

**Speaking of “Tongues,”  
What Does the  
Bible Teach?**

**Dr. Malcolm B. Yarnell, III**

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The Center for Theological Research  
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary  
Fort Worth, Texas  
Malcolm B. Yarnell, III, Director

## Speaking of “Tongues,” What Does the Bible Teach?

When two African theologians, Arius and Athanasius, squared off concerning the ontological relationship of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to God the Father, they both treated Scripture as authoritative.<sup>1</sup> Today, both men would probably affirm modern evangelical terminology concerning both “inerrancy” and “sufficiency” with regard to Scripture. However, facile or superficial affirmations of Scripture’s inerrancy and sufficiency are simply not enough when it comes to forming true doctrine; there is also the critical issue of the orthodox “interpretation” of Scripture. Orthodoxy separates the Christian, Athanasius, from the heretic, Arius. Thus, interpretation can lead to either orthodoxy or heresy.

Unlike postmodern Christians, who naively consider differing interpretations of Scripture to be a mere matter of openness or *adiaphora* [“indifference”], conservative believers recognize that the orthodox interpretation of Scripture preserves the faith of the people and glorifies God. (We pray the Holy Spirit will guide the churches to the orthodox conclusion in the particular matter under discussion here.) On the other hand, errant and heretical interpretations may lead to unhealthy churches at best or false Christianity at worst. Misinterpreting the biblical teaching regarding “speaking in tongues” is, fortunately, closer to the former than the latter.

This essay is written in an effort to set out what this Southern Baptist believes is the orthodox doctrine of Scripture regarding *glossolalia*, or speaking in tongues. What follows is a popular presentation of one tertiary aspect of the rich biblical doctrine of the Spirit.<sup>2</sup> Those desiring historical and experiential reviews of the modern phenomena of tongues should consult other sources.<sup>3</sup> The author recognizes that a number of close Christian friends will disagree; however, he begs those friends to consider the text and correct his interpretation according to the witness of that text. Let us not allow the Corinthian corruption of *glossolalia* to bring division; may Love instead reign.

### The Biblical Witness Regarding *Glossolalia*

There are a number of biblical passages cited by advocates of the various modern practices of “speaking in tongues.” Rather than beginning with the positions of these modern advocates, it is best to consider the biblical passages in their canonical context.

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<sup>1</sup>James D. Ernest, “Athanasius of Alexandria: The Scope of Scripture in Polemical and Pastoral Context,” *Vigiliae Christianae*, 47 (1993): 341-62.

<sup>2</sup>For an academic discussion of the Holy Spirit, one may consult the text and note structure of the chapter on Pneumatology in the upcoming book, *A Theology for the Church*, edited by Danny Akin.

<sup>3</sup>For an authoritative review of the historical sources for the modern practices of speaking in tongues, see Robert M. Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1979). For a poignant personal review of modern practices, see Neil Babcox, *My Search for Charismatic Reality* (London: The Wakeman Trust, 1985).

While modern enthusiasts begin with their personal experience, it is proper to begin with the witness of Scripture. The relevant biblical passages shall be considered below according to their primary or secondary impact upon the doctrine of *glossolalia*.

The theological implications of the biblical teaching will be drawn out. Thirteen conclusions regarding the biblical doctrine of *glossolalia* follow our scriptural review. Please take the time to consider the Scripture’s witness with me rather than jumping to the thirteen conclusions, for the truth is in the biblical text. Historical tradition, personal experience, and rational conclusions are subservient to the Bible and must always be judged by the Bible.

### Primary Biblical Passages Regarding *Glossolalia*

**Mark 16:17-18:** In this critically questioned yet infallible passage, after delivering the Commission, Jesus declares concerning believers, “And these signs will follow those who believe: in My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues [*glossais lalalousin kainais*]; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” These five amazing occurrences are labeled “signs” [*semeia*]. A biblical sign is an indicator of a deeper spiritual reality. In this case, the signs are intended to provide divine verification of the gospel of Jesus Christ (cf. Heb. 2:4). This gospel concerns Jesus’ life, death, resurrection, and continuing ministry, and the salvation available in and through Him by personal faith, a faith evidenced in the first submissive act of a disciple, baptism.

