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Glossolalia a Theological Position in Pentecostal Christianity: A Case Study of Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa Forward in Faith (Z.A.O.G.A F.I.F) Spirituality

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Abstract:

Pentecostal Christianity is a phenomenon that has been adopted by almost half of the total populace in particularly in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe is a typical example of a country that has witnessed the spread of Pentecostal Christianity mostly in southern Africa. Pentecostal Christianity has triggered a massive exodus of people from mainline churches commonly referred to as white missionary churches. The believers to this new wave of churches are attracted by the emphasis on gifts of the Holy Spirit particularly glossolalia (speaking in tongues) which have given rise to the development of a new spirituality among the Pentecostals. The study notes that almost all Pentecostal churches placed much emphasis on glossolalia as a prerequisite for appointment to the top leadership position. Nevertheless, this paper also argues that glossolalia is a major source of conflict in the contemporary churches. These insights will be exemplified by the study of ZAOGA F.I.F and Apostolic Faith Mission (A.F.M) in the Zimbabwean context. The study observes that for Pentecostals like ZAOGA F.I.F and Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe (A.F.M) every believer has to undergo a spiritual test measured by a Spiritometer (glossolalia) as a gauge for being spirit filled. However, this paper argues that though speaking in tongues is so central in Pentecostal Christianity, it should not be seen as overriding other spiritual gifts. Furthermore, whereas the gifts of the spirit are vital, it is the fruit of the spirit which is esteemed more highly. This is the thrust of the paper which posits that Christian spirituality is not measured by a believer's ability to speak in tongues but by the fruit of the spirit produced thereof. Here, the thesis does not seek to demine the significance of speaking in tongues or glossolalia per se, but to address the extremes of this phenomenon in both Pentecostals and non Pentecostals churches. The study is guided by the St Paul's understanding of glossolalia in the light of propagating a spirituality of tolerance, love and peaceable living among Christians of his time which represent different Christianities of today.

Keywords: *Glossolalia, theological position, Spirituality, Spiritometer Pentecostal Christianity ZAOGA F.I.F/AFM churches*

1. Introduction

Christianity in Africa has along and reputable tradition. According to (Orobator 2008) Africa is now the centre of Christianity. This is evidenced by a wide range of Christianities in Africa particularly in the Zimbabwean context. Ngindu Mushete observes that Christianity will never be uniformized but pluralized and diversified in nature due to different theological, sociological, physiological and historical variables (Mushete 1978). This paper observes that there is a variety of Christianities represented in Africa such as: Western Missionary Christianity, African Independent (mapositori) Christianity and African Pentecostal Christianity. This paper has sampled African Pentecostal Christianity because it has attracted people of different social and historical backgrounds. The researcher has observed that although African Independent Churches (mapositori) emphasizes on gifts of the Holy Spirit the general understanding of the gifts of the Spirit in these churches is that not all are prophets, not all are gifted in faith or speaking in tongues unlike the Pentecostals where emphasis is on 'priesthood of all people' every member is encouraged to desire all spiritual gifts especially glossolalia and then prophesy. In other words African Independent Churches and Western Missionaries almost share the same understanding on how the gifts of the Holy Spirit operate in church settings. It is in this background that this paper seeks to discuss the significance of glossolalia in Pentecostal Christianity.

2. Etymological Definition of Glossolalia

Glossolalia is the term commonly used to apply to a particular kind of religious linguistically experiences animated by a spirit (Machingura 2011). It comes from Greek words, *glossa* meaning tongue and *laleo* meaning to speak (Machingura 2011). This is a phenomenon that characterizes all Pentecostal Churches across the globe. Pentecostalism is a religious movement within Christianity that emerged in the dawn of the 20th century in America (Alexander 2011). The term, Pentecost from the Old Testament perspective denotes a Jewish festival which occurred on the 50th day, some seven weeks after the Jewish Passover festival (Ukpong 2008). In the New Testament, the term Pentecost assumed a new dimension altogether. As Ukpong (2008) observes that Pentecost was celebrated in the church as the day on which the Holy Spirit descended (Acts 2) which manifested the fulfillment of the promise of (Joel 2:28) which was later confirmed by Jesus in (John 16:7-13). In fact, the designation, Pentecostal Christianity refers to the 'spirit type' churches, (Chitando 2004) which derive their doctrine from Acts 2:1ff, which reads in part, thus: 'And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord...all of a sudden there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind...And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues (*glossolalia*) as the Spirit gave them utterance (Musoni 2013). Accordingly, the doctrine of glossolalia which means the outpouring of the Holy Spirit evidenced by speaking in other tongues, or also regarded as 'baptism in the Holy Spirit', is an obligatory aspect of Pentecostalism (Alexander 2011). Speaking in tongues becomes a doctrinal issue across all Pentecostal Churches and a position that marks a permanent feature of the Pentecostal churches worldwide.

However, many critics would want to equate Pentecostal' position on speaking with unknown tongue as a borrowed phenomenon from African traditional religion (Machingura F 2012). For Machingura and others to be in the spirit for Pentecostals *kupinda mumweya* means speaking with an unknown tongue. The underlining factor for this critic lies in the fact that pre Christian Africans have a similar case on spirit possession. When a spirit medium is in ecstatic state he/she speaks in an unknown tongue. Speaking in tongues becomes an evidence that the person is in the spirit *wasvikirwa* is immersed in the spirit. However, this paper observes that speaking in tongues in Pentecostal Christianity is different from *kusvikirwa* spirit possession in African Traditional Religions in a number of ways. Firstly, Pentecostals believe that speaking in tongues is a gift for every believer 'priesthood of all believers' unlike in African Traditional Religion where the gift is for special people the 'Spirit Mediums' only. Secondly, speaking in an unknown tongue is for devotional purposes hence all members should have the gift so that they can pray according to the spirit (Romans 8). Contrastingly, the research has observed that rather than equating glossolalia in Pentecostal Christianity with *kusvikirwa*, in ATR, the comparison can come out nicely if scholars associate *kupinda mumweya* (spirit possession) in African Independent Churches (*Mapositori*) with *kupinda mumweya* in African traditional religion because they share same notes. For *Mapositori* only church leaders and prophets exercise the gift sparingly only if one is about communicate divine oracles. For Pentecostals tongues are for devotional purposes, whether there is a divine message to communicate to the audience or not, Pentecostal members speak in tongues always when praying... