

THE FALSE GIFT OF TONGUES

by Ray C. Stedman

REFUTED

By Brad Smith

All original text is unaltered and is coloured black. All additional comments are coloured blue. All text boxes are added. All additional scripture is in purple. The additions are added to highlight false and misleading arguments presented in this article by Ray Stedman.

Many of us, I suppose, have had some experience with what is called "fool's gold." You may have picked up a rock that had this shiny substance in it and thought you had found gold. Then you learned that it was fool's gold, a substance called iron sulphite which looks very much like gold and has deceived many into thinking they have found the real thing. But though it looks like gold, and is distributed among the rocks like gold, it does not pass the tests of true gold. If it is put to more than a superficial test one soon discovers that.

Perhaps all of us, at one time or another, have seen a counterfeit bill. The danger of a counterfeit bill lies in its close resemblance to the genuine. Counterfeit money that is badly printed doesn't stay in circulation very long, but if it is accurately printed it can sometimes cause considerable damage to our economic system. The test of a counterfeit bill is simply to compare it with a genuine bill. This is always the test of falsehood. It is impossible to know without a genuine, for otherwise you have no basis for comparison or standard of measurement. Failure to see this is one of the reasons why there is so much confusion today on the subject of glossolalia, the matter of speaking in tongues. We have taken time to discover the characteristics of the genuine gift of tongues in order that we might compare what we hear, and evaluate it as true or false.

There is a widespread manifestation of the phenomenon of glossolalia today and it is essential that we discover whether it is true or false, whether it is genuinely of the Spirit of God, or comes from another source and is a counterfeit gift. The only way that we can possibly know this is to lay it alongside that which is unquestionably true. This is why our previous study examined the true gift of tongues and commented on every reference in the New Testament to tongues, because if you have anywhere the genuine manifestation of tongues it will be Scripture. Therefore, anything that claims to be tongues today but is not like that presented in Scripture is patently false, no matter how sincerely it is offered or how helpful it may appear to be in the life of the individual who professes it. If you will take that statement seriously and carefully review it, I doubt if you can disagree with it. It must serve as the basis for measurement on this issue of tongues. They must be like what we discover in the Scriptures. **If we use the same bible principle as is being promoted up to this point, we need to recognize that there is no direct scriptural warning relating to false tongues. Thus, the whole of this document is built upon a contrived scriptural viewpoint (a false premise).** Now let's review the true gift of tongues that we may lay it alongside what we are seeing today:

1. First, the true gift of tongues is a normal language, spoken somewhere on earth, but not learned by the linguistic processes by which we ordinarily learn languages; yet it is clearly understandable by anyone who would happen to speak that language. It is not some unknown tongue in the sense that it is different from any language spoken on earth. It is spoken somewhere on earth, if it is the true gift of tongues. This rules out all gibberish, stammering, stuttering, or repetitious sounds. And, right at this point, much of what passes for tongues today fails.

I have attended scores of meetings where so-called tongues have been in evidence and very frequently it is an ecstatic, almost hysterical repetition of syllables over and over again. Sometimes it is the same syllable repeated endlessly in a continual jabbering. This is clearly not the Biblical gift of tongues. A meaningless jumble of incoherent syllables is not the true gift of tongues, for the Biblical gift of tongues is a gift of languages, known languages. Now, I recognize, to someone who is not acquainted with a language, it is sometimes difficult to tell the difference between gibberish and language. But no known language consists of the same syllable repeated over and over. And there is no question, if we take the Bible for what it says, that the Biblical gift was a language (*see box).

Unfortunately, there are numerous errors of fact and reasoning on every page.

