

# BIBLE EXPLORER

News

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Online Newspaper

PEN-5

## THINGS PENTECOSTALS DON'T KNOW

— About The Relationship Between First-Century Pentecost & Modern Pentecost —

#pen-5 — Online NEWSpaper "PENTECOST" series. Each article builds on the aggregate foundation of all the previous ones.

From #pen-4—

It is difficult to rescue those among the perishing who think they've already been rescued. The most difficult of tasks is to convince them that their presumed rescuers are pirates who sail under the Christian flag. So why keep trying?

*And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*

—Galatians 6:9

candid chats with pentecostals

### Tongues of Angels

A former pastor, full to overflowing with righteous indignation, challenged me via email: "You're dead wrong about tongues always having to be the known languages of men, sir! Paul said he spoke with the tongues of angels!"

*Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become [as] sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.*

—1 Corinthians 13:1

I wrote back, "As always, my friend, I appreciate scriptural feedback and rebuttal, but here are some things you may want to ponder on that topic:

"At 1 Corinthians 14:2, Paul wrote, 'Wherefore tongues are for a sign not to them that believe, but to them that believe not.'

If there were Holy Ghost inspired utterances of angelic (i.e.: truly unknown) languages, how and why might they ever serve as a credible and effective sign to any unbeliever? How and why might an unbeliever's heart be pricked to repentance unto salvation because of them, as was the case with the known tongues of the unbelievers who heard them at Acts 2?

"How might they serve any useful purpose except, perhaps, to inflate the egos of the *tongue*-talkers?"

*He that speaketh in [unknown] tongue edifieth (i.e.: entertaineth) himself.*

—1 Corinthians 14:4

And of what possible ministry value is speaking 'into the air?'

—1 Corinthians 14:9

"Those Corinthian church folk were clearly out of control. Paul's 1 Corinthians 12, 13 and 14 message to them was not of encouragement and edification; but of strong rebuke, chastisement and correction. His 13:1 is objectively characterized as hyperbole—an extravagant statement or figure of speech not intended to be taken literally.

"Unbelievers who witness the unintelligible utterances of pentecostals for the first time are typically scared to death! Please note that my *scared to death!* phrase is hyperbole, too.

"The Holy Spirit gives utterance ONLY to languages

that, although unknown to a speaker, are necessarily heard and understood with no supernatural assistance whatsoever by at least one foreign-language-speaking unbeliever.

"Unknown *tongues* are uttered by the power of seducing spirits, as addressed at 1 John 4:1 and 1 Timothy 4:1. The jury is in: That point is not intelligently debatable."

That former pastor chose not to respond. Had he learned? If not, of what value is God's clearly written word to him?

*...thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.*

—Revelation 3:1

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### Foundation of Our Faith

"Don't bother us with what the Bible says; we know 'what we believe' about Pentecost!" Those weren't the words, but it was the tone of a letter from the pastor of a small pentecostal church who had received one of our early pamphlets from a church member. He wrote, "By what authority do you attack the foundation of our Pentecostal faith?"

I wrote back, "I am happy to apologize for any such attack if you will be kind enough to direct me to the specifics of it, sir. That may be a difficult task,

though: While I have cited a collection of scriptures that appear to be a strong indictment against some of your doctrines and practices, my initial thought is that the scriptures (not I) have angered you.

"Our two-edged sword hurts when it cuts. I've learned that I can't grow without a few cuts.

"I am particularly burdened by something you have written, though: Does the foundation of your faith really rest on your practice of unknown tongues and their interpretations?"

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### My Special Prayer Language

A saintly sister wrote me, "Praise the Lord, brother! I have a very special prayer language that the devil can't understand!"

I wrote, "I'm sure that feels good, but could you send me a scripture that suggests that there are languages that the smartest being God ever created cannot speak and understand fluently?"

About two weeks later she wrote, "Romans 8:26 says the Spirit intercedes for us with groanings that can't be uttered."

I guessed that her preacher had helped with that, so I wrote, "Do you think you might ask your pastor to help us out with that 'cannot be uttered' part?"

