



*Edify the
Church*

Louie E. Bustle

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DEDICATION

To my lovely wife, Ellen, who has been a wonderful
co-worker with me in building the Kingdom.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Louie E. Bustle has been active in missions for the Church of the Nazarene since 1970. He served in St. Croix, Virgin Islands, for four years. In 1975 he began the work in the Dominican Republic where the district grew to 61 organized congregations in 6 years. He was appointed Regional Director of South America in 1983, and since this time he and his family have lived in Quito, Ecuador. The South America Region grew from 18 to 48 districts, from 349 to 808 organized churches, and from 23,916 to 56,390 members in five years.

Dr. Bustle received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion from Trevecca Nazarene College in 1969. He received his Master of Arts degree in Missions from Nazarene Theological Seminary in 1982. In 1987, Trevecca awarded him the Doctor of Divinity degree.

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FOREWORD

Followers of Christ can only rejoice because of the renewed interest in the person and work of the Holy Spirit in the churches in recent years. Jesus - assured the early disciples of the coming of the Spirit in the fullness, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you" (Luke 24:49). "And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should . . . wait for the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4).

The promise was fulfilled at the first Christian Pentecost celebration (Acts 2). Since that time the Spirit has been available in new and fresh ways to cleanse, empower, and indwell obedient believers in Christ's church. His work is to recall in us the teachings of Jesus (John 14:26) and to exalt the Name of Christ (John 15:26; also 16:13-14).

Unfortunately, there is much confusion throughout Christendom regarding the place and role of the Spirit in the church. The fruit of the Spirit, which manifestations are "the virtues of Christ," is often neglected because of an unbalanced emphasis on the gifts of the Spirit. Particularly is this true with regard to the gift of languages and the interpretation (translation) of languages (I Cor. 14).

It is this last issue that is addressed by Dr. Louie Bustle in this volume. His aim is to highlight the biblical understanding of what some have called "tongues-speaking" and to interpret the practice of "glossolalia" in this light. His exegesis is sound, and his principles of biblical interpretation are reliable.

Dr. Bustle has dealt with this issue at the practical level in his missionary labors in South America, as well as in the Dominican Republic. His adherence to Scripture is commendable and his teachings have been used of the Lord to strengthen the church.

I commend to readers everywhere this study, which seeks to clarify the work of the Spirit as it, relates to a critical area of the contemporary life of the church.

—John A. Knight
General Superintendent Church of the Nazarene

INTRODUCTION

This treatise on tongues is intended to clarify the biblical interpretation of the word "tongues." There is much confusion in the church today about this issue. Many Nazarenes are trying to follow the position of the church, but do not really understand why.

It is my prayer that the Lord will be able to use this book to help the reader understand the subject especially as it is dealt with in Acts and Corinthians. We need to be able to guide the church into a biblical understanding that will lead to unity throughout the church.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

1. The word "tongues" in the Bible means an instrument of speaking or a human language that communicates.
2. The "neo-Pentecostal tongue" is the modern day practice of speaking in meaningless ecstatic utterances which do not constitute communication.
3. "Unknown tongues" are also understood as meaningless ecstatic utterances.
4. The word "unknown," as in the phrase "unknown tongues," does not translate directly from the Greek source but was added later for clarity. It was intended to mean a language of man that was not understood by the hearers.

CHAPTER 1

BASIC ELEMENTS

In the church today there exists a widespread confusion concerning what Pentecostals call the charismatic gift of speaking in "unknown tongues." Many sincere people are wondering what the truth is. On the one hand they fear that they are not receiving all that God wants them to receive. On the other hand, they fear that "tongues" is not of God. Many are in a dilemma because of a lack of understanding.

The neo-Pentecostal movement has spread throughout the world and has crossed denominational lines. It has touched the Roman Catholic Church as well as evangelical churches. The movement is characterized by the widespread practice of speaking in "unknown tongues." It is important to note that not all of the people who have experienced the "gift of neo-Pentecostal tongues" have had a transformation of their lives by Jesus Christ. This is evidenced by the lack of the fruit of the Spirit in their lives.

"The modern day movement of neo-Pentecostal tongues speaking was „ started in 1901 Jay a man named Charles F. Parham in a small Bibb school in Topeka Kansas? The practice of speaking in neo-Pentecostal tongues in the Christian church was not wide-spread. Infrequent instances were recorded among people who were more fanatic or sectarian in their doctrine. Until early 1900, there was no theological foundation drawn from these practices. It is impossible for us to draw upon the history of the church for any kind of historical foundation to support the phenomenon that is happening today. Speaking in tongues has been insignificant throughout the history of the church.

One problem is that many are attempting to interpret the Bible by the neo-pentecostal experience they or others have received. But this is not the proper approach. The reasonable way is to search for an experience because the Bible teaches us to do so. That is the reason we seek id receive Christ through repentance and to be filled with the Holy Spirit. These are Bible experiences that we must seek because they are supported by Scriptural teaching. However, we should not seek an experience of neo-pentecostal tongues speaking because someone else has that experience and try to force the Word to prove that an experience is correct.

In Ephesians 4:14, Paul admonishes the church to be strong and not to be tossed about by every wind of doctrine, He knows that the Church is going to be attacked from every side. This is especially true today. Different sects knock on doors and tell people, "We have the true religion." Sometimes Satan's attacks come from within the church through good people who have been transformed and even sanctified. It may come from people within the church who have not been transformed, but have been confused by the teaching of other people. Sometimes it happens when people have not sought a deeper relationship in Christ. That deeper experience is the empowering of God's Holy Spirit in His sanctifying power.

Some things are very difficult to understand concerning this phenomenon of tongues-speaking in the Bible. Probably there are some things we will never completely understand until we get to heaven. However, every Christian has the ability to understand the instructions Paul gave to the Corinthian church. These instructions are still valid for the church today. When we span the gap of the centuries, words have lost

their original intent. The problem of speaking in tongues that Paul was dealing with has become unclear in this lapse of time.

Fear of the current tongues-speaking movement has led some to the opposite extreme. There are a few pastors who are so opposed to any form of emotional expression in church services that they prohibit hand-dapping during the singing of lively choruses or even special prayer for divine healing. On the other hand, there are pastors who have promoted hand-dapping and other forms of emotional expression until their church has become more like a sports rally than a place of worship. Some have placed more emphasis on healing than on the salvation of lost souls on their way to hell.