Among the five signs, *glossolalia* appears second. The languages spoken would be “new” [*kainais*], indicating their relation to the speakers as something they had previously not learned. These prophesied signs found their fulfillment in the early days of the church, as recorded in the book of Acts, thus verifying the movement of God in the life of the early church (cf. Acts 3:7, 5:16, 28:3-6). The prophecy of Jesus concerning *glossolalia* was soon fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2), while there were subsequent fulfillments in Acts 10 and 19, echoing the structure of Christ’s command concerning the successive movement of the gospel beginning from Jerusalem (Acts 1:8).

**Acts 2:4:** After watching Jesus ascend to heaven, the disciples were gathered in prayer on the day of Pentecost. A fourfold phenomenon occurred where they had gathered: a heavenly sound of rushing wind filled the whole house, tongues like fire settled on each head, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they “began to speak with other tongues [*lalein heterais glossais*], as the Spirit gave them utterance.” According to Peter, this event fulfilled the prophecy of Joel. Peter was clear that the coming of the Spirit upon the church occurred in this miraculous, wondrous and significant manner (Acts 2:22) for the purpose of letting Israel “know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (2:36). The Holy Spirit’s gifting of tongues at Pentecost was explicitly to verify to Israel that the crucified Jew named Jesus is indeed God.

According to Peter and Luke, who were inspired by the Holy Spirit respectively to speak and write what we have in Acts 2, the sign of speaking with other tongues publicly conveyed the gospel of Jesus Christ. There are four aspects of this significant event

which must be grasped. The first three aspects tell us about the speakers, the hearers, and the meaning communicated. The fourth aspect tells us why the communication occurred in the way it did.

First, there is no doubt whatsoever that this was a miracle of speaking in languages that the individual speakers did not know but that others in the Jerusalem crowd did know. From Parthia to Asia to Arabia to Egypt to Rome, multiple languages were being spoken by these provincial Galilean Christians.

Second, these multiple languages were heard and understood by witnesses from around the world. The Christians conveyed information in actual languages to actual people that heard and understood those languages. What amazed the hearers was that the speakers should not have known their unusual languages. Their attention had been effectively obtained.

Third, this event centered on the communication of certain information. That information concerned the gospel of Jesus Christ and prepared the hearts of the hearers for what Peter would soon proclaim and draw to an invitation. In other words, the gospel was being manifested through this miraculous working by the Spirit. Speaking “with other tongues” was not for personal edification but for public proclamation of the gospel to other people.

Fourth, the accompanying and attention-gripping nature of speaking in tongues was intended to draw attention to the gospel of God. Fulfilling His own prophecy (Mark 16:17), the phenomenon of tongues was given by Christ Himself as a sign (cf. Acts 2:22, 34). Signs draw attention to something; Christ intended the sign of speaking in tongues to draw Israel’s attention to the gospel. Peter’s role was then to call the hearers to turn from their sin to Jesus Christ and to be baptized in His name, receiving for themselves the Holy Spirit.

It is also important to grasp what did not occur here. The existing believers received the gift of speaking in tongues, but there is no evidence whatsoever that the new believers received that same gift when they too received the Spirit. Rather, in converting to Christ by repentance and faith, the new believers simultaneously received the Gift Himself, the Holy Spirit. The focus of Peter and the early church was not upon the sign gift of speaking in tongues but on converting their neighbors to Christ. The points emphasized by Peter as he concluded his sermon with an invitation concerned forgiveness, repentance, Jesus Christ, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). And when the hearers responded to Peter’s repeated fervent invitations to be saved, they were baptized and brought into the church. Incredible awe overcame the growing church and the lasting effect of the Spirit’s coming at Pentecost upon the Jerusalem church was the growth of the church and the fostering of unity, fellowship, and community in that church (2:41-47).

**Acts 10:46:** The unique experience of the Jerusalem church at Pentecost in Acts 2 occurred in similarly public and significant ways for non-Jews in Acts 10 and for followers of John the Baptist in Acts 19.

In Acts 10, God specifically dealt with Peter to help the Jewish Christians overcome their opposition to Gentile conversion. The Holy Spirit came upon these foreigners when Peter preached to them. The Holy Spirit then manifested Himself in these Gentiles in the same way that He had shown Himself upon the Jews at Pentecost.