1. It is falsely claimed that all tongues are languages spoken on earth. **1COR 13:1** Though I speak with the **tongues** of men and of **angels**... Paul makes reference to angelic tongues as well... there are unknown numbers of these languages and dialects (could be millions). It is also worth noting that over a thousand languages are already lost to the world and another 3000 are at risk of vanishing as well (Britannica). Tongues are a sign, but the language is primarily towards God... **1COR 14:2** For he that speaketh in an **unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God**: for no man understandeth *him*; (grasps the full extent of the spoken language). People may understand certain words when tongues are being spoken, but they fail to understand the bigger picture of the dialogue. * I have been to thousands of meetings over 40 years where almost all tongues have been clear and fluent.

2. The second aspect of the true gift was that even if it were a known language, it must consist of praise and thanksgiving to God. It is addressed to God and not to man, for Paul specifically says, "He that speaks in a tongue speaks not to man but to God," {cf, 1 Cor 14:2}. There are never any tongues in Scripture except this. Tongues are never used for preaching, or exhortation, or prediction in the Scriptures. It is invariably praise and thanksgiving to God.

Here again the present manifestation is seen to be largely false, for wherever an interpretation is given it is usually some exhortation addressed to those present. Those of you who heard the recent television broadcast on the subject of glossolalia saw the program introduced by what was evidently a film of a meeting where they were allegedly speaking in tongues. I listened very carefully to that manifestation and to the supposed interpretation which followed, and the interpretation was an exhortation to the people present to receive the gift of speaking in tongues and a description of the blessing that would be theirs if they did. I knew when I heard the interpretation that this was not the true gift of tongues for the true gift is never addressed to man; it is addressed to God, and God does not exhort himself to speak in tongues. The true gift of tongues is praise and thanksgiving for the marvelous works of God, addressed to God. Every manifestation of tongues in the Bible in which the characteristic of it is given to us is always of this type.

3. The third mark of the true gift is that it must be publicly exercised as a sign to unbelievers, for again Paul specifically says that tongues are not a sign for believers but for unbelievers. On the day of Pentecost this is exactly the purpose they fulfilled. Though they were addressed to God, they arrested the attention of the unbelievers who were present in the public place, and became a sign to them. I believe it took place in the temple courts. The crowd regarded it as highly unusual, and a proof that God was at work. **The bible reveals the location and it was not the temple courts!**

It is most remarkable that there is not a single instance or hint in the New Testament of any private use of tongues. **This is a misleading statement and will be addressed shortly. Jesus himself said that signs would follow (accompany) believers... he is the one who said they would speak in tongues.** Every occurrence is in a public place or open meeting. We are hearing today that the primary use of tongues is for private prayer. On the TV program previously mentioned, such a statement was made, and if that is true, then it immediately stamps as counterfeit the manifestation of tongues in our day. All the gifts of the Spirit, we are told (including tongues), were given for the common good. You will find that statement in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians in the 12th chapter. None is to be exercised privately. In fact, if you go through the gifts of the Spirit that are listed there, you can see that their very nature requires they be exercised in some public fashion and are not to be used privately. Therefore, when I hear someone say that he prays privately in tongues, though he may be perfectly sincere and believe he is receiving a wonderful blessing from the Holy Spirit, I know from the Scriptures that he is not receiving the true gift of tongues, for the true gift of tongues was never intended to be privately exercised. Let him who wishes to argue that point produce a single instance from Scripture of such private use of the gift of tongues. Scripture must be the test. **This argument that none of the gifts of the spirit are for personal benefit is foolish and against numerous scriptural promises and principles. One example of personal benefit will be sufficient. Jesus healed people privately as well as publicly... he used the gift of healing. There are numerous examples of the private values of various gifts of the spirit, including tongues. Speaking in tongues edifies the speaker... 1COR 14:4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself... also 5 I would that ye all spake with tongues (that you all edify yourselves), God commands them all to be personally edified. Both these verse make it clear that the arguments used in this document do not reflect a scriptural understanding of God's will. One of the strong arguments supporting tongues as a form of personal prayer can be gleaned from the verse quoted in Romans 8 (see the box on the right). Verse 26 claims that we do not know how to pray as we should. This is an astounding statement when we consider that it was written to experienced Christians. The remedy was to let the spirit do the speaking, because the spirit is better equipped to speak to God. Our own language**

2. It is true that the tongue is spoken to God, however, the interpretation is spoken to men for their edification. **1COR 14:5** I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater *is* he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, **except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.** The content of the tongue is not always praise and thanksgiving as is claimed... it is also for teaching... **v19** Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my **understanding** (includes interpretation), that *by my voice* I might **teach** others also, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue.

