

## A BIBLICAL STUDY OF TONGUES

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### MARK 16:17-18

Outside of the book of Acts, there are only two other places in the New Testament where tongues are mentioned, Mark 16 and I Corinthians 12, 13 and 14.

In Mark 16:17 - 18 we are told that there would be five signs that would follow those that believed. The believers would:

1. Cast out devils
2. Speak with new languages
3. Take up snakes
4. Drink poison without harm
5. Heal the sick

If the position is taken that these signs would continue to follow the believers, then all five signs should be seen today. Those that speak in tongues today should also be able to cast out demons. They should also be able to drink poison with no ill effects. They should also be able to lay hands on the sick for a complete recovery.

Laying hands on the sick and praying for the sick are not the same. We should all pray for the sick, trusting that, if it is within God's will, He would grant healing. On the other hand, when a person had the Spiritual gift of healing, he was able to lay hands on a person and healing would come. Peter had the gift of healing and in Acts chapter two he simply reached out and took a crippled man by the

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hand and the cripple was healed so completely that he could stand, walk and leap immediately. That healing did not take place in a "healing service" or even in church, but as Peter and John were walking to the temple.

Paul fulfilled the sign of the snake in Acts 28:3-5. He was gathering firewood and in the process also gathered a snake that bit him. Everyone around expected Paul to die, but no harm came to him.

There is no fulfillment in the New Testament of anyone drinking poison. This sign was no doubt fulfilled by a person who was not mentioned in the Bible.

It is clearly evident that not every believer cast out devils, healed the sick, were bitten by snakes, drank poison or spoke in tongues. To use this verse to prove that believers should speak in tongues today is a serious mistake. If speaking in tongues is an option for people today, then so is drinking arsenic.

The fact is, these signs did follow the believers and are still following us today. These signs wrought by Peter, Paul and the other apostles, to this day, give evidence of the power of God.