The Jews who were present in Caesarea heard the Gentiles “speak with tongues [*lalounton glossais*] and magnify God” (10:46). This wondrous event had a significant impact upon Peter. The sign of the Spirit’s coming upon the Jews was now evident in His coming upon the Gentiles. The Jewish Christians heard these foreign Gentiles magnify God as they communicated intelligibly in languages. Peter therefore commanded that his Jewish Christian companions baptize the Gentile Christians, thus bringing Gentile believers into fellowship with the Jerusalem church (10:47-48).

Afterwards, when word of these events spread, other Jewish Christians questioned Peter. Peter relayed to them that the Holy Spirit had come upon the Gentiles at Caesarea as He had come upon the Jews. The sign-value of this event was not lost upon Peter’s questioners, for they too glorified God that He had graced the Gentiles with repentance and life (11:12-18). Similar to the events at Jerusalem, speaking with tongues at Caesarea publicly magnified God. Moreover, like the Jerusalem occurrence, the purpose of the sign of speaking with tongues was to verify that the Father was active in saving people—here, the Gentiles—by sending His Son and His Spirit. While speaking in tongues, they “magnified God:” the gift both helped publicly convey the gospel and uniquely signified divine verification of that gospel.

**Acts 19:6:** The dual role of the gift in proclamation and in verification occurs once again in Acts 19:6. Here, the followers of John the Baptist, who were expecting the Messiah but had not yet surrendered to Jesus Christ, were also converted and received the Spirit. For the third and final time in the book of Acts, a unique group of people was publicly verified as coming into the church through the sign of *glossolalia*. The former followers of John the Baptist were now Christians and “spoke with tongues [*elaloun glossais*] and prophesied.” Again, the gift functioned as verification that a new people were brought into a church. Again, the gift intelligibly conveyed the gospel. The verification concerned the conversion of the followers of John the Baptist. The proclamation can be seen in the coupling of prophesy with the gift.

These three passages—Acts 2:4, 10:46, and 19:6—are the only instances regarding speaking in tongues in the book of Acts. Pentecostal theologians assert *glossolalia* also occurred in Acts 8;<sup>4</sup> however, there is no textual support for such speculation. All three passages treat the gift of speaking in tongues as the public and intelligible communication of truth about God. These passages also treat the gift of speaking in tongues as a verifying sign of the unique coming of the Holy Spirit upon a new group of people, thereby incorporating that group into the church. There are numerous other instances of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon new believers without any indication of the gift of tongues being present (Acts 2:41-42, 8:12, 9:17-19). Although Scripture teaches that the Spirit must accompany the proclamation of the Word to be effective (1 Thess. 1:5-6), there is no specific reason to assume that the verification provided by the particular spiritual gift of speaking in tongues is required beyond the verification of the incorporation of these three main communities – Jews, Gentiles, and followers of John the Baptist.

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<sup>4</sup>J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology: Systematic Theology from a Charismatic Perspective, Three Volumes in One* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 2:209-10.

**1 Corinthians 12-14:** In contrast to the churches in Acts, the church at Corinth was an extremely unhealthy and fractured church. Its membership included a number of former pagans who were finding it difficult to leave behind their ungodly ways. In discussing spiritual gifts, a major concern for these former pagans, Paul found it necessary to re-educate the Corinthians by placing the gift of tongues in its proper context. First, he reminded the Corinthians that before converting to Christ they had followed “dumb [*aphona*] idols” (1 Cor. 12:2). An *aphonic* idol is literally an idol “without a voice” or “without meaning.” In the Old Testament, God’s powerful voice [translated as *phona* in the Septuagint] indicated His self-revelation by His Word. In the New Testament, *phona* may indicate a powerful voice expressed through those who bear the Spirit of God.<sup>5</sup>

Opposite the biblical examples of God speaking *phonically*, powerfully and clearly, through His servants, idols are known to be *aphonic*, incapable of speech and meaningless. Pagans believed their idols could express themselves in speech through an oracle, but their speech was unintelligible and a religious poet was required to translate. Examples of ecstatic, untranslatable speech may be found in the Oracle of Apollo at Delphi as well as the cults of Dionysius and Cybele.<sup>6</sup> The pre-Christian background of the Corinthians indicates that ecstatic religious experiences involving unintelligible speech conferred special status upon those who practiced such.<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, the Corinthian believers brought their pagan religious practices, its attendant elitism, and the resulting social divisions into the Christian church (cf. 1 Cor. 1:10-11; 3:1-4, 18; 11:17-22).