3. The scriptures identify two uses for tongues. One is as a sign to unbelievers... **1COR 14:22** Wherefore tongues are for a **sign**, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: Tongues is also listed as a prayer... **14** For if I **pray** in an *unknown* tongue, **my spirit prayeth**, This is the only scripture in the bible that clearly defines what spiritual prayer is!! We are encouraged to use this prayer, often, even always. **EPH 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, ROM 8: 26** Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our **infirmities** (this as all very personal): 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*. It is God's will to do this; personal and public!!

can be seriously lacking because our minds don't understand the depths and potential of God... tongues does the job because it is articulated by God's Spirit.

4. The fourth mark of the true gift of tongues is that it is not to be used in a church meeting unless it is translated, either by natural means, or the exercise of the gift of interpretation. Even then, it must be a language spoken somewhere on earth and an expression of thanksgiving to God. Tongues is never a medium by which the Spirit of God delivers a message to the church. It is always an expression of praise to God through a human voice box in a language spoken somewhere on earth as a foregleam of the day when the effects of evil in the human race will be done away and all men will understand one another again. That was the clear purpose of the gift of tongues.

Now when it is used in church, no more than two or three are to speak in tongues, and each speaking is to be translated. Otherwise no one is to speak in tongues. If there is no translator present, or no one with the gift of interpretation, there must be no tongues. This implies that anyone speaking in tongues should find out first if there is someone present who can translate, before the gift is exercised. If this control were put into practice in present day manifestations of tongues it would quickly eliminate the false from the true. Every true Christian is encouraged to seek for and use the voice gifts of the Holy Spirit in church gatherings. As a point of interest, how many of Ray Stedman's followers and associated churches do any more than criticize a gift that they do not understand? Are their meetings applying these gifts and seeking to use them according to the bible pattern? What is their God given sign to the unbeliever? Paul made it clear that he preached the same doctrine to all churches! **1COR 4:17** For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance **of my ways** which be in Christ, **as I teach every where in every church.**

5. A fifth qualification of the true gift is that women are not permitted to exercise the gift of tongues in the church. Paul says so specifically. **No he doesn't. One of the great difficulties of understanding the bible comes from drawing a conclusion, then trying to make all the scriptures fit an argument, when the basis of the argument is scripturally wrong.**

As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silence in the churches, [it is in the context of the discussion on tongues] **for they are not permitted to speak, but they should be subordinate, as even the law says. {1 Cor 14:33b-34}.** Tongues is not the topic, as is falsely claimed! The last gift mentioned before the request for the women to remain silent is prophecy, not tongues (v29-33... see the scriptures in the box on the right). You can't argue this point both ways, as a little later on, Ray argues that women **can** use the gift of prophecy.

Undoubtedly, women have been asked to remain silent... was it tongues, or was it prophecy, or was it something else that Paul was referring to? Let's look at the context, because the bible answers itself. Take notice what the following verse reveals immediately after women are asked to be silent... **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. The topic is not 'tongues'; the topic is about asking questions (probably out aloud). They are told in the very same verse that these utterances (questions to their husbands... neither tongues nor prophecy), have to be done outside of the meeting. Read it again, the answer is self-explanatory. We don't have the exact details of the problem, but we certainly have a clear outline.

And he also says in this connection, interestingly enough, that

if any one thinks that he [or she] is a prophet or spiritual, he should acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord. {1 Cor 14:37 RSV} It is too bad that these highlighted mistakes will not be identified with the same zeal as is used against those who correctly use tongues in both its forms.

