

Speaking in Tongues ?

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1. The Environment: Spiritual and Intellectual, Modern Theology, Humanism, Spiritualism, The Tongues Movement
2. The Development of the Tongues Movement: From 1900 Until the Present
3. Case Histories From the Tongues Movement: Its Effects on People
4. The Biblical Counterpart of the Tongues Movement: What the Bible Says About Tongues...
5. Antidote for the Tongues Movement:: What the Christian Should Do

Introduction

Elijah the prophet had complete authority over the godless king Ahab and his even more godless wife Jezebel. He was also given the power to overcome the queens 450 prophets of Baal. The secret of this power and authority was that he stood in the Presence of God. "The God before whom I stand !" Thus equipped he could come and stand before the king.

The writing of a pamphlet of this nature needs to stem from the very atmosphere of the Holy Spirit. We cannot achieve this by ourselves, but, we can pray that it may be so. However, the events which led up to the words you find written here, accord with this requirement. It was at Whitsun in 1965 when the inner constraint to write these things down came to me. I had spoken in the morning at an Anglican church near London on the reality of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and in the evening at the Baptist Church in Richmond on the text 1Cor.12, 7 11.

Paul mentions nine spiritual gifts in this passage: wisdom and knowledge, faith, the gift of healing and of miracles, the gift of prophecy and the discernment of spirits, the gift of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. He goes on to call love the tenth and greatest gift in 1Cor.13 and in Rom.5,5.

That Sunday after these two services, I spent a restless but blessed night. A Whitsun prayer, the

request for the Holy Spirit went through my mind. It was the earnest desire that self would be broken, and the entreaty that all the false spirits which cause so much havoc in the Church of Christ, should be removed. It was a prayer in the form of a hymn to which the music readily joined itself. The tune to the German version will be published in my next book 'Jesus, Name above all Names' which is still in preparation.

But not everything has been recorded yet concerning what this Whitsun in London meant to me. After the evening service at the church in Richmond there was communion. Desiring to take part in this, I sat down in the front row. But then one of the deacons of the church came up and whispered to me, "There is a woman here who wants to speak with you." As I did not want to miss the Lord's table, I asked him, "Can it wait till afterwards?" He answered, "She is very nervous and agitated." On hearing this, I let him take me to the woman, and I sat and talked with her in the vestry.

The story she told me was quite remarkable and can be passed on without mentioning names.

Ex.1 This lady had been in Africa for almost twenty years. Among her acquaintances however, there had been some with mediumistic abilities and one evening at some social occasion, a well known medium told her that she had a lot of misfortune coming her way and that she was being persecuted by a strong magician. Shortly after this, the woman became even more worried when a palmist living near her said that there was a strong and evil magic charm hidden somewhere in her house or garden, and that she was in great danger.

In Africa, with its more primitive background, such things are common. Frightened and intimidated by these two prophecies, the woman looked around for help. The palmist offered to look for the hidden magic charm, and while digging in the garden they found a corked bottle containing various African fetishes and magic utensils. These things were destroyed and the woman was given a strong counter magic in the form of some black powder which she was to strew around the garden. However, while she was about to do this, the powder still in her hands, a large black snake entered the garden. They had not seen such a snake in the grounds for years. She called her sons who came at once with a gun and killed it.

In the opinion of the palmist the danger was now over, and as it so happened, the feeling of unrest that she had had, did go. Yet other disturbances followed. The woman became depressed, and this is not surprising, as those who consort with mediums and fortune tellers must always pay a heavy price.

Now comes the incredible part of the story. The woman returned to England in order to find a cure for her depression, and in their, Christian country she was advised by a woman missionary to seek help from a spiritistic healer. To put it in other words, she was told to cast out demons by Beelzebub, the prince of the demons. The ignorance of this missionary is unbelievable!

These were the circumstances in which the woman found herself when she came to the service at Richmond. It was the first service she had attended in England since arriving from Africa a short time previously.

It was not easy to show her the way to Jesus through the maze of these sins of sorcery. But she was prepared. She must have suffered many, many fears, yet she was completely open to the new message that Jesus not only forgives all sin but frees us from all fear. In Luke 10,19 he has given us the promise, "Behold, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall hurt you." The Gospel took root in this woman almost at once. Instead of the fears and threats of the powers of darkness, she was to find peace and security through Jesus. So this Whitsun, the anniversary of the birth of the Church, became the birthday of this troubled woman. The Gospel is good news, it brings release and freedom from all the forces that would overpower and keep us captive.

Thus this Whitsun in London brought a double blessing to me. The Spirit of God had moved my own heart, and too, before my very eyes had made the name of Jesus come alive for this burdened woman. And that is how He works, quietly and behind the scenes. We see this also on Mt. Horeb. The Lord was not in the strong wind, nor in the storm, nor in the earth quake, but in the still small voice. Today we must remember this afresh. God does not speak to us in ecstasy, nor in the noise and hysteria of so called supernatural experiences. Loss of restraint and self control is not a sign of His presence. Our God is a God of order. The Spirit of God is a Spirit of power, and of love, and of discipline. This briefly is the main thought and the theme behind what you find written here.

It has already been said that the writing and publication of this booklet must stem from the atmosphere of the Holy Spirit. In other words I must pray that the Spirit of power and discipline shall have its own way, and that the Spirit of love shall neither be hurt nor grieved. Power and discipline mean authority. Authority means that the Holy Spirit obtains complete control over us.

There are strange notions going about today concerning the character of love. For example, how can a theologian properly speak of the love of God when he rejects the atonement made by Jesus death on the cross. Moral and humane attitudes are not love in the New Testament sense of the word.

To love does not mean to keep quiet when people depart from the Word of God. In England today there exists a certain cult of 'softness'. It is the attitude that no one must set hurt, not even when they hold the most absurd religious opinions. One must look for the best in everything. Whether the person is a spiritist, someone who speaks in tongues, a Jesuit or a modernist, please, don't upset them by talking about controversial matters! That is the new cult of 'softness'.

Do the Scriptures teach us to have this attitude? It would behove all who give way to others so easily, to read the seven letters to the churches thoroughly. The risen Lord reproves the church at

Pergamos, "But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam" (Rev. 2, 14). And the Lord rebukes the church at Thyatira (Rev. 2, 20), "But I have this against you that you tolerate the false prophetess Jezebel." Had a member of one of those churches at that time said anything against these false teachers, he would have been called unloving and intolerant. Yet Jesus would have been on his side.

We are concerned with the command of the Holy Scriptures, "Test the spirits to see whether they are of God" (1 John 4, 1). To test in this way can be done in the Spirit of love. Not everything that false theology labels as love is love, and it can well be real love that constrains us to say 'no' for the sake of the Church of Christ. One can therefore stand in the presence of the Spirit of God and we must do just that when one investigates the so called gifts of the Spirit and tests them in the light of the Holy Scriptures.

I. The Environment of the Tongues Movement: Spiritual and Intellectual

The 90 or so lectures and discussions which I held in churches, Bible colleges, universities and various halls in Great Britain, have given me an insight into the spiritual climate and intellectual structure of this nation.

