

nation in the generation of people that lived during the time of Christ and shortly thereafter, and tongues was never seen in their day, i.e. they had ceased!

### D. “Forbid not to speak with tongues” 14:39

- Paul’s admonition here is not to prohibit foreign brethren from participating in your services if they abide by the principles of God guiding the worship service (1 Cor 14).
- Thessalonica had already forbidden tongues (foreigners speaking in the service) because of the problems involved, and because of tongues’ abuse when understood and practiced as in mystery religions as when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians.

### E. Montanus 150 AD

- **BACKGROUND** – Formerly a priest in the Cybele-Attis Mystery Religion, then later he accepted the Lord supposedly.
- **Priscilla and Maximilla** – Two married women that Montanus convinced to divorce their husbands and be his two high priestesses. While he rolled around on the floor in ecstasy, they interpreted what it meant.
- The Christian churches of his day identified him and his movement as heresy, and the act of ecstasy was the same as demon possession, and not of God.

**OBSERVATION:** Where in the Bible is there one example of God taking over, possessing, or “controlling” a believer such as the tongues experience? There isn’t. But in **Mat. 17:15, the father of demon possessed boy** said that often the demon would take control of his son and throw him (against his will) into the water or into the fire. Doesn’t **Gal 5:23 mention “temperance” which is self-control**, as a fruit of the Holy Spirit? Isn’t self-control the exact opposite of loss of control? Which then is the real HS control?

- Montanus and his group were famous for “novelties”, always coming up with something new (such as rigorous diets where liquids were off limits, or forbidding to marry), in which they used these practices to presume that they were more spiritual than the rest of the Christians which did not follow their follies.
- After years of hearing his arguments for his peculiar doctrines and practices, the churches of his day finally decided that he was a heretic, and would not allow him to participate in the Lord’s Supper with them. Montanus went out and hanged himself, and shortly thereafter Maximilla also.
- One division of his group, CataPhrygians, held that God was one in person, and Son, Father, and Spirit were all the same person, same as the Oneness Pentecostal movement. (Montanus baptized in name of Father, Son, and Montanus.)
- **OBSERVATION:** Except for the heretic Montanus, there is no speaking of tongues (ecstasies) after 1 Corinthians in mainstream Christianity until the **Irvingites** in late 1800’s. This is why the Pentecostals invited the doctrine of the “**latter rain**”, to explain why the history of the Christian church is void of any kind of tongues except speaking in foreign languages which usually are learned in a language school to preach the word to other language groups.
- **THE faithful manifestation of the Holy Spirit is a holy, and devout life!**

## The Problem of Tongues

By David R Cox © 2003

**INTRODUCTION:** Are Tongues a great problem in the church today or is it a part of the Christian life that Christians and churches like you and I are missing out on? Let’s study tongues first of all assuming that the Pentecostal and Charismatic people have “rediscovered” this biblical truth, and examine it in the light of Scripture.

### I. What are Tongues?

#### A. Pentecostal Definition of Tongues

Tongues for the Pentecostals is simply the following:

- (1) A Christian desires and yields to be filled with the Holy Spirit.
- (2) He opens his body and spirit to be filled with the Holy Spirit.
- (3) The Holy Spirit comes in at his invitation and fills him, taking over his body.
- (4) At this point he loses control of his tongue, & begins to speak in tongues.
- (5) He can also possibly lose consciousness of what is happening, and even fall on the ground and roll around, or crawl around making animal noises.

A woman pastor in the early years of the Pentecostal movement was preaching in her church in California when she began to speak in tongues, and did so for three days, and when she came out of it, she did not know three days had passed.

- KEY #1 – Holy Spirit must be invited in by the person. **Rom 8:9**
- KEY #2 – The person loses control of at least his tongue, if not also his entire body, and possibly even his consciousness. **1 Cor 14:32**
- KEY #3 – It is a wholly supernatural experience, the Holy Spirit controls the individual’s body, and the individual is not in control of his own body.

#### B. Biblical definition of Tongues.

- **PRINCIPLE OF INTERPRETATING THE BIBLE:** When there are two passages that speak of an issue, one clear and one obscure, always go to the clear passage of Scripture first, interpret that and draw the conclusions that you can from it. Once you have done so, those conclusions always carry more weight than anything deduced or supposed from the unclear passage of Scripture. (1 Cor 13:1 – angel = “messenger” spirit or human)

What are the clear passages of Scripture dealing with tongues? Acts 2, 1 Cor 14.

