.

Acts 2:1-4

*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ²And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. ³And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. ⁴**And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.***

Explain the verses and connect it to the next thought:

The disciples were instructed by the Lord Jesus to wait for the promise of the Holy Ghost and so they prayed until they were filled with the Holy Ghost, as ALL of them spoke in another tongue or a new language that they have never learned. They were the very first ones to be filled with God’s Spirit. And then after that, they started preaching about Jesus to others and thousands of other souls received the Holy Ghost by speaking in other tongues.

- b) **Cornelius** and his Household (Acts 10:42-46)

Here’s a good example of Peter sharing Jesus to others, as he preached to a man named **Cornelius**.

- Cornelius was a God-fearing and religious man but God told Cornelius that there was something more than he needed to hear and do.
- So Peter started preaching to him and his household about Jesus and before he was even done talking, Cornelius and his household started speaking in tongues!

Acts 10:42-46

⁴²And he (Jesus) commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. ⁴³To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. ⁴⁴While Peter yet spake these words, **the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.** ⁴⁵And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also **was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.** ⁴⁶**For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.**

Cornelius was the first Gentile or non-Jew to receive the Holy Ghost and speak in other tongues.

c) The Ephesians (Acts 19:1-2)

Then here's an interesting situation that you can probably relate to since these were believers who were not familiar with the Holy Ghost!

Acts 19:1-2

¹And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, ²He said unto them, **Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.**

- Paul also asked them how they were baptized and they said they were baptized unto John the Baptist's baptism.
- Then Paul explained to them that they needed to be re-baptized in the name of Jesus and so that's what they did.

- Then after they were baptized, Paul laid his hands on them AND they all were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues!

Acts 19:6

*⁶And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the **Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.***

We have just read three powerful examples in the Bible of various believers receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, as they spoke in tongues. Therefore, now we can say that the experience of “speaking in tongues” is actually in the Bible, *don't you agree?*

2. The Lord Jesus taught about **our NEED to receive the promise of the Holy Spirit.**

John 3:5–8

*⁵Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.** ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and **that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.** ⁷Marvel not that I said unto thee, **Ye must be born again.** ⁸**The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.***

These verses help me to understand **TWO THINGS:**

- 1) That I need to be born of the Spirit **so that I can be SAVED, or be able to enter into the kingdom of God.** (*expound on this, as needed*)
- 2) That **there is a SOUND** associated with the experience of being born of the Spirit.

And the next point will tell you more about this SOUND ...

3. The Bible teaches that **Speaking in Tongues was God's chosen SIGN** when a soul is **born of the Spirit** or is filled with the Holy Ghost.

Isaiah 28:11

*For with stammering lips and **another tongue**
Will he speak to this people.*

Mark 16:16–17

*¹⁶ He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. ¹⁷ And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; **they shall speak with new tongues;***

1 Corinthians 14:39

*Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and **forbid not to speak with tongues.***

Having the tangible sign of speaking in tongues confirms that the Spirit of God is within us, which is very important for our salvation. But I want to share with you other valuable things that the Bible teaches us about speaking in tongues.

4. There are **OTHER PURPOSES** accomplished when we speak in other tongues.

It gives us rest and refreshing:

Isaiah 28:11–12

*¹¹ For with stammering lips and **another tongue** Will he speak to this people. ¹² To whom he said, **This is the rest** wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; And **this is the refreshing:** yet they would not hear.*

It edifies us:

Jude 20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

It helps us to pray for our self and for others:

Romans 8:26-27

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷ And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

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Other versions to provide more clarity on the context of Rom 8:26:

AMPC:

So too the [Holy] Spirit comes to our aid and bears us up in our weakness; for we do not know what prayer to offer nor how to offer it worthily as we ought, but the Spirit Himself goes to meet our supplication and pleads in our behalf with unspeakable yearnings and groanings too deep for utterance.

TPT (Passion Translation)
And in a similar way, the Holy Spirit takes hold of us in our human frailty to empower us in our weakness. For example, at times we don't even know how to pray, or know the best things to ask for. But the Holy Spirit rises up within us to super-intercede on our behalf, pleading to God with emotional sighs too deep for words.

5. The Bible states that the Holy Ghost was not only available for the first century church but that it is still available for us to receive TODAY!

