

Tongues, Part 1

By Phillip G. Kayser · Acts 2:4-13, Part 1 · 2005-6-19

Let me start this sermon by saying that I enter into this subject with fear and trembling. I really do. James 3:1 says, "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment." Obviously I don't want to be judged by the Lord, and so I have sought to be slow, and deliberate and careful in my study. I have studied this subject of tongues for 30 years. And yet I recognize that I am not infallible. So I urge you to make sure that I back up everything I say with the Bible. Eat the corn, and throw away any corncob that may have inadvertently crept into my sermon. I don't think there is any corncob here. I am convinced that I am right or I would not be preaching this. But you are still responsible to be Bereans.

And I have friends who strongly disagree with my position. Some of those friends think there is no place for any miracles at all today. I strongly disagree with that position. Some of those are Reformed and some are dispensationalist. But I don't think they have a leg to stand on exegetically. Others who disagree with me say that everybody should be able to have all the gifts, and that no gifts have ceased. And I think I have already clearly demonstrated that at least prophecy and apostleship have ceased. But all three of these positions claim to be following the Scripture. And so, when I disagree with brothers and sisters on the subject of tongues, I hope it is not in a spirit of arrogance. And I hope you will see that I want to be driven by Scripture, and Scripture alone. I have had experiences that contradict the Bible, and I reject my experience and follow the Bible. Why? Because my experience is not infallible. I have had lack of experience that also tempts me to color how I see the Bible, but I have sought to reject my lack of experience and to follow the Bible. Why? Because what I experience or don't experience is not the determiner of truth. Nor are your experiences or lack of experiences. The Bible is the only infallible thing in life. And so, if I cannot back up my statements from the Bible, hold my feet to the fire. OK? I know you will be faithful to do that.

I also want to explain why I am unwilling to take positions on the subject that may *seem* logically valid, but are not logically necessary. And too many Reformed people do that. I'm going to be hitting up the charismatics in a bit, but let me start by critiquing our own circles *which have gone too far in the opposite direction*. Here's the typical argument that a Reformed person might bring.

Premise 1 – Apostleship and prophecy have ceased in the first century. And I happen to agree with that premise. I gave extensive Biblical proof of that three weeks ago. So that is premise 1 of their argument.

Premise 2: They correctly point out that 2 Corinthians 12:12 uses the phrase "signs of an apostle" to describe signs and wonders (in other words, miracles). And I too believe that those miracles (or those signs and wonders) were *indeed* signs of an apostle.

Now, *if it could be demonstrated* that *all* miracles were *only* signs of an apostle, then their conclusion would be necessary.

Their conclusion is that since apostleship has ceased and since miracles were signs of an apostle, that miracles cease when apostleship ceases. There would be no purpose for signs of an apostle if there are no longer any apostles around, would there? That is a very typical Reformed argument. And by the way, that is also a very typical dispensational argument. Older Reformed writers did not fall into this fallacy.

The problem with the argument is that premise two is faulty. If signs and wonders only had the function of being signs of an apostle (as they imply in their argument), *then why does the Scripture show miracles being performed by people who weren't apostles?* There were many miracles done by those who were not apostles. And they might respond, "Well, OK, they are signs of apostles *and prophets*. And both those offices ceased, right? So our argument still holds," they will say. And they will even admit that miracles were signs that authenticated Jesus' claim to be the Messiah." But in order to make that admission, they are making the admission that 2 Corinthians 12:12 is not saying that the *only* function miracles had was to authenticate apostles. It did serve that purpose. But without the word "only" they do not have an argument. Biblical miracles also authenticated the claims of prophets, to really be prophets, of Jesus to really be the Messiah, of evangelists to truly be bringing the message of Scripture, and we saw last week that God did a miracle at Solomon's *temple* to authenticate the fact that God was authorizing this *temple* to replace the tabernacle. And miracles were signs of *believers* to be serving the true and living God. In other words, miracles can serve God's authentication of anything and anyone that He is approving. And by the way, Scripture shows that miracles have other purposes beyond authenticating something. Psalm 103 says it is simply God's covenant blessing in the lives of His followers.

But why don't you turn with me to Mark 16:16-18. Here Jesus claims that ordinary believers would be given signs and wonders. And some people try to weasel out of this passage by claiming that it is not Scripture. If you look at the marginal note at verse 9 in the New King James Version, it says this. "Verses 9-20 are bracketed in NU [that's the critical Greek text that a lot of other modern Bibles follow – it goes on to say] as not in the original text. They are lacking in Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus, although nearly all other manuscripts of Mark contain them." And actually, if you pick up my book on Textual criticism off the back table (and I am coming out with a second major edition of that soon), you will see a picture of this page from Sinaiticus that shows that even that manuscript had it, and where it was poorly erased later. There's a big gap where this text used to be. That booklet shows how God has preserved every jot and tittle of His Word in every age. We can rely on it. We can bank on it. So I think that is a cop out. But look at verses 16-18.

And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.

Here it's not authenticating apostles, but authenticating believers.

And the response might be that these believers must have been given the miracles because the apostles were hanging around. But then you show them miracles in the Old and New Testaments that were private miracles, and you begin to see that we have moved a long way from premise two.

