

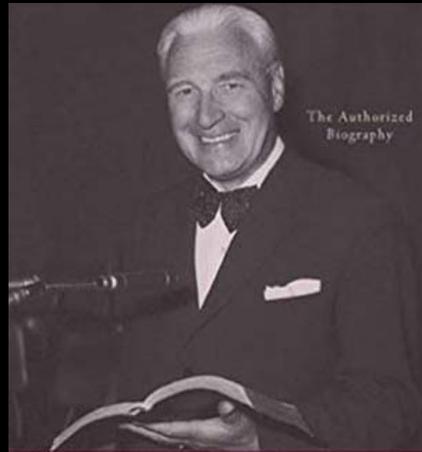
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Part 4: Sign Gifts
Gifts that validated Jesus & the Apostles

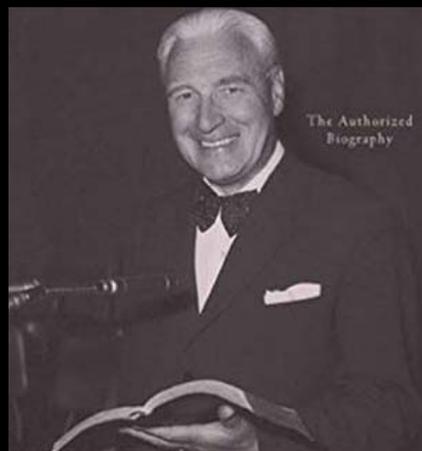


“And how endlessly interesting these problem texts make the Bible! Joseph Parker well said: ‘When the last word has been said about the Bible it will no longer be the Word of God.’ We never get to the end of the Bible. It is as wise in its reservations as in its revelations. Enough is revealed to make faith intelligent. Enough is reserved to give faith scope for development.