Acts 2:38b –40

*... and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. ³⁹ For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. ⁴⁰ And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, **Save yourselves** from this untoward generation.*

WHO can have RECEIVE the gift of the Holy Ghost and experience speaking in other tongues?

Those that OBEY His word.

Acts 5:32

“And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.”

Those that respond to God’s call by ASKING Him to fill them.

Luke 11:13b

“How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?”

All people regardless of race, nationality, social class, age or gender.

Joel 2:28-29 (Acts 2:16-17)

²⁸ And it shall come to pass afterward, That I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions: ²⁹ And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids. In those days will I pour out my spirit.

6. **Share with them how you received the Holy Ghost and let them know that they can receive it too!**

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TESTIMONY Sample:

I raised my hands to God as I wanted to receive His Spirit. Then I opened my mouth to pray and worship Him. The minister guided me and prayed for me to receive the Spirit of God as he put his hand on my forehead. Then all of a sudden, I just started speaking in words or syllables that I did not understand but I felt His presence while it was all happening and it was so powerful!

Bible Study for the Indoctrinated:

Their belief is that **Speaking in Tongues is optional for Christians and is not required for Salvation based on 1 Corinthians 12.**

1 Corinthians 12:30³⁰ *Have all the gifts of healing? **do all speak with tongues?** do all interpret?*

ASK: *Do you have another verse or two to support your interpretation that tongues are optional?*

In this Bible Study, I am going to show you several verses that prove that **Speaking in Tongues** was part of Salvation and was thus, not optional!

1. Jews on the Day of Pentecost - Acts 2:4

BACKGROUND (Acts 1 – 2:1-3):

The Lord appeared to His disciples after His resurrection and before He ascended and gave them final instructions for them to wait for the promise of the Holy Ghost. And so they prayed until God filled them all with His Spirit.

Acts 2:4 *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

- This shows us that when they were filled with the Holy Ghost, that they began to speak in other tongues.

2. Cornelius and his Household – Acts 10:44-48

These verses tell us an interesting account on what happened while Peter was still preaching to Cornelius:

Acts 10:44–48⁴⁴ *While Peter yet spake these words, **the Holy Ghost fell on all them** which heard the word.*⁴⁵ *And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.*⁴⁶ ***For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.***

- It is clearly stated here that they knew that the group had received the gift of the Holy Ghost when they heard them speak in tongues.

NOTES

This topic was already covered in Lesson 16 so this Bible Study will present the same foundational points but it is a more focused version since it excludes the topic of water baptism.

If you are addressing BOTH areas (water baptism and speaking in tongues) – use Lesson 16. But if you are addressing mainly the topic of tongues – use this lesson.

3. The Ephesians – Acts 19:6

Paul was in Ephesus and found some believers who were baptized unto John's baptism. He instructed them to be re-baptized in the name of Jesus then afterwards, Paul prayed for them to receive the Holy Ghost.

Acts 19:6 *And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.*

- For the third time, speaking in tongues is linked to receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost.

What Do These Biblical Examples Agree Upon?

That Speaking in Tongues was God's chosen SIGN when a believer is filled with the Holy Spirit.

Other Verses to support that statement:

Isaiah 28:11 *For with stammering lips and **another tongue** Will he speak to this people.*

Mark 16:16b–17 *but he that believeth not shall be damned. ¹⁷And these **signs shall follow them that believe;** In my name shall they cast out devils; **they shall speak with new tongues;***

John 3:8 *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou **hearest the sound** thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: **so is every one that is born of the Spirit.***

Biblical Evidence that the infilling of the Holy Spirit is Necessary for Salvation

John 3:5–7 ⁵*Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit,** he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and **that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.** ⁷Marvel not that I said unto thee, **Ye must be born again.***

- **You can NOT enter Heaven without it! Being born of the Spirit was NOT optional to God!**

Ephesians 1:13b–14

*in whom also after that ye believed, ye were **sealed with that holy Spirit of promise**, ¹⁴ Which is the **earnest of our inheritance** until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*

- **The Holy Ghost is our seal or earnest or security deposit that we will inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.**

Rom 8:9b,11: *Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his ... But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead **dwell in you**, he that raised up Christ from the dead **shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.***

- **You must have the Holy Ghost in order to be resurrected!**

BIBLICAL ANALYSIS:

So if these verses validate (1) the need to receive the Holy Ghost for our Salvation, and (2) that the initial sign of receiving the Holy Ghost is to speak in other tongues, then what about **1 Cor. 12:30**?