The church must find a balance between excessive emotionalism and formalism. A movement of God is needed in churches to bring this balance. Genuine revival, where people are completely obedient to the will of God, has almost become a vacuum in the church today. A balance of emotion is needed where there will be hymns of praise and choruses, which are based, in biblical doctrine. Emotion is not just hand-clapping but rather feeling the presence of God, which may result in tears, raised hands, or an uplifted face. Emotion will possibly lead to testimonies of praise. The church needs times of feeling the glory and the presence of God. This is one of the great problems we have-trying to find the place where the church has real communion with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The church has never been afraid of praying for divine healing, but should find the correct balance of emphasis. We know that Jesus spent a great deal of his time healing, but He also emphasized the other aspects of the gospel. We believe that God can and does heal. However, man does not have the right to tell God whether He should heal or not. We must remember it is God who heals; we only pray the prayer of faith. The very nature of Satan is to deceive the church today. The Bible says he comes as a "mighty, roaring lion, walking up and down upon the earth, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8, KJV). He wants to sow seeds of disunity and divide the church. Many times the church has fallen into Satan's trap and has been used by him to disrupt the plan of God for the world today.

Satan would like us to deviate from God's true plan so we would follow him. At first, it is just a small matter. Then, it becomes larger and larger until he has us in his control.

If we listen attentively to the Holy Spirit, we will not fall into Satan's trap. A serious study of the Word of God will reveal the plan and purpose of God for our lives and for the church. There certainly is enough direction in the Word of God to guide us in this subject of the modern day tongues-speaking phenomenon.

Recently, I received a call from a church leader who informed me that there were problems in his area of the country. We immediately began to pray for divine guidance, asking God to show us how to handle the situation. After much deliberation with the Lord and study of the Word, I arrived in the capital city to find our churches divided and confused. Some of the people were elated over the "new movement" even though they were not sure what was happening. Others were fearful as to where this faction of the church was going. Both still felt a deep commitment to the church.

One of the major problems was that some of the leaders of the district had been seeking a movement of God without guarding against the danger of possibly sacrificing good doctrine and worship practice. Paul warns us in Ephesians 4:14, "We should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine"

(NKJV).

Confusion arose concerning the church's position on certain issues as well as what the Bible really said about them. During this time, there had been a genuine revival among all evangelical groups in this area of the country which had touched many Nazarene churches. Probably 80% or more of what was happening was of God. Testimonies of changed lives were abundant. Healings were witnessed throughout the country. In just a short time, 25,000 people had been converted. There had been some people practicing speaking in neo-Pentecostal tongues although the movement was not emphasizing this.

God's blessings were poured out in many of our churches. In one church on a Wednesday night there was standing room only where a few months before there had been only 15 in Sunday school. There were 30 people at the altar that night seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Most of those people had been converted in the previous two or three months. Several of them gave testimonies of how God had healed them physically.

Four months later at the district assembly, reports showed that more than 800 people had been brought into the fellowship of the church as members. There were more than 900 people in preparation to be members. Just two years before, that district had a net gain of only five members.

This was a true movement of God. One pastor had testified how difficult it was to build the church in his area. However, after the revival started, people were coming to his house asking how they could receive Christ.

The division had come to our churches when some pastors wanted to participate in this movement while other pastors chose not to take part. They were afraid of emotionalism because of the excess of it in some churches.

I had studied and prayed many hours for my message that night when I was to speak to all the pastors of the district. One could almost feel the tension. Satan had done his work well. The biblical bases of the message were holiness and unity. God came in a marvelous way. When the message was finished, we knelt in prayer. Afterwards, the session was opened for questions and testimonies. There was not one question among the pastors from either side. Instead, pastor after pastor stood and said that their questions had been answered and that they knew the direction they needed to go. Truly the power and presence of the Holy Spirit had filled our hearts to overflowing.

Today we also must eliminate the fanaticism that has caused so much division. But we must continue in the movement of the Holy Spirit. The Lord wants to build His church. He wants to give us real revival.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

If the New Testament is read in the light of Acts 1:8, it helps us to better understand what Jesus wants for His church. Before His crucifixion, Jesus had promised His church that He would send the Holy Spirit to them. In Acts 1:8, He promises the believers that He will endue them with power from on high. After that, they would be witnesses to all of the world. The Holy Spirit has always been the greatest force of the church.

This is the reason that Jesus taught His disciples in chapters 14:17 of John concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit. In John 14:16, Jesus says, "... I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever." He told them that the Holy Spirit abides with them and will be in them (John 14:17). In John 14:26, He adds that the Helper, who is the Holy Spirit, will come in the name of Jesus. He will teach them all things. Jesus continues in John 16:7, by telling the disciples it is to their advantage that He go away in order to send the Holy Spirit to them. In John 16:13, Jesus says that the Holy Spirit will guide them into all truth.

In chapter 17, Jesus prayed for the disciples of His day as well as the disciples who would believe on His name. He prays that God would sanctify them in the truth and that they would be in unity. There is no division in the Holy Spirit.

In Luke 24:49 Jesus promises the Holy Spirit to the Christians as He did in Acts 1:8. He tells them that they must wait to receive the promise. After the promised Holy Spirit comes, they will be endued with power from on high. Of course, we know that is exactly what happened in Acts 2. The believers were endued with power from on high, and immediately they became witnesses for Jesus Christ. More than 3,000 people came to know the Lord in one day because of the empowering of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the disciples.

One of the reasons that people seek the modern day gift of tongues-speaking in meaningless ecstatic utterances is because they are not satisfied with their religious experience. Jesus never talked nor taught about the gift of tongues. His emphasis was upon the infilling of the divine presence of His Holy Spirit in the lives of people. If "tongues" had been significant to Jesus, He would not have been completely silent about the subject.

It would be very difficult for anyone to interpret Mark 16:17-18 as an emphasis on speaking in an ecstatic utterance. "And these signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it shall not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." In his book, *Facing the Tongues Issue*, Norman Oke states:

First, note that there are gathered together here X" five distinct powers; casting out devils, speaking in new tongues, handling snakes, drinking poison harmlessly, healing the sick. Simplest logic would tell us that they are a 'bouquet of powers' and one should not be emphasized while the other four are omitted. Either these five are to be applied together, or not at all. And I have yet to hear of any advocate of speaking in tongues

who recommended drinking DDT to prove the power of God.

Second, this passage is not a strong scripture on which to build a major emphasis, because it is of doubtful origin. Scarcely any version of the Bible includes verses 9-20. This is because they are not found in the earliest and best manuscripts.¹

To build a doctrine on this one scripture would be a serious mistake for the Christian church.

Actually if this scripture is authentic, then the fulfillment of these verses is found in Acts 2. Believers did speak with new tongues. But the miracle at Pentecost was the gift of spoken languages understood by groups of people who spoke in different dialects. The gospel of Jesus Christ was communicated to every person in their own language.

Acts 2:6 states that they were bewildered "because everyone heard them speak in his own language" (NKJV). It was not a gift of hearing for the Bible says they were "speaking" in the various languages.

This Pentecostal experience has been interpreted as a reversal of the confusion of languages at the tower of Babel. The Holy Spirit has now come to bring unity instead of division. In Acts 2, the Pentecostal experience was the sign that Christ was sending the disciples to preach to all language groups and to every nation.

Donald Metz in his book, *Speaking In Tongues*, gives a summary of the Pentecostal experience in the book of Acts.