Apart from many minor under currents, five clearly defined streams of thought reveal themselves to the alert observer. Events in the intellectual world are always paralleled by other factors. For example the Reformation cannot be divorced from the deterioration which had taken place in the Catholic Church up to that time. The materialism of the 19th century would not have reacted against the church and clergy without orthodoxy first having become estranged from real life. In the same way the new tongues movement in England will be better understood when the conditioning factors are correctly seen and recognised. The five movements are:

1. Modern Theology. Once, when among some believing Christians, I asked about Bishop Robinson, the author of 'Honest to God'. There was an awkward silence. People often feel ashamed about him and ask themselves, how a country which produced men like John Knox, Wesley, Spurgeon and Hudson Taylor, can at the same time produce a man like Bishop Robinson, and why in spite of his heresy he is allowed to remain in such a high position in the church. But at a ministers convention, in reply to this question of mine, an Anglican said, 'Made in Germany'. It was now my turn to be ashamed, because in saying this he had wanted to express the fact that Robinson's theology had really originated in Germany.

To show the result of such modern theology with its destructive criticism of the Bible, I will give a short example. I stayed for a while with an English family. The young wife told me how she had come to believe. A few weeks after her conversion she had asked a Presbyterian minister if she could become a member of his church. As she had not previously belonged to a church, she now wanted to have a spiritual home. Being a young Christian she thought that all ministers were men of God, so in his study she told him unsuspectingly that she had just begun to read through the Book of Revelation. The minister was taken aback and replied, "How can you read a book like

that? The writer must have been insane.” He explained to the startled woman that one could not say that all of the Bible was equally inspired. For example, the Song of Solomon was more pornographic than anything else. It is a miracle of God’s grace that this newly converted woman suffered no ill effects from this theological poison.

2. Humanism. This intellectual current of thought makes itself apparent at English universities, but has little else in common with the tolerant attitude of 16th century humanism. An example which clarifies this:

John Stott is the well known chaplain to the Queen. He is a believing man who holds the Gospel close to his heart. As well as caring for his large parish, he gives a lot of his time to work amongst student. Two years ago he held a mission in Oxford. Together with other Anglicans he took meetings in 31 of the colleges. What happened? The humanists started other meetings in opposition to his. Next to the posters of John Stott they put up their own, which ridiculed Stott’s messages. For instance they wrote, ‘Go to Stott’s meetings and commit intellectual suicide.’ They also sent hecklers into the mission meetings to disrupt them.

This is, the new aggressiveness of humanism. Such anti Christian activity is a typical sign of the times. Together with the softening of the principles of the Ecumenical Movement, we find a growing antagonism from anti Christian bodies. We must not fear this but rather rejoice knowing that it is a pointer to the imminence of the last great battle.

3. The New Materialism. In Blackpool, the well known pleasure resort of Northern England, a church magazine came into my hands. It contained an article by a bishop in which he took a stand against the modern trend in luxury and high standards of living. The bishop wrote, “In the past women were content with a musquash coat, but today it must be mink. A few years ago a business man was satisfied by a Ford or Morris, but today he has to have a Jaguar or a Rolls Royce.” But this continual rise in incomes and growth in prosperity does not result in an increase in sacrificial giving to the Kingdom of God. I have seen this myself, that many independent English evangelists are very poorly supported. The sacrificial spirit of Christians in England can really be called terrible. It is even worse when the treasurers of churches withhold the offerings from the preacher. The particular example which follows is almost unbelievable to Christians in Switzerland, Alsace and Southern Germany.

An English evangelist was invited to preach at Newcastle upon-Tyne. The man depends for his livelihood on the support of those for whom he labours. Before the campaign he put this before the committee. They agreed to pay him £100 for the ten days he would be among them, during which time the evangelist would not only speak at evening meetings, but also in the colleges during the day. After the mission, at which over £500 had been taken in offerings, a member of the committee gave £10 to this brother. The evangelist waited a few months for the remainder of the promised sum. When nothing arrived, he wrote them a friendly letter pointing out that he had spent altogether £ 90 on travelling expenses, food, and money for the song leader. In reply to this request he was sent another £ 10, together with a biting letter. Thus the evangelist had to Put £

70 of his own money towards this mission. I could add many similar examples to this.

4. Spiritualism. The darkest chapter in the spiritual life of England concerns the Christian religious facade of spiritism. England and Scotland have altogether more than a hundred spiritualistic churches. One magazine mentioned three million members. Furthermore among these spiritualistic churches there are 30 mediums who earn an annual income of over £ 3,000 each. Even lesser known mediums earn more than a German or an English minister. Most of these mediums are women. In the services they try to get in contact with the dead, while after the main part of the service they often have spiritistic seances. These facts were told me by a man who at one time had been a medium in a London spiritualistic church.

Many people are led astray by the apparent Christian form of the services. Hymns are sung and short passages of the Bible are read. Yet in some spiritualistic churches those who want to become members have to deny the Son of God.

The real danger behind this movement is the ignorance of English Christians. This has already been apparent in example I, the case of the woman at Richmond. In Glasgow, there is a spiritualistic church not 200 yards from the Bible Institute. It is a massive building, resembling the style of a Greek temple. I asked one of the Bible students what he could tell me about this church and its teaching. He could say next to nothing about it. The principal of this Bible College said to me, "English people are careless they just don't worry about things like this."

5. The Tongues Movement. Into this intellectual bed of confusion pours the fifth stream, the tongues movement. As if the chaos was not bad enough already!

But first let us look at the positive side. Members of the tongues movement are definitely against what is called modern theology and they reject anything connected with humanism or spiritism. At first sight this would make us sympathetic towards these Christians. Added to this, the members of the movement are usually generous in their giving. They have not bowed down to the idol of materialism like many Christians in England. Of course, there are exceptions. And thirdly, a large number of real Christians have linked themselves to this movement, because they hope to experience the gifts of the Spirit in fuller measure. While there is nothing at all in common between the first four movements already mentioned, and true biblical faith, this fifth movement is still connected in various ways to the Church of Christ. But all that has been said on the positive side, is only caused by the fact that real Christians have been drawn into the movement, when really they belong outside it. Here we have then a brief sketch of the various intellectual and spiritual forces at work in England. What a chaos faces us here, so reminiscent of the time of the second coming.

II. The Development of the Tongues Movement: From 1900 until the Present

This century has already experienced one tongues movement which began in California in 1900. That it began there is not just chance. Los Angeles, the original centre of the movement, is a spiritistic stronghold. Apart from hundreds of small spiritistic circles there are also 40 spiritualistic

churches with the usual notorious, activities of mediums. The movement spread to Europe through a Swede, and two Scandinavian 'prophetesses' travelled throughout many European countries introducing this speaking in tongues wherever they went. Their centres in Germany were Hamburg, Grossalmerode and Kassel. The meetings of these prophetesses though were so much like riots that God's people were soon on their guard. There are still brethren alive today who witnessed, and who even today witness to the bad effects of their work. To mention two in particular, there is 84 year old brother Schöpwinkel, and brother Ising who are at the moment again together writing a book against the go called 'Pentecostal Spirit'.

In 1959 Los Angeles and California were again the scene of such an event. Both movements have the same characteristics but with one main difference. The latter is not so fanatical and disorderly as the first. With a little insight one might be able to say that the devil has learned his lesson. He has realized that people have seen through his tricks. On the first occasion he wore clogs, the second time he came in carpet slippers!

In 1961 when I was preaching in California, again and again I came across the speaking in tongues in my counselling. A few examples:

E 2 A missionary's daughter told me with much concern how she was being pursued by a girl friend who kept on and on at her saying, that unless she spoke in tongues she did not possess the fullness of the Holy Spirit. I asked the daughter of the missionary whether she had already committed her life to Christ. She answered in the affirmative and declared that by the grace of God she knew that her sins were forgiven, and that for a few years she had been following Jesus. I then reassured her, and advised her to break the relationship between herself and the other girl if the girl continued to trouble her in the same manner.

