

Summit Woods Baptist Church  
First Corinthians Sermon Study Equipping Class

Tongues in the New Testament

Remember to begin your study early in the week so that you have time to really think (and keep thinking) about the passage without being rushed.

Because of the nature of next week's sermon passages, no single text or a passage structure is provided to read. Instead, you will be spending time studying and meditating on a variety of passages in the New Testament that either directly mention, or perhaps allude to the gift of speaking in tongues. The aim of the message and this week's study is to give you an overview of all the places where tongues is mentioned in the New Testament in order to discern what its purpose is in God's divine plan.

**Day 1**

Because of the nature of next week's sermon, no passage structure is provided. Instead, you will be spending time studying and meditating on a variety of passages in the New Testament that either directly mention, or perhaps allude to the gift of speaking in tongues. The aim of the message and this week's study is to give you an overview of all the places where tongues is mentioned in the New Testament in order to discern what its purpose is in God's divine plan.

1. Read Mark 16:14-20. This is the first reference to speaking in tongues in the New Testament. At what point in Jesus' ministry does he give these statements?
2. Who is Jesus speaking to specifically (v 14)?
3. What is the relationship between the signs that are mentioned and salvation in verse 17?
4. Make a list of all of the "signs" that Jesus speaks of here.

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- a. Read the following passages and note where these signs have appeared in the narrative account of the apostles going out into all the world preaching the gospel (these are not every occasion, but representative of them):

Acts 5:16; 8:7; 19:12 (what is being done, who is doing it?)

Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6 (what is being done, who is doing it?)

Acts 28:3-6 (what is the sign referred to? To whom did it happen to? Who was seeing it happen?)

Acts 28:8 (what happened and who did it?)

5. The word for “tongues” is the same word often translated as “languages.” What kind of languages would “they” speak? What does this likely mean for the one who finds themselves speaking these languages?

6. Read Mark 16:20 again.

- a. Who was preaching?
- b. What was the stated purpose of the signs?
- c. What does this tell you was the purpose of the signs mentioned in Mark 16?

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- d. What is the implication for the purpose of the sign of speaking in new tongues?

## **Day 2**

- 7. Read Acts 2:5-13. This is the second mention of speaking in tongues in the New Testament. Think through the following questions in relation to this passage.

- a. On what day did this take place? How do you know?
- b. Where did this take place and who was present?
- c. Who was speaking in other languages?
- d. Why were the people so bewildered and why would this have been so unusual?
- e. How many were hearing the speakers in their own native language?
- f. How could it be that each of the hearers was hearing each of the speakers in their native language when the speakers were speaking?
- g. How many different nationalities were present?
- h. What was the content of what was being spoken?
- i. How did some others present interpret what was happening? Do drunk people normally speak clearly in other languages? Why would they assume this?

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- j. How many believed Peter's message (2:14-36) because of the speaking in tongues (2:37-41)?
8. Read Acts 4:23-31 and answer the following questions:
- a. In the context, who is referred to as "they" and from where were "they" released?
  - b. Briefly re-tell what "they" did when they gathered with their friends (4:24-30).
  - c. Read 4:31 carefully. Where is speaking in tongues mentioned? From these verses, what evidence may be present that they did speak in tongues?
  - d. Read also 5:12-16. What other signs were being done and who was doing these signs? Where are these signs being done (what geographical area)?
9. Read Acts 8:14-18 and answer the following questions:
- a. Who had received the word of God? Who was not present when this occurred and heard later?
  - b. What is so significant about this group of people receiving the word of God in the absence of the apostles in Jerusalem?
  - c. Who went down to confirm and why would these men be so significant?

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d. What happened in 8:17? While speaking in tongues is not named specifically in this passage, is there any evidence in the passage or surrounding verses that might give thought to it happening here? Why would it be significant if it did take place here?

e. Read Acts 9:31. Where had the gospel spread so far?

10. Read Acts 10:44-48. This is actually the third time speaking in tongues is specifically mentioned in the New Testament. Answer the following questions:

a. Review Acts 10:1-43 to see who Peter is speaking with and why. Briefly state who is hearing him preach. Why would this be so significant, especially at this point in the book of Acts?

b. What happened to those who were hearing God's word?

c. What was the evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit?

d. Who else was present to see this unusual act take place? Why would this be so significant?

e. What amazed Peter and what was his response?

f. What did speaking in tongues signify to those who heard it?

g. Read Acts 15:7-8. Where is this taking place and what is its significance in relation to what you read in Acts 10:44-48? What does it say about speaking in tongues?

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11. Read Acts 19:1-7. This is the fourth time speaking in tongues is specifically mentioned in the New Testament (and the last time in the book of Acts). Answer the following questions in regard to it.

- a. Where is Paul when this takes place?
- b. Who does he begin to meet with?
- c. What is unique about this group?
- d. Why had they not heard about the Holy Spirit?

12. In the narrative historical account of the opening years of the church, speaking in tongues appears to be very rare, occurring only 3 (possibly by implication 4 or 5) times in the entire book of Acts.

- a. Of these occasions, remind yourself of where (geographical locations) this gift showed itself (in Acts), and who received it each time.
- b. Compare what you have learned to the geographical theme verse of the book, Acts 1:8. List the geographical places Jesus said the apostles would be his witnesses.
- c. How does that correspond to where you have seen the gift of tongues expressed in Acts.
- d. What does this teach you about the purpose of the gift of tongues?

If you desired to look into it further, you would do well to examine a number of occasions where the gospel was being spread in the ancient world and converts are never said to have spoken in tongues (i.e., Acts 13:4-52; 14:1-28; 16:11-15, 30-34).

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**Day 3**

13. As a final step in making some observations about the gift of tongues in the New Testament, we will look to list some basic observations about the gift from the book of 1 Corinthians, the only other book in the New Testament that refers to this gift.
- a. List what you learn about the gift in 1 Corinthians 12.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. List what you learn about the gift in 1 Corinthians 13.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. List what you learn about the gift in 1 Corinthians 14 (you will find many references here).
    - i. What gift is it contrasted with the most and why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
    - ii. What setting is it used in the most?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
    - iii. When is it to be used and when is it not to be used? Who determines when, where, and how it is used?
14. After everything you have studied in this lesson, what was the purpose of the gift of tongues? What purposes for this gift remain today?
15. How does the information gleaned from this study help you understand Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 13:8 and that the gift would cause itself to be stopped?

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16. If someone claims to have the gift today, how would you evaluate its use in light of what you have studied?
  
17. If someone desires to have the gift of tongues, how would you talk with them about their motives, their understanding, and their desire to practice this gift?
  
18. Why is this such a challenging subject for us to think about, talk about, and apply biblical standards to today?