*Have all the gifts of healing? **do all speak with tongues?**
do all interpret?*

What was this verse really referring to? We need to know since we cannot exclude any verses from the Bible when interpreting doctrine and since the Bible cannot contradict itself.

The good news is that there is no contradiction in the Bible! Because **1 Cor. 12:30** is **NOT referring to the SAME type of tongues** that we speak when we first received the Holy Ghost, as shown in the examples from the Book of Acts. But it is pertaining to a **different type of tongue** that has a completely **different purpose**.

1 Cor. 12:30 is referring to **one of the Nine Gifts of the Spirit**, the *gift of tongues*, which is **different** from **Speaking in Other Tongues** when one receives (or is filled with) His Spirit.

How the Gift of Tongues (in 1 Cor. 12) is DIFFERENT from Speaking in Other Tongues (in Acts):

First of all, it is important for us to acknowledge that these two types of tongues are referenced from **two separate divisions** of the New Testament. And as you read the introduction of the Book of Acts, and the address of every epistle, you will see that these two divisions are not focused on the same group of people.

The Book of Acts and the Book of Corinthians focus on **TWO DIFFERENT TYPES OF PEOPLE:**

- The **Book of Acts** is a recording of the history of the Church, how **sinners** were saved.
- **1 Corinthians 12** is an epistle or a letter that was written by the Apostle Paul to the Church of Corinth. This also means that the Church members of Corinth have already been filled with the Holy Ghost.
 - **Therefore, the focus, teaching or application of TONGUES would be different for these two different groups: the Church members and the unsaved souls.**

These two types of tongues are different since they serve **TWO DIFFERENT PURPOSES:**

- 1 Corinthians 12 is a letter written to the Church of Corinth that teaches about the NINE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT and the **Gift of Tongues** (or *Divers Kinds of Tongues* or *Unknown Tongue* in KJV) is one of the nine gifts. And the purpose of these gifts is to **EDIFY the Church** (1 Cor. 14:12).
- The purpose of Speaking in Other Tongues as one prays since he is filled with the Spirit, is to **EDIFY ourselves**. Jude 20: *But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,*
- As the new converts spoke in tongues in the Book of Acts, it was never referred to as a gift to edify a group/others but it was always presented as a “personal” experience that they needed to have for themselves.

These two types of tongues are different because they **DO NOT OPERATE THE SAME WAY:**

The *Gift of Tongues* are governed by **RULES** while *Speaking in Other Tongues* do not need any rules:

Rules for the Gift of Tongues = 1 Cor. 14:27 – 28

- When the *gift of tongues* is in operation, **there can be no more than three separate messages in tongues.**
- After the third message in tongues, they need to be silent and wait for the **interpretation of tongues.**
- When the believer, who is filled with the Holy Ghost speaks in tongues (in private or public), **there is no limitation to how many times he can speak in tongues.** In fact, Paul encourages us to pray in tongues a lot (1 Cor. 14:18).
- When we pray in tongues at Church, we don't need to take turns but we can all pray together at the same time, to worship God or to edify ourselves.
- **There is no interpretation required after we speak in other tongues,** as it is a form of our personal prayer to God. When we pray in the Spirit to edify ourselves, God does not require for us to understand what the Spirit is praying through us, although we may feel a witness in our spirit.
- You will not find any example of an interpretation required in Acts 2,10, 19, after these souls spoke in tongues when they were filled with the Holy Ghost.

These two types of tongues are different in regard to **SALVATION:**

- In 1 Cor. 12:30, Paul was implying that not everyone is used in the same gift, that some may have the gift of healing or the gift of tongues and others may not. And that's acceptable to God because the possession of a particular **spiritual gift** is **NOT a salvation issue.**
- However, the **infilling of the Holy Ghost** is a **requirement for our salvation** and **speaking in tongues is the initial and tangible sign** that proves that one has been filled with the Spirit of God, as we read in the Book of Acts.

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As they receive the revelation of the these two types of tongues, and possess the desire to receive the infilling of the Holy Ghost, **offer to pray for them** to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and they will speak in new tongues!