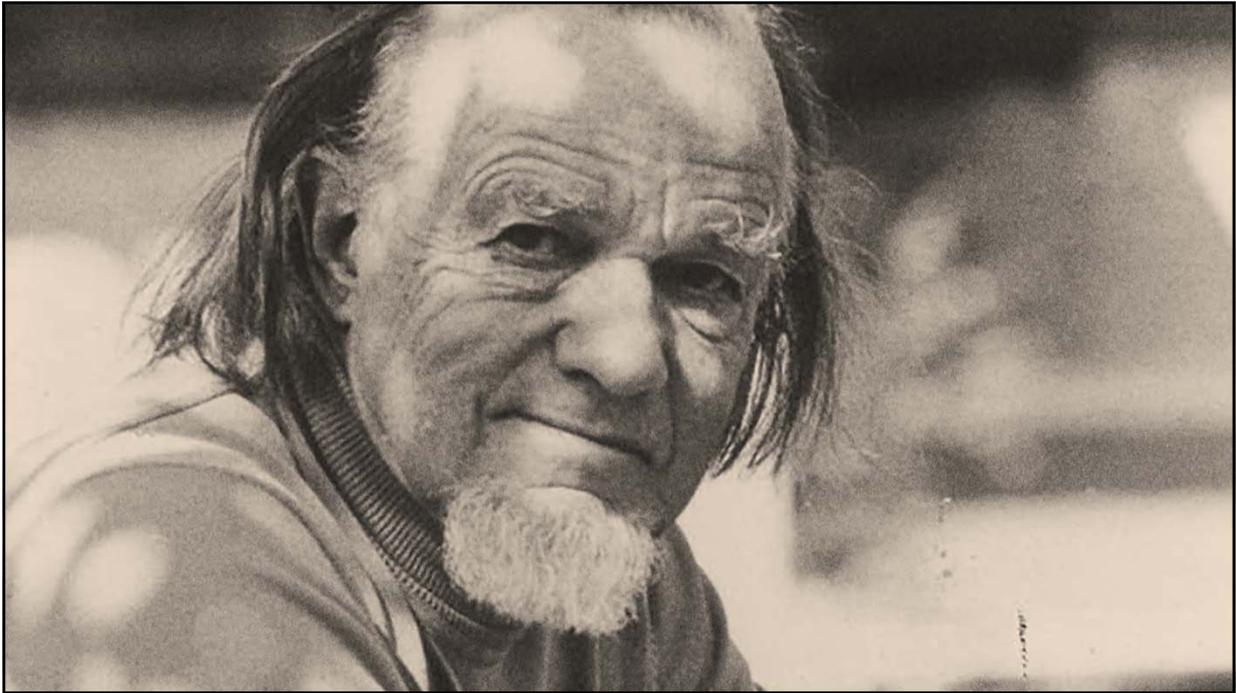


J. Sidlow Baxter
Studies in Problem Texts

Everything needful to salvation and godliness is written with such clarity that all the simple-hearted may understand; but there are other matters which, with wise divine purpose, are presented less lucidly, or even enigmatically, so as to challenge enquiry – matters fascinating, mysterious, or more intricate, but all yielding rich and sanctifying reward to devout exploration.”



J. Sidlow Baxter
Studies in Problem Texts



Francis Schaeffer, *The New Super Spirituality*:

“One can also see a parallel between the new Pentecostals and the liberals. The liberal theologians don’t believe in content or in religious truth. They are really existentialists using theological, Christian terminology. Consequently, not believing in truth, they can enter into fellowship with any other experience-oriented group using religious language. A dismissal or lessening of content has occurred in the new Pentecostalism.

Instead of accepting a person on the basis of what he believes, which has always been the Christian way, it's, 'Do you have these external manifestations?' Questions which have been considered important enough to cause crucial differences, all the way back to the Reformation and before, now are swept under the rug. On this level too, as with the liberals, it is as though people can believe opposite things on important points of doctrine, and both can be right. Or perhaps, it is better to simply say content does not matter as long as there are the external signs and religious emotion."

1. The sign gifts:

- tongues
- interpretation of tongues
- healing
- miracles



2. God has normally used signs to validate His special messengers.

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- Supernatural signs validated His prophets in O.T. times:
 - Moses

Ex 4:8-9 “Then it will be, if they do not believe you, nor heed the message of the first sign, that they may believe the message of the latter sign. ⁹ And it shall be, if they do not believe even these two signs, or listen to your voice, that you shall take water from the river and pour it on the dry land. The water which you take from the river will become blood on the dry land.”

- Elijah & Elisha
- Daniel

Dan 6:27 He delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

- **Supernatural signs validated Jesus's divinity:**

Jn 2:11,23-24 This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him. ... ²³ Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. ²⁴ But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men,



Jn 4:48 Then Jesus said to him, “Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.”

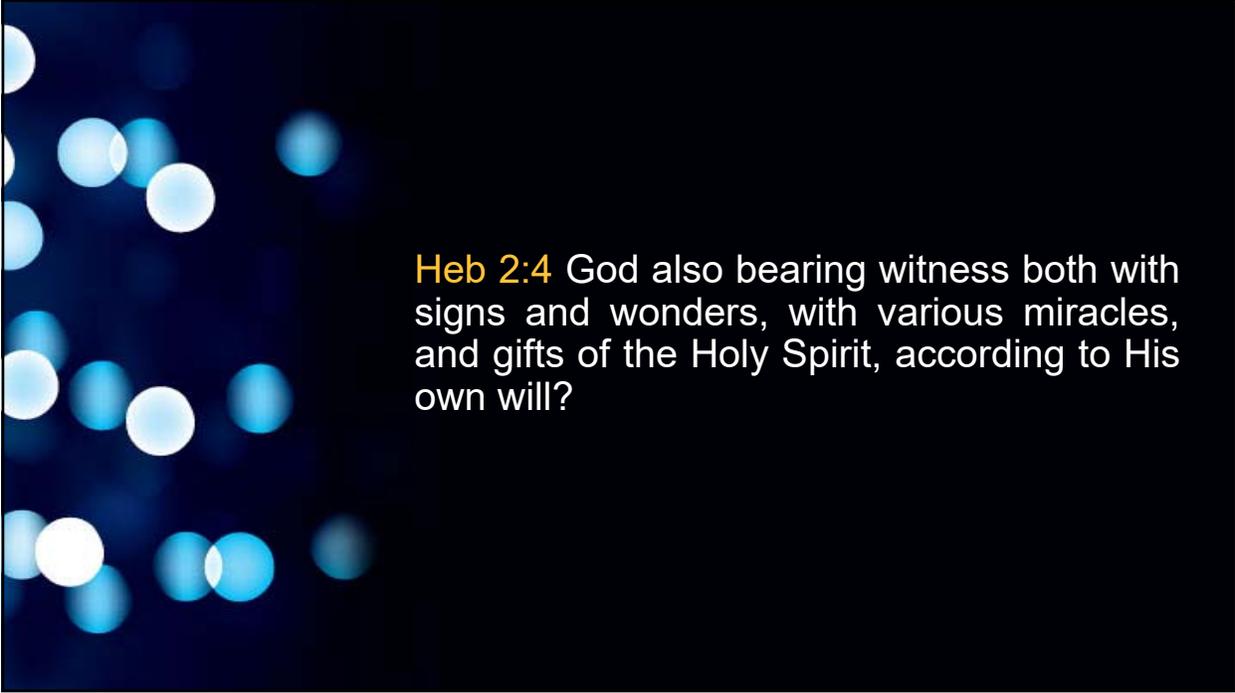
Acts 2:22 Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know