- a. If Pentecost alone is taken as the pattern, then anyone speaking in tongues should speak in a language that could be understood, or at least a language in use and one understood. This would eliminate 'unknown tongues' from consideration at this point.
- b. If Pentecost alone is the pattern, no one should actively seek for the evidence of tongues, for the 120 prayed only for the coming of the Holy Spirit. The speaking in tongues was as much a by-product of their praying and of their expectations as were the sound as of wind and tongues as of fire.
- c. If Pentecost alone is taken as the pattern, speaking in tongues should be a group experience, for they "were all filled...and began to speak with other tongues" (Acts 2:4).
- d. If Pentecost is taken as the pattern, heart purity is the essential, permanent result, rather than speaking in tongues (Acts 15:8-9).
- e. If Pentecost alone is taken as the pattern, an exact reproduction in contemporary experience should also be accompanied by the sound of wind and the tongues as of fire.²

The second place in the Book of Acts where speaking in languages accompanied the infilling of the Holy Spirit was in chapter 10. The disciples had prejudices; they did not want to include the Gentiles, therefore, God gave Peter a vision.

This was actually the Gentile Pentecost where they received the same experience as the Jews did on the day of the Jewish Pentecost. That testimony is given in Acts 15:8-9, "And God, which knows the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as He did unto us, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (KJV).

The third and last experience of speaking in tongues in the Book of Acts is found in Acts 19:6, where Paul's visit to the church at Ephesus is described. In this instance they

also clearly proclaimed the gospel message in a known language. They prophesied. The same author is writing about the same kind of experience that took place during the two previous occasions in Acts.

There are several instances in the Book of Acts where many people were filled with the Holy Spirit but did not speak in foreign languages. In Acts 4:31, there is such an experience. Luke states that they were "all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak the Word of God with boldness" (NKJV). Acts 8:15-17 records the Samaritan Pentecost when believers were filled with the Holy Spirit, but there is no reference to speaking in other languages.

In Acts 9:17:18, we read that Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit, but there is no mention of his speaking in other languages. In this case, there is no need for another language to be spoken. However, Paul truly had his Pentecostal experience at that time.

It is necessary to distinguish between "tongues" and "languages." "Tongues" in the modern day interpretation signifies speaking in meaningless ecstatic utterances, although some people understand this as languages that are unknown to the speaker: The word "languages" means human languages to communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ. In Acts we read that the gospel was communicated through the use of languages. They were definitely human languages. So, in this study, we will be using biblical term translated "tongues" to mean "languages," The Greek word "glossa" is translated "tongues" in many translations of the Bible. Most biblical scholars consider this word to mean the gift of foreign languages.

In the Wesleyan Theological Journal, Charles W. Carter writes:

It must be faced in all honesty from the very outset that the word 'unknown,' in relation to the Bible "gift of tongues," does not occur in the original Greek of the New Testament, nor is it used in the American Standard, or other modern versions. The word 'unknown' occurs only in italics in the King James Version of the New Testament, indicating that it was added by the translators, and that misleadingly, in a futile attempt to clarify the meaning of the word "tongues." Thus, properly speaking there is no "unknown tongue" in the original language of the New Testament. The Greek word glossa, meaning a tongue or a language, or a nation of people distinguished by their language, is consistently used in its various forms throughout the New Testament except where the Greek word dialektous (dialect), meaning conversation, speech, discourse, or language...the tongue or language particular to any people, is employed.³

This same word, glossa, is used in all three places in Acts where they spoke in other languages. It is a divine gift of language that was to be used as an evangelistic tool. In chapter 2, the gift was for the benefit of the proselyte Jews who had come into Jerusalem from many backgrounds and dialects. Actually there are two different words used in chapter 2. In verses 2 and 4, glossa is used, but in verses 6 and 8, dialect is used. In chapter 10, this gift was used to evangelize several hundred soldiers that were there with Cornelius, the centurion. These soldiers had a variety of linguistic backgrounds. This was the Gentile Pentecost, revealing that the gospel was for them also.

Chapter 19 relates the Asian-Gentile Pentecost Ephesus was a great linguistic as

well as religious and cultural center. People from all over the ancient world lived in Ephesus. Since the Gentile believers spoke in different languages at Ephesus, they were able to accomplish their evangelistic task there as well, showing that the gospel was for all the world.

CHAPTER 3

THE CORINTHIAN PROBLEM

The problem of I Corinthians is somewhat different. In the Book of Acts, the gift of language was used to edify the church, but in Corinth it became a divisive problem. Actually, the language problem discussed in I Corinthians arose more than twenty years after the initial gift of languages that occurred at the Jerusalem Pentecost. However, Paul wrote I Corinthians before Luke wrote Acts. I Corinthians was probably written around A.D. 55 or 56, and Acts was written around A.D. 63.

Luke was a very close friend and co-worker of Paul. It seems reasonable Paul would have discussed with Luke the problem in Corinth. Luke may have read the first Corinthian letter even before he wrote Acts. There is no biblical evidence of any difference of opinion between Luke and Paul concerning this issue.

Many people have assumed that I Corinthians is referring to something different than the three accounts in Acts. Even if it were different, the church should not build a doctrine on a text that contradicts the rest of the scriptures. However, when you read this carefully, you will note there is no contradiction between I Corinthians and Acts.

The history of the Corinthian church is not glorious. In the beginning chapters of the book, Paul recounts their conversion from paganism and idol worship. He discusses in depth their many problems. In Chapter 1, he addresses the divisions within the congregation, and in Chapter 3, he discusses their carnality. Later Paul reprimands them for preaching another gospel.

In I Corinthians 4:6, we find that the Corinthians were having a problem understanding what had been written. They had an attitude of superiority, but at the same time they were defiled by immorality. Many in the congregation were living in sin. Amidst all this, the church at Corinth had a deep confusion concerning the gifts that God had given. For believers today the question is, what kind of an example do we want to follow? Do we want to model after a congregation that was carnal and had moral problems?

What was Paul trying to do with this church? What was his purpose in writing this letter? If the Corinthians had followed the rules that Paul established for them, the problem of the gift of languages would have ceased, as it evidently did.

Paul's purpose was to save the church. Diplomatically he tried to help this congregation solve these problems and again plant their feet on a spiritual foundation. He wanted to guide them to a higher level of spiritual thinking. His goal was to establish rules to solve their communication problem so they would always edify the church.

Before we study this gift that has been distorted, let us consider some aspects of speaking in ecstatic utterances which is what many people call the gift of tongues today.

The phenomenon of modern day tongues is not, beneficial to the church of Jesus. The devil has used neo-pentecostal tongues to divide and cause problems as well as divert proper emphasis from a holy, sanctified life. There are many people who have used this phenomenon of a "prayer-language" privately and publicly. Most of them do not follow the biblical guidelines that Paul establishes for the church in I Corinthians. When they interpret "tongues" in I Corinthians to signify speaking in meaningless

ecstatic utterances, a problem arises as to what the Bible really says. People have been erroneously taught that this is a divine gift of God.