4. The same mistakes are quoted again. The answers are still the same. The second paragraph continues on with the same error that assumes that tongues is a sign only and serves no other purpose. However, the correct protocol of how tongues is to be used at the time of the voice gifts (as opposed to prayer time), is correct. Tongues are not to be used unless a person who uses the gift of interpretation is present. The gifts are limited to a maximum of three tongues and interpretation in any one meeting.

5. These are the particular reference verses for this argument. **1COR 14:29** Let the **prophets** speak two or three, and let the other judge. **30** If *any thing* be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. **31** For ye may all **prophecy** one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. **32** And the spirits of the **prophets** are subject to the prophets. **33** For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. **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. **36** What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? **37** If any man think himself to be a **prophet**, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

That is, this isn't just old crotchety Paul talking, that old bachelor who never understood women anyway! No, this is an inspired apostle speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and writing the mind of the Lord. [Good point when applied with the correct interpretation of scripture.](#)

This is a prohibition that greatly needs to be observed. It is significant that a majority of tongues speakers today are women.

Someone asked me if it was not possible for women to be among the group that spoke on the day of Pentecost. Yes, it is possible. [Mary was there!](#) That was not in the church, that was not a meeting of the church gathering together in the Lord, worshipping God. [This argument makes a clear distinction between the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost \(where many heard people praising God\) and tongues as used in a church meeting. Why doesn't the same observation equally apply, when the use of tongues is identified, firstly as a sign and secondly, identified as a prayer language, in other parts of the bible?](#) That was a public manifestation and, in that, it would be permissible for women to exercise the gift, but in the church Paul says "No." It is shameful, he says. This is the only limitation I know that prohibits women from speaking or exercising any gift in the church. They are allowed to prophesy, i.e., to speak, to talk, to exhort to edification and comfort. Women are not limited in this respect, but, in the matter of the exercise of tongues, they are definitely restrained in the church. [This argument is illogical and serves no purpose whatsoever. What scriptural reason or principle serves as a precedent for this argument? It doesn't even make sense that women can prophesy, etc, but not speak in tongues in a church meeting. As we have seen once again, the arguments are based on false assumptions being presented as sound doctrine.](#)

6. The sixth and last distinction of the true gift is that the gift of tongues is distributed by the sovereign choice of the Spirit and is definitely not intended for everyone. "Do all speak in tongues?" Paul says, {1 Cor 12:30b RSV}. And the implied answer is "No," for the manifestation of the Spirit is given by the Spirit, as he wills. It is the choice of the Spirit as to who speaks in tongues and who does not. [This last sentence is correct. Only those who are anointed by God with the spirit will speak in tongues. They are the true Christians of the New Testament church... all the others are pretenders. ROM 8:9 ...but if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. How do we know when someone has received the Holy Spirit... ACT 10:44-47 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all of them which heard the word. 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 \(how did they know\). For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then answered Peter, can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? This ends the argument that tongues never serves as a sign to prove the anointing of the Spirit. This leads to the next question; is this bible salvation or a separate experience? Lets look at the words which Peter used when referring to the same account in the next chapter. ACT 11:13-15 And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved \(the topic is salvation not optional extras\). And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Tongues was the sign to prove their salvation experience... no amount of denial will change the facts outlined in the complete account of the Gentile conversion. This reveals the true lies that are promoted in this document.](#)

6. Like mathematics, the answers will always be wrong if the mistakes made in previous additions are used in future sums. The confusion over the uses of tongues, have resulted in the false arguments presented in these pages. It is claimed that not everyone will speak in tongues. Let's look at another scripture in the same chapter... **1COR 14:26** How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, **every one** of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, **hath a tongue...** **That's right, everyone has a tongue.** This scripture ends the argument. A new solution to the use and value of tongues needs to be found. This document fails because it builds on false sums.

