

Holy Spirit. This phenomenon had a primarily evangelistic purpose: to proclaim and certify the good news of salvation from sin to those whose primary language was foreign to the one attempting to communicate the gospel.

- (2) The modern phenomenon of tongue-speaking, defined as non-linguistic ecstatic utterance, has no warrant in scripture, either exegetically or theologically. Therefore modern tongue-speaking should not be regarded as a supernatural or a spiritual gift of the Holy Spirit, at least so far as the gifts of the Spirit enumerated in Scripture are concerned.
- (3) Tongue-speaking, defined as non-linguistic ecstatic utterance, should probably not be regarded as a Satanically-inspired counterfeit to the work of God, unless it clearly turns men's attention away from Christ and the gospel and toward the seeking of an experience of escape from reality and of self-gratification.
- (4) Given the lack of scriptural warrant for modern tongue-speaking, and the universality of glossolalia in various religions and the occult, modern tongue-speaking should probably be regarded as an expression of the human psyche -- one which provides a temporary release from emotional tension and a temporary emotional "high". As such, it may have some value for psychology and psycho-somatic medicine, but even here its side effects must be considered, including psychological dependence and escape from the need to come to grips with real problems in order to seek lasting solutions.
- (5) If evangelical Christians are drawn away from evangelizing the lost with the gospel, and drawn toward evangelizing other Christians with the baptism of the Holy Spirit and tongue-speaking, then the phenomenon has a net negative value, and holds promise of creating great harm and doing real damage to the Church of Jesus Christ.
- (6) The Apostle Paul says, "Do not forbid to speak in foreign languages. But let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner." (I Cor. 14: 39-40). Paul enumerates four guidelines in I Corinthians 14:26-28 for the exercise of this gift in the church: (a) the gift must be exercised for the edification of the church; (b) two or at the most three should exercise the gift during any one meeting of the church; (c) those who exercise the gift should do so consecutively; i.e., one at a time; (d) there must be an interpreter present to translate the utterance. Thus if anyone claims this gift, his or her utterances in the church are to be tested and evaluated according to their content (in the light of scriptural teaching) and the guidelines enumerated above.
- (7) This controversial issue is not going to disappear from evangelical churches in the near future; therefore believers need to be instructed and helped in their formation of convictions and attitudes on this matter. In view of the volume of religious books, pamphlets, periodicals, and speakers that address this phenomenon favorably, the people of God need solid teaching and preaching directed to this issue, so that they will not be left without assistance in their attempts to evaluate and develop a scripture stance on glossolalia.