While holding a pastor's retreat in Chile, I was teaching during the day, and preaching holiness messages each evening. The third night, a young pastor came forward to pray and was gloriously sanctified. He gave a definite testimony to receiving God's Holy Spirit in cleansing power. The next day, when I had finished the study of the Bible concerning speaking in tongues, the young pastor stood to speak. He said, "I have been using neo-pentecostal tongues as a prayer language for several years. However, after being sanctified last night, and listening to these biblical lessons, I am convinced that what I have been practicing is not biblical. I want you to know that from this point on, I cease to speak in neo-pentecostal tongues." When one truly has been sanctified wholly, there is no need or desire for another kind of experience. The fullness of God's Holy Spirit truly satisfies.

The phenomenon of speaking in "tongues," or ecstatic utterances is not of God. Certainly the devil can counterfeit gifts. But what is this gift? People can fall back into sin and continue to speak in an ecstatic utterance. Is this the proof that we are sanctified? By no means! Does this "gift," as the Pentecostals explain it, help us spiritually? NO!

There are religions in India, Haiti, Brazil, and other countries that have nothing to do with God but have the same kind of tongues-speaking phenomenon. In Haiti, the Voodoo pagan religion practices tongues speaking. The Spiritists in Brazil practice this phenomenon. Real frustration and confusion result when people receive Christ and find the same thing in the evangelical church. Matthew 6:7 records that Jesus hated the babblings of the pagan religions. "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words."

The gift of languages is to communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ. Its purpose is not to confuse people with a false, uncommunicative, ecstatic utterance. It is basic for us to understand the importance of this truth as we read in Acts and in I Corinthians.

Also, as we study I Corinthians, let us recall that the word "glossa" is used in Corinthians in the same manner as it is in the three places in Acts. Remember that it is a word that means languages for communication.

CHAPTER 4

I CORINTHIANS 12 AND 13

We will begin our study of I Corinthians in chapter 12 which concerns itself with spiritual gifts. The word "pneumatikon" is translated "spiritual gifts."¹ However, that is not the best translation. It is really one word, which means "spirituals." A more accurate translation of Paul's expression would be "spiritual matters, or spiritual things."

The Corinthian church was confused concerning these spiritual matters because it had retained many traits of its former life including its religious, moral, and cultural understanding of the gospel. This is one of the reasons that the members were having so many spiritual problems in their individual lives. Paul was concerned that they did not understand true spirituality (I Corinthians 12:1).

In I Corinthians 12:7, we find the purpose of spiritual gifts. The gifts are to edify the Kingdom of God. In verse 4, Paul talks about a variety of gifts. In verse 5, he discusses a variety of ministries, but he confirms that the same Lord is over all of these. There seems to be no serious problem, except in the areas of healings, speaking in different kinds of languages, and Interpretation of languages. Let us discuss these three for just a moment.

1. Concerning healings, the church has always believed that God can divinely heal a person. He has the power to touch and heal the body no matter how serious the disease.

The church should never be afraid of healings. A serious problem in the church today is that some people believe that God has given them the "gift" (singular) of healing. However, the scripture says in verse 9, that there are "gifts" of "healings" (plural for both words). The Bible says it is by the Spirit that these healings take place. God is the one who heals, not man. Man cannot dictate who will be healed. The Bible declares that there are gifts of faith and power for certain cases of sickness. God can heal according to His will and His divine purpose. The Church should encourage people to pray for healings. We are admonished in this throughout the teachings of Jesus as well as in other scriptures throughout the Bible.

I have seen many people healed. It is a historical fact that Jesus healed in Bible times, and He is still healing today. I have also seen many people die who had prayed and believed for their healing. Is it that some people have faith and other people do not? We must remember that we cannot manipulate God. It is His divine will in the over-all picture that is most important. God has particular purposes for each individual. Many times He receives more glory through the death of a believer than through his healing.

A fine Christian gentleman who was only 40 years old had an incurable disease. He was rapidly dying when he attended a young adult retreat. He came forward for special prayer during a healing service. We prayed and asked God to heal him, believing He would do so. When the man stood to testify, he said, "I do not know if God has healed my body, but I do know that He has healed my attitude." About a year later, he died, but during that year, he was a different person because of his changed attitude. God heals in different ways. The correct emphasis needs to be placed on divine healing—for the greatest healing of all is when a person has been healed of a sin-sick condition and is made new in Jesus Christ.

2. Concerning speaking in other languages, we have noted that the same word used in I Corinthians 12 is used in Acts 2 (glossais). It does not mean an ecstatic utterance, but clearly means languages. Again, the purpose of these languages is to communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ.

3. Concerning the interpretation of languages, the same word, "glossais," which means human languages, is used. There was no interpretation on the Day of Pentecost, therefore, the conclusion is drawn that there was a problem concerning the way that they were speaking in the Corinthian church. There was the need of interpretation so that people could understand and the gospel could be communicated. The people were speaking in many foreign languages which the majority did not understand.

Some years ago, my wife and I had the privilege of going to Costa Rica to study the Spanish language for six months so that we could work in the Dominican Republic as missionaries. There were many Pentecostals studying there as well. After completing our studies we went to the Dominican Republic where we pioneered a new area for the church. God did not automatically give us the gift of speaking a new language. He did help us and give us the ability to study and learn Spanish.

There are times when interpretation is very important for communicating the gospel. It was not needed in Acts because the gift of languages was given to the speaker who in turn communicated the gospel to the hearer. Interpretation is still needed today for anyone speaking a foreign language. In I Corinthians 14, Paul emphasizes that foreign languages be interpreted. God is capable of giving a person the gift of interpreting a language that he has never studied. However, most interpreting is done by bilingual persons. Even though a person knows two languages, they may not be able to interpret well. I have been present when people with tremendous ability interpret messages given in a foreign language to the language of the congregation with the true unction of the Holy Spirit.

In verse 14, Paul says that the body is made up of many members; each having function and purpose. Unity is, of course, one of Paul's priorities for the church. Verse 25 tells about the members caring for one another. There should be no division.

In verse 28, Paul discusses the appointments of God concerning the ministries of the church. He lists first, apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers; and then miracles, gifts of healings, helps, administrations, and various kinds of languages. In verses 29 and 30, he explains that not all are apostles, not all are prophets, not all are teachers, not all have the gift of miracles; all do not have the gifts of healings, nor of languages, nor do all interpret. Verse 31 is a subtle admonition to the Corinthian Church that they should desire the greater gifts.

Having discussed all of this, Paul says in the last part of verse 31 that there is a more excellent way, better than all of these gifts. One can have different gifts, however, the most important spiritual quality is to be filled with Holy love as explained in chapter 13. The genuine gifts will follow as God gives them.