Where the healthy churches of Jerusalem and Ephesus experienced tongues as a significant verification of popular conversion which proclaimed the gospel and united the people of God, the unhealthy Corinthian church was experiencing tongues as a sign of personal status which was unintelligible and resulted in divisions among the people of God. Paul was therefore forced to put the idea of *glossolalia* in its proper Christian context as intelligible and significant speech, in opposition to the pagan context where *glossolalia* was unintelligible and insignificant speech. He began fulfilling that difficult task by reminding the Corinthians that the Spirit will never lead people to curse Christ; instead, the Spirit’s role is to lead people to confess Jesus as Lord. The pagan practice of *glossolalia*, characterized by unintelligibility, could apparently lead some to ignorantly curse Christ (1 Cor. 12:3).

Paul then taught the Corinthians that spiritual gifts are not subject to human manipulation, but are under the sovereign gifting of the Triune God (12:4-6). Paul affirmed that *glossolalia* is a spiritual gift, but he clearly taught that in the hierarchy of gifts, it was the least (12:10, 28). Moreover, not every Christian possessed this gift (12:30) and this particular gift should be desired the least (14:1).

God’s gifts are given for one primary reason, the common good (12:7). This overarching goal of communal welfare is expressed in three important ways through the

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<sup>5</sup>Otto Betz, “*Phona*,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, transl. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 9:295-96.

<sup>6</sup>Such practices may also be found in non-Christian religions today. Billy Graham, *The Holy Spirit: Activating God’s Power in Your Life* ([n.p.]: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 230.

<sup>7</sup>Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 913-16.

remainder of chapters 12-14 of 1 Corinthians: First, the diversity of the members with their various gifts finds its single purpose in the mutual care of the members in the “one body” whose head is Christ (12:12-27). Second, although Christians should desire the better gifts, their goal must always be the “more excellent way” of radically selfless love on behalf of the other (12:31-14:1). Third, Paul then outlines his understanding of the gift of proclamation [*propheteia*] as better incarnating love for the other because it allows Christians to practically fulfill the important theological end of the “edification” [*oikodoman*] or mutual “up-building” of the church (14:3).

In light of Paul’s understanding of the common good as the one body, the way of love, and ecclesial edification, his description of the Corinthians’ *glossolalia* as intended for self-edification shows that this fractured church’s understanding of the spiritual gift is grossly perverse (1 Cor. 14:4). Spiritual gifts, as Paul repeatedly indicated, are for mutual edification, thus the Corinthians should re-orient themselves away from their self-centered doctrine of tongues.

In chapter 14, Paul shows how the Corinthians’ doctrine of tongues differs from the orthodox Christian doctrine: the Corinthians’ doctrine of *glossolalia* is insignificant and unintelligible as well as disorderly and indecent, while the orthodox doctrine of *glossolalia* is significant and intelligible as well as orderly and decent. Paul reconstructs the orthodox doctrine of *glossolalia* for the Corinthians by closely correlating it to prophesying, or euphemistically, the public proclamation of the gospel.<sup>8</sup> In some detail, Paul denigrates the idea that true *glossolalia* may occur apart from meaningful communication, which involves the full engagement of the mind with the spirit and the speaker’s intentional edification of his hearers.

Everyone must communicate with languages, but even more than merely speaking, they should clearly proclaim the gospel. Speaking without regard for the correct transference of the meaning of the gospel (i.e. “interpretation”) does not edify the church (14:5). If a person speaks without being concerned for communicating meaningfully, his sounds are meaningless [*aphona*], like a trumpet which cannot call troops to battle or like a person in a foreign land who cannot understand the local language (14:7-8, 10-11). Those who are zealous for spiritual gifts should above all seek to edify the church (14:12). If one speaks in a tongue, one should pray that God will help him speak with understanding (14:13).