This immediately gives the lie to all claims of tongues as the unique sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit, or that those who have not spoken in tongues have not been baptized or filled by the Spirit. We hear this so much today and there is much unscriptural confusion on this matter. We are being told that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is an act subsequent to salvation and that it is accompanied by the sign of the speaking in tongues, but none of this is

substantiated in the least degree by the Scriptures. That is an erroneous idea that has no support whatsoever in the text. [You already know better than this false argument... now.](#)

In the first place, the baptism of the Holy Spirit takes place at conversion, unquestionably so. It is that which adds us to the body of Christ, as Paul says in First Corinthians 12:13, and if we are not a part of the body of Christ, we are not Christian. "He that has not the Spirit of God is none of his," {cf, Rom 8:9b KJV}. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not accompanied by any signs at all. It is an unexperienced reality by which the believer's life is made one with the life and being of Jesus Christ. There is no feeling attached to it, or sense of it happening at all. But it happens nevertheless. It is the impartation of the life of Christ to the believer. [Not according to Acts 10 & 11... see notes further on.](#)

Now the filling of the Spirit is quite another matter, and on occasion this matter of tongues is connected in the Scripture with the filling of the Spirit. But isn't it remarkable that there is never any statement that says that tongues is a sign of the filling of the Spirit? On one or two occasions when people were filled by the Spirit, they also spoke in tongues, but the two are not synonymous, nor do they always occur together. We read, for instance, that John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb, but he never spoke in tongues. [We are told why in John 7:37, it was not yet available to the general populace.](#) And it is recorded of him that he did no miracles. There was nothing spectacularly supernatural, if you please. Yet here was a man who, by the statement of Scripture, was filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb. The Lord Jesus was also filled with the Spirit all the days of his ministry, but there is no record that he ever spoke in tongues. This simply has nothing to do with the filling of the Spirit. If it does occur at that time it is a coincidental joining together of the gift of the Spirit with the filling of the Spirit, but the two are not the same. [Both John the Baptist and Jesus Christ were part of the Old Testament dispensation. To try and compare their experience with those born into the New Testament church is ignorant and pointless. The New Testament began at Pentecost and the example was clearly detailed and defined. They spoke in tongues, which resulted in the crowd gathering around them, where surprise turned to inquisitiveness for the observers. Peter expanded what had happened and made it clear that the New Testament era had begun. Tongues was the sign that drew the crowd and no amount of speculating or posturing will change that fact. ACT 2:14-21](#) But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens **I will pour out in those days of my Spirit;** and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, *that* **whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.** [Peter related the above verses to salvation... not optional extras as many are told. Baptism in the Spirit and the infilling of the Spirit are the same event. Ignorance of this fact is part of the reason why so many mistakes have been able to be revealed in this document.](#)

Now I think that it is obvious, as we have gone through this, step by step, comparing of the true gift with the false, laying the present day manifestation alongside of the true, that most, if not all, of the manifestation today is counterfeit! It bears little or no resemblance to the Biblical pattern, and this must be the ground of our testing. **The majority have been proven wrong.**

Immediately when I say that, the question comes to your mind, "Then where does this counterfeit originate? It seems to be such a blessing to people. They seem to get so much out of it. If it doesn't originate with the Spirit, where does it come from?" Before I attempt an answer, let me say, first, that to call a manifestation of tongues counterfeit by no means impugns the sincerity or earnestness of the one who claims to have this gift. He is doubtless quite honest and well intentioned in what he claims. But that doesn't change the fact that he can be, and probably is, deceived on this matter, led astray by his own sense of dedication, by

his own desire to have all that God wants him to have. He is tricked by the flesh into a false thing. Perhaps it is his own deep desire and sense of dedication which has taken away his normal caution and allowed him to become so gullible that he is led into this experience.