We see that chapter 13 is placed between chapters 12 and 14 by design. When Paul talks about a "more excellent way," he is talking about perfect love. This is brought to the heart of man only through the divine power of sanctifying grace as a believer crucifies himself in self-surrender and receives by faith the fullness of God's Holy Spirit in cleansing and purifying power.

This love that Paul proclaims is the highest point of I Corinthians. Paul is attempting

to change their minds from desiring minor gifts to coveting the gift of perfect love. If the Corinthians had had perfect love, they would not have been experiencing the problems concerning spiritual gifts. Their own lack of spirituality had caused them to seek gifts so that they could be better than the rest of the body. Perfect love is the greatest spiritual attribute because it counts others above oneself.

Some have said that in I Corinthians 13:1, Paul is talking about the possibility of a person receiving a gift of languages as angels speak. However, Paul is not saying that at all. He uses the subjunctive mood when he says, "If I could speak." In the subjunctive mood it really means, "if it were possible." He is not even suggesting that it is possible to speak in a language of angels. The whole point of this chapter of love was to meet the problem the Corinthian church was having with glossais (languages). Love is the highest way, Paul proclaims. Love is God's excellent and ultimate way. Languages will cease (v. 8). Paul is promoting true love, trying to lift the Corinthians to a new level in Christ Jesus.

CHAPTER 5

FACTS ABOUT I CORINTHIANS 14

I Corinthians 14 has become a problem for the modern day church. We cannot possibly understand this chapter without understanding Acts as well as I Corinthians 1-13. There are really three different Greek words that are used in I Corinthians 14 that are translated "tongues" in most versions of the New Testament They are: dialekton glossa, and phonon. Glossa or glossais is used principally in chapter 14 of I Corinthians ana denotes a language or languages of man. Dialekton is used to mean a dialect of a language particular to a people. Phonon means mere sound.

Let us note some interesting facts concerning this chapter.

1. The number one purpose of speaking is communication. Paul always comes back to this.

2. It is logical to interpret this chapter as dealing with a problem concerning human languages. Some people take the term that Paul uses, glossa, and give it two interpretations of the same chapter In one verse, they interpret it as a communicative language, in another verse, they interpret the same word as unintelligible languages of the neo-pentecostal movement. Because the word means a communicative language, interpreting I Corinthians 14 with two different meanings is contradictory. It is more reasonable to understand the problem in Corinth as a problem of people trying to speak their native languages which were not understood in the congregation.

Some people try to interpret this as an ecstatic utterance, possibly resulting from their pagan religions. If this were something other than a problem of human languages, Paul would have clarified that. Also, it would have come up again in his writings or in the writings of Luke.

3. Paul does not attempt to make any distinction between the Corinthians speaking in languages and the languages at Pentecost except to say that in the Corinthian church it is a problem.

4. Note the use of the plural and singular words in this chapter which are translated "language" or "languages." This seems to be a significant proof that Paul is referring to human languages which are spoken by different groups of people. If he were referring to a meaningless ecstatic utterance, he would not use the singular and plural in different places.

5. Paul is trying to stop the problem of people falsifying the real speaking in languages as found at Pentecost

6. Paul does not give permission for anyone to pray in neo-pentecostal tongues or meaningless ecstatic utterances in private or public.

7. If the phenomenon in I Corinthians were a problem of speaking in unknown ecstatic utterances, then Paul is not allowing these pagan practices to be brought into the church.

8. Paul is setting down spiritual and practical rules that will eliminate the problem in the Corinthian church. Some may have been counterfeiting the genuine language experience as found in Acts. Others were speaking their own languages. There can be

a gift of languages even today, but it is certainly not what was practiced in I Corinthians. A gift of language today would be to communicate the gospel to a people who could not understand the language being spoken. There are actual cases today where people have been given special language gifts for a time for the preaching of the gospel.

9. Remember that throughout this chapter, the Greek word glossa is the same as in Acts, where they heard In their own language-to communicate was the purpose. In Corinth they were talking in human languages but not communicating; therefore, it caused a problem.

Even the human language learned as a child is a gift from God. However, the true gift of language is one that is not Seamed but given directly from the Holy Spirit enabling a person to communicate in an unlearned human language. That is what happened in Acts. The counterfeiting of that gift is what became the problem in Corinth.

CHAPTER 6
I CORINTHIANS 14:1-25 INTERPRETED

1. Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.
2. For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries.
3. But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.
4. One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church.
5. Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying.
6. But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongues, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation or of knowledge or of prophecy or of teaching?
7. Yet even lifeless things, either flute or harp, in producing a sound, if they do not produce a distinction in the tones, how will it be known what is played on the flute or on the harp?
8. For if the bugle produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle?
9. So also you, unless you utter by the tongue speech that is clear, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.
10. There are, perhaps, a great many kinds of languages in the world, and no kind is without meaning.
11. If then I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be to the one who speaks a barbarian, and the one who speaks will be a barbarian to me.
12. So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek to abound for the edification of the church.
13. Therefore let one who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.
14. For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.
15. What is the outcome then? I shall pray with the spirit and I shall pray with the mind also; I shall sing with the spirit and I shall sing with the mind also.
16. Otherwise if you bless in the spirit only, how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the 'Amen' at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying?
17. For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified.
18. I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all;
19. however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind, that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue.
20. Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be babes, but in your thinking be mature.
21. In the Law it is written, "By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people, and even so they will not listen to Me," says the Lord.
22. So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to unbelievers; but

prophecy is for a sign, not to unbelievers, but to those who believe.

23. If therefore the whole church should assemble together and all speak in tongues, and ungifted men or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad?

24. But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all;

25. the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you.

Paul repeats in verse one of chapter 14 what he has said in chapter 13-that the Corinthians should pursue love. This is the Christian's guiding principle. Of course, every Christian seeks a spiritual gift. However, gifts are of no major benefit unless they are used to edify the church and communicate the gospel through preaching. The word "prophesy" used throughout this chapter means preaching, rather than the prophetic foretelling of the Old Testament

One would suppose that verse 2 would be some kind of gibberish; however, to interpret it as an unintelligible language is not in agreement with the context. It is a language foreign to men, but understood by God. In the Greek the word "spirit" with a small "s" means "his spirit," and not the Holy Spirit. The Greek is very clear on this point. Some would like to understand that "in his spirit he speaks mysteries" means that through the unintelligible utterance he communicates somehow to God. However, one must force the passage to read that way, especially in light of what Paul is trying to do for the Corinthians. Let us read this verse as Paul intends: "For one who speaks in a language does not speak (communicate) to men (because they do not understand the foreign language), but he speaks to God; for no one understands him even though by his spirit he speaks mysteries (to God). It is clear that these mysteries are understood by the speaker and by God but not by the people since the messages were not being spoken in the language of the congregation. Paul does not call this a gift!

Verse 3 emphasizes the important theme throughout this chapter. To prophesy (or to preach-I will use "to preach" in this book instead of "to prophesy") speaks to men so they can be edified, exhorted and consoled. This is the theme that Paul teaches the Corinthian church throughout this chapter.