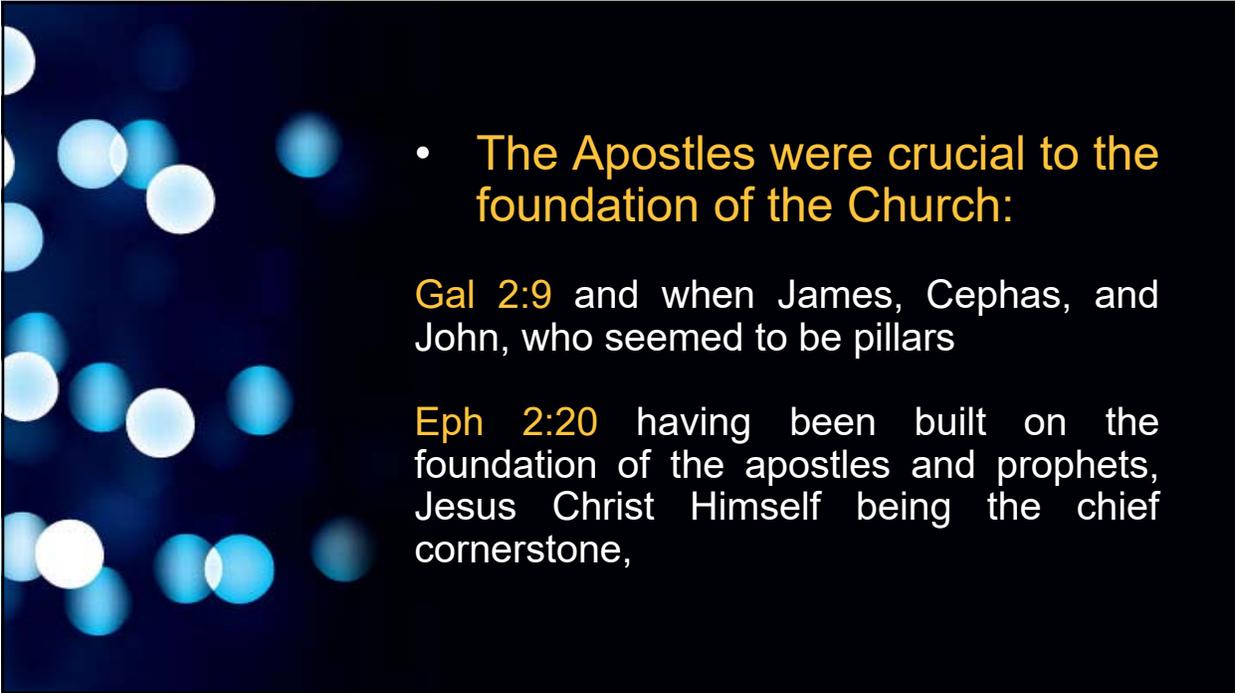
- **Supernatural signs validated the Apostles:**

Acts 4:29-30 Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, ³⁰by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.