E 3 The Rev. Blackstone of the First Presbyterian Hollywood Church rang me up one day and asked for my help. Speaking in tongues had broken out in his church and a group of about 23 people were on the verge of causing a division. I said I would come to the next prayer meeting of the tongues speaking group. Both of us agreed beforehand that when the first person started to speak in tongues, we would pray roughly the following, "Lord, if this gift is from you, bless this brother, but if it is not of you, then stop it and let there be no other praying in tongues in our presence." Furthermore we asked for Jesus' protection. In this attitude we went to the prayer meeting where more than twenty people were gathered together. The group knew of course that we were both ministers, because they were members of Rev. Blackstone's church. The welcome itself was strange. A young man asked us, "When did you receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit He then began the meeting with a short devotion after which it was open for prayer. A woman started to pray fluently in a foreign language without any stammering or hesitation. An interpretation was not given. The Rev. Blackstone and I started to pray quietly as we had agreed earlier. What happened? No one else spoke in tongues although usually in these meeting all of them, except for an architect, pray in unknown tongues. Brother Blackstone and I saw our prayer answered.

The following year I again had to render some services in California. In the meantime the tongues movement had spread all over the State. One could find tongues speakers in all denominations, with the Anglicans as well as with the Lutherans, with the Methodists and Baptists, the Presbyterians and Congregationalists. The same trouble everywhere. Oftentimes the ministers were at a loss. Some agreed with it, others were against it. Nobody was completely sure whether this was a movement of the Holy Spirit or not.

In 1963 I went for a third time to the Pacific Coast. Now the tongues movement had spread from the West to the East Coast. Those who were in favour of it spoke of revival. Others were strongly against it because they noticed that it caused divisions everywhere. Four ministers these were the first to do so - dared to exclude the tongues speakers from their churches without much ceremony, in order to restore peace.

By the time of my fourth visit to the United States in 1964, the tongues movement had grown into a social problem. The government appointed a commission to investigate the movement which consisted of a psychiatrist, a Lutheran minister, and a layman who were to explore the character of the tongues movement and watch its development. This disturbance and confusion must have been quite exceptional for the government to feel urged to stop it if possible.

In 1965 the tongues movement had spread its roots to all continents and countries. Tongues speakers tell of a 'world wide revival'. One can read this in the magazine 'Voice' edited by the 'Full Gospel Business Men' in its March 1965 edition. My English director and I could see in Great Britain the depth to which this tongues movement undermines churches in many other countries. Before we started on our lecture tour, we agreed that we would nowhere mention the speaking in tongues, so as not to cause unnecessary trouble. It was however, completely hopeless to try and avoid the problem. Everywhere we went people asked our opinion about the tongues movement, or we met difficulties in counselling people who had become involved with the movement, and now wanted to be free of it. Two examples will illustrate this:

E 4 A student in a teachers' training college told me his story. He had been invited to a conference of the Pentecostal Church in Ireland by his friends. The message at this conference had the usual slant: only the person who has spoken in tongues has been baptised by the Holy Spirit. The student prayed for this gift. Some days later one of the main speakers laid his hands on him. He experienced a warm sensation going through himself and he began to speak in tongues. He had no idea what he was really praying at the time, but he felt his emotions being stirred up. What was the outcome of this? After a few weeks the student no longer had any desire to read his Bible or to pray, and his original assurance of salvation disappeared. The student confessed to me that through the gift of tongues he had lost everything that by the grace of God he had previously received the assurance of sins forgiven and his peace with God. It was only after he had denounced this experience which he had had in Ireland that he received these things back again.

E 5 While I was writing this pamphlet two Anglican ministers came and told me of a large minis-

ters' conference which had been convened by Mervin Stockwood, the Bishop of Southwark. About 400 Anglican ministers came together for a week, including Bishop Robinson of Woolwich, the author of 'Honest to God'. Near the end of the conference many of the ministers witnessed a small sensation. A minister of the High Church suddenly spoke in tongues and another minister interpreted. The interpretation sounded like a few Bible verses strung together with the message that there was a difficult time ahead for the Church. During the next break there was a small crowd around both these men.

One of the two ministers from whom I heard this, asked me, "Why do we need speaking in tongues to hear a few verses from the Bible which we could just as easily read for ourselves?" The other man thought that the actual minister who had spoken in tongues did not make a good impression when he chain smoked during the break. He felt that speaking in tongues and chain smoking just did not mix.

3. Case Histories from the Tongues Movement: Its Effects on People

It is not easy to put all forms of speaking in tongues over a common denominator. Today, speaking in tongues breaks every denominational, racial and cultural barrier.

We find groups of people who speak in tongues in all Christian and non Christian churches. It follows that this is a phenomenon not restricted to Christianity.

Speaking in tongues exists as much in South America or Africa as it does in India or Australia. And so we see that it is not limited to just a certain race of people. The black or coloured person speaks as well in tongues as the white.

Tongues speaking is also not confined to any cultural or intellectual level. An illiterate native of Peru or Ceylon can speak in 'tongues' as competently as a doctor or theologian trained at a European university.

We will attempt the difficult task of grouping the many forms that the tongues movement takes under certain headings.

1. We will first collect together those examples one might be able to label as positive. The best things first! The following experiences are all drawn from my own circle of friends and acquaintances.

E 6 A believing Christian who lives a quiet and secluded life, has been able to worship God in what for us is a foreign language, for twenty or thirty years. She does not talk about this in public, nor does she pray in this way at the prayer meetings of the church she attends. She does not herself understand the language, but she has a feeling of joy when she worships God in this way and is convinced that God has given her the gift of speaking in tongues. The minister of the church,

who is a believer, considers her to be a sensible and true Christian who is not given to extremes.

E 7 In Switzerland I got to know another real Christian who, like the woman in E 6, does not belong to any Pentecostal movement. She willingly gives a lot of help to those who work for the Kingdom of God. Once while talking to her personality she told me that for 28 years she had had the gift of praying to God in an unknown tongue. No one but myself knows about this gift, not even her husband. She had only told me because she had heard some brethren from the Pentecostal Church say, that I had called the new tongues movement unscriptural.

E 8 In another country I came to know a group of women social workers who practise speaking in tongues amongst themselves. A widely known man of God once witnessed their speaking in tongues, and in his opinion it was good. I know these sisters well. Their work is blessed and they pray faithfully. Again I ask myself, "Could this be wrong?"

E 9 A further example from another country. I went to a prayer meeting. It did not cross my mind that there were people present who could speak in tongues. Suddenly a simple woman did just this. The language was very rich in vocals and sounded almost like ancient Greek. When she had finished, she prayed, "Lord, give the interpretation." She then prayed a second time and spoke about the triumphant march of the Gospel throughout all the world till the second coming of Christ. I was under no impression that this was either hysterical or demonic, but the question came to me, "Why this long way round? Could she not have prayed in the right language the first time?"

What is so likeable about these is that they are still striving for sanctification and to be completely surrendered to the Lord. Other good signs are their healthy acknowledgement of the Spirit's gifts, their earnest desire to follow the example of Jesus, and the actual evidence of their everyday lives. Time will tell whether this tongues speaking is a true gift of God or not.

Since then I have also heard that in the SMD (Student Mission) and in the Marburg Fellowship there are already isolated cases of Christians who speak in tongues. But it must be added that the leaders of these groups as yet do not approve of this.