And so what some dispensationalists and Reformed writers will do is to admit that miracles *were* broadly distributed among ordinary believers, but that they were always linked to three periods of time when new revelation was being given, and that the purpose of the miracles was to authenticate the new Scripture. Never mind the fact that during these periods people were given miracles who hadn't even heard the new revelation. But let me quote John MacArthur, who holds to this position. He says, "Most biblical miracles happened in three relatively brief periods of biblical history: in the days of Moses and Joshua, during the ministries of Elijah and Elisha, and in the time of Christ and the apostles." And the purpose of these miracles was to authenticate new revelation.

Now at this point MacArthur is making dogmatic statements not based on Scriptural statements, but based on a theory of how miracles seem to be grouped. But even that has numerous problems. First, no new written revelation was given during the second period of time that MacArthur cites. Second, Jack Deere and other charismatics have been able to chart out Biblical references that cover every period of Biblical history to show the presence of miracles totally outside those three periods. You know, we will not have a strong argument against charismatic abuses if we go beyond the Scripture. We won't have credibility.

Let me give you the bottom line. My caution to you is this: Don't base your theories on deductions that may seem valid, but are not logically necessary. Back up everything with clear Scriptural references. I am convinced by the Scripture (beyond any shadow of a doubt) that our God continues to be a God of miracles. And neither the abuses of charismatics nor the rationalism of skeptics changes what the Scripture says. And we are going to be seeing miracles in the book of Acts. And if the Scripture only clearly states so much, let's restrict our dogmatism to what it clearly says. I think we have already clearly established that all infallible revelation has ceased, that prophecy has ceased and that apostleship has ceased. Let's see what the Scripture says about tongues.

Is this a gift of hearing or a gift of speaking? (v. 4,6,7,8,11)

And we will start with verse 4. "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." The second clause of that verse corrects two common misconceptions that I have repeatedly heard. The first misconception is that Acts 2 is not talking about the gift of tongues, but the gift of hearing. On this theory (which I heard last week that even R.C. Sproul holds to), the disciples were speaking in Hebrew and the foreigners were miraculously hearing this Hebrew in another language. To an Arab it sounded like Peter was speaking in Arabic,

and to a Parthian, it sounded like Peter was speaking in Persian, and to a Phrygian it sounded like Peter was speaking in the Phrygian language, to a Roman it sounded like he was speaking in Latin, but the whole time Peter was actually speaking only in Hebrew. And so on that interpretation, the miracle was not with Peter's *lips*. The miracle was in the hearing of the *foreigners*. And there are both charismatics and non-charismatics that hold to this. And there are two or three variations on that theme – But these interpreters insist that what is happening in Acts 2 is utterly, utterly different than what is happening in 1 Corinthians 12-14. And you can see why they *have* to insist on this. Their interpretation of 1 Corinthians doesn't even remotely look like the tongues of Acts 2. Now think about this for a moment even before we dig into the text. Does this make any sense? The Gospels prophesy of tongues and Acts describes tongues, and then suddenly, the only other time that the New Testament addresses tongues, Paul is supposedly describing a totally different phenomena?! - - I think we should assume that the Bible was meant to *clarify*, not to confuse. So why did Paul use the term "tongues" in 1 Corinthians if what he is describing is utterly different than the tongues in Acts 2? It doesn't make any sense. If both passages are tongues, you would expect both passages to be talking about the same thing. And yet, most modern interpretations of 1 Corinthians 12-14 go to great lengths to distinguish the two. So I want you to be aware of that.

Here's their argument. And I will try to present it the best way that I can. They say that the text does not say that the disciples spoke in other languages, but that the foreigners *heard* them speak in their own language. For example, verse 6, in the last phrase says, "everyone *heard* them speak in his own language."

Second, these foreigners can somehow recognize that these Jews are Galileans, and how could they recognize that if they weren't speaking in their Galilean dialect of Hebrew? Yet somehow they are also able to recognize it in their own language. Verse 7: "Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?" To them, this implies that they are speaking in the Galilean dialect of Hebrew. Yet verse 8 says, "And how is it that we *hear* each in our own language in which we were born?" They claim that this implies that the foreigners recognize that the same speaker is being interpreted as speaking Arabic, Latin, Persian, Greek, etc. – each speaker being *heard* in many languages.

Third, it is argued that those who can't understand what is being said in verse 13 haven't been given the gift of hearing. Otherwise, why couldn't they understand what was being said?

And then lastly, they argue that it is physically impossible for twelve apostles to be speaking in all the languages of the world at the same time.

Let me respond: I would say, "Well *of course* the foreigners heard what was being said in their own language, but the text clearly says that they *heard* it because it was *being spoken* in other languages. Verse 4 says that they "began to *speak* with other tongues." It wasn't just that languages were *heard*. The other languages were coming out of their mouths. And even verse 6, which says the foreigners *heard* it, also makes clear that the

disciples spoke in that language. It doesn't say that they thought the disciples spoke in Latin, Persian, Greek, etc. but that they *did indeed* so speak. Emphasize the word *hear* all you want, it still says "everyone heard them *speak* in his own language." Verse 11 in the middle – "we hear them *speaking* in our own tongues."