Verse 4 is saying that to speak in a foreign language edifies the person himself. But one who preaches the gospel in a language that people can understand edifies the church. The word "strange" or "unknown" is not in the Greek text. The Bible translators have added these words to help us understand that it is a foreign language. Therefore, one only edifies himself because he is the only one who understands what he is speaking. Preaching edifies the church only if it is in the language of the people.

Verse 5 is one of the most misunderstood verses. It continues the idea that it is good for the Corinthians to talk in languages but in order to follow the theme of this chapter these languages must communicate the gospel. Paul is saying that languages that are not understood by the people are of no benefit unless they are interpreted for the church to receive edification. Paul expressed this thought in the subjunctive mood saying that he would like it to be possible for all to speak in many languages, but it would be best to preach in a language understood by the congregation so that the church would be edified.

Corinth was an international port. There were even more languages spoken in Corinth than in Ephesus. The people may have spoken in their own languages without

interpretation, expecting other people to understand. Sometimes this happens when North Americans visit other countries. At times, visitors speak English to Spanish congregations thinking that everyone can understand their language when they stand to testify, but it only produces confusion.

Corinth could have had some pagan practices of ecstatic utterances as well. However, Paul is using the same word here as is used in Acts meaning a spoken language. There is no biblical evidence that they were speaking in neo-Pentecostal tongues. Of course, the underlying theme of verse 5 is that the church must receive edification.

Verse 6 continues the theme of edification. The purpose of Paul's discourse is to eliminate the practice of speaking in foreign languages that were not understood by the church. Only revelation, reason, preaching, and doctrine are valid in the church. Verse 6 should be understood to mean that if even Paul himself were to speak to them in foreign languages that they could not understand, it would not benefit them anyway.

The Greek words in verses 7 and 8, mean sounds or tones. Paul uses the illustration of instruments making different sounds. The accumulation of these sounds form a message or messages. Otherwise, what would be their value if they did not communicate?

In verse 9, Paul says that if a person does not speak understandable words, no one will know what is spoken. He would only be speaking into the air. If we tie this into verse 2, the person could be speaking to God, but if he were trying to speak to men, the result would be as if he were speaking into the air because men could not understand.

Verse 10 talks about the many different kinds of languages (the Greek word means "sounds") in the world. Every sound has its meaning. The Greek emphasizes that they all are produced by a voice.

Verse 11 continues, "...then if I do not know the meaning of the words, I shall be to the one who speaks as a foreigner, and the one who speaks will be a foreigner to me" (paraphrase). How can there be edification?

In verse 12, Paul refers again to spiritual things. He says the Corinthians are zealous of spiritual things and they should seek to edify the church. What will spiritual things do for them? Edify!

Paul adds in verse 13 that they should not speak in languages that do not communicate unless they can interpret what is said in that language.

In verse 14, Paul reverts back to verse 2 with his thoughts. "For if I pray in a language that is not known by the people, they will understand my spirit, but not the prayer. What I understand in my prayer will not bear fruit because they do not understand. They understand the emotion of my prayer, but it is without meaning to them" (paraphrase). This verse does not refer to nor allow anyone to speak in a neo-Pentecostal prayer language!

Verse 15 bears witness to that interpretation as well. Paul says, "I will pray with my own spirit (small 's' meaning his spirit), but I will pray with my understanding as well." He continues by saying that he will sing with his spirit as well as with his understanding. The motive for this is to edify the church. Even if one wanted to interpret verse 14 to mean that a person prays without understanding what he is saying, Paul does not allow that position in verse 15.

A good understanding of the translation of verses 14 and 15 is: "Because if I pray in

a strange or foreign language, my spirit (small "s") prays, but my understanding "what I understand) is without fruit because others do not understand me." That means that when they prayed emotionally in their own languages, it produced no fruit for others because they did not understand. Both of these are positive verses in Paul's central theme of edifying the church.

Verse 16 also reinforces this interpretation. Paul says that if one blesses in spirit only, how will he v/ho hears say the "amen" at the giving of one's thanks, since he does not know what is being said. It seems that Paul's argument concerning the problem at Corinth is that many people were speaking other languages, but they were not edifying the church at Corinth.

Verse 18 has also been one of the most misunderstood verses of this chapter when Paul proclaims that he speaks in languages more than all of them. Note that the word language is the same as in Acts 2 when they understood in their own languages. Many people have understood this to mean that Paul spoke in ecstatic utterances. The word "more" has been misunderstood as well. Paul was an educated man who spoke many languages. The word "more" means that he spoke more languages (plural) than all of them. Otherwise, how could Paul tell them not to do something that he was guilty of doing? The Greek language verifies that the word "more" refers to the number of languages.

In verse 19, he continues to discuss understanding and edification. Many translations have put in the word "unknown" before the word language." "Unknown" is not in the Greek. The same word is used here that is found in Acts 2, meaning human languages that are spoken by people. Paul is saying that he would rather communicate with Just five understandable words so that he could teach others rather than speak ten thousand words in a language that is not understood by his congregation.

In verse 20, Paul chides the Corinthian church for being immature and thinking as children. He tells them that they must mature in their way of thinking.

Verse 21 has also been misunderstood. Actually, verse 21 is a direct reference to Isaiah 28:11-12 which speaks of a communicating language to the people of Israel. Since they would not listen to God in their own language, they were sent into captivity. The message of God came to them by other languages. Because of that communication, they turned back to the true God.

Verse 22 also has been misrepresented and misinterpreted. Paul is working to edify the church. We still have the same word (glossias) here that means languages in Acts. That is exactly what happened in Acts 2. It was a sign to the unbelievers in Acts 2 who heard in their own dialect. This is a direct reference to the Pentecostal experience in Acts 2.

Verse 23 is a reflection of the problem the Corinthians were having when these different groups spoke in foreign languages without interpretation.

In verses 24 and 25, Paul again emphasizes that preaching is what convicts the heart of man. Possibly Paul is thinking here of the phrase "by the foolishness of preaching shall men be saved" (1 Corinthians 1:21).

CHAPTER 7

RULES FOR THE CHURCH TO FOLLOW

26. What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

27. If anyone speaks in a tongue, it should be by two or at the most three, and each in turn, and let one interpret;

28. but if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God.

29. And let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment.

30. But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, let the first keep silent.

31. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted;

32. and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets;

33. for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

34. Let the women keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but let them subject themselves, just as the Law also says.

35. And if they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church.

36. Was it from you that the word of God first went forth? Or has it come to you only?

37. If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment

38. But if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized.

39. Therefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak in tongues.

40. But let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner.

In I Corinthians 14:26-40, Paul begins to lay down rules for the Corinthian church to follow. If any church follows these rules, there will be no problem with ecstatic utterances nor any problem with people speaking languages of men without communicating. A note of caution is appropriate here. Do not change from interpreting the problem as ecstatic utterances in one place, to languages in another.