These four good instances are countered by innumerable negative examples from all over the world. And yet, even one example which proved itself to be definitely a gift of God would be of decisive importance, for this would show that the gift of tongues still exists today in its biblical form. However, many Protestant theologians in the English speaking world would not even consider this possibility. Personally, I believe that there are genuine and biblical cases of speaking in tongues.

Yet I have to use the term 'biblical' with care. Who really knows the heart of man? It is quite well known that even great men of God have had unaccountable things associated with their lives. Luther for instance sometimes spoke sharply and was rude. Zinzendorf, Jakob Spener and Wesley had difficult marriages. The tea of the Puritan and the Armenians will never be reconciled. General Booth of the Salvation Army had a different doctrine of grace from Spurgeon. Nevertheless, all th-

ese men were used by God in spite of their peculiarities. Why should God not use a person who speaks in tongues, even when their gift is of a suggestive rather than a biblical nature? But it is true, demonic speaking in tongues could never be sanctioned by the Holy Spirit. In all this, what I really want to say is that I cannot be one hundred per cent sure whether these four positive examples are really biblical in character or not. Anyway, we will examine this question later.

2. Occurrences of the second group can be distinguished more readily. These are to do with the training of the subconscious. The following are some examples that one can immediately detect to be the awakening of certain psychic powers.

E 10 After holding a lecture tour in the United States, a German minister returned home with a rather alarming souvenir speaking in tongues. Since then many people who think their speaking in tongues is genuine, have flocked around him. But further information reached me later concerning this man. A lay preacher was asked by the German minister, "Do you speak in tongues?" He replied that he did not. The minister then said, "In that case something is lacking in your faith." Here we are furnished with evidence that this example belongs not with those cases which are possibly biblical in character but rather with the extreme cases.

E 11 A woman who belonged to the Pentecostal movement was, the leader of a girls' class. She herself spoke in tongues and wanted the girls to learn how to pray and ring in tongues as well. She explained to those members of the class who followed her unquestionably, that one could be prepared in a way to receive the gift of tongues by constant repetition of certain phrases. In the training she now instigated, she would speak some phrases out loud which the others would repeat in chorus after her. And in fact, a few weeks later some of the girls could speak in tongues.

E 12 In Scotland I met a graduate with a Ph. D. from some uni→versity. He had originally been a zealous Christian and at the same time a blessing to his friends. Through his studying hypnosis and yoga he looked into the problem of suggestion and auto suggestion. He made experiments in the course of which he was able to put himself into a semi or complete trance. In this condition he was open to the tongues movement. His life of faith immediately changed. His power to witness disappeared. Yet since then he has begun to speak in the terminology of the tongues movement about the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the second blessing and the gift of tongues. To his former friends, the change in this Christian is really saddening.

E 13 I met one of the clearest cases of this in Japan. It has already been cited in my book 'Jesus on all Continents'. I will mention it here only in passing. At the Mission Conference in Karuizawa I gave eight lectures. one day before the conference opened, a Lutheran minister from America introduced himself with the words, "I am a spirit filled minister." We had no time to really consider this odd statement because he went on to say to the president of the conference, Joe Carroll, "The Lord has commis→sioned me to speak at this conference." Carroll replied, "If it is the Lord's will, then He will have to make it dear to me as well. You cannot speak here." The next day a large

group of his friends came and repeated the request. But Carroll stood his ground. This was a good thing too, for otherwise the whole conference of about 500 missionaries would have disintegrated. What happened?

This so called 'spirit filled' minister started counter meetings to which he invited people. About 40 missionaries went along, some merely out of curiosity. A number of them returned quite shocked and spoke strongly in a way which I will not repeat here. At the meeting, this American minister had spoken and sung in tongues for a long time without anyone interpreting. One of the missionaries had had the courage to ask him personally how one could receive this gift. The answer was typical, and it showed the kind of 'spiritual gift' the minister had. He said, "You must think of a short prayer, perhaps the phrase 'Lord help me', and repeat this prayer five to eight hundred times. Then your tongue and consciousness will get used to it and suddenly you will speak in 'tongues'."

We need no proof here to show whether this speaking in tongues is biblical or not. The Holy Spirit does not need repetitive exercises or any training of the subconscious. Such incidents are both tragic and shameful. We see here a psychic phenomenon on the level of the subconscious. As a stone thrown into water causes a succession of waves to follow, so in this case we have a similar psychic movement which spreads from continent to continent, from country to country. In this sense, the tongues movement is a psychic epidemic. As the basic dispositions, the archetypes, of all mankind are the same, so each race, every intellectual level, every man, no matter what his religious beliefs, can be contaminated by this epidemic. Personal convictions sink into the background, because the subconscious represents a far greater unity than mere religious differences can ever hope to break. Some indications of this:

E 14 I was told that in America, Jesuits, Lutherans, free church people, modern theologians, High Anglicans, and Mormons meet together in order to speak in tongues. They are convinced that this is true Ecumenicalism in action.

This sounds fantastic. And yet I heard of a similar group in London. What a wonderful time we live in today! All schisms, all denominational barriers, age long divisions have been overcome by the new gift of tongues! Does this really mean that what the Word of God could not accomplish, has been brought about by a psychic epidemic? Do not let us be deceived! For years I have noticed on many missionary journeys, that every movement representing an attack on the central scriptural message of redemption through Christ, is growing. There are two directions this takes, those that detract from the biblical theme as modern theology does, and those that add to it as do the fanatical groups of extreme character. English Christians have an unusual expression for this. They call the two trends 'Jesus minus Christians' and 'Jesus plus Christians'. The meaning is obvious. The one group believes that the person of Jesus has 'been over emphasised and they cannot stand His authority and divinity. The other group finds that Jesus is too small and they put the person of the Holy Spirit above Him. We find God's answer to both these misrepresentations in the last verses of the Bible.

3. The third group of incidents will open the eyes of anyone who is not yet fully convinced. There are numerous examples of demonic speaking in Tongues.

E 15 A woman was converted in New Zealand. For the first few years she was a faithful follower of Jesus and she lived a well balanced life. Then one day she was drawn into one of these fanatical streams. An evangelist who took this line, told her that unless she spoke in tongues she had not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The woman was deceived and received the laying on of hands. Since then she has spoken in tongues, and on top of this she has led other Christians astray, bringing them into a similar experience as hers. She looks directly at Christians and says, "I can see in your eyes that you have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I can help you." She then lays hands on these people that they might receive the Holy Spirit. As well as this, she uses the laying on of hands for healing and for conversion. This means that people do not have to recognise, confess, and repent of their sin and surrender their lives to Christ through faith. All that is necessary is that this - prophetess lays her hands on them.

E 16 In San Diego, California, a woman came for counselling. She told me of a bad experience that she had had during a mission held by a member of the tongues movement. She had gone to his meetings in which he had spoken about the necessity of the gift of tongues, and in an after meeting she had allowed hands to be laid on herself in order to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of speaking in tongues. At that moment she fell down unconscious. On coming round again she found herself lying on the floor with her mouth still opening and shutting itself automatically without a word being uttered. She was terribly frightened. Standing around her were some of the people who were followers of this evangelist and they exclaimed, "O sister, you have really spoken wonderfully in tongues. Now you have the Holy Spirit." But the victim of this so called baptism of the Holy Spirit was cured. She never again returned to this group of tongues speakers. When she came to me for advice she was still suffering from the bad after effects of this 'spiritual baptism'.