Such a thing is not limited only to the matter of tongues. You remember how Peter swore that he would never forsake the Lord and said to Him, "If you can count on any man, Lord, it is I. Others may forsake you but I never will." And he took him aside and began to rebuke him because he was talking about a cross, a crucifixion. Peter said to him, "Lord, be it far from thee. This must not happen to you. Spare yourself, Lord. This is no way for you to talk" {cf, Matt 16:22 KJV}. Peter was perfectly sincere, perfectly honest. He was entirely desirous of doing the right thing and he thought he was doing the right thing. Yet Jesus said that he was being led of Satan. "Get thee behind me Satan. Thou art an offense unto me for thou savourest not the things of God but of men," {Matt 16:23 KJV}. So it is quite possible for Christians to be sincerely mistaken, to be honestly confused, and end up, therefore, sincerely carnal and fleshly. This is true in many other areas besides tongues. These are the wiles of the devil. How he loves to trap us, trick us, deceive us, delude us and let us think we are getting something especially good. He is the one who, when we ask for bread, gives us a stone, or, when we ask for fish, he gives us a snake disguised as a fish. The Lord will not do that for he has clearly outlined in his word what we are to ask for. But the enemy leads us to ask beyond the Word. [False understandings as promoted by this document certainly falls into this category.](#)

Now where does this counterfeit come from? Let me say that the word "carnal" is the best explanation of the origin of the false manifestation of tongues. Incidentally, this is the word that Paul uses to the Corinthians. "You are carnal," he says {cf, 1 Cor 3:3 KJV}. They had all the gifts but they were carnal, fleshly people. They were exercising these gifts in such a way as to misuse them and abuse them and even unconsciously to imitate them in the false and carnal fashion. When we say that a thing is *carnal* we mean that it originates from our Adamic nature, our fleshly minds, i.e., our human nature. In other words, this counterfeit gift of tongues is a purely psychological phenomenon originating from a powerful subconscious desire to possess what seems to be a highly desirable symbol of divine favor. That strong subconscious desire is what does the trick and manifests itself in this false gift of tongues. [The bible does not record one single event of false tongues in the New Testament.](#)

I think this is demonstrably true in that the manifestation of tongues, such as you hear widely demonstrated today, is also found among the cults. The Mormons frequently speak in tongues, and it is found in other religions such as Islam, for instance. Even among those with no particular religious convictions, we sometimes find this phenomenon, this jargon which is called tongues. Obviously, such occurrences are either carnally inspired or the direct activity of demonic powers. [These observations are not spoken about with any expertise on the subject. Many are hearsay and anecdotal... this is not scriptural nor is it wise. Jesus identified this as blasphemy; when someone credited Satan with a blessing from God. In His time it was about healing... on this particular occasion it is tongues.](#)

When the false gift occurs in a church, it invariably becomes a religious status symbol and the power of suggestion soon spreads it abroad throughout the church. When it appears to be a mark of special divine favor, some esoteric experience to which only a privileged few can attain, then it soon creates a very deep subconscious desire for the manifestation of this in other individuals' lives. When that desire becomes strong enough, as it certainly does when there is a group that accepts this as a mark of the Holy Spirit and therefore calms all fears about it, then such desire, burning deep in the heart, bypasses the conscious control of speech in the brain and the subconscious mind takes over the tongue and produces whatever is expected or strongly desired. Psychologists have described this as occurring with people who have no strong religious convictions at all. It is a known psychological phenomenon. [There will be people in all faiths, who corrupt one form of worship or another for a variety of reasons \(tongues included\). The bible does not single tongues out as a topic to fear, nor an act that will be counterfeited, but it does warn us about rejecting God's true signs and powers for false doctrinal reasons... ISA 28:11 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. Read this again and reflect upon](#)

what the true rest in the Spirit comes from. As we have seen earlier in Romans... we don't know how to pray as we should, so the Spirit does the praying in the language God has bestowed upon us... this is also referred to as tongues. **ROM 8: 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 (naturally spoken)**. **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*.