1. In verses 24-26, Paul declares that everything must edify. In each assembly of the church, there will be different aspects of that service. However, everything must be done for edification.

2. Verse 27 states that "if anyone speaks in a tongue (glossa, which is singular), it should be by two, or at the most three, and each in turn." Someone is obligated to interpret each one of those testimonies or messages.

3. In verse 28, Paul says that if there is no interpreter they should keep silent in the church. Of course, they can talk to God and to themselves in their own language. There is no reference here to an ecstatic utterance.

4. In verse 29, Paul also places regulations on preaching. However, he was very

concerned that even the gift of preaching should not be a superior gift in the sense that they would be puffed up with pride. The word "judge" in this verse, means to discern, to discriminate. The congregation was to examine each message, probably to see if it was biblical and harmonized with what Paul had preached to them previously.

5. Verse 30 was probably written for those people who tried to be seen the most and talked excessively. They should let someone else have an opportunity to share God-given revelations.

6. In verse 31, prophecy is to be given by one person at a time. This way there was to be no confusion. No one could dominate the meeting, and all would be edified.

7. Verse 32 confirms the idea that when a person is in the Spirit, he has control over his own spirit. There are no exceptions to this rule. We should control what we do and what we say. This is a rule for preachers as well as for laymen. Once a person loses control of his own reasoning ability, he is also out of the control of the Holy Spirit.

8. In verse 33, Paul sums up that "God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." There are no churches that have a favorite place in the Kingdom.

9. Verses 34 and 35 have to do with women keeping silent in the church. Paul is not against the participation of women in the church. He had used women many times in his services and in the work of building the Kingdom. He is continuing the thought that God is not a God of confusion.

In Paul's day, the custom was for the congregation to be divided with the men seated on one side and the ladies on the other side. The women were very unlearned and had problems understanding. Possibly the women were projecting their voices across the church asking their husbands to explain what was happening or what the preacher was saying. This is evident in verse 35, "if they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home." Confusion was the result in the synagogues and in the church. It may be that the women were asking in their native languages which would result in even more confusion. Paul made the rule, not to stop women from participating in the service, but to ask that women not cause confusion in the church.

10. In verse 36, Paul chides the Corinthian church about thinking that they are the only ones. The gospel did not originate with them. They should not have spiritual pride thinking that they are a select group.

11. In verse 37, we see that the emphases of these chapters are on rules, not established by Paul, but rules to be followed as the children of God would follow the commandments of the Lord. Verse 38 continues by saying that if they do possess such gifts, the whole church should recognize gifts of individual people. Otherwise, the speaker would not be recognized in the church of God.

12. Verse 39 has also been one of the great problems of this chapter. If one reads this verse as many people understand it, then Paul completely changed his whole emphasis throughout this chapter. Of course, someone can speak in other languages if they are interpreted, and follow the rules that Paul has laid down. However, this does not include speaking in sounds without meaning. There is no proof that Paul allowed any ecstatic utterances. The message of Paul in this entire chapter is to edify the church. The proper gift of language is not an ecstatic utterance, but a legitimate language-gift given on occasion by God to a person who otherwise could not communicate the message because he does not know the language of the people.

I was in the home of Dr. Ralph Earle, a noted biblical scholar and translator. Dr. Earle and I were discussing verse 39, and searching through the Greek New Testament. Dr. Earle discovered a key that helped us in the translation of this verse.

The four oldest manuscripts which are available have a different order of the Greek text than we find in present day translations. They read, literally, "Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy and speaking do not hinder by languages." The word "forbid" is better translated "hinder." The Greek Lexicon gives "hinder" as the first translation of this word.

A better translation for this verse, which would be in accord with the whole chapter and with the oldest Greek manuscripts would be: "Therefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to preach and do not hinder (preaching) with languages." Another acceptable translation would be, "Therefore my brethren, desire earnestly to preach, and do not hinder by speaking languages" (not understood by the congregation). Paul is referring back to the Corinthian problem. If they are going to talk in other languages, they must be communicative languages, either by interpretation, or languages that the people understand. However, the problem seems to have been that some people were speaking their own languages, and this was hindering the preaching of the Word. The congregation was not being edified.

13. In verse 40, Paul declares that the way to do everything is to do it "properly and in an orderly manner." Everything should be done under the control of the Holy Spirit with the same mind and with Godly reason. The purpose is to edify the church and build the Kingdom of God. That follows through with his whole theme of the edification of the church.

I was in a church in Lima, Peru. A lady who spoke only the Quechua language wanted to give her testimony. She was invited to the front and began to testify in her language. However, very few of the church people understood her. The pastor stopped her and asked if anyone could translate for her. A lady came to the front, and translated for the Quechua lady. She gave a wonderful testimony of the saving grace of God. We understood through the interpretation from Quechua into Spanish.

CHAPTER 8

REASONS TO REJECT ECSTATIC UTTERANCES

There are at least ten reasons why we should reject the speaking in ecstatic utterances advocated by the modern day charismatic movement which is emphasized by the Pentecostal churches.

1. Church people misunderstand the modern day term, "tongue." The biblical term that is translated "tongue" really means a language that will communicate something to someone with understanding. It is a human language, not an ecstatic utterance.

2. Speaking in ecstatic utterances is not biblical. The only chapter in the Bible that gives most people a problem is I Corinthians 14. Paul is against the practice of any kind of language that does not communicate, whether it be a language of men or an ecstatic utterance.

3. The Corinthian problem, which was a problem of human languages spoken at the wrong time without an interpreter, was and is negative. The Corinthian church was a carnal congregation, full of immoralities with problems of spiritual pride. Many were trying to show that they had the ability to speak in one or more foreign languages.

4. Speaking in meaningless ecstatic utterances hinders communication. Modern day "tongues" do not facilitate communication.

5. Ecstatic utterances are an obstacle because they impede the edification of the church. Paul was trying to promote the preaching of the Word so that people could understand.

6. It is only an emotional experience with no spiritual value. Paul talked considerably about doing things decently and in order. There is no place in the church for a person to lose control of his faculties of thinking and reasoning. Emotion should not be the principle base of any religious experience. Extreme emotional experiences are dangerous and will lead to irrationalities.

7. Christ did not teach concerning speaking in ecstatic utterances. Jesus did not speak one word concerning the kind of experience that modern day Pentecostalism teaches concerning ecstatic utterances. Every word that Jesus spoke was easily understood, and His teachings were clear concerning the important matters of the gospel.

8. "Tongues" cause division in the church. Many times when "tongues" are practiced in a church, it causes a division in the body of Christ. Anything that causes damage to the church should be rejected.

9. Many religions practice the speaking in ecstatic utterances: the Mormons, Voodoo in Haiti, Spiritists in Brazil, as well as most major non-Christian religions. Even in the Christian church, the same practice of "speaking in tongues" generally is in meaningless ecstatic utterances.