Paul concludes that the idea of unintelligible speech is extremely odd, for the human spirit must not be disconnected from the human understanding in prayer or in song (14:15). After all, how can others be edified if we speak meaningless words (14:16)? Speaking tongue-in-cheek (pardon the pun), Paul lets the Corinthians know that their meaningless speech may represent their sincere effort to thank God, but he is more thankful that he can publicly proclaim the gospel intelligibly with five words rather than mumble on with ten thousand meaningless words (14:17-19).

Echoing his previous reference to the passing childishness of speaking in the tongues of angels (cf. 13:1, 11), Paul exhorts the Corinthians to cease being immature in their understanding (14:20). Those who are mature will understand that language indicates not only blessing but judgment. Unknown tongues in Scripture signify divine wrath. The biblical significance of *unintelligible* tongues is worryingly different from the

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<sup>8</sup>A contextually simple Pauline definition of prophecy is “speaking edification and exhortation and comfort to men” (1 Cor. 14:3).

biblical significance of *intelligible* tongues. Paul quotes Isaiah 28:11-12, regarding God’s judgment of unrepentant Israel by sending an invading army of foreigners. The vivid imagery of Isaiah 28 recalls the horrors of watching the occupation of Jerusalem by an invading army, an army which speaks in a meaningless language. In the Old Testament passage, Israel was noted for its refusal to think clearly (Isa. 28:9): will the Corinthians be the same way? The biblical significance of intelligible Christian speech is that the gospel brings life to those who will believe; the biblical significance of unintelligible speech is that God will judge. Unintelligible tongues are intended by God to serve as a sign of judgment on unbelievers; intelligible proclamation of the gospel is intended to bring life to those who believe (14:22). The unbeliever who enters the church and hears unintelligible speech will leave with the understanding that the Corinthian Christians are senseless (14:23). The person who enters the church and hears an intelligible proclamation of the gospel’s power will be convicted of sin, and may repent and turn to worship God (14:24-25).

After carefully distinguishing the orthodox doctrine of *glossolalia* as intelligible and significant speech from the Corinthian doctrine of *glossolalia* as unintelligible and insignificant speech, Paul then launches into a discussion of order and decency. If these Corinthians believe they have the true spiritual gift of tongues, then they must practice it in such a way that they function intelligibly and significantly. Paul indicates how the gifts of tongues and of prophecy must be conducted so that all things are “done decently and in order” in the church (14:40). With regard to tongues, it must be practiced for public edification, there must be an orderly presentation, and there must be an interpreter. If these requirements cannot be met, then Paul is clear that the Corinthian enthusiasts must “keep silent in church” (14:28). Paul did not forbid the practice of speaking in tongues in the church (14:39), but he severely qualified its practice with requirements that still apply to churches today (14:26-28).

### Secondary Biblical Passages

**Romans 8:26:** Some scholars consider various other biblical passages in relation to the issue of *glossolalia*. Romans 8:26 is often utilized in this regard; however, the passage does not address the phenomenon. First, in the prayer of Romans 8, there is an explicit inability to utter words [*alalatois*], while *glossolalia* explicitly concerns the utterance of words (cf. Acts 2:4). The only way to equate the phenomenon of Romans 8 with that of *glossolalia* is to engage in contradictory logic and say that “not speaking” is “speaking.” Second, through much of Romans 8, Paul discusses the Spirit’s role in salvation, and as Martin Luther demonstrated, Paul here expounds the prayer of faith which concerns personal regeneration by the Spirit.<sup>9</sup> Third, if Paul had the gift of tongues in mind in his letter to the Romans, he would have included it in the gifts discussed in Romans 12:3-8. Although many Charismatics as well as the odd higher critic have tried to place this text within the conversation over *glossolalia*, the most authoritative modern

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<sup>9</sup>Regin Prenter, *Spiritus Creator*, transl. John M. Jensen (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1953), 18ff.

commentator on Romans has declared, with typical British understatement, that such a connection is “not likely.”<sup>10</sup>

**Other Passages Cited in Support of Modern Practices:** Other biblical passages have also been brought forward by Pentecostal and Charismatic theologians seeking to buttress their modern practices. These passages include Ephesians 5:18-20 and 6:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:19, and Jude 20. However, *glossolalia* is not mentioned in any of these texts. Modern enthusiasts freely equate biblical *glossolalia* with various modern practices of “speaking in tongues.” Included among the modern practices are the Pentecostal requirement of speaking in unknown tongues as the initial evidence of receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit; the congregational practice of simultaneous expressions of unintelligible ecstatic speech; and, the private practice of unintelligible ecstatic speech as a prayer language. The modern advocates of these various practices assume that the biblical doctrine of *glossolalia* is what is being practiced today under the name of “speaking in tongues.” This is a precarious assumption, for not all that calls itself biblical actually is biblical.