E 17 I heard of one of the most terrifying examples while in Japan. Again this has already been quoted in detail in 'Jesus on all Continents'. I have the information from Joe Carroll and several German missionaries who work in Japan. Eighteen English and German speaking missionaries went apart for a conference in Toyama. There they wanted to give themselves to prayer and fasting so as to receive a new blessing. After a few days speaking in tongues broke out amongst the group. Then all 18 were seized by it and they called it the 'second blessing'. After the conference they returned to their churches. They explained to their Japanese congregations that to prove one had the baptism of the Holy Spirit it was necessary to speak in tongues. The Japanese are an intelligent nation and they asked, "Well, which is right, what you told us originally or what you are telling us now?" There was such a confusion that these 18 churches were ruined and destroyed. Fifteen of these tongues speaking missionaries went back to their secular jobs. Three of the missionaries denounced the 'Toyama blessing' and were able to stay in Japan. I met one of these three and he confirmed the truth of this story.

E 18 I came across another example in my counselling just as terrible as this. So as not to endanger anyone I will not mention the country in which it took and is unfortunately still taking place. A girl who was greatly distressed came to me for counselling. She is a student at a Bible college. One of the teachers there is a follower of the new tongues movement. This teacher speaks in tongues and has dragged a number of students into the same experience. On top of this, the woman has lesbian tendencies and commits sexual offences with some of the girl students. The girl in question had also been seduced by her.

And now a few examples from England. It is quite obvious that the tongues movement has a stronger foothold in England than it has in either Switzerland or Germany. I found no church in England where speaking in tongues had not caused at least some concern. Yet almost all ministers dare say nothing against the movement because they want to wait and see what comes of it. Added to this, those who speak in tongues pass round the word that anyone who says anything against the gift of tongues, is blaspheming against the Holy Spirit.

E 19 In Leicester a young man reported the following. He and his friend had been believers for some years when one day they were invited to the meeting of a tongues speaking group. The atmosphere of the meeting got a hold on them and afterwards they prayed for the second blessing and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. After intensive prayer it was as if something hot came over them. They felt very excited inside. For a few weeks they revelled in this new experience, but slowly these waves of feeling abated. The man who told me this noticed that he had lost all desire to read the Bible and to pray. He examined his experience in the light of the Scriptures and realized that it was not of God. He repented and denounced it. With that he got back his original assurance and peace with God. His friend on the other hand continued in these 'Tongues', and it destroyed him. Today he will not even consider the idea of going on further as a Christian.

E 20 An even more alarming example was told me after I had held a series of lectures at an English Bible college. On entering the Bible college my colleague and I noticed the magazine of a certain evangelist lying around, who is rather fanatical. I asked the principal if he agreed with what the man preached. He told me that he did. I did not mention a thing about the new tongues movement in my lectures there. We had decided that this would be our policy even before starting on the lecture tour. Yet the problem could not be avoided. We noticed in discussion, that not all the teachers were of the same opinion as the principal. Added to this, many of the students were inwardly against these things. We heard so much from these Bible students on the negative side concerning the breaking out of the tongues movement in the Bible college, that this itself would be enough to reveal the dangerous character of the influx. A student, who is already completely submerged in this flood, declared that he did not need to read the Bible anymore. God the Father would himself appear and speak to him. Six other students who had at first sought this 'second blessing', discounted it when they felt something weird was going on.

E 21 At a Scottish Bible college I heard of some similar cases, although this college is not so much

endangered, as the principal does not support the new movement but rather discourages it. One of the women students there wanted the baptism of the Holy Spirit. She had hands laid on her by a preacher from a Pentecostal church. Because the expected blessing did not come, the girl went another five times within that week to have hands laid on her. She then experienced a warm feeling that she regarded as the second blessing. And the result? Today she has slipped so far that she completely disregards praying and reading God's word. She no longer finds it a joy to be a Christian.

E 22 A doctor's daughter had been influenced by some friends who spoke in tongues. She had then begun to pray for the gift herself. For weeks she begged earnestly for this so proof of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. When her prayer went unanswered, in desperation she tried to commit suicide.

E 23 A worker for the Kingdom of God was handed the sum of £ 300 by a Scottish business man in this case he was certainly no 'Scot'. He was asked to pass this on as a gift to an English evangelist. But the young man did not do that, and kept the money for himself. When the business man asked for the receipt, he learned the truth. Both the giver, and the man who should have really received the money, are Christians and do not want to take him to court. The man who cheated them is in fact a preacher of the second blessing, and of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, of holiness and of the Full Gospel, and he also supports the tongues movement. Because he is a good speaker, he has found his way into many churches in London and Great Britain.

A comment must be added to the last example. As the proverb goes, 'One swallow does not make the summer'. There are dishonest people in every profession. One cannot condemn the whole movement because of one man. I have already said that there are generous disciples of Christ in the Pentecostal movement whom I respect. But it is more than against the grain to cheat a brother in the faith out of a sum of money, and yet still to preach about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. His friends may object saying, "This man has surely repented and asked for forgiveness." It would be a strange repentance however. According to Scripture, one is to return what is stolen and to ask the forgiveness of the wronged person, and naturally that of God as well. With this, the unhappy event could be forgotten.

The question is now, whether with this division of speaking in tongues into three groups, we will be able to assess the different forms scriptural. Would we have found the correct solution for example, if we said that there is a biblical form of speaking in tongues, but that at the same time there are human and demonic imitations? Biblical - human - demonic. This would be a logical distinction, but whether it is correct or not is still uncertain. If speaking in tongues due to training of the subconscious see the examples in the second group gets labelled as that of the Holy Spirit, is this not blasphemy and thus demonic? And could the experiences listed under the heading of biblical forms still be instances of an alien spirit at work? The above three groups are thus still very disputable.

Furthermore there is the valid objection, though I have heard it so often that it makes me tired, "You only talk about the negative side. Where are the positive examples?" Usually such members of the tongues movement who ask this, also add, "It's true what you say. There are many false forms of tongues speaking, but my gift is of the Holy Spirit." However, if one pursues the conversation with such brothers who allegedly have the gift of speaking in tongues, one discovers such a jumble of thoughts and such an unscriptural attitude in their grasp of the faith, that this does not prove it to be genuine but rather suggests the opposite. I would thus like to retort, "Where are the positive examples?" It should be clear that I have endeavoured to treat the subject objectively by the fact that in the first group examples are cited which may perhaps be authentic. However, the few instances with good characteristics are contrasted by thousands of a very dubious nature. In addition to this, such a strange spiritual atmosphere hangs over the whole tongues movement that one can sometimes see it clearly in the members. Two English evangelists told me, "You can see when these people are seized by this spirit just by looking at them."

Is it not also significant that some Christians who really seek for the gift of tongues and the baptism of the Spirit in the sense defined by the new movement, cease from doing so on becoming aware of the true character of the gift they desired. An example to show what I mean.

E 24 It was a great joy to meet Peter Marrow in Brighton He is the minister of an Anglican church and is well known for the fact that he has an alive church. In Germany, Peter Marrow is also a widely known and respected brother. While I was taking services at his church, I was told the following story. A few real Christians heard a lot about the 'second blessing' and reached out for it in prayer. After they had prayed constantly for some weeks, something strange came over them which they recognised as not being good. Consequently they had nothing more to do with it and they told their minister that this was not the way for them. These people had sensed the error in the tongues movement through their healthy scriptural outlook.