##### 1) Acts 2

**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. **5** And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. **6** Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. **7** And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? **8** And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? **9** Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia,

and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, **10** Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, **11** Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.  
(15 distinct languages)

**QUESTION: Were tongues known or unknown languages here? KNOWN. Were tongues a language of angels (unknown to men) or were they the same languages that these people were speaking from their childhood? (KNOWN LANGUAGES).**

**QUESTION: What was the central purpose of tongues speaking here?** “speak the wonderful works of God” **Acts 2:11**

## 2) 1 Corinthians 14

<sup>KJV</sup> **1 Corinthians 14:2** For he that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth *him*; **howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.** (He is communicating a truth of Scripture verbally)

**14:10** There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them *is* without signification. **11** Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh *shall be* a barbarian unto me. (What is the context of tongues then, worldly languages-communication)

**14:14** For if I pray in an *unknown* tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. **15** What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. **16** Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?

**QUESTION: Can this logically be talking about speaking in a foreign language? YES**

- **Can people say a pray in a foreign language without understanding it?** Yes Roman Catholics have done this for years by having memorized prayers in Latin.
- **Can people sing in a foreign language without understanding it?** Yes. Many Operas today are in foreign languages that the singers have no understanding of that language. They have to have somebody translate it to them before they can put the emphasis where it should be placed.

**QUESTION: If tongues were ecstatic speech (not a language but just sounds without any real meaning), then can you translate this into English?** No. You would be making up whatever you say the person is saying.

**CONCLUSION:** Biblical Tongues were never ecstatic speech, but always were foreign languages known by somebody present at that time they were being spoken.

**CONCLUSION:** If the entire point of Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 14 is that everything done in the church MUST EDIFY the entire church body present, then we

the Mystery Religions extensively used women to do just as the modern Pentecostal Movement does. The religion of Apollo, centered around the Oracle of Delphi, and used women as leaders, prophets, speakers, and teachers.

## 3) Excessive preoccupation with demons and spirits.

The Mystery Religions did not see demons or spirits as a bad or evil thing, but they constantly sought how to control and work with these “spirits” to achieve their goals.

## 4) “Ecstasies”

The word was coined by the mystery religions. “**Ecstasy**” comes from two Greek words, “ex” meaning out of, or outside, and “stasis” meaning being. When you are in an ecstasy, you are outside of yourself. Also they coined the term “**enthusiasm**”, which comes from the Greek words “en” meaning in, and “theos” meaning God. When their god entered into them, they would lose control and act like the modern Charismatic-Pentecostals act in their services, exactly. This is a manifestation of their “god in them”.

**NOTES:** (1) The first recorded “ecstasy” was in 1117 BC by an Egyptian worshipping the god Amon in Babylonia. (2) The mystery religions were leaders in making these ecstasies a common occurrence among their members, and not just limited to the religion’s leadership.

## 5) Little focus on doctrine, major focus on emotions.

It would be wrong to say that they did not have doctrine and dogma, they did. But the Mystery religions did not put emphasis on the issue of doctrine and dogma but rather treated it lightly. Their emphasis was on a feeling, an experience, an encounter with God.

The worship of these mystery religions was centered around what we would call a modern “show”, just like Hollywood. They would have parades, theaters and plays, purification ceremonies, and “light shows”, all designed to excite the emotions of their members.

## C. “Tongues will cease” – Paul 1 Cor 13:8

Paul clearly said in this passage that tongues will stop. When is the big question. It is a great problem for Pentecostals that tongues occur only in Mark 16, Acts, and 1 Corinthians. The latest mention of tongues is 1 Corinthians written around 59 AD.

- Corinthians was one of the first epistles, and neither Paul, nor any other written of Scripture mentions tongues after this point, not even 2 Corinthians.
- Apparently none of the NT churches except Corinth had the phenomena of tongues.
- Corinth had the most mention of spiritual gifts, and was the least spiritual of all the churches that are mentioned in the Bible. **Gifts do not equal spirituality.**
- Paul’s attitude in 1 Cor. is not “you should be speaking in tongues”, but rather “here are the principles necessary to discern what is of God and what is not of God.”
- Various church fathers (100-400 AD) observed that they could not comment on tongues because it had ceased in the apostolic age, being a last sign for Jewish