It is an honest experience. I don't imply by this that anyone who experiences this means to deceive. He doesn't. He is quite deceived himself and what he does is done honestly, but nevertheless it is not of the Spirit. That is the point. It is not the true, Biblical gift. Because this is a psychological phenomenon, some people by constitutional make-up are simply unable to respond and this creates a very unhappy situation. There are some wonderful, born again Christians, earnestly desirous of having everything that God wants them to have, wanting to go on with God, who are deceived into thinking that this is a mark of divine favor. They struggle to receive this gift but never get it, and eventually fall into despair. From this there come those terrible divisions that so frequently mark the appearance of tongues phenomenon in the churches today. **The arguments being used in this latter part of this article could be equally applied to the false arguments contained in this document itself. The author of this paper is a well-meaning person wishing to explain something that he is not qualified to do. Thus his on reasoning finds him guilty himself of the very crimes he thinks he is revealing about others. Also, those who repeat these errors become equally guilty of the same sin as well. This is what this document implies to most of those who speak in tongues, so it should similarly apply to those who falsely reject these genuine manifestations.**

I once heard a psychiatrist discuss this. He pointed out that this is a very severe danger and could easily give rise to suicide out of a sense of despair in not being able to rise to the level of accomplishment that others had. **Totally irrelevant to the correct usage of tongues.**

Now this is not the way of faith. This is not the way of the Spirit. The Bible declares that the weakest believer in Jesus Christ has everything that the strongest saint ever had. You are complete in Christ! In Jesus Christ dwells "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" {cf, Col 2:9 KJV}, and "you are complete in him" {cf, Col 2:10 KJV}, no exceptions. Therefore, it is possible for any believer by simply believing what God says, and acting on all that Christ is, to enter into the fullness that God has for him. This is true of any other saint in any other age. It does not depend on tarrying or waiting and pleading or some psychological make-up which either allows or does not allow the manifestation of such a gift. **All Christians have the same Spirit and the same manifestation... they all speak with tongues as has already been established.**

In closing, let me speak briefly about some of the results of this false gift. I have already mentioned one:

1. It is highly divisive. Invariably, where the counterfeit manifestation of tongues appears, the first result is that the church is split right down the middle. People begin to take sides. Those who are psychologically able to enter into the experience become victims of a feeling of superiority. This becomes very evident in the way they talk and act (though they may disguise this or try to subdue the manifestation of it). Those who cannot enter into this experience become resentful, or at least suspicious, and schisms and divisions arise. **This is through ignorance, not tongues.**

A man told me not long ago of a church up in the mountains in which tongues made its appearance and the church was split in a terrible way. One woman had a heart attack as a result of these manifestations. This is a very emotional and divisive thing. I have seen whole denominations torn asunder by this type of manifestation. **The rejection of tongues has been even more divisive and blasphemes the Holy Spirit when criticized falsely.**

2. Furthermore, it is diversionary. By that I mean that it is a trick of the enemy to distract our attention from the true work of God the Spirit, which is the exaltation of Jesus Christ, and get people off on a side track talking about gifts. They are so concerned with the gifts they forget the Giver and forget the outreach of the gospel and the need of hungry hearts around them. [At the heart of the Gospel is Jesus command to be born again. In the flesh we cannot please God.](#) Even though very specious claims are made by the tongues people that this experience results in a greater interest of unsaved people, I have noticed that the interest is always focused on tongues, not upon the Lord, nor upon the gospel. This is a diversionary tactic to get us involved in some secondary thing rather than the primary, the exaltation of Jesus Christ. [This document is equally a divisionary tactic because it promotes false doctrine and faulty reasoning. It actually speaks evil of one of the genuine manifestations of the Spirit and casts suspicion on genuine signs and wonders that come from the will of God.](#)