As to the argument that it would be tough for the apostles to speak in so many languages, the context makes it clear that it wasn't just the apostles. Verse 1 shows that all the disciples were present. Verse 4 says that all were filled and all spoke in other tongues. Even if it was only the 120 leaders who were speaking in tongues, that's a lot of languages.

Third, why would they be amazed in verse 8 if the only thing an Arab heard was Arabic, and the only thing a Roman heard was Latin? There wouldn't have been any confusion because they would have only heard one language. They would just assume that here were some people who happened to know their language just like they did. If it wasn't remarkable for a foreign Jew to know a foreign language, why would it be remarkable to hear foreign languages coming out of their mouths? It wouldn't. There were 100's of thousands of foreign Jews in Jerusalem. *But*, if there were 120 people speaking 120 languages, as foreigners wandered through the crowd, and all were natives of Galilee and part of the same group, *that* would be remarkable.

The bottom line is that verse 4 clearly says that the believers spoke in other tongues, and no amount of hermeneutical gymnastics can turn this into the gift of hearing. If this brings embarrassment to commentators who don't understand how tongues in 1 Corinthians 12-14 could be so different from tongues in Acts 2, then so be it. It brings no embarrassment to me since I believe the two are identical. And I will later go to great lengths to show that.

Is tongues a true language? (v. 4,6,11)

But there is a second error that verse 4 corrects, and this error is frequently held to by the same people. This error says that the tongues of 1 Corinthians 12-14 is not a true language that can be analyzed by a computer and broken down into syntactically recognizable arrangements. Instead, they say that it is pre-rational communication by the *Spirit (not by us)*, or as some word it, prelinguistic communication by the Spirit. And I think we could theoretically grant that there can be minimal communication without language. But then, it wouldn't be called a language, would it? You can communicate things with a groan or the rolling of your eyes, or a red face, etc. But that's not language. And many charismatics admit that.

One charismatic scholar said this: ""these top drawer theologians accepted the definition in the Molenes Document of Tongues which is pre-rational utterance; which as I understand it would be a lot like laughing and crying. You don't teach a baby how to laugh and cry; it can do that before it can think. This is a primal cry of the heart, it is not a language. Tongues is not a language... We use sounds that indicate words that do not have meaning, such as 'Oops', when we drop something, or 'Uh-huh' or 'um-Hum.'" ... Therefore, tongues, primarily, as I understand it after 32 years of praying in tongues,

is the Holy Spirit in union with my heart crying out for God by which I release my voice to the Holy Spirit so that this crying out can become an articulation. According to Rom. 8:26, the Spirit prays in us with unutterable groanings. I believe in Acts 2 there are two different gifts: the gift of tongues by which the Spirit in the heart of the Apostles was using their voices to praise God. But the gift which we experience from time to time is the anointing of the ears where people hear what the Lord wants them to hear."

My problem with this theory is that the word for "tongues" in this passage and in 1 Corinthians is a word for language – for communication that can be syntactically broken down. This was the word that used in the Old Testament Septuagint, by secular writers, by religious writers and elsewhere in the New Testament for language. Ordinary language.

And just to be fair, I should say that not all charismatics say that tongues is *nota* language, but it seems that the vast majority have been forced to recognize this. Why? Because many examples of tongues have been recorded and analyzed by linguists to see if what these top charismatic leaders are uttering when they supposedly speak in tongues has any order or syntactical arrangements like all languages do. And their discovery is that *none of the indicators of true language appear* in the noises that these top charismatics are voicing.

Now remember that I said last week that I believe that true tongues continues to exist on the missionfield, but it doesn't even remotely resemble the tongues of charismatics. For example, James Thomas went to be a missionary in Cordoba, Argentina in 1985. He had tried and tried and tried to learn Spanish, and could not do it. So he gave up, and did all his work with a translator. But one Sunday night James all of a sudden could understand Spanish and was able to speak it fluently with an Argentinian accent. From that point on he was able to speak anytime, anywhere to people in Spanish, and speak it fluently. When he did conferences in Guatamela, Honduras, Venezuela and Mexico, he spoke their dialects just like a native accent would have it. His wife was instantly given the same ability, but she couldn't speak without an accent. Or you can think of examples like Ethel Raath, Norman Bonner and others who have had the same phenomenon widely documented. I have close friends that were given the ability for only the two weeks that they were in the country, and others who have had the ability continue permanently. MAF pilot Bruce Cadd and Physician Bruce Olson describe native evangelists to other tribes being given the same ability. On the other hand, these same people had relatives and friends who were not given the same gift despite longing for it. God is sovereign.

But in any case, if you read the typical charismatic description of tongues in a book – and I have probably read over 50 such books, they tend to admit that the tongues they speak is inarticulate speech; pre-linguistic noises, etc. And so they have had to come up with different explanations of Acts 2. Some say that the apostles were speaking a language (Hebrew) and that God enabled the hearers to have the gift of interpretation in their own language. Others believe that the disciples were not speaking a true language – it was meaningless noises that were erupting from the true communication which was unheard between Spirit and Father, but the apostles weren't communicating with their

noises. And again, they would say that the hearers were given the gift of interpretation. Others say that it wasn't the gift of interpretation, but purely a gift of hearing, and that this was unique in the Bible, and unconnected to the the tongues of 1 Corinthians 12-14; that's unique in the Bible. But they struggle with Acts 2.

