

Questions of Concern for Charismatics

1. If speaking in tongues is the biblical evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit what is to be said of those who were filled with the Holy Spirit but did not speak in tongues?
 - John the Baptist. *Luke 1:15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. 16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.*
 - Jesus Christ. *Luke 4:1 And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. Luke 4:14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.*
 - The Converts in Samaria. *Acts 8:14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: 15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: 16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) 17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.*
 - Paul. *Acts 9:17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.*
 - Elizabeth. *Luke 1:41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.*
 - Zacharius. *Luke 1:67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied saying, 68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people.*
 - The Twelve Disciples. *Acts 4:31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.*
 - Stephen. *Acts 6:5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch.*
2. If God the Holy Spirit sovereignly assigns every believer their spiritual gift why should everyone be exhorted to speak in tongues?

- *1 Corinthians 12:11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.*
- *1 Corinthians 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 19 And if they were all one member, where were the body? 20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.*

3. For what purpose was the gift of tongues given?

- *1 Corinthians 14:19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. 20 Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. 21 In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord [cf. Isaiah 28:11]. 22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.*

Note. Does this passage not teach that the gift of tongues is a sign to the unbelieving Jewish community that judgment has fallen upon national Israel? How would the unbelieving Jewish community know that God was judging them? One way was that the gospel began to be communicated in Gentile languages.

4. The word “*unknown*” is supplied in the English translation preceding the word “*tongue*”. Since the word “*unknown*” is not found in the Greek text this little word has mislead people in their understanding of “*glossalia*”. There are many who believe in a heavenly language that can be spoken but not known. This is a belief not grounded in Scripture.

- *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.*
- *1 Corinthians 14:4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.*
- *1 Corinthians 14:13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.*
- *1 Corinthians 14:14 For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.*
- *1 Corinthians 14:19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.*
- *1 Corinthians 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.*

Note. In Scripture there is no such thing as an “unknown” tongue. The “tongue” that people heard were known languages as per Acts 2:8-12. “And how hear we every man in our own tongue [language], 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. 12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?”

5. Since the spiritual gift of tongues was being abused when used in the Church of Corinth Paul, led by God the Holy Spirit, regulated its usage.
 - Prayer is to be offered by the one who speaks in tongues that he may have understanding of what was just said. *1 Corinthians 14:13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.*
 - The divine objective of using a spiritual gift in a public assembly should be to edify others and not to please self. *1 Corinthians 14:26 How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, everyone of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.*
 - In any single public worship service those who speak in tongues are to do so in a decent and orderly manner.
 - First one person is to speak and an interpretation given. Then a second person is to speak and an interpretation given. *1 Cor 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. 28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.*
 - No more than three individuals are to speak in total. *1 Corinthians 14: 29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.*
 - At all times a person is to be in total control of his mental facilities. *1 Corinthians 14:32 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.*
 - No woman is to be permitted to speak with tongues in a public assembly. *1 Cor 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.*

Question. Have you ever been in a charismatic church where these Biblical guidelines were honored consistently?

6. One of the distinct characteristics of speaking in tongues is rapid repetition of words and sounds. Since Jesus forbid the empty usage of repetitive words and sounds why is this practice allowed? *“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking” (Matt. 6:7).*
7. A very practical reason not to try to speak in ecstatic utterances and gone it speaking in tongues is makes individuals appear to be mad or crazy.
 - *1 Corinthians 14:23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?*