### THEREFORE WE HAVE THREE OPTIONS.

- (1) The Holy Spirit caused these people to sin against their will. (IMPOSSIBLE)
- (2) The people sinned by their own will (Definition of tongues precludes this)

### ILLUSTRATION: ACCUSED WHILE UNCONSCIOUS

If you go into the hospital for an operation, and when you wake up from the anesthesia, a police is there to arrest you. You ask, “why?” “Because while unconscious your hand slipped off the operating table, hit the scalpel and cut the surgeon, and he is charging you with assault with a deadly weapon.” How can you be accused of a crime if you are not in control of your own body? YOU CANNOT! Same here, if by definition tongues is losing control, then you cannot be accused of sin by God.

- (3) You misidentified the “spirit” that you invited in, and it was not God’s Holy Spirit. Who was it then? **God** – no, **you** – no, perhaps a **good angel** – angels that cause men to sin are demons, like Lucifer in the garden! **A demon?** – Yes. ONLY POSSIBILITY!

### III. Where did Pentecostal-Charismatic tongues come from if it did not come from the Bible?

Probably the Corinthians brought a lot from their former religions into Christianity.

#### A. Aphrodite – goddess of love

In 400 BC in Corinth, there began a religion around Aphrodite, the goddess of love. This religion had a temple on the hill overseeing Corinth. Every evening the 1000 priestesses would descend upon Corinth, a city of 4,000 people, to “practice their religion”. The “sounding brass and tinkling cymbal” of 1 Cor 13:1 probably refers to this practice which was their “call to worship”. The Roman government in 187 before Christ tried to outlaw it in the Roman Senate, but failed. But nevertheless in 146 before Christ Roman invaded Corinth and carried off as slaves and dispersed all its population.

#### B. Mystery Religions

When some of these people resettled in Corinth, they modified this religion into basically three mystery religions, which at a later date, copied from each other extensively such that they became identical. These are the historical roots of the modern Pentecostal-Charismatic movement.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MYSTERY RELIGIONS

##### 1) Central Doctrine – “to feel good”.

Their entire religion focused on a **divine mystical encounter**. This is a highly emotional, supernatural experience with God which is the basis of being a part of their mystical religion. If you do not have this experience, well, it would be the same to us as not having accepted Jesus Christ as Savior, “you just are not one of us”. This explains why the Pentecostals and Charismatics insist on tongues being a supernatural “encounter with God”, and why they assert that if you do not speak in tongues, you are not saved.

##### 2) Extensive use of women in teaching, leading, and presiding.

The Bible is very clear that women are not to be leaders, teachers, preachers, or preside or rule over groups where men are involved or would be hearers or under these women. But

conclude tongues in 1 Corinthians 14 and Acts were foreigners speaking **THE GOSPEL MESSAGE OR PREACHING THE TRUTHS OF SCRIPTURE** in a foreign language. **If this is true, everything in 1 Cor 14 would still apply today in such cases.** We cannot conclude that it was done by miracle or by previous study of the person. The contexts do admit this fact one way or another. *Gift of teacher, still study in school to exercise his gift.*

## II. THE PROBLEM WITH CHARISMATIC TONGUES

But let’s concede for a moment that the Charismatics are right about their position, practice and teaching about tongues. Let’s examine what they say to see if it agrees with the Bible, because we always have to take the position that **OUR ULTIMATE AUTHORITY IS THE WORD OF GOD**, not our view or what our heart tells us or anything else.

### A. “The Holy Spirit causes tongues, the individual is out of control of his own body.” - Pentecostals

**REVIEW OF PENTECOSTAL DEFINITION:** Tongues are a supernatural event, very emotionally charged, when the Holy Spirit enters into the body of an individual and fills him, and the Holy Spirit, (not the individual) controls that person’s throat and tongue and the Holy Spirit begins to move it to make sounds supernaturally.

Pour cold water on it

### B. Paul’s rules for speaking in tongues (1 Cor. 14).

#### 1) 14:3 “edification, exhortation, and comfort”

Everything done in the local church service is to be done with the end purpose of edifying, exhorting, and comforting (rebuking sin and reinforcing righteousness) of the entire church.

**14:26** How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

**14:31** For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

#### 2) Self-control and the Spirit of God.

**14:32** And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

**OBSERVATION:** In biblical tongues speaking, the person speaking in tongues never loses control of his own spirit. In fact, the Bible emphatically declares to us as a rule or principal to go by, that God’s true prophets will never lose control of themselves.