2 Cor 12:12 Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.



Heb 2:4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?



- **The Apostles were crucial to the foundation of the Church:**

Gal 2:9 and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars

Eph 2:20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,

3. Spiritual gifts are not all equal.

1 Cor 12:28,31 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. ... ³¹But earnestly desire the best gifts.

Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

1 Cor 12:31 But earnestly desire the best gifts.

4. The gift of *tongues* was a sign gift:

1 Cor 14:22 Therefore tongues are for a sign ...

5. Everyone does not receive the gift of “*tongues.*”

1 Cor 12:29-31 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? ³⁰Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹But earnestly desire the best gifts.

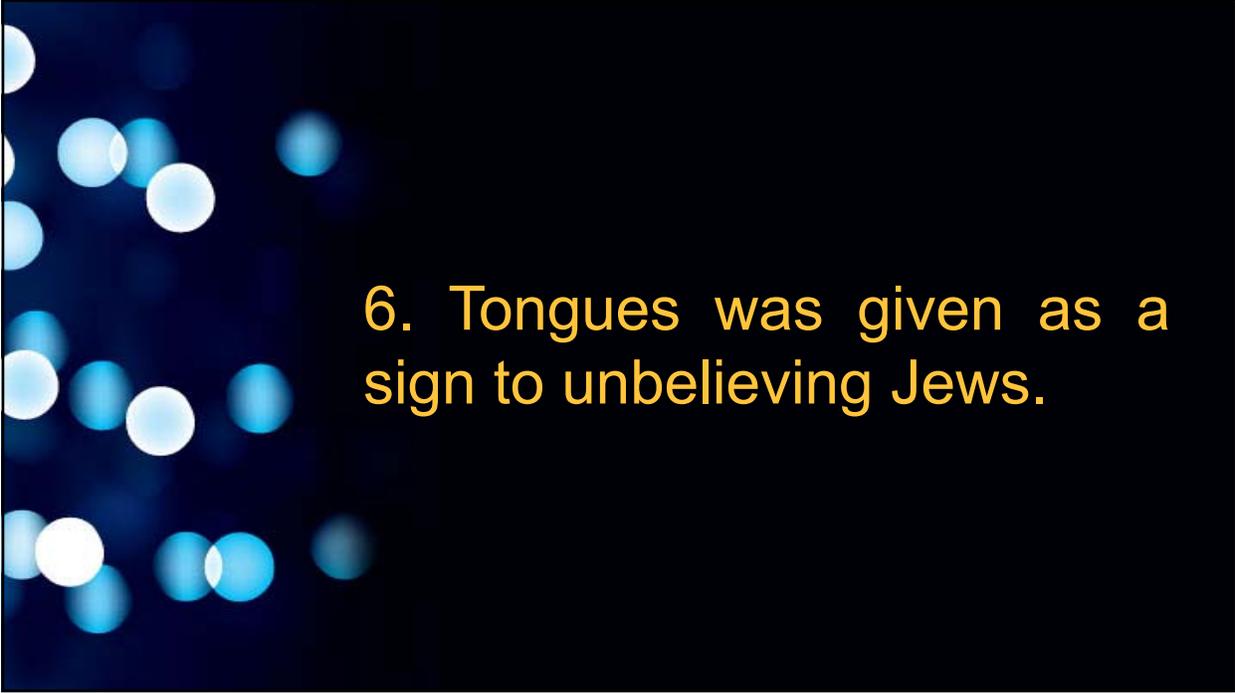
Rom 12:6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them:

We believe the sign gifts, referred to in Scripture as “*apostolic sign gifts,*” are **no longer** generally operative today. The primary purpose of these gifts was to demonstrate that Jesus (Acts 2:22) and the apostles were the true representatives of God (2 Cor 12:12).

