What does it mean to speak in tongues as the Bible describes it? Do they still exist or we are speaking about the shadow of something that was in the past and then it ceased. Well, I’ll just give you my opinion based on experiences I had and obviously we will compare it with the word of God.

This is what I think. The fact that we don’t have a certain gift or we don’t understand something, it doesn’t mean that it doesn’t exist at all or that someone else doesn’t have it. I personally don’t have this gift, the gift of the tongues strongly manifested in my life, but I believe in it and I did have experiences with it. Someone can just experience it in part and someone else will have it fully manifested in His life. Some persons however will never experience certain gifts, but they will have something else that still glorifies God. It can be stronger faith or word of wisdom or to serve. To each one is given according to the Spirit of God and His desire. Each one is important in his own way. But all of this doesn’t impede us to study about the rest of the gifts and the multivariate body of Christ.

Firstly as we look into the Bible we see that not all the believers have it as a gift.

“Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak **tongues**? Do all interpret?”

1 Corinthians 12:30

It doesn’t mean that they can not experience it or strive to practice it and desire it in their life, but it means that is not something manifested in a obvious way in their life. Same as all the other gifts. In certain moments of our life we can experience them, but still with time we see that we don’t always find them there. It is normal, because the Bible says that what endures and remains is love and all the rest of gifts will cease. By ceasing I believe that they can cease in the life of a single believer and not necessary in everyone. By this I mean also that a believer to whom is not given a certain gift, can still experience it some moments in his life, because probably of the situation he is found in. However the Bible tells us to desire the gifts. **I am speaking to the believers that have been already born again and have repented, because without this step, we can not obviously receive any spiritual gift.**

We are all born with a some kind of a natural gift or capability and if we don’t come to a personal knowledge of God in our lifetime, then it will be surely somehow wasted. But here we are speaking about another kind of gifts and these are the spiritual gifts that the believer receives when he starts his new life with Jesus after being born again. These ones are like spiritual capabilities that will help us in our new life.

I can tell you of my personal experience. After my conversion, I started to discover the prayer in a deeper way and I was attending to the services and meetings and feeling the presence of God. There were moments when I was immersed in a prayer and it was like I didn’t have words to express how I was feeling and to praise God with the words He really deserved and almost without being aware, there were some other unknown words coming out of my mouth that I didn’t actually understand. In a few cases when they were coming, I was interrupting them, because I didn’t know what was that about. It was happening always when I was feeling filled with the Spirit and really close to God. One day someone told me that they were organizing a special meeting for everyone speaking and desiring the gift of tongues. I went there as I knew that I already have experienced in part that gift. The person that spoke in the meeting, explained very well what the purpose of tongues is and encouraged us to speak and practice them. I remember him saying that this is gift that allows you to have a direct connection with God, which the Devil can not understand and interfere. Not even you understand it while praying, but is actually your spirit praying and saying things that are given to him from the Spirit of God to pray about. And these are the needs of our spirit. The Spirit of God is the one that always needs to teach us and guide us how to pray and what to pray about, He best knows how to glorify God and which is our real need.

“Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weakness. **For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered.** Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” Romans 8:26,27

We need to submit to Him in a prayer. In this way is as well how He communicates to us the tongues. He needs to give them to us. We can practice them and try to pray, but it is not definitely something that we can make up. And if it is something that only we are trying to create, then it is not something coming from God. In the same way the Spirit communicates to our soul the tongues, He also needs to be involved in our everyday normal prayer and also needs to show us and reveal us what to pray about. This is how someone prays in the Spirit. A prayer is composed by our petitions, but also and mostly by petitions that He shows us to pray about. This is actually the prayer that glorifies God and gets in a relation with Him.