10. The gift of languages is not expressed in meaningless ecstatic utterances. This phenomenon was not found in Acts nor Corinthians. Paul talked about a more excellent way. This is perfect love in the hearts of sanctified believers. The neo-pentecostal movement has erroneously taught that speaking in ecstatic utterances is the evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

W. T. Purkiser states:

The New Testament throughout makes it abundantly clear that the evidence of the fullness of the Spirit is no physical manifestation that may be counterfeited by the devil, or linger after love is lost. It is the grace and fruit of the Spirit: 'love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

The evidence of the sanctifying experience is a pure heart that has been touched by the divine Holy Spirit in cleansing, purifying action.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

What should the position of the church be in affirming the biblical interpretation of the gift of languages?

1. Teach the Word. One of the reasons that our people have trouble with the modern Pentecostal movement is the lack of biblical teaching. Our people must know what Paul preached and taught so that their own knowledge of doctrine can be established. This is the only way to be able to stand on the Word of God.

2. It is necessary to keep order in the churches as well as in our own private lives. The Apostle Paul continually admonishes us about this. The responsibility of the pastor is to teach his people concerning order. God wants to direct and guide us if we will listen and be obedient. A good balance of emotion and worship helps to develop good church services.

3. Emotional services in the church are a great part of communion with God. We are talking about the real thing, not something that is false or artificially "pumped up." God, the Holy Spirit, can come in very special ways. The Holy Spirit always lifts up Jesus. Let us not be afraid of emotion, but let us not depend on it to guide our lives.

4. The need for the power of God in our lives and in our services is abundant. This is precisely what is referred to in Acts 1:8. When the Holy Spirit comes, He makes the difference with His almighty power.

5. Every pastor should seek to preach under the unction of the Holy Spirit. No other kind of preaching is acceptable. Unction is when the Holy Spirit takes control of a person and uses him in a great manner, speaking to the people through his preaching.

6. Let us edify the church in all things. Nothing should be done that would destroy anyone, particularly in the body of Christ. Neither should leadership allow anyone to divide or destroy the church of God.

7. We must be evangelistic in our methods as well as in our message. Seeking the lost is the most important mission of the body of Christ.

8. Let us keep the glory of God upon our individual lives, and upon the church. God wants us to be different. That only comes through His power manifested in the lives of His people.

9. God wants to give us revival. We must not be satisfied with anything less. To be satisfied with anything that is superficial or false is not the will of God, nor is it biblical. Genuine revival is the greatest need of the church today.

10. God wants to guide us into "a more excellent way." Let us seek Jesus. He will lead us to the divine power and presence of the Holy Spirit in sanctifying grace. That is the "more excellent way."

Paul says in I Timothy 1:5, "But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith." Paul is explaining that this is the more excellent way. It is found in I Corinthians 13. The heart is purified when God has not only forgiven the sins that one has committed, but when the Holy Spirit has cleansed the heart of inbred sin.

After one has received such a divine touch from God, there is no reason for seeking another experience such as speaking in meaningless ecstatic utterances. Maturity and

growth are essential as one walks in Holiness.

To have a close relationship with God is the most important thing in life. That relationship and fellowship with God is climaxed in a pure heart. It is nurtured day by day as we grow and mature in our faith.

If one has a gift of a language to communicate the gospel to a people, of course, it must be valid. There is no reason for me to speak to an English congregation in Spanish and have someone interpret the message into English. That only proves that I can speak Spanish. It edifies the church more if I speak in the language of the congregation.

In the same sense, it would be of no benefit for me to speak in a meaningless ecstatic utterance in public or in private. Many have thought that the speaking in an ecstatic utterance has given them a new dimension in their relationship with Christ. However, if it is not biblical, and it is only a personal emotional experience, we should not allow that in our fellowship, nor should we allow it in our private lives. There are experiences such as hypnotism where one loses his cognitive powers that may make a person feel better. Nevertheless, if it does not coincide with a biblical experience, we need to be careful, for many times it will deviate us from the real thing. Experience is not the base from which we get our doctrine. Our doctrine comes from the Bible. We seek an experience with God based on biblical teachings.

Luke gives us some words in Acts 15:8-9 that should help us understand this evidence and how we can arrive at the "most excellent way." Peter stood in the midst of the Jerusalem Council where Paul and Barnabas and some of their converts were testifying to the Council. Peter had already had his vision from God concerning preaching to the Gentiles. Now he gives a clear statement concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit to these Gentiles. He declares that God knew their hearts. That is, that God knew that they needed the Holy Spirit in His fullness and power. Therefore, He gave them the witness that they had received the Holy Spirit even as He had done to the Jews in the Day of Pentecost. In that Work of Grace, God cleansed or purified their hearts by faith.

We receive the Holy Spirit by faith. Sanctification is not obtained through works, but in the same manner that we received Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour—by faith. He comes when we invite Him and when we believe that He has come and done the work in us. This is faith; this is belief.

The witness of the Holy Spirit is not a sign, nor is the witness a result of anything we do. Different people will respond in different ways. Some cry, some laugh, some shout, others have different kinds of emotional experiences. However, emotion is only the result of what has happened. The evidence is that He bears witness with our hearts that we have been sanctified through and through. That is not head knowledge but a result of faith from the heart. The results will be seen in the life of the sanctified as the fruit of the Spirit. We know that we have been sanctified because we have believed, and because He has shared with our own hearts that He has come in sanctifying power.

Jesus talked about this in Luke 24:49, "...wait for the promise of the Father. Tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are clothed with power from on High" (paraphrase). Jesus declares with His last words before His ascension that we will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon us and then we will be His witnesses (Acts 1:8). Of course, we know that the believers were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit on the Day of

Pentecost. They were also filled with His divine love. They became a people of overflowing love, witnessing, sharing, and preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Let us be a Holy people who have not been deviated to one side or the other by unbiblical doctrines. Let us be a people, filled with His power and presence, who will go into all the world and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us establish the church in sound biblical doctrine. Let us edify the church of Jesus Christ.

NOTES

1.

¹Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), pp. 99.

2.

¹ Norman R. Oke, *Facing the Tongues Issue* (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1973), p. 23.

² Donald S. Metz, *Speaking In Tongues* (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1971), p. 22.

³Carter, Charles W., "A Wesleyan View of the Spirit's Gift of Tongues in the Book of Acts," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* (Concord, Mi.: Wesleyan Theological Society, Vol. 4, No. 1, Spring 1969), p. 40.

4.

Harvey J. S. Blaney, "St. Paul's Posture on Speaking In Unknown Tongues," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* (Lakeville, in.: Wesleyan Theological Society, Vol. 8, Spring, 1973), p. 53.

8.

¹ W. T. Purkiser, *Spiritual Qrfts: Healing and Tongues* (Kansas City, Mo.: Nazarene Publishing House, 1964), p. 19.