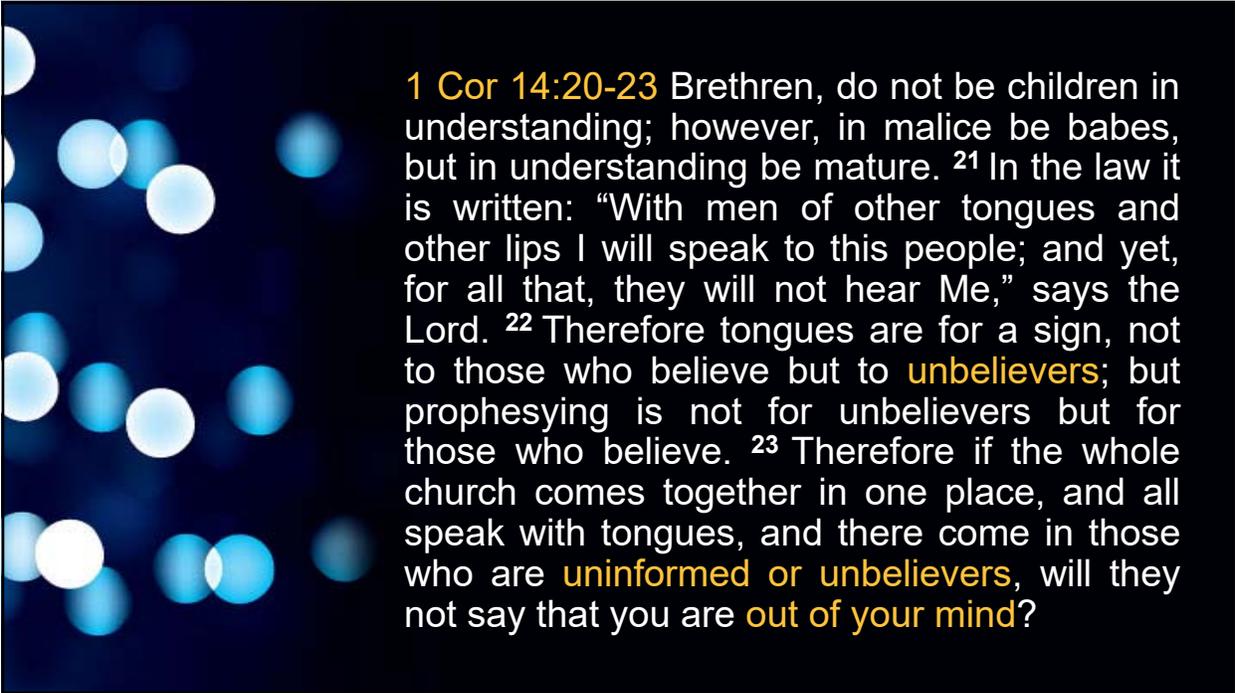
- Even though God is supernatural and can do anything He desires to do, we believe Scripture teaches that once these gifts fulfilled their purpose with the completion of the canon of Scripture and the establishment of the church, they ceased to function in the church as they did in the Apostle's ministry and were done away with when the last of the Apostles died.

The gift of tongues seemed to cause the most trouble in the early church.

It caused such a problem in the Corinthian church, Paul had to write an entire chapter (1 Cor. 14) to address this abuse and to provide guidelines for their proper use as long as the gift was active.



