

The Holy Ghost (Part I)

- Opening Scripture: Acts 19:1-2
- Who is eligible to receive the Holy Ghost?
 - believers only (John 7:37-39, Ephesians 1:13, Acts 2:37-38)
 - sinners can't receive Him because there is a certain way you have to present yourself to God in order for the Holy Spirit to come in (we'll go into more detail later)

Tongues

- Do tongues and the Holy Ghost always go together? Can you have the Holy Ghost without speaking in tongues?
 - there is an example in the Bible where people received the Holy Ghost without speaking in tongues (Acts 8:14-17); the story continues after they receive the Holy Spirit, but never mentions that they spoke in tongues
 - tongues is one of the gifts that a person is eligible for after they receive the Holy Ghost; however, the Spirit has to give the gift; everyone will not have the gift of tongues even though they have the Holy Ghost (I Corinthians 12:7-11)
- What is a tongue (that the Bible speaks about)?
 - definition- a language
 - example on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-11): the gift of tongues is used to spread the Gospel in other languages
 - every time tongues were used in the Bible another nationality was present (the account mentioned in the opening scripture does not state this clearly, but Ephesus, where they were, was a thriving metropolis with a seaport during Biblical times and many people of different nationalities came through there)
- Conclusion
 - the gift of tongues allows people to spread the Gospel to other nations and languages

- the Holy Ghost manifests Himself in more ways than just through the gift of tongues; He gives other gifts as well (in fact, the list of gifts in I Corinthians 12 places the gift of tongues toward the end of the list)
- a person must have the Holy Ghost to be eligible for the gifts
- only believers are eligible for the Holy Ghost

A Little on the History of the Modern Tongues Movement:

Source: <http://www.religioustolerance.org/tongues1.htm>

Definitions of "speaking in tongues":

The term "*speaking in tongues*" has been used to describe two very different phenomena:

- **Glossolalia:** This is the most commonly meaning of "*speaking in tongues*." This term is derived from two Greek words: *glōssai*, which means "*tongues*" or "*languages*," and *lalien* which means "*to speak*." It is observed in some tribal religions and within some Christian denominations, notably Charismatics, members of [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#) (often called Mormons) in the past, ¹ and [Pentecostals](#).
- One source claims that [Atheists](#) and [Agnostics](#) have also spoken in tongues. ²
- Another source defines it as "*a phenomenon of intense religious experience expressing itself in ecstatic speech*." ³
- Still another source comments: "*To the outsider, hearing someone speaking in 'tongues' is like hearing so much gibberish. ..Glossolalia is the common prayer speech heard at Pentecostal churches*." ⁴
- The *Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible* defines glossolalia as: "*the ecstatic utterance of emotionally agitated religious persons, consisting of a jumble of disjointed and largely unintelligible sounds. Those who speak in this way believe that they are moved directly by a divine spirit and their utterance is therefore quite spontaneous and unpremeditated*." ⁵

A person speaking in tongues is typically in a state of religious ecstasy and is often unable to understand the words that she/he is saying.

Most Christians who speak in tongues believe that they are speaking in an existing language. However, it is not similar to any known human tongue. Many speculate that it is a heavenly tongue. i.e. a language spoken by angels or by God, and does not correspond to any human language. It was seen frequently in the church at Corinth in the 1st century CE. It was experienced rarely during the history of Christianity until the 20th century when it became quite common.

- **Xenoglossia:** (a.k.a. Zenolalia, Xenoglossia) This is the ability to spontaneously speak a foreign language without first having learned it, or even been exposed to it. This term is also derived from

two Greek words: *Xenos*, which means "foreign" or "foreigner", and *glōssai*, which means "tongues" or "languages." An event in which an individual who knows only English, has never been exposed to any other language, and who suddenly starts to speak in fluent Swahili would be an example of Xenoglossia. Stories of xenoglossia are well known, particularly within the Pentecostal movement and psychic research.

The phenomenon of speaking in tongues differs greatly among conservative Christian faith groups:

- Most Pentecostal denominations teach that, at the time that a person is saved, or slightly later, the believer will be "*baptized of the Holy Spirit*." One automatic manifestation of this baptism is the gift of speaking in tongues (a.k.a. glossolalia). Essentially all of their members do exhibit this gift when or after they are saved.
- Other conservative Protestant denominations, such as Fundamentalist and other Evangelical groups, also teach the vital importance of personal salvation. Most of their members are saved. But these denominations do not associate salvation with speaking in tongues. Essentially none of their saved members speak in tongues.

History of Speaking in Tongues

The various gifts of the Holy Spirit disappeared from view after the death of the apostles.

"Tongues" have reappeared since the Renaissance:

- **Late 17th century:** in southern France during the attempted extermination of Protestants by the Roman Catholic church. Many of the victims who exhibited the gift were French Calvinists, called Huguenots.
- **18th century:** among some British [Quakers](#) and American Methodists.
- **19th century:** in England among members of the Catholic Apostolic Church, and in the US among members of [Mormon](#) churches. Later in the 19th century, it became common within the Holiness churches.
- **Early 20th century:** it was an important factor -- perhaps the defining characteristic -- at the founding of the [Pentecostal](#) movement. In 1900, Charles Parham and a small Bible study group in Kansas began to study Bible passages about the gift of tongues. They began to speak in tongues. In 1906, one of Parham's students -- William J. Seymour, an African American preacher, -- held a Pentecostal revival meeting in Los Angeles that developed into the Azusa Street Mission Revival. The movement quickly expanded from there. It started out as a mixed-race movement, but later de-integrated. 8 Attendees were often described as "Holy Rollers", "Holy Jumpers", "Tangled Tonguers" and "Holy Ghosters." 9
- **1960s:** Believers who spoke in tongues began to form Charismatic groups with existing denominations, both Protestant and Catholic.
- **Recent events:** At the *Toronto Blessing in Toronto, ON, Canada* and the *Pensacola Blessing in Pensacola, FL*, many unusual activities have been observed. These include:
 - Being slain in the Spirit -- fainting and remaining motionless for several hours,

- Laughing in the Spirit -- exhibiting uncontrollable waves of laughter,
- Getting drunk in the spirit,
- Weeping in the Spirit,
- Barking like a dog, and
- other unusual activities.

Although the Pentecostal movement has enjoyed a rapid increase in membership in many countries around the world, the movement in Canada has been shrinking. [It lost about 15%](#) in membership between 1991 and 2001, according to the Canadian government's census office.

Note:

A lot of times it's good to research the history of something when making a judgment. We don't intend to focus on the gift of tongues for the rest of this series, but the purpose of this lesson is to separate the gift of tongues and the Holy Ghost. Everyone who has the Holy Ghost will not speak in tongues. Next week, we will focus on the Holy Ghost Himself.