We get a little closer to what is behind the new tongues movement when we compare it to similar currents in other religions. Speaking in tongues is not just restricted to the Christian world. During a visit to the Transvaal in South Africa I was told that many possessed Bantu natives spoke in tongues. These Bantus cannot be associated at all with Christianity, although there are obviously some Christians among them. In some of my other books for example I have written about the Zulu Christians.

On a mission tour through East Asia and Japan I often heard of Buddhist and Shintoist priests who speak in strange languages and tongues while in trance. A Shintoist priest who told me his life story mentioned the same experience. In the Philippines I actually heard a possessed man speak in foreign languages which he himself had never learned.

Yet we do not have to go to foreign countries to see this. Spiritistic mediums all over the world often speak in foreign languages when in trance. The famous medium Mirabelli of Brazil spoke 25 languages in trance which ordinarily were unknown to him. My latest example in this field comes from London and I have permission to publish it.

E 25 During my first lecture at Down Lodge Hall in London, I met a certain Mr. Millen. This man supported me when I was being attacked in the discussion after the lecture. Years ago he had been a very successful medium in a spiritualistic church. He had possessed powers of healing which revealed themselves when he was in semitrance. Many people had been helped through this. He had also mastered the excursion of the soul. He could as it were let his soul or part of it step out of his body and send it over great distances. In this way he had uncovered things which on checking were found to be true. In full trance he could speak in tongues.

Mr. Millen's wife was converted at a mission. She then formed a prayer group which interceded for him for years. God showed him mercy. Mr. Millen was completely liberated and today he is one of Christ's witnesses.

With this brief glance at religions and spiritism throughout the world it becomes dear that speaking in tongues is by no means always a gift of the Holy Spirit. No heathen witch doctor and no spiritistic medium can have a gift of the Holy Spirit. All over the world we find that speaking in tongues is connected with highly emotional movements and with excitable spiritual conditions. It does not matter whether this state of excitement has been stirred up by dancing and singing, or through alcohol, drugs or suggestion. These ominous associations should make those of us who are Christians very careful.

The fact that the tongues movement is mainly mediumistic in nature is backed up by the following observation. Countries associated with a lot of spiritism are today experiencing a rapid growth in the tongues movement. The origin of both the movements in Los Angeles also supports this. We see the same characteristic in Japan, Brazil, in the Philippines and in England. The following example confirms the fact even more.

E 26 In London I met a missionary named Aldrich. His mission field was in British Guinea. His church consisted of European settlers and former Hindu and Moslem immigrants. After he had worked there for a few years, someone who spoke in tongues came and brought their new found knowledge to this mission field. Aldrich's church was infected by it and a typical process started to take place. The Hindu and Moslem people because of their religious background were strongly rooted in mediumism, and they accepted the speaking in tongues. The Europeans however, rejected it. Thus the whole church was divided and destroyed. The missionary saw for himself that the mediumistic members of the church were more susceptible to tongues speaking than the less excitable Europeans.

I have observed that people who are mediumistically inclined respond more quickly to speaking in tongues than others. About 8 to 10 % of the people in the Western world are said to be potentially mediumistic. In the Eastern world the percentage is more likely to be 90 % or higher. This mediumism is not always recognised. Some people only discover it by chance.

Through counselling the following related factors have come to my notice. Latent mediumistic powers can be caused by the parents or grand parents of a person committing sins connected with

sorcery. Dabbling with fortune telling, magic, or spiritism develops such mediumistic powers and they then become hereditary factors. The children of such people are mediumistic, even when they do not realise it. This mediumism is not a sin of the one who inherits it, but it is a burden. Some people are also mediumistic because they were charmed magically when they were very young. Others have received their mediumism through their own sins of sorcery. E 12 is a case of this. The man became mediumistic through experimenting with Trances and has now readily accepted the tongues movement. When people who have mediumistic abilities are converted, some of them are completely freed from the burden of it while others carry these powers into their Christian life. This is possible, as not all mediumistic abilities can be labelled as demonic. There exists a small marginal area of neutral mediumism. But in almost all cases mediumism is an open door for the demonic. The above observation that mediumistic people speak in tongues much more quickly than non mediumistic people is interesting.

The following course of events is fatal. A person carries his latent mediumistic powers over into his Christian life. Later he discovers that he can speak in tongues and he reckons this to be a gift of the Holy Spirit. In reality it is only a mediumistic gift and such gifts are not used by the Holy Spirit. This is made clear in the story of the girl with the spirit of divination at Philippi (Acts 16,16 18). Hence one would have to check all the examples of the first group to see whether those particular gifts of tongues can be traced back to unconscious mediumistic backgrounds, or whether they are really of the Holy Spirit.

Bearing in mind all these questions it becomes more and more clear that maybe over 95 % of the whole tongues movement is mediumistic in character. But we must now subject ourselves to the testimony of the Scriptures.

4. The Biblical Counterpart of the Tongues Movement: What the Bible Says About Tongues

At the very start of this chapter I must acknowledge that I am not a follower of modern biblical criticism. To me the Bible is the Word of God. I believe everything written in the New Testament about the gifts of the Spirit.

Having acknowledged this, that is my faith in the Scriptures, I confess also that through God's grace I belong to the *communio sanctorum*, to the Body of Jesus Christ. This Church of Christ is drawn from all denominations. A Catholic who has been horn again or a brother of the Pentecostal movement who is scripturally sound in faith is closer to me than a minister of my own Lutheran persuasion who is not a disciple of Christ. This statement is not an 'ecumenical confession' on my part. I cannot go along with the so called Ecumenical Movement. My place is in the Church of Christ. What I wanted to say is that God's children are one, no matter in which camp they find

themselves. This does not mean that I ignore the denominational barriers which have come into being in the course of history. For example I could never join the Pentecostal movement or other groups associated with it, yet I respect many brothers and sisters of this persuasion. I heard a theologian once say in Germany, "In a sect the life is often better than the teaching. In the church the teaching is usually better than the life." Of course, this comparison is not absolutely true in every case. A sectarian is a person who is cut off from the Body of Christ. A Lutheran is a sectarian if he is not a born again Christian. A so called sectarian, that is a member of a sect, is not truly a sectarian if he is a real disciple of Christ. Whoever is of the truth will understand what I am getting at in this paragraph.

1. Passages Concerning the Gift of Tongues

We can now enter into the biblical discussion on the gift of tongues. It is mentioned five times in the New Testament.

a) In Mark 16: 17, 18, five gifts including that of new tongues are mentioned by Jesus as signs and effects of the faith.

b) In Jerusalem at Pentecost (Acts 2) we hear of it again. Through the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon them, the apostles were able to tell of the works of God in many different languages. Many theologians speak of this as a miracle of languages while they say the gift of tongues is of another character. But it does not matter whether we differentiate between speaking in tongues and the miracle of languages or whether we class them as the same thing, for glancing at their origin one can see that the two are related phenomena. Nevertheless, in their effects they are different, as we shall indeed see.

c) The third occasion on which the miracle of tongues is mentioned is at Caesarea in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10). Here the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Gentiles for the first time.

d) The fourth occurrence of this nature took place in Ephesus (Acts 19). The disciples of Apollos had never heard of the Holy Spirit before Paul's visit. After the apostle laid hands on them they received the Holy Spirit and spoke in new tongues.

e) The strongest evidence and argument on the gift of tongues is found in the first letter to the Corinthians, chs. 12 to 14.