6. Tongues was given as a sign to unbelieving Jews.



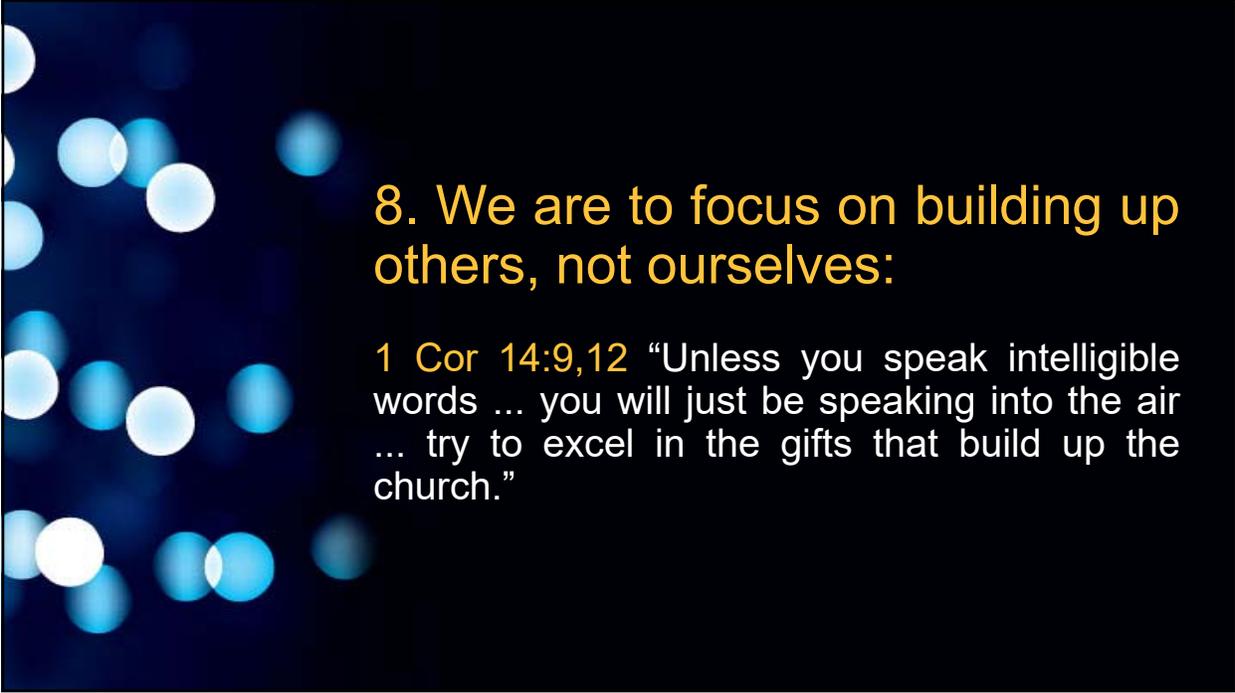
1 Cor 14:20-23 Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature. ²¹ In the law it is written: "With men of other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people; and yet, for all that, they will not hear Me," says the Lord. ²² Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to **unbelievers**; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe. ²³ Therefore if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those who are **uninformed or unbelievers**, will they not say that you are **out of your mind**?

Paul clarified the difference between Jewish unbelievers & gentile unbelievers:

1 Cor 14:24-25 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all. ²⁵And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.