But this passage stands against all such interpretations. To those who say that the disciples were making noises that were inarticulate speech, we would point to verse 4 which says that "the Spirit gave them utterance," and the Greek word for "utterance" is defined in Strong's Dictionary as "to enunciate clearly... to declare, to speak forth." In other words, it *was* articulate speech. To those who deny that it was a language, we would say, "First, the word "tongue" *means* language. Second, Luke lists the languages being spoken in verses 9 and following. Third, the text clearly says that the disciples *spoke* all these languages. For example, verse 4 says, "began to *speak* with other tongues." Verse 6 says, "heard them *speak* in his own language." Verse 11 says, "we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."

And then there is yet another theory. And I suspect this theory was developed because 20 people who interpreted a tongue played to them on a tape recorder gave twenty different interpretations. And this has been repeated a number of times. But their explanation is that the sounds made by tongues speakers carries no meaning in itself. The true meaning is silent prayer between Spirit and Father, and these noises gush out as the human fallibly connects with the Spirit. And so they say that there is no necessary connection between the noises a person makes when speaking in tongues and what God wants the person to hear who has the gift of interpretation. So, on this theory their could be multiple interpretations that the Spirit gives depending on what He wants them to know at any given time. We would respond that verses 6 and 11 make clear that what was spoken *was* what was heard. They heard the wonderful works of God, and verse 11 says they were speaking the wonderful works of God.

Is the tongues in Acts 2 different from the tongues in 1 Corinthians 12-14? No. There are many evidences that they are the same:

But let's dig deeper into this by at least starting to look at question #3. Point 3 asks, "Is the tongues in Acts 2 different from the tongues in 1 Corinthians 12-14?" I've already affirmed that the answer to this is "No. It's not different," and I am going to give several proofs that it is not different. The first proof (point A) is that just as Acts shows true language, 1 Corinthians' tongues is true language. And if you want to follow along, we will be in 1 Corinthians 12-14. I believe that chapter 12-14 are Paul's infallible teaching on the tongues in the book of Acts.

The tongues of 1 Corinthians 12-14 is a true language.

The Greek word for "tongues" (*glossa* - see 1 Cor. 12:10,28,30; 13:1,8; 14:2,4,5,6,9,13,14,18,19,22,23) is the same word used in Acts 2.

First, look at 1 Corinthians 12:10. "to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues." The first thing I want you to notice is that the Greek word for "tongues" is the same word used in Acts 2: *glossa*. Now that's not a definitive answer, but it should make us at least assume that Paul is talking about the same thing. The burden of proof is upon those who say that it is a totally different thing.

The Greek word for "tongues" (*glossa* - see 1 Cor. 12:10,28,30; 13:1,8; 14:2,4,5,6,9,13,14,18,19,22,23) is the normal word for languages (See LXX translation of Gen. 10:5,20,31; 11:7; Dan. 3:7,29; 4:1; 5:19; 6:25; 7:14; see also Rev. 7:9; 10:11; 11:9; 12:7; 14:6; 17:15). It is used to refer to miraculously spoken human languages of the tower of Babel (Gen. 11:7) as well as the miraculously spoken human languages in Acts 2:4. It is used interchangeably with the Greek word *dialektos* (from which we get our English word "dialect") in Acts 2:6,8.

Second, this word *glossa* is the normal word for languages. It's used in secular literature for language and in the Bible for language. For example, the ancient Greek translation of Genesis 10 and 11 uses *glossa* to translate language. "From these the coastland peoples of the Gentiles were separated into their lands, everyone according to his language." In the Greek translation that's *glossa*. This is the word that describes all the languages God created at the tower of Babel. Or you can look at the last book of the Bible. Revelation 7:9; 10:11 and several other verses uses this word to refer to the languages of the world. And in Acts 2:6,8 the word "tongue" (*glossa*) is used interchangeably with *dialektos* (which refers to dialects or variations of language).

The Greek word *hermeneia* ("interpretation" in 12:10; 14:26) is the word used for translating languages (see John 1:42; 9:7; Heb. 7:2). If someone is able to translate, what is translated must be a language.

But look again at 1 Corinthians 12:10. It speaks of "*interpretation* of tongues." The Greek word "hermeneia" is the ordinary word for translating languages. For example, John 1:42 says, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas (which is translated, A Stone.)." A translation always takes words from one language to another language. If tongues was not a real language, you couldn't speak about translating it.

The word "kinds" in the phrase "different kinds of tongues" (1 Cor. 12:10; 14:10) is from the Greek word *genos*, from which we get the English genus: "family, group, race, nation." Babble cannot have a genus or a kind since it is not linguistically distinct from other babble. "Kinds" must refer to true language.

Fourth, in the same verse (1 Corinthians 12:10), it says, **different kinds of tongues**. That's an interesting word. The Greek is *genos* from which we get genus, and it has reference to family, group, race or nation. That's another indicator that we are talking about languages from different nationalities. Kinds of tongues means nationalities of tongues. Babble cannot have a genus (or a kind) since it is not linguistically distinct from other babble. "Kinds" must refer to true languages.