As I was saying, when that person finished speaking in that meeting, he invited the people present there to speak in tongues. Everyone started and I opened my mouth too and tried to do it. I remember that there was faith in me and after the first couple of words coming out of me, it happened like the Spirit invested me and I started just speaking and I felt that the light in my heart was too much. It happened like I really felt close to God. Maybe like never before that time. There were those words coming out of me that I couldn’t understand, but it felt like they were edifying me and my spirit. I just opened my eyes out of the surprise. I remember that after that meeting I felt so filled with the Spirit that I spoke about God to everyone I met that evening. The words about God were just flowing out of me. It didn’t matter if the person I spoke with was a believer or not, or not even if he was longer than me in Christ. All of this was happening as a result of the experience I had with the tongues.

I have to say that till today’s day I still have this gift manifested in my life, but it is never been my strongest point. I mean that I don’t always feel or it doesn’t always get fully manifested in me. All of this doesn’t diminish the gift itself and the power of it. The fact that I don’t have certain gifts or they are not strongly manifested in me, doesn’t mean that they are not important or they don’t exist.

Let’s see some verses in the Bible that describe speaking in tongues. What we find in the Bible is true and we must believe in it. We mustn’t be led just by our experiences or by the way we see things, but by what is written. Our own experiences can tell us for example that is impossible to do or have certain things and gifts, just because we haven’t experienced them, or can tell us that we can do things that are not even scriptural. That’s why, the best thing is always to compare with the scripture.

“When the day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it lifted the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.” Acts 2:1-6

From this passage, we see a particular situation where the tongues given by God were manifested for the first time. And there we see that the Spirit gave the apostles the gift of foreign tongues. And this happened so that the people present there could understand and be touched by what the Spirit was speaking through the apostles. It happened also so that they can experience a prodigy and a sign from God. Something supernatural to let them see His greatness. In this passage is one of the manifestations of the tongues that God gives. The other one we can see mentioned in the book of Corinthians chapters 13 and 14.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.” 1 Corinthians 13:1

We all know that in these chapters of Corinthians Paul speaks about the greatness of the love of God and about the importance of prophesying, but He is by no means diminishing the importance of the gift of tongues. And in this verse we see mentioned about tongues of angels. This is what the Bible speaks about and I believe it. There are tongues of angels that only them and God can understand. This a heavenly language. The one that edifies our Spirit. It can not be made up, it can not be imitated, It must be given by God. Obviously someone can just make up sounds, but it will be never effective as when God gives it to you. I’m telling this, because I know that there might be someone thinking that when the Bible speaks about tongues, it only means speaking a foreign language, and it is truth that there is a foreign language as well, but there is something more when the Bible speaks about tongues. I know it by personal experience, but the best is to examine what the scripture says regarding the matter.

“For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, **but to God**, **for no one understands him**; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. He who speaks in a tongue **edifies himself**, but he who prophesies edifies the church.”

1 Corinthians 14:2-4

Here in this chapter speaks about speaking in tongues and we can clearly see that as this scriptures describes it, “he who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.” We are not discussing now the importance of edifying, but we are looking at how the scripture describes speaking in tongues. If the tongues were only meant for foreign speaking persons, how is it then that it says that the one speaking in tongues does not speak to men, but to God and that he edifies himself? Because obviously in this part of the scripture we are not looking anymore to foreign languages tongues, but to angelical tongues. The ones that are taught by the Spirit of God to us and express the need of our spirit. The need that many times we don’t know, but He knows well and can show it to us. That’s why it is important to speak in tongues, so that we can edify ourselves. The tongues can not replace completely our daily usual prayer, but I would say that we must strive to have them in our life and to make them part of our prayer.

And again, if the major part of that church were speaking in Greek and they were Greeks, who were the foreigners then? Why would they speak in a foreign language, if they did so? All of this proves scripturally that angelical tongues do exist.

All of this tells us that the gift of tongues, as well as other gifts that the Bible speaks about, still exist. We just need to desire them earnestly and God can give them to us according to His measurement and way. We mustn’t get discouraged if we don’t have a certain gift. Important is to glorify God with everything we have, with much or less. Important is to bring fruit for His kingdom. I personally don’t have gifts that can distinguish me from any other person, but I do believe in the power of God. And I know other persons that do have certain gifts and they also believe in the same Father and God as I do. I am obviously speaking to those who are born again and have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. The most important is the faith and the purpose by which we are driven.