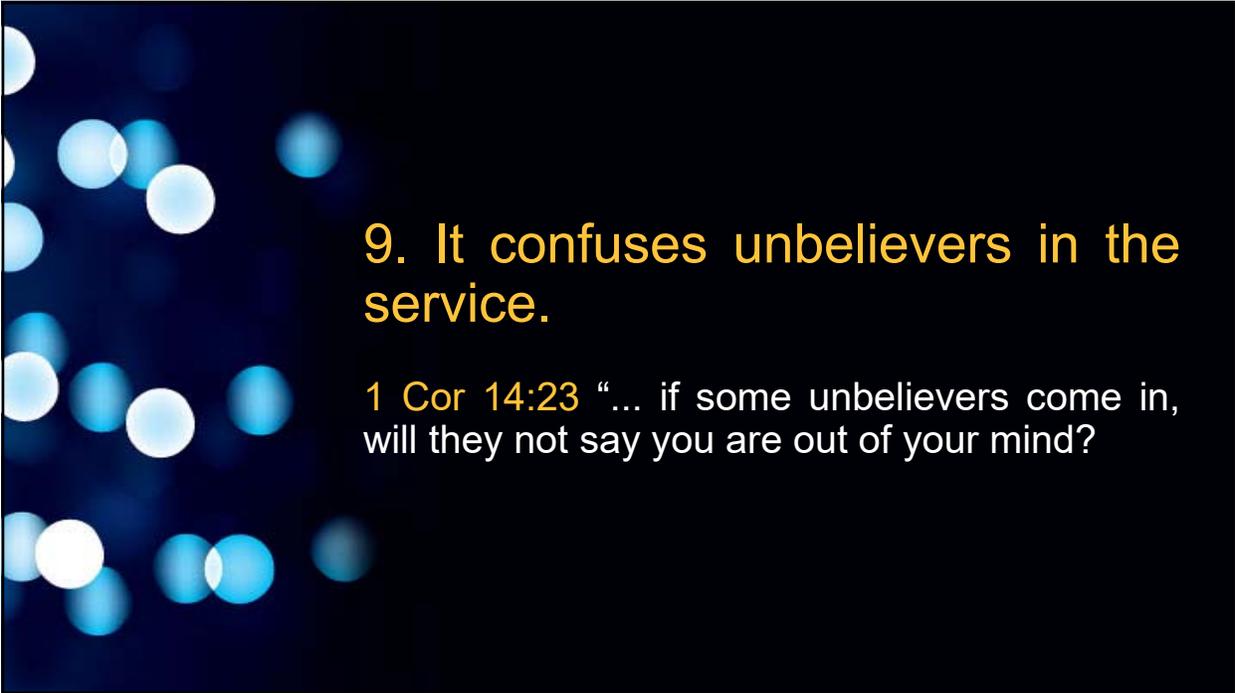
7. Tongues is for personal edification, not for the whole church.

1 Cor 14:4 "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who preaches edifies the church."



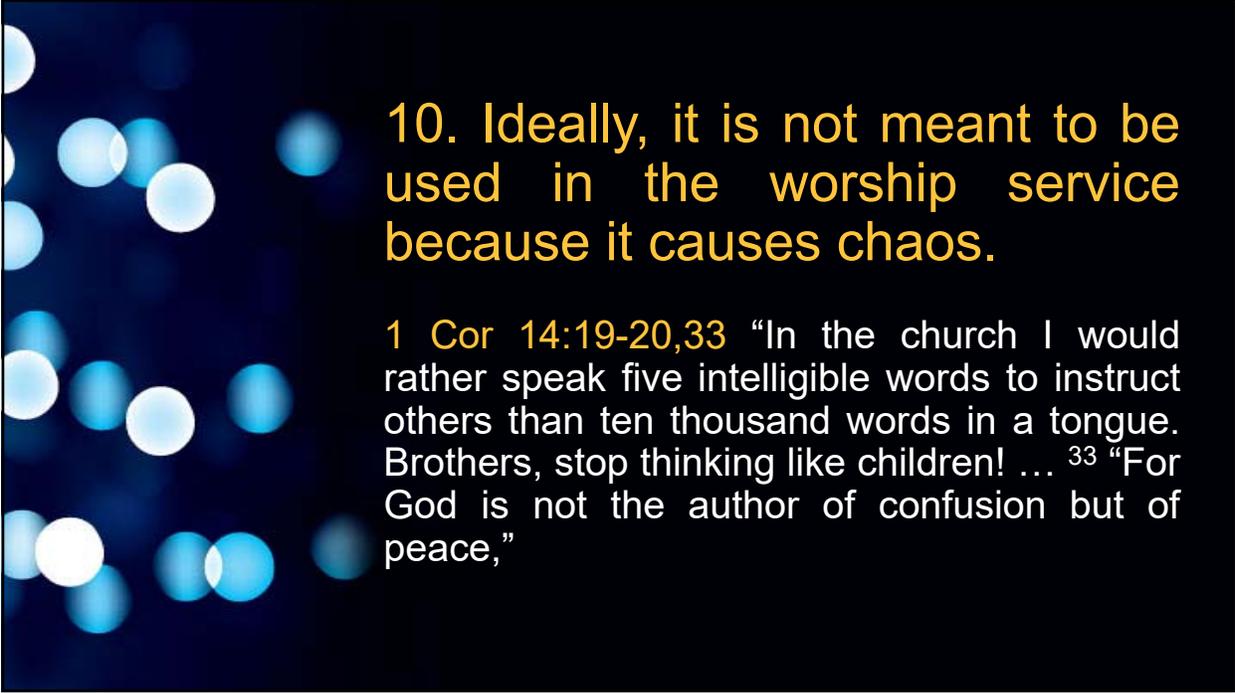
8. We are to focus on building up others, not ourselves:

