

have for the Corinthian phenomenon is the Acts phenomenon, it is highly probable that the Corinthian phenomenon represents the same act of speaking in foreign languages as is found in the book of Acts. Any claim to the contrary would appear to require sufficient evidence for such a radical change of understanding of the phenomenon of tongue-speaking. The burden of proof lies heavily on those who would claim that such a change (from foreign-language speaking to ecstatic, nonrational utterance) has occurred.

- (6) What happened to this supernatural gift of foreign-language speaking following the apostolic age? It would appear that its apologetic and evangelistic purposes were fulfilled in the early church, when the message of Christ's coming and atonement had reached all parts of the inhabited world (Colossians 1:5-6, 23). The act had served its purpose, by providing supernatural evidence of truth-claims of the disciples of Christ, with the result that many nonbelievers had received and trusted in Christ and His redemptive work, and believers had been convinced that God had extended His saving grace to all mankind. Since its purpose had been fulfilled, the gift appears to have ceased.
- (8) What about the phenomenon of supernatural speaking in foreign languages today? The phenomenon appears to have disappeared very early in the history of the Church; and no sizable group in the church today makes a claim to the possession or exercise of this gift. A number make the claim that, although glossolalic utterances are not given in any known language, nevertheless they are heard as a known foreign language by those who have the supernatural gift of interpreting tongues. Since Acts 2:4 clearly states that the disciples spoke in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance, this claim is not only unverifiable, but also contrary to scriptural evidence!
- (9) The conception of tongue-speaking in currency today is that of producing nonrational (i.e., without the use of the mind), ecstatic utterances that are foreign to speakers and hearers alike. It now appears clear that these utterances do not constitute language in any meaningful sense of the term. Descriptive linguistics during the past twenty years has been comparing recordings of alleged glossolalia with known human languages. Although linguists have not compared recordings of glossolalia with each of the three thousand or more languages in use in the world today, nevertheless they know enough about representative languages of every known language family in the world to recognize whether or not tongue-speaking is similar to any of these languages. It is not. Not only are these ecstatic utterances devoid of any language structure, they are characterized by an excessive frequency of repetition, especially of one or two vowels; and when they are interpreted, the same phrases or clauses are translated to mean entirely different things! In addition, it has been noted that tongue-speaking,