

IS SPEAKING IN TONGUES RELEVANT FOR TODAY?

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Is speaking in tongues relevant for today?

That is a very good question. It certainly is *evident* today. 100's of millions of Christians are filled with the Holy Spirit and who practice this strange but wonderful gift of God.

What does the Bible reveal and teach about speaking in tongues?

The believers gathered in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues - (*Acts 2*)

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them (Acts 2:4).

In this case people heard them speaking human languages not their own. This was the only instance of 'glossolalia' (the Greek word) manifest in this way. All other instances were unintelligible language.

(1 Corinthians 14:2 'unknown tongue' – KJV)

Peter explained to the crowd, “*this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel*” (2:16).

He then quotes Joel’s prophecy about the outpouring of the Spirit in the last days upon God’s people. And while proclaiming the gospel, he declares about Jesus:

“Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear (v33).

The convicted crowd cried out, “*brothers, what shall we do*”? (v37).

*Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.³⁹ **The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call.**” (v38,39 emphasis added).*

The normal experience for new Christians was to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence and gift of speaking in tongues.

(Below verses and comments adapted from *The Way of the Lord*, by Barbara Buckland, Bethel Publications, Boroko, PNG.)

Acts 2:1-13

The Day of Pentecost 120 men and women spoke in tongues.

Acts 8:5-25

Peter and John found converts of Philip in Samaria who had been baptised in water. They laid their hands on them and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. A sorcerer saw this and offered money for the gift which he observed.

Acts 9:17

Paul was healed and filled with the Holy Spirit after Ananias laid hands on him. Later Paul wrote, *“I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all”* (1 Cor. 14:18).

Acts 10:44-48

Peter preached at Cornelius' house, and people were filled with the Holy Spirit. Others knew they were filled because they heard them speaking in tongues.

Acts 19: 1-7

Paul baptised believers in water at Ephesus, laid hands on them, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues and prophesied.

Dr Barry Chant in his book, *Your Guide to God's Power*, TABOR, 2017 pg. 55, highlights the purposes of speaking in tongues found in the NT.

- Speaking in tongues is not to men but to God (*1 Cor. 14.2*)
- speaks divine mysteries (*v2*)
- is for personal edification (*v4*)
- is a form of prayer (*v14-15*)
- is thanksgiving (*v16-17*);
- is a sign for unbelievers (*v22*);
- is spiritual intercession (*Romans 8:26-27*);
- is the display of the Mighty works of God (*Acts 2:11*).
- We can also sing in the Spirit - in tongues (*1 Cor. 14:15*).
- “Do not forbid it” (*v40*).
- Speaking in tongues in a gathering of believers. ***1 Corinthians 12: 8-10.***

The 9 Gifts of the Holy Spirit are: Miracles, Healings, and Faith. Word of Wisdom, Word of Knowledge, Discernment of Spirits. Prophecy. Tongues, Interpretation of tongues.

Speaking in tongues is used in a prophetic way when spoken out in the church gathering, so long as there is an interpretation given by the Spirit.

*“Eagerly Desire Spiritual gifts” (1 Corinthians 14.1).
But ‘tongues’ is the only one of the nine which can be
used at will as a heavenly prayer language (v14-15).*

In closing, there is no biblical reason every
believer cannot be filled - baptised - with the Holy
Spirit and speak in tongues. In fact, it is the
promise of God for each one of us.

*“The promise is for you and your children and for all
who are far off” (Acts 2:39)*

So, may I encourage you today to reach out in
faith and receive the Gift the Father promised.
Acts 1:4.

Ask the Lord to fill you. Step out boldly by faith
and begin to speak in tongues. It is not just
relevant for today - it is essential!