**14:28** But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

**14:30** If *any thing* be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

**Paul is giving them principles to separate what is of God, and what is not! He is not saying, you should all speak in tongues.**

**OBSERVATION:** Both of these passages speak of self-control. What the person that speaks in tongues does, he does under his own self-control of his own body and will. He is not controlled like a puppet or robot by the Holy Spirit.

God's way: command -> our will -> obedience

### 3) One by one, by turns, limited to 3 per service.

**14:27** If any man speak in an *unknown* tongue, *let it be* by two, or at the most by three, and *that* by course; and let one interpret.

**OBSERVATION:** There is never to be more than one person speaking at a time. Always some ONE PERSON "has the floor", and if somebody else wants to speak, he must either wait his turn (self-control) or the person who has the floor must concede the floor to the one who wishes to speak.

**EXCEPTION:** Singing - when we sing, we all say the same thing in unison, and this is the only time there is more than one person speaking at a time, but repeating the same thing.

**OBSERVATION:** Paul obviously equates tongues speaking with the same things as what a "prophet" does when he "prophesies".

**DEFINITION "PROPHET"** – A prophet can prophesy in either or both of two ways: (1) forth telling the truth of God, or (2) foretelling the truth of God. Both can be done without any miracle or immediate inspiration of God. If John repeats what Daniel said, or Peter what Isaiah said, then they are simply referring to a previous place where God spoke.

**NATHAN THE PROPHET** – The prophet's main job is to confront the people with their sin and the truth of God. When Nathan told his parable and King David passed judgment on the wicked one of the story, Nathan's job as prophet was to get David to recognize and repent of his sinful acts. This is prophecy and the ministry of a prophet. At times it does, **BUT IT DOES NOT ALWAYS HAVE TO INVOLVE NEW REVELATION. IT CAN SOMETIMES INVOLVE ONLY REVELATION OF WHAT GOD HAS ALREADY SAID.**

### 4) Absolute necessity of having an interpreter.

**14:28** But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

**OBSERVATION:** Without an interpreter, nobody who speaks in tongues should speak out loud in the church. Always, always biblical tongues are interpreted into the language of the people present. Again, tongues HAS TO BE FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

**SPEAKING IN TONGUES IN MY CLOSET** – If tongues is speaking in a foreign language known to the speaker (his native language), then go ahead and preach to yourself in Latin or Greek in your closet. Anything beyond this (ecstatic speech) is not biblical tongues but something else.

**OBSERVATION: ALWAYS IN CONTROL** – If the tongues speaker will obey the Bible then he will sit down and be quiet if there is no interpreter, and he is always in control of his own body and actions. They are always subject to his will.

### 5) The message of tongues has to be understood, and judged.

**14:29** Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

**OBSERVATION:** Tongues is simply the communication of God's word in another language, probably foreign to some people present in that service (either the speaker or the hearer). Without interpretation of tongues, the congregation cannot understand what is said, nor can they fulfill their biblical duty at the end of the service and either disagree with the unbiblical teaching or say "amen" (so be it) at the end of a biblical message. Tongues is the communication of God's Word, nothing else abides within the biblical restraints.

### 6) Women are always prohibited from public teaching, preaching, and officiating when men are present.

**14:34** Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; *but they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law. **35** And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

**OBSERVATION:** Anytime you see a woman stand before a group of people in which adult men are present to teach, preach, or officiate (preside), that is not biblical. This extends so far as to even prevent women from asking questions in a public service or participate by giving explanations. Some women are so astute they can "teach" or put across their viewpoints by asking certain questions or questions in a certain way.

### 7) God demands order, Satan loves confusion.

**14:40** Let all things be done decently and in order.

**OBSERVATION:** Anytime there is confusion and disorder, God is highly displeased, and God is not in that place. Many Charismatic churches teach their people to all voice prayers under their breaths but aloud, or just pray out loud when they hear somebody praying.

### C. Are charismatic tongues biblical tongues? NO

**OBSERVATION:**

- (1) If something is opposite from the rules and commands of God, then it's sin.
- (2) By definition, Charismatic tongues is losing control of one's own self and body.
- (3) Most Charismatic and Pentecostal tongues speaking breaks one or all of these rules. If they are under the total control of God's Spirit, how can this be? Who sinned?