When we look for the significance of the gift of tongues in the first century, we find essentially two answers. Firstly, the gift was given as a sign to the unbelieving world. Jesus expressed this in Mark 16, 17 and Paul said the same in 1 Cor. 14, 22. The Jews of that time were brought up to have 'faith in signs'. Thus Jesus said in Matt. 12,39, "This evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, but no sign shall be given it except that of Jonah the prophet." And Paul writes in 1 Cor. 1, 22, "The Jews demand a sign...". The gift of tongues together with the other gifts was a sign to

the Jewish people. Besides Jerusalem, the cities of Caesarea, Ephesus and Corinth had large Jewish populations.

The second reason for the gift of tongues was the inauguration and birth of the Christian Church. That first Whitsun was indeed the birthday of the Church. One could compare the event to a wedding. The couple celebrate the day with festivities and at the same time they receive many wedding presents. In a similar way the Holy Spirit poured out the gifts of God in full on this memorable day for Jesus' disciples.

The difference between the miracle of languages in Acts 2 and the gift of tongues in 1 Cor. 14 is that the disciples had no need of interpreters. The people from 15 different foreign nations present at Jerusalem heard the disciples speak in their own languages. The Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to tell in these different languages of what God had done (Acts 2, 4). In 1 Cor. 14 this ability no longer existed because those that spoke in tongues now needed an interpreter. We see already that there was a deterioration in the gift of speaking in tongues.

2. Regulations for the Church Concerning the Gift of Tongues

Studying 1 Cor. 14 we find that at that time speaking in tongues had already caused disturbances and disorder. There were already believers in Corinth who forbade people to speak in tongues. We will now see how Paul endeavoured to straighten out the problem. At the same time it will become apparent as to how far the present day tongues movement deviates from the rule laid down in the Scriptures.

- a) V. 18 The apostle affirms here that the gift of tongues is a gift of God's Spirit.
- b) V. 39. He commands that speaking in tongues must not be forbidden.
- c) V. 19. Paul makes a distinction between speaking in tongues in private prayer and in public. He says, "Rather five words with my understanding than ten thousand in a tongue."
- d) V. 34. Women are not to speak publicly in tongues. This is not heeded anywhere in the new tongues movement today.
- e) V. 27. Only two or three should speak in tongues on any one occasion. No notice is taken of this either in the new tongues movement. Ten, twenty or even more people speak in tongues at the same prayer meeting.
- f) V. 27. This verse also says that the prayers should follow one another. In today's tongues speaking groups there is often confusion because many people pray at the same time.
- g) V. 28. If there is no one to interpret at the church, let those who speak in tongues keep silent. Where is this regarded today in the new tongues movement? Nowhere!
- h) V. 33. Our God is a God of order, not of disorder.
- i) V. 40. Paul calls for decency and order.
- j) Vs. 1, 39. Paul affirms twice that the gift of prophecy is greater than the gift of tongues. The gift of tongues is called the lowest gift by Paul, but today it is given first place by the tongues movement.

These rules show that today's tongues movement ignores almost all the biblical principles. Often there is praying without any interpretation and with a lack of order and control. Many people pray and they frequently pray at the same time and the women invariably take precedence.

3. The Decline in the Gift of Tongues

Here we tread on very dangerous ground. Many a grim battle is fought here for and against the new tongues movement. In Germany and Switzerland there is less argument in this respect than in other countries. It is in South America and in the English speaking countries that the discussion reaches its highest level.

Roughly speaking there are three points of view. The tongues movement believes that the gift of tongues has not been decreasing but is increasing mightily. They are right on this point. But the question is, what kind of gift of tongues is it? The second idea is mainly held by protestant theologians in the United States and in England, who say that the gift of tongues had already completely ceased at the end of the second century AD. But there is yet a third opinion which at least does not rule out the possibility that speaking in tongues as found in the Scriptures still exists today, and the question is left open. Nevertheless, those who hold this opinion are still strongly opposed to the present day tongues movement. We shall get an answer to the question raised here when we again see what the Bible has to say on the matter.

a) We must reconsider the characteristic signs of the gift of tongues. We find in the Bible various epochs in God's revelation to man. Thus for instance, the experiences of the children of Israel during the time of the plagues in Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea mark a certain era in this revelation. While the people of Israel were in the wilderness they had no further need of these miracles. The sending of the manna in the wilderness however, marked another occasion of God's special intervention. When the Israelites reached Canaan this gift became superfluous. In a similar way the prophets Elijah and Elisha symbolize another epoch. Their miracles and signs and prophecies form a special stage in God's revelation. The letter to the Hebrews talks of the shadow of things to come. The gift of tongues was also in this sense reserved for a particular time, that of the early Church. We know not only from church history but also from the New Testament itself, that the gift of tongues diminished later on.

b) Anyone who reads the places in Acts concerned with the gift of tongues and where the Holy Spirit came upon people, will see that in every case all the people involved spoke in tongues. If one goes on to examine the letter to the Corinthians it will be seen that in Corinth no longer did everyone speak in tongues. In 1 Cor. 12, 30 we have the rhetorical question of Paul, "Do all speak in tongues?" He wished to say, "No, not everyone speaks in tongues." So we have in the New Testament within a span of about 20 years from the original outpouring of the Holy Spirit to the writing withdrawal of this gift can be further seen in that after the writing of the first letter to the Corinthians it is never again mentioned in the New Testament.

c) There is also a third point that supports this idea of a decline. We have said before that the gift of tongues came with the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the birthday of the early Church. That this gift primarily enabled the Church to be built up and edified is clearly seen in Corinthians again. Paul says in 1 Cor. 12, 7 that the gifts serve the common good of the Church. In 1 Cor. 14, 26 to 28 again the edification of the Church is emphasised. If there is no one to interpret the tongues, that is, if no edification would result, those who would speak in tongues should keep quiet. Whoever is acquainted with the early history of Christianity knows that the gift of tongues slowly died out. In its place came the written word, the collection of New Testament writings.

4. Did the Gift of Tongues Cease Completely after the Time of the Early Church ?

Here we have the most pressing question of today. What are the arguments put forward by the English theologians? As I am not writing a theological commentary but rather a pamphlet for distribution, I will only select one problem. These theologians take 1 Cor. 13 as a starting point for the scriptural proof of their argument. They find verses 8 to 13 particularly important. They differentiate between three stages:

Prophecy, tongues and knowledge will cease and pass away (v. 8)

Faith, hope and love will remain (v.13)

Love is everlasting (v.13)

Will these statements theologians in England have devised the following scheme. When Jesus returns, faith will be turned into sight, hope will be realized, but love will remain. When Paul says, "There abide faith, hope and love", he means that the first three gifts will have already disappeared. When did this take place? When did the first three gifts disappear, leaving just faith and hope? Their reply is that as the canon of the New Testament became available in its present form, these three gifts became superfluous because they were replaced by the written Word of God. The fixing of the canon took place at the two synods at Jamnia and Joppa (201 AD.). Thus we have the following point of view before us: the first three gifts existed up till the year 200; faith and hope will remain till the second coming; love has existed from the beginning and will continue to do so for all eternity. This is a logical train of thought.