**The Cessation of *Glossolalia*:** On the other hand, advocates of Cessationism have gone to Hebrews 2:3-4 to argue that “signs” [*semeiois*] were intended to verify the original dissemination of the gospel message.<sup>11</sup> Since that message has now been recorded in the apostolic writings, there is no longer any need for sign gifts like speaking in tongues. W.A. Criswell affirmed this interpretation: “One of these sign gifts was speaking in tongues. When the authenticating necessity for the sign gift ceased, the phenomenon ceased. It was needed no longer. It had served its purpose. For us to seek to re-create the sign is not faith but presumption.”<sup>12</sup> In the debate over whether the miraculous gifts are for today, the Cessationist argument makes valid points; however, the “Open but Cautious” view is also worthy of consideration. The open but cautious view allows for the continuation of many spiritual gifts into the modern churches, but is unwilling to make a one-to-one correlation between modern practices and the biblical witness.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, the “Third Wave” and “Pentecostal/Charismatic” positions too often begin from the vantage of personal experience or tradition.

### Thirteen Conclusions Regarding Biblical *Glossolalia*

1. Biblical *glossolalia* is a gift of the Holy Spirit from Jesus Christ.
2. Biblical *glossolalia* involves a Christian using an existing spoken language that he or she has not previously learned.
3. Biblical *glossolalia* involves non-Christian hearers who understand an existing spoken language they previously knew.

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<sup>10</sup>C.E.B. Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, International Critical Commentary (London: T&T Clark, 1975), 423.

<sup>11</sup>Richard B. Gaffin, “Cessationist,” in *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today? Four Views*, ed. Wayne A. Grudem (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 42.

<sup>12</sup>W.A. Criswell, *The Holy Spirit in Today’s World* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1966), 216.

<sup>13</sup>Robert L. Saucy, “Open But Cautious,” in *ibid.*, 97-148.

4. Biblical *glossolalia* involves the public communication of intelligible information concerning the gospel.
5. Biblical *glossolalia* was intended by Jesus as a sign to verify the proclamation of the gospel concerning salvation through His death and resurrection.
6. The sign of biblical *glossolalia* was fulfilled in the unique events surrounding the incorporation of the Jews, the Gentiles, and the followers of John the Baptist into the New Testament churches.
7. Biblical *glossolalia* is not intended for every Christian.
8. Biblical *glossolalia* is the least important of all the various spiritual gifts.
9. Biblical *glossolalia* is intended for the common good and results in unity, loving fellowship, and congregational edification.
10. The biblical sign of intelligible language indicates divine blessing, but the biblical sign of unintelligible language indicates divine wrath.
11. Biblical *glossolalia* must be distinguished from Corinthian *glossolalia*.
  - a. Biblical *glossolalia* comes from the Holy Spirit while Corinthian *glossolalia* comes from the pagan religious background of Corinth.
  - b. Biblical *glossolalia* involves intelligible speech concerning the Gospel while Corinthian *glossolalia* is unintelligible speech that may curse Christ.
  - c. Biblical *glossolalia* results in unity, love, and edification, while Corinthian *glossolalia* results in division, discord, and destruction.
12. In light of the problem of Corinthian *glossolalia*, if a church wishes to discern whether biblical *glossolalia* is present, Scripture establishes some guidelines:
  - a. It must involve the congregation.
  - b. It must result in public edification.
  - c. There must be a decent and orderly practice.
  - d. There must be an interpretation.
13. Biblical *glossolalia* may be allowed by the church, but those who embrace Corinthian *glossolalia* must keep silent.

# **Dr. Malcolm B. Yarnell, III**

**Assistant Dean for Theological Studies,  
Director of the Center for Theological  
Research, Director of the Oxford Study  
Program, and Associate Professor of  
Systematic Theology**

**Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary**