These two things being true (it is divisive and diversionary), therefore, it also follows that it is devilish. I don't mean that tongues is a manifestation of demon possession. In some religions it may be that. I don't think that is the normal explanation of what we see manifest today. But it is a manifestation of carnal barrenness, which is ultimately of the devil. The Apostle James puts the two wisdoms side by side. He says, "There is that wisdom that comes from above which is peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, [i.e. easy to live with, reasonable] and there is that which is from below which is fleshly, sensual, devilish!" {cf, Jas 3:15-17 KJV}. There are only two sources. It is one or the other. Anything that arises out of the carnal mind, the flesh, the human, Adamic, fallen nature is devilish. It oftentimes has enough novelty about it to capture the imagination of people and fascinate them, even help them in some temporary fashion, but, if somewhere along the line they are not delivered by the Scriptures, or by some helpful counsel on this, eventually, following down this avenue, they run into a blind alley and end up in the wilderness of defeat and barrenness. I have seen it happen many, many times. [Due to numerous errors, the mistakes in this document bring the author under the same judgments he has made upon others.](#)

Now I don't mean to imply by this that everyone who speaks in tongues will be totally defeated in his life. The Spirit of God is ready to correct the manifestations of carnality in our life. He often is able to keep the manifestation of this thing to such a minimum area that only part of the life is affected by it. But if it is false it is not of God, and if it is not of God it is of the enemy. If it is of the enemy then its effect is bound to be blinding, defeating, deadening, and, ultimately, it will bring disaster. Therefore, we must be very careful that everything we see we test according to the Spirit of God. [This document fails the test.](#)

It is the glory of the Spirit to uplift the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The mark of the Spirit-filled church is not a church that talks about the Spirit, it is a church that talks about Christ. [Jesus said 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send \(the Holy Spirit\) receiveth me \(Jesus\); and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me \(God\) JOH 13:20\).](#) Paul said 'now we know no man after the flesh' in Corinthians. We don't receive Christ as a person; we receive Him (the Spirit) that he sends ([Acts 2:33](#))... he hath shed forth this which you **now see and hear** (what did they hear?... they heard them speaking in tongues. It was that sign that drew them to the newly anointed saints in the first place). The mark of the Spirit-filled person is not a person who is concerned and talking continually about the Spirit, but it is a person who is concerned and talking continually about the glory of Jesus Christ. This is the work of the Spirit in our lives. [This is the reason why there is so many mistakes in this document. When there is too much emphasis on Jesus Christ and not enough on the Holy Spirit and God, then mistakes get made and the essence of the New Testament is compromised. The bible puts the same emphasis on the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit... thus the church should have an equal emphasis on all the subjects and topics of the bible church. Jesus himself spoke about tongues... he told his disciples that tongues would follow true believers... MAR 16:17](#)And these signs shall **follow them that believe;** In my name shall they cast out devils; **they shall speak with new tongues;**

When Paul met certain disciples, [he didn't ask them if they believed in Jesus,](#) he asked them if they had received the **Holy Spirit.** Why doesn't this document have the same

understanding as Paul had? Consider these verses, as they are another complete bible account of the salvation experience... **ACT 19:1-6** And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, **Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?** Paul was more interested in raising the topic of the Holy Spirit than Jesus Christ, because without the Spirit you don't know nor understand what Christ represented. And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the **Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues**, and prophesied. When they got to believe in Jesus the correct way... they were filled with the Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues!! Was Paul wrong or divisive to speak these words? He pushed the point on the anointing of the Spirit... something every church should imitate.

The true gift of tongues enhances that. There is no divisiveness that follows. It has a power to draw people together. I am speaking now out of what I read in Scripture, for, as far as I have any recollection or knowledge or ability to judge, I have never myself seen even one manifestation of tongues that I would call the true gift of tongues. I certainly would not take the position that it is impossible for the Holy Spirit to give this gift again today, but I am very certain that if he does, it will be right along the lines and in the pattern outlined and given in the Scriptures. This is the way the Spirit always acts. I am very confident, therefore, that as we test the present-day manifestation we will know, if we are ready to accept the Biblical pattern, whether the thing is true or false. **It is sad that a man who dedicated his life to God, has never met (or correctly identified), any of the millions of faithful followers of God who have been anointed by the Spirit and exercise its life saving powers... initially identified by the God given sign of tongues.**

Original document Ray Stedmen (black print), additional comments Brad Smith.