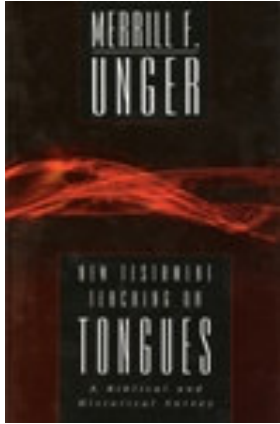


Read 'Em and Reap!

Evangelical Christian Book Reviews
Hebrews 5:14



New Testament Teaching on Tongues – Merrill F. Unger
The Charismatic movement has successfully brought to the forefront of Christianity a renewed interest in Spiritual gifts. To its credit, this movement has also redirected some long overdue attention to the third member of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit.

However, as important as it is for Christians to understand the Holy Spirit, is the attention given to Him the kind that He wants? Compare the Charismatic movements view of the Holy Spirit to the recently reviewed book, Father, Son and Holy Spirit by Bruce Ware. The Holy Spirit stays behind the scenes to point people to Christ for the Glory of the Father.

The Charismatic's distortion of this vital role of the Holy Spirit is probably most evident in their teaching

on the gift of tongues and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. According to them, tongues did not cease after the Apostolic period, but continues today and is manifested in those who are spiritual or faithful.

Dr. Merrill Unger, perhaps best know for Unger's Bible Handbook, has undertaken a copious study of tongues in the New Testament. Though this book was published in 1971, it is just as relevant today. Dr. Unger deals with such passages as Acts 2 (Pentecost), Acts 8 (The Samaritan Revival), Acts 10 (Cornelius' Conversion) and Acts 19 (The Ephesian Disciples). He also makes a distinction between the tongues in Acts which were a *sign* to the Jews and the *gift* of tongues in the Epistles.

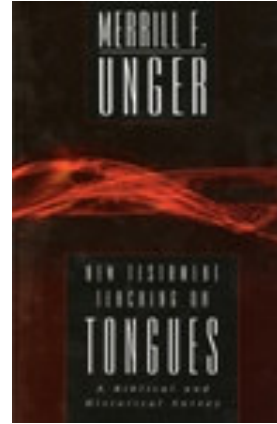
Unger rightly concludes that the gift of tongues ceased at the end of the Apostolic era. It is mentioned in the earliest lists as a gift of the Spirit (I Corinthians 12), but not in later ones. First Corinthians 13:8 specifically teaches that tongues will pass away (along with Prophecy and Knowledge). While the greek text may indicate that Prophecy and Knowledge have not completely passed away, it is quite clear that tongues has already ceased. Unger's argument is that the "perfect" mentioned in 13:10 refers to the completed canon, or Scripture. It is a compelling argument, but one that really doesn't fit with the context of the passage. A more likely interpretation of the "perfect" is the eternal state (cf. John MacArthur NT Commentary, I Corinthians). Be that as it may, Unger presents a very clear presentation in favor of the cessation of tongues at the end of the Apostolic era.

This is a handy book to help believers understand the biblical teaching on tongues and to help them recognize the distortions so prevalent in the glossolalic movements. *Read 'em & Reap!*

For more reviews, visit www.ReadnReap.net

Read 'Em and Reap!

Evangelical Christian Book Reviews
Hebrews 5:14



New Testament Teaching on Tongues – Merrill F. Unger

The Charismatic movement has successfully brought to the forefront of Christianity a renewed interest in Spiritual gifts. To its credit, this movement has also redirected some long overdue attention to the third member of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit.

However, as important as it is for Christians to understand the Holy Spirit, is the attention given to Him the kind that He wants? Compare the Charismatic movements view of the Holy Spirit to the recently reviewed book, Father, Son and Holy Spirit by Bruce Ware. The Holy Spirit stays behind the scenes to point people to Christ for the Glory of the Father.

The Charismatic's distortion of this vital role of the Holy

Spirit is probably most evident in their teaching on the gift of tongues and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. According to them, tongues did not cease after the Apostolic period, but continues today and is manifested in those who are spiritual or faithful.

Dr. Merrill Unger, perhaps best know for Unger's Bible Handbook, has undertaken a copious study of tongues in the New Testament. Though this book was published in 1971, it is just as relevant today. Dr. Unger deals with such passages as Acts 2 (Pentecost), Acts 8 (The Samaritan Revival), Acts 10 (Cornelius' Conversion) and Acts 19 (The Ephesian Disciples). He also makes a distinction between the tongues in Acts which were a *sign* to the Jews and the *gift* of tongues in the Epistles.

Unger rightly concludes that the gift of tongues ceased at the end of the Apostolic era. It is mentioned in the earliest lists as a gift of the Spirit (I Corinthians 12), but not in later ones. First Corinthians 13:8 specifically teaches that tongues will pass away (along with Prophecy and Knowledge). While the greek text may indicate that Prophecy and Knowledge have not completely passed away, it is quite clear that tongues has already ceased. Unger's argument is that the "perfect" mentioned in 13:10 refers to the completed canon, or Scripture. It is a compelling argument, but one that really doesn't fit with the context of the passage. A more likely interpretation of the "perfect" is the eternal state (cf. John MacArthur NT Commentary, I Corinthians). Be that as it may, Unger presents a very clear presentation in favor of the cessation of tongues at the end of the Apostolic era.

This is a handy book to help believers understand the biblical teaching on tongues and to help them recognize the distortions so prevalent in the glossolalic movements. *Read 'em & Reap!*

For more reviews, visit www.ReadnReap.net