And yet I am afraid of analysing chapter 13 as if it were a mathematical formula. I am convinced that classical and biblical revelation came to an end with the closing of the canon. But how often has God revealed himself to his children even after the completion of the Holy Scriptures? I am also convinced that the special age for the speaking in tongues came to an end when the canon was closed. But why should not God in spite of this, every now and then give his children a special gift for worship? Thus I cannot completely agree with the idea that speaking in tongues has entirely ceased. One thing that supports me in this is the passage in Mark 16, 17. Here Jesus does not mention any limitation on the duration of the gift of tongues. If we have to reckon with the total loss of one of the Spirit's gifts, then we may ask of Mark, "Which gifts are still valid and which are not?",

because in Mark there are five gifts mentioned. Yet I can say that in my own personal experience I know many instances which confirm the existence of four of the gifts mentioned by Mark. It is solely concerning the gift of tongues that I have not a single example which I can describe without any doubt as being both scriptural and genuine. As I have said, examples 6 to 9 may be genuine but I have no complete assurance that they are. So I still leave it open as to whether the Spirit of God can give a humble and spirit filled Christian the gift of praising Him in an unknown tongue.

I am not alone in this thought. It is refreshing to know that not all other theologians rule out the possibility. Richard Trench, one of the most clear and faithful theologians of the last century wrote, 'If the gift of tongues still survives among us, then it no longer does so under the same name nor with the same frequency and intensity as of old.'

In a treatise by Dr. Torrey with the title, 'Is the present day Tongues Movement of God?', I read the following, 'We do not deny the possibility that God can give the gift of tongues to a person when He thinks it is right. He can and will give it. But the gift of tongues was so evidently abused in the early Church, even as it is today, that it became necessary to warn people about it. God in his wisdom and love may well have considered it necessary to hold back this gift for a period of time. And we have no reason to presume that He has renewed the gift in our time, for it is quite certain that today's so called tongues movement is not of God.'

These two men lived a hundred, and fifty years ago respectively. Their estimation of the tongues movement would fit the present day movement exactly. However, neither man closed the door completely, although they both rejected the then modern tongues movement. This coincides with my own position.

What observations make the new tongues movement appear to be a dangerous heresy? There is an enormous amount of material that could be used to answer this question. In this pamphlet we can only very briefly mention a few main points. Of course, not all the statements apply to every branch of the tongues movement. Swiss and German groups are in general somewhat more sober than their counterparts in England and more especially in South America.

1) The arbitrary use of apparently scriptural phrases is really bad. 'He who has not the gift of tongues has not the Holy Spirit.'

To this Paul replies in 1 Cor. 12, 13, 'For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body ... and all were made to drink of one Spirit.' In the same chapter the apostle goes on to say (v. 29, 30), 'Not all have the gift of tongues.'

The statement, 'All sickness is caused by sin. All sickness can be cured by faith', is similar to this. Where in the Bible do we find such a concoction? Jesus said of the man who had been horn blind (John 9), 'It was not that this man sinned, neither his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him.'

2) A second fallacy is that conversion and being born again is not enough, but that the Christian needs a 'second blessing' and a 'second baptism of the Spirit'. The Scriptures reply that rebirth can only take place through the Spirit. 1 Cor. 12, 3 reads, 'No one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.' The desperate striving for a 'second blessing' is strictly speaking blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, because it means that the first work of the Holy Spirit was not enough.

3) Another thing that marks the tongues movement is the way they alter and overemphasise certain points whilst others are almost ignored. This goes as far as putting the person of the Holy Spirit above God himself. The whole terminology full Gospel, second blessing, baptism of the Holy Spirit, gifts of the Spirit, speaking in tongues, latter rain shows that for this movement the thing that matters is the extraordinary, and the experience, rather than the sure foundation of the Word of God and its true scriptural proclamation.

4) A further observation is the superciliousness of the 'baptised with the Holy Spirit tongues speaker'. They are first class Christians, all others are on a lower level.

5) The most frightening effect is the way it splits churches. Without any exaggeration ministers, missionaries and evangelists all over the world lament the divisions it has caused in their churches. What has taken decades of hard work to build up, is torn down by this flood. The Holy Spirit does not split churches, but he punishes sin, stirs the conscience, breaks pride, shows us Jesus and gives assurance of salvation. The Holy Spirit unites the church and does not pull it apart.

6) It is a mistake to think of the tongues movement as a world-wide revival. In all classical revivals the people broke down under a conviction of their sins. True revivals are movements of repentance where people find their way to Christ.

The tongues movement is all for making proselytes. Those who are already Christ's must be won over to the 'tongues wonder'. Added to this there is no concern for the conversion of the sinner but just that he should speak in new tongues.

7) The new tongues movement whips up the emotions. Rhythmical hymns are sung, hands are clapped, and in Southern countries they even jump on the chairs, or roll on the ground until they have lost all self control. In this state the people are open to any uncontrollable experience.

8) The tongues movement is an ecstatic movement comparable with spiritistic trance as well as hypnosis. As a proof of this I will quote the following example that I noted in England.

E 27 A preacher belonging to the tongues movement was in the habit of praying first in tongues before giving his message. It has happened several times now that he has been unable to cease from speaking in this foreign tongue. He has had to have a towel given to him to stop up his mouth. What powers are these, if the preacher cannot end his own prayers? The spirits of the prophets are usually subject to the prophets.

9) The tongues movement is of a mediumistic nature. We can see this in some of the meetings of the tongues speakers where all the people present have to put their hands on both their neighbours in order to build up a chain amongst themselves. Sometimes in broadcasts on the wireless or television people are asked to lay their hands on the set and then to form a chain among the actual people in the room. These are the same proceedings that one finds associated with spiritistic lifting and glass moving. Examples 12, 16 and 26 are of this nature. Where in the Scriptures do we find any indication that believers, unbelievers, Hindus, Moslems and Christians should lay hands on one another indiscriminately in order to receive the Holy Spirit?

10) The tongues movement is an epidemic which rages over disturbed humanity. An indication of this is that heathens, and Christians, possessed people and tribal dancers, witch doctors and spiritists can all speak in tongues. The tongues movement is the expression of a delirious condition through which a breaking in of demonic powers manifests itself (1 Tim 4, 1).

5. Antidote for the Tongues Movement: What the Christian Should Do

Having recognized the dangers of the tongues movement the next question is, "Can we stop it?" No! The heresies of Mohammed could not be stopped. The Mormons continue to build their luxurious temples. All these have to grow and ripen till the Lord returns and reaps his harvest.

Does this mean that we have to look on quietly while the movement grows? No! Keeping quiet makes us guilty and endangers believers who might be engulfed by it. I say for the second time, read the letters to the seven churches. We must warn people in the same way as we must warn against modern theology and other heresies.

Is our task complete, when we have given this warning? No! That this tongues movement has been able to grow so quickly is a sign that we Christians are all equally to blame. The Holy spirit's work has not been evidenced in our lives. We have to repent.

The real answer that we can give is that we are people full of faith and of the Holy spirit. There is a sound, biblical way of speaking about the Holy Spirit and his gifts.

Do we have it in ourselves to attain to such a life? No! It is only God who can pave the way for us. This way was prepared through the sending of his Son, through the pouring out of his Holy Spirit, and through the great gift of the written Word of God.

How is this salvation revealed to us? Through His grace. Who experiences this grace? Water always settles in the deepest place. That means that God cares for the broken, the crushed and the humble. We are commanded to surrender ourselves completely to the Lord. It is not that we should receive more of the Holy Spirit but that the Holy Spirit should receive more of us. We are commanded to commit the present and the future into His hands. We are commanded to submit

ourselves to Him completely, body, soul and spirit. We are commanded to give Him our time, our will, our strength, our money, and our possessions. We are commanded to crucify our gross, proud, obstinate selves. Let us not be concerned about others when faced with these commands but rather about ourselves.

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