



## WEEK 2 – “Confusing Signs”

**REVIEW: WEEK 1** We must judge every EXPERIENCE by the infallible standard which is **GREATER** than any experience (**2 Peter 1:19-21**).

**The infallible standard is the Bible.** When confronted with the truth of the Bible versus a seemingly real and valid experience, the experience must be judged in the light of the Bible. If the experience does not line up with the Bible, the experience must be the one to go – no matter how real! Amen.

Tonight, we begin with definitions. We must understand the terms being used today (and definitions) and compare them to the Bible’s definitions. (Example: **1 Cor 15:1-4** “*according to the scriptures*”)

Next week, we will learn the purpose for all SIGNS and WONDERS! Then, we will study every usage of “*tongues*” in the Bible, an overview of 1 Corinthians, and a detailed study of 1 Corinthians 12-14.

### THE DEFINITION OF “TONGUES”

#### 1. The biblical definition of “TONGUES”

##### a. **Acts 2:4-11**

**Acts 2:9-11**  
*Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.*

- In **Acts 2**, “*tongues*” were spoken first by the apostles – men who were **NOT** familiar with the particular language that they each were supernaturally speaking. However, the foreigners present could understand in each’s respective language.

**NOTE** Outside of **Mark 16:17**, which prophesied the future (Acts 2) use of tongues, this is the **FIRST** use of “*tongues*” in the New Testament. (Law of 1<sup>st</sup> Mention)

- **Acts 2:6** proves every person heard the word of God in his own native language.
- **Acts 2:9-11** proves exactly where these men were from, and **languages spoken**.

**KEY** The Bible teaches that “*tongues*” = “**LANGUAGES**”.

##### b. **1 Corinthians 14:20-21**

- The Apostle Paul, while speaking through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, rebukes the Church at Corinth for being like CHILDREN in their understanding (*also 13:11*). Apparently, they had elevated the gift of *tongues* to an elite practice within the Church and were speaking in “**UNKNOWN** *tongues*” (**1 Co. 14:2, 4, 13, 14, 19, 27**).

**This went against the biblical PURPOSE of the gift.** (*As we will learn next week*)

- An “**UNKNOWN** tongue” as defined by the context of 1 Co. 14 has two possible definitions (*although both could be happening at the same time*):

**Unintelligible**  
(Synonyms)

Ambiguous, baffling, bewildering, confused, disjointed, garbled, illogical, incomprehensible, inconsistent, indecipherable, jumbled, meaningless, muddled, mystifying, nonsensical, obscure, unclear, unfathomable, vague.

1) An unintelligible language **NOT** in operation anywhere. In truth, it is **NOT** even a language! It is likely the church at Corinth was doing this (*speaking in an unintelligible words*) ... exactly as “Christian” groups are doing NOW.

**NOTE** It was a common practice among the local pagan religions of that *time* and is still practiced by MANY pagan non-Christian religions today. In light of the other pagan antics the Corinthian church was still practicing (*see Paul’s rebukes in chapters 1-16*), it is possible they were still doing this with a “Christian” twist.

**Doctrinal Accountability**

How do you hold people accountable for their teaching when you cannot even understand what they are saying? This is why God gave you the Holy Spirit and His holy Book! Amen.

2) A known spoken language, but with no one present to **UNDERSTAND**. It was a language with **no hearers** who could know what was being said.

**NOTE** That is why he said if there is no one who is around to understand it, then you need someone to exercise the gift of interpreting so everyone could get it or else be silent!!! **1 Cor 14:27-28**

- The key concerning this particular chapter (1 Co. 14) is that there must be **UNDERSTANDING** (1 Co. 14:19). Therefore, anything done without understanding is **NOT** profitable. (*We will do a thorough expository study of this chapter, verse by verse, and compare it with what we see happening today.*)
- God, having PRESERVED His word perfectly in the Authorized Version, writes the word “*unknown tongue*” only six times in the entire Bible.

Strangely enough it appears **ONLY** in 1 Corinthians 14 and nowhere else!