Likewise, "varieties of tongues" (1 Cor. 12:28) implies true language since it is difficult to distinguish varieties of "inarticulate speech" since it's very inarticulateness makes it hard to distinguish from other inarticulateness.

A similar argument could be made from verse 28 where he speaks of "varieties of tongues." You can't distinguish varieties of inarticulate speech since it's very inarticulateness makes it hard to distinguish from other inarticulateness.

When people speak in tongues they speak "words" (1 Cor. 14:9,19), not gibberish.

Sixth, look at 1 Corinthians 14:9. "So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue *words* easy to understand..." Notice that what is spoken is *not pre-linguistic*. It's *words* that are spoken. That means that it *is* linguistic. Look at verse 19. "yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand *words in a tongue*." Do not buy the argument that computers can't analyze it's structure because it's not actually words that are being spoken. No. This clearly say that it is words. It's true language.

Paul says that of all true "languages ... none of them is without significance" (1 Cor. 14:10). The word "without significance" (*aphonos*) means "incapable of conveying meaning as a language normally does" (BDAG lexicon). Thus, tongues are not "pre-linguistic communication" or "pre-rational communication," but propositional communication.

Seventh, look at chapter 14:10. "There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance." I don't think you could get a clearer testimony to the fact that the tongues Paul is talking about is a true language. The dictionary definition of "without significance" is as follows. *Aphonos* means incapable of conveying meaning as a language normally does." Paul is saying that there isn't any language that has that characteristic. This is as explicit a rejection of the idea that tongues is "pre-linguistic communication" or "pre-rational communication" as you can get. And yet Gordon Fee tries to get around it by saying that Paul is simply using an analogy and making only *one point of comparison* with language: that just as foreign languages can't be understood, tongues can't be understood. He says, "The analogy [and I would say, "It's not an analogy; it's an identity. But Fee says, "The analogy] is not that the tongues-speaker is also speaking a foreign language, as some have suggested, but that the hearer cannot understand the one speaking in tongues any more than he can the one who speaks a foreign language." (p. 665). And I would say, "No. If that was the case, why is Paul saying that none of them is without meaning or without significance." What does that have to do with analogy? It's ____. The term "languages of the world" in verse 10 is precisely what Paul and the other tongues speakers in Corinth was able to speak. Unfortunately, I think that too many interpreters have allowed their experience to dictate exegesis, and they just dismiss these verses.

When talking about tongues, he uses another Greek word for language (*phonaē*), and says, "There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world" (1 Cor. 14:10). For Paul, "kinds of tongues" (12:10) is a synonym for "kinds of languages" (14:10).

Instead, it is clear that "kinds of tongues" is a synonym in Paul's mind for "kinds of language." He uses the two phrases interchangeably.

The Greek word for "foreigner" in 1 Cor. 14:11 implies that tongues are a language. Barbaros means barbarian, and refers to "the native people of an area in which a language other than Greek or Latin was spoken" (Louw & Nida). The BDAG lexicon defines such a person as "'non-Hellenic' with focus on strangeness of language: pertaining to using a language that is unintelligible to outsiders, foreign-speaking, of foreign tongue... [or] pertaining to not Greek speaking..." How could a tongues speaker be thought to be a "barbarian" if he wasn't speaking the language of barbarians?

Verse 11: "Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to him who speaks, and he who speaks will be a foreigner to me." Notice the words "meaning," "language" and "foreigner." The Greek for "foreigner" is Barbarian, and let me give you some dictionary definitions so that you can see how this is very parallel to what was happening in Jerusalem in Acts 2. Louw & Nida dictionary say, Barbaros refers to "the native people of an area in which a *language* other than Greek or Latin was spoken" (Louw & Nida). The BDAG lexicon defines it this way: "'non-Hellenic' with focus on strangeness of *language*: pertaining to using a *language* that is unintelligible to outsiders, foreign-speaking, of foreign tongue... [or] pertaining to not Greek speaking..." Now think about that. How could a tongue speaker *be a Barbarian of any sort to you* if he wasn't speaking one of the Barbarian languages? Paul is not complaining that the tongues speaker is speaking gibberish. He is complaining that he is speaking *a foreign language* without translating it, and thus he is not edifying the Greeks and Romans who were in the church. That's the ninth proof for it being a true language.

Tongues communicates since it is used for prayer (1 Cor. 14:14-15), for giving of thanks (1 Cor. 14:16), for singing (1 Cor. 14:15) and for "speaking in our own tongues of the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2:11). All of those require the communication of propositional statements, and these propositional statements are being made by the speakers themselves (not just the Spirit silently praying to the Father from within the speakers) (14:2,,3,4,5,6,9,11,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,26).

Tenth, tongues communicates since it is used for prayer in verses 14-15, giving of thanks in verse 16 and for singing in verse 15. All of those imply language. A prayer is not a prayer if the prayer is not giving propositional statements. The response of charismatics often is that it isn't the person praying, but the Holy Spirit within him. But look at the text. Verse 14. "For if *I pray* in a tongue, *my spirit* prays..." And we will get to the next phrase of whether tongues speakers understand what they are saying next week, and I think you may be very surprised at how clear that subject is. But I do not see any way of getting around this. It is the person who prays and sings. Verse 16 says, "Otherwise, if *you bless* with the spirit..."etc. And in your outlines I give all kinds of examples of persons actually praying, or teaching, or blessing in a tongue. And so the propositional statements must come from the prayer, the blesser, the singer. And so this is parallel to Acts 2:11 which says, "we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the wonderful works of God."