1 Cor 14:9,12 “Unless you speak intelligible words ... you will just be speaking into the air ... try to excel in the gifts that build up the church.”



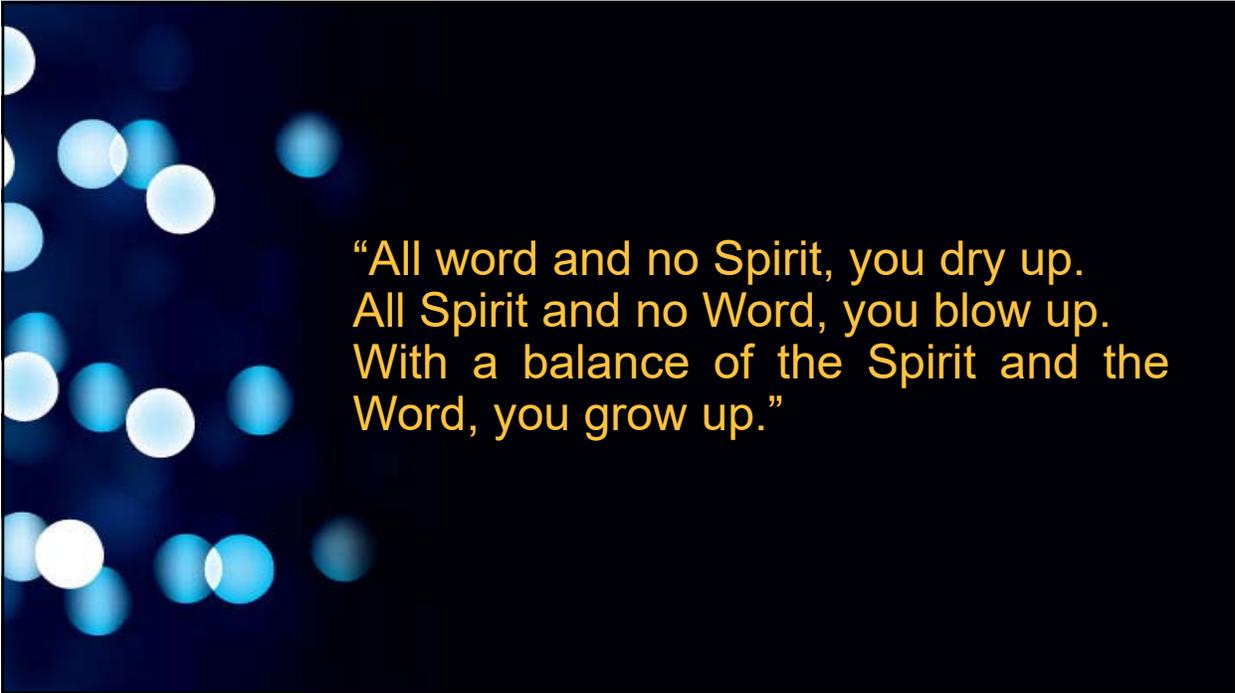
9. It confuses unbelievers in the service.

1 Cor 14:23 “... if some unbelievers come in, will they not say you are out of your mind?”



10. Ideally, it is not meant to be used in the worship service because it causes chaos.

1 Cor 14:19-20,33 “In the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue. Brothers, stop thinking like children! ... ³³ “For God is not the author of confusion but of peace,”



“All word and no Spirit, you dry up.
All Spirit and no Word, you blow up.
With a balance of the Spirit and the Word, you grow up.”



Eph 4:15-16 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.