*Think about that!* He then quotes to them in verse 21, Isaiah 28:11 which defines “*tongues*” as an understandable known language. This was a prophecy concerning the coming Assyrian invasion of Israel (*the people that fulfilled that prophecy initially historically were the Assyrians, WHO SPOKE ASSYRIAN – a known, spoken language and not an unintelligible language or “heavenly” language*).

Now get this...watch the historic similarities...

The **Acts 2** SIGN that was the doctrinal fulfillment of **Isaiah 28:11**, referred to as “*Tongues*” came in the form of a **KNOWN**, understandable, spoken language; it was **NOT** an **unintelligible** language!

In Isaiah’s time, Israel would **NOT** believe God, so He sent the Assyrians to deal with them who were a people of “*other tongues*.” God did this **SIGN** so Israel would believe Him. Unfortunately, Israel’s leaders still did not believe.

In the time of Acts 2 Israel did **NOT** believe God, so He sent the apostles to deal with them who spoke with “*OTHER tongues*.” God did this **SIGN** so Israel would believe Him. Unfortunately, Israel’s leaders still did not believe.

c. According to the context of **Acts 2:4-11** and **1 Corinthians 14:20-21**...



“*Tongues*” or “*other tongues*” are **clearly** defined as being a specific, understandable, known language currently in operation by a certain people group or nation.

**KEY** The Bible usage of “*tongues*” is **never** an unintelligible, “*heavenly*” language!

- d. The use of the word “*tongues*” is consistent throughout the Bible. The verse list below contains every passage in the Bible, with the exception of the apostolic references which we will look at in the coming weeks, with the word “**tongues**” found in it:

**Genesis 10:20** These are the sons of Ham, after their families, after their **tongues**, in their countries, and in their nations.

**Genesis 10:31** These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their **tongues**, in their lands, after their nations.

**Ps 31:20** Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of **tongues**.

**Ps 55:9** & Destroy, O Lord, and divide their **tongues**: for I have seen violence and strife in the city.

**Ps 78:36** Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their **tongues**.

**Ps 140:3** They have sharpened their **tongues** like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips. Selah.

**Isa 66:18** For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and **tongues**; and they shall come, and see my glory.

**Jer 9:3** And they bend their **tongues** like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD.

**Jer 23:31** Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that use their **tongues**, and say, He saith.

**Rom 3:13** Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their **tongues** they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

**Rev 7:9** After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and **tongues**, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

**Rev 10:11** And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and **tongues**, and kings.

**Rev 11:9** And they of the people and kindreds and **tongues** and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

**Rev 13:7** And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and **tongues**, and nations.

**Rev 16:10** And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their **tongues** for pain,

**Rev 17:15** And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and **tongues**.

**Proselyte**

A newcomer; one who has converted from a Gentile religion to Judaism.

**NOTE** The passages from Acts and 1 Corinthians were intentionally left out because we will study them in detail in the coming weeks.

- ❖ Consider this about Acts 2 – ALL people present at the time of Acts 2 were **JEW**S.
- ❖ Any Gentiles that were present were converts to Judaism (*which would make them JEWISH*; See verse 10, “**proselytes**”).

**NOTE** When “*tongues*” (known languages which were unknown to the speaker) were first used in the NEW TESTAMENT, they were used by Jews and only Jews.

2. Conclusion

- a. “*Tongues*” as defined by many so-called “*Christian*” groups, is actually an “**UNKNOWN tongue**” which is, in truth, an **unintelligible** language.

**NOTE** This practice is forbidden by God. In history, at the time of 1 Corinthians 14, God made it clear to not hinder the ACTUAL, BIBLICAL use of *tongues* (**1 Co. 14:39**).

- b. According to the Bible, “*tongues*” or “*other tongues*,” are **KNOWN**, spoken, **understandable** languages.

In an apostolic context, “*tongues*” were supernaturally spoken by, OR supernaturally interpreted by, a person unfamiliar with the particular language in question at the time of its manifestation.

**KEY** These are objective, biblical, facts and not based upon any subjective view. This is what the Bible **clearly** says. And all God’s people said, “**AMEN.**”

**\*\* NEXT WEEK – the PURPOSE for “*tongues*” and all signs and wonders as taught by the word of God! \*\***