1n 1 Corinthians 14:21, Paul bases his theology of tongues on Isaiah 28:11-12, a passage which refers to a known "tongue" called Assyrian. He identifies the tongues of Corinth with the true language of Isaiah.

Look at verse 21 for the eleventh proof that this is a true language. And this may seem tedious to you. But you need this ammo if you are going to be able to discuss these things with charismatics. These are sincere Christians who have sincerely had a genuine experience. You can't just say, "I question your experience." In fact, we don't even need to debate whether the experience is legitimate or not. We just need to insist that it's not what Paul is talking about. And we need to keep reminding them that their experience needs to conform to the Bible, not vice versa.

I have no problem with reports of missionaries being given the ability to preach in a new language. That's incredible. That's wonderful. That is *just* like what is being described here. Look at verse 21. Paul is basing the whole of his theology of tongues upon a passage in the Old Testament that everyone agrees was the Assyrian language.

In the law it is written, "With men of other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people; and yet, for all that, they will not hear Me," says the Lord. Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers....

If the tongues Paul is talking about is not a true language, then his conclusion *does not logically follow*. The "therefore" of verse 22 has no force and would not be a logical necessity *unless* both the tongues of Isaiah 28:11-12 (that's quoted in verse 21 – unless those tongues) and the tongues of Corinth were the same kind of tongues. I know I am wearing you out with all these proofs, but I want you to come away from this sermon saying, "I am convinced beyond any shadow of a doubt that the tongues of Acts 2 is the same as the tongues of 1 Corinthians. Pastor Kayser gave *more* than adequate Biblical proof. He went way overboard."

The word "other" in "other tongues" (Acts 2:4; 1 Cor. 14:21; Is. 28:11) implies language since it implies a different species of the same subject (language).

Very quickly, both Acts 2 and 1 Corinthians 14:21 and Isaiah 28:11 use the phrase "other tongues." That phrase implies language since it implies a different species of the same subject (the language you already know). Does that make sense? If tongues is not a language, then what does he mean by the word "other." I've got my mother tongue, and then I will be speaking in other tongues, implies that the other tongues are a language too. Otherwise the word "other" doesn't make sense. And everybody agrees with that logic in Isaiah 28:11; they just have a hard time with it on the other passages.

The word "new" in Mark 16:17 implies language (otherwise, what is it new in comparison to?). The new tongue is in context of the old tongue or language that the person already knows.

Likewise, the phrase "new tongues" in Mark 16:17 implies language, otherwise, what is it new in comparison to? The new tongue is new in comparison to the old tongue that the person already knows.

The word "unknown" in the King James Version (1 Cor. 14:2,4,14,19,27) is not in the Greek. It was added by the translators to make it clear that the language being spoken was a language that had not been previously learned. But this should not be interpreted to mean that nobody on earth knows the language. Nor should it be interpreted to mean that the person speaking in tongues does not know what he is saying. There is nothing in the text to indicate that the speaker does not know the language at the time he is speaking. (See next week's sermon)

Some claim that Paul's reference to the tongues of angels (13:1) explains why linguists cannot make out any linguistic features in modern "tongues" – supposedly because angels don't communicate as we do.

However, Paul is not saying that there is an utterly different category of tongue for angels than there is for men. The phrase says, "tongues of men and of angels," implying that the category of definition for "tongues" for men applies equally well to angelic languages. This means that if it is admitted that human tongues are languages, then angelic tongues must be languages.

It is clear that angels communicate to God (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6; 1 Kings 22:22), communicate with each other (Job 38:7; Is. 6:1-3; Jude 9), communicate with man and vice versa (Dan. 9:22-27; 10:10-15; Matt. 28:57; Luke 1:11-17 [notice the subsequent dumbness of Zacharia in vv 18-20]; Acts 1:10-11; 10:1-7 with 11:13-14; Gal. 1:8; 1 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 2:2; Rev. 2:24; etc.). Such communication by definition is not "pre-linguistic" or "pre-rational" as many charismatics claim.

To argue that angelic tongues is pre-linguistic communication necessitates the odd idea that angels can't understand each other without the gift of interpretation.

The deep structure rules of language is that core aspect of God's image that is given to communicating beings. Angels have been granted this ability to have and understand language.

The one other passage that apparently refers to the language of angels (2 Corinthians 12:4) implies that the reason for the need for additional language for angels is because they are dealing with issues that can't be translated into human language. Therefore, if the Corinthians were speaking in the tongues of angels, why did Paul insist that everything be translated? Paul claims that such words are "inexpressible."

The same verse (2 Cor. 12:4) says that it is unlawful for man to utter the angelic words that Paul heard.

Paul is using a form of logic that argues from the greater (what very few if any people have been able to do) to the lesser (the tongues of men these Corinthians were speaking). Paul's logic is that even if someone were somehow to be given the ability to speak in angelic language, it would still mean nothing if he did not have love.

I'm going to skip over point 14 and deal with a major objection that charismatics bring in point 15. When I have brought these other points up, almost always my charismatic friends have appealed to 1 Corinthians 13:1. That passage says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal." I have read numerous arguments that say that Acts 2 is talking about the tongues of men, and Paul is talking mainly about the tongues of angels. And since angels don't communicate like we do, there is no way that a linguist or a computer program would be able to determine if tongues is some kind of language with linguistic features, so don't even try. In fact, they accuse you of blasphemy if you want to test their tongues. But my response is that I don't have a choice. 1 John 4:1 commands me to test the spirits. Paul gives all the rules and all the information about tongues in chapters 12-14 because he wants us to test.

I won't go into all my arguments as to why this doesn't hold water, but let me quickly give you some pointers. First of all, notice that the word "tongues" or language modifies both what men and angels speak. There is one category (tongues) and it has two parts: of men and of angels. As far as I am concerned, that settles it. A language is a

language is a language. Angels don't speak something that is totally different from human languages. There is one category of language, and there's lots of human languages and there are apparently more than one type of angelic language. But it's still a language.

Second, it is clear that angels communicate with God (Job 1), communicate with each other (Isaiah 6 and other passages) and communicate with man (Daniel 9 and many other passages). This ability to communicate is part of the image of God in man, and all language has the same core linguistic structures or it ceases to be a language.

To go even further and to argue (as many have) that tongues is pre-linguistic or pre-rational communication means that the only way angels could communicate with each other would be if the Holy Spirit gave another angel the gift of interpretation to make sense of the babble coming out of the angel's mouth. But this destroys the meaning of "tongue," "language," "speak," "communicate," etc.

Please turn to 2 Corinthians 12:4. This *may indeed* be an example of Paul being given the ability to understand angelic languages. It's the closest example that I could find anywhere of the existence of an angelic language. In every other case the angels speak in the language of the man or woman he is talking to. Let's start at verse 3. Paul is using the third person to be modest. Most commentators hold to that, that it is talking about Paul. And he says,

And I know such a man – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know. God knows – how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

If he was given the ability to understand this angelic language, Paul was saying that he didn't know human words that could adequately express what he heard. There are categories of human thought (because Paul thought it), but there aren't human words that he knew that could express those categories of thought. He didn't deny that the angels had words. The angels expressed words and he heard them, but for Paul it was inexpressible. He couldn't put it into human language.

Second, and to me this is very interesting: Paul was told that "it is not lawful for a man to utter" the words that Paul heard. Whether this is a total prohibition of angelic tongues is not certain, but it is clear that what Paul heard could not be expressed with words ("inexpressible words") and therefore couldn't be translated anyway! That's the point. It is highly unlikely that 1 Corinthians 13:1 is calling Christians to speak in angelic tongues and have them translated. How could you translate what is inexpressible? Rather, he is using a form of logic that argues from the greater (what very few if any people have been able to do) to the lesser (the tongues of men these Corinthians were speaking). Paul's logic is that even if someone were somehow to be given the ability to speak in angelic language, it would still mean nothing if he did not have love. Now next week, as we look at the purpose and nature of tongues we will be seeing that it would be pointless to have the tongues of angels unless God was requiring you to talk to angels. And apparently Paul did.

When there are so many abundant references to the tongues being human language, we are on shaky ground when we say that modern tongues can't be analyzed linguistically because it is angelic tongues that can't be tested by computer. Come on. If it's a language it can be tested, whether it is angelic or not. But in any case, I think I have demonstrated that the tongues of 1 Corinthians is a real language just like the tongues of Acts 2.

Just as there were varieties of tongues (languages) in Acts 2, there were "varieties of tongues" (1 Cor. 12:28) in Corinth.

I think I have also demonstrated that both passages have varieties of tongues.

Just as the tongues in Acts 2 included an evangelistic purpose, the tongues mentioned in Corinth was primarily intended to be used outside the church.

Implied by Paul's contrast between what he speaks outside the church and what he is willing to speak inside the church (1 Cor. 14:18-19). See the "yet."

But another point of comparison is that both passages indicate that tongues can be (and were used) to preach the Gospel. Most people agree that Acts 2:11 shows that purpose. But what about in Corinth? Obviously Paul is trying to minimize the amount of tongues that is being used in the church, but what about outside of the church? Look at 1 Corinthians 14:18-19.

I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all; yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue

(1Cor. 14:18-19) The word "yet" shows the contrast between Paul's speaking in tongues outside the church and his speaking in tongues inside the church – you could say loosely that it is a 10,000 to five ratio. Or at least it indicates that the vast majority of Paul's speaking in tongues was outside the church. Why? It can't be claimed that Paul had more personal devotions than others, or that in his private prayer life he switched to more languages than them. How does one determine that? The obvious answer relates to his job. Those in Corinth didn't come into contact with nearly as many language groups as Paul did in missions, so the Spirit didn't give them as many languages as He gave to Paul. Paul's missions covered so many countries and language groups that apart from the Spirit's miraculous help, he wouldn't have been able to communicate effectively to such a wide range of tribes. He wouldn't have had time to learn a new language in each new country he went to. So that is at least a hint that it had an evangelistic purpose outside of the church.

Implied by the fact that tongues is primarily intended for unbelievers (14:22)

The second hint is in verse 22 where Paul says that tongues was primarily intended for unbelievers, not believers. Now isn't that interesting? Where do most of the tongues go on in charismatic churches? Not with unbelievers, but with believers inside the church –

the very place that Paul said untranslated tongues were useless. That too seems to indicate an evangelistic purpose similar to what it had in Acts 2.

Implied by the contrast between 14:5 and 14:27. Paul desires everyone to speak in tongues (apparently outside the church – 14:5), but only wants a few to speak inside the church (14:27).

The third hint is that verse 5 says, "I wish you all spoke with tongues..." He didn't wish that in the church. In verse 27 he says, "If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret." But that's because there wouldn't be a need for more than two or three in the church. But outside the church there was enormous need for such communication with foreigners.

Tongues is not just a "prayer language." Just as Acts shows that tongues (a supernaturally given ability to speak in a foreign language) could be used for both prophesy (Acts 2:4,18) and teaching (Acts 2:11), so too Paul says that tongues has multiple purposes of communicating information "by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching" (1 Cor. 14:6), praying (14:15), singing (14:15), blessing (14:16), giving thanks (14:17) and speaking to people outside the church (14:18 contrasted with verse 19).

In contrast, charismatics often cite 14:2 as proof that tongues is purely a prayer language and is only addressed to God.

And my last point of comparison today is this: tongues had multiple purposes in Corinth just as it did in Acts. Many charismatics insist that tongues is only (or at least primarily) a prayer language that is addressed to God. And again, not all charismatics hold to this, but it is the dominant view. At first sight, chapter 14:2 seems to support the charismatic contention because it says, "For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries."

Gordon Fee (himself a Pentecostal) says, "Although it is quite common in Pentecostal groups to refer to a 'message in tongues,' there seems to be no evidence in Paul for such terminology. The tongues-speaker is not addressing fellow believers but God (cf. Vv. 13-14,28), meaning therefore that Paul understands the phenomenon basically to be prayer and praise." That's a very common viewpoint – that tongues is only a prayer language. And so long as you mumble quietly, you don't need an interpreter since you are talking to God anyway, not to man.

However, Paul emphasizes throughout this chapter that tongues must edify others, and the profit of tongues flows from multiple uses: "If I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge..."etc.

Let me respond to that. First of all, such an interpretation makes an absolute contradiction in this chapter. Let me spell the contradiction out: Verse 2 (taken out of context) says, "he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God." But look

at verse 6: "But now, brethren, if I come to *you* speaking with tongues, what shall I profit *you* unless I *speak to you* either by revelation..."etc. He was teaching *men* through tongues. Look at verse 21. "In the law it is written: "with men of other tongues and other lips *I will speak to this people...*" God intended them to be speaking to people with tongues. Look at verse 22. "Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but *to unbelievers.*" Verse 28 tells the person speaking in tongues, that if there is no interpreter, "let him *speak to himself* and to God." It's clear that tongues was spoken to men, not just to God. In fact, the whole chapter argues that point by way of the argument of edification. If the tongues doesn't edify the *people*, he should keep silent, because you've got to do it for their benefit.

It is clear that tongues is indeed spoken to men, and not just to God (14:6,21,22,28).

14:2 (in context) means that *untranslated tongues* is only addressed to God, and therefore it should not be done in the church.

So what is verse 2 saying? It is saying that tongues *apart from translation* should never be attempted in the church since that would be speaking to God and not to men, since no one understands him. There is no contradiction because Paul doesn't *want* there to be tongues in the church without interpretation.

But there is more evidence that this is not simply a prayer language. In Acts 2:4,18 tongues was clearly used to prophesy, but in Acts 2:11 it was used for teaching (and the next verse in Joel 2 adds another dimension of tongues – for prayer). And we have the same thing in 1 Corinthians 14. Look for example at verse 6. Here Paul indicates that tongues had multiple purposes. Verse 6 says, "But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching?" The "unless" indicates that he is still speaking in tongues when he communicates with these people. Paul didn't just pray in tongues. He taught in tongues, communicated prophecies in tongues, gave knowledge by way of tongues and communicated new revelations by tongues. It had multiple purposes.

Now keep in mind that I don't believe that God prophesies through tongues anymore, or gives inspired revelation through tongues anymore, since we saw that prophecy has ceased. But could there be teaching in another language like Paul did? I don't see why not. In fact, it would be an incredible blessing to be able to teach a foreigner who came into this room by translating the sermon into his language. I would welcome that. That would be an incredibly edifying ministry.

I want to finish this topic next week. I want to discuss two questions primarily. The first question is, "Did the speaker in tongues know what he was saying," and how you answer that question has profound ramifications. The second question is, "What rules should be followed for speaking in another language and translating?" And Paul lays out nine rules which are broken every Sunday in most charismatic churches. The ninth rule is, if all the other rules are kept, do not forbid to speak in tongues." So we need to make sure that we are not breaking that rule. If someone can translate my sermons into Chinese, Japanese and other languages, I want to talk to you. You will be in high

demand. But you will be in high demand even if you haven't been given that ability supernaturally. If you've just learned the language, and you've learned it well, I want to talk to you. In any case, next week we will pick up where we left and hopefully tie the ends together and make practical applications. But we have gone way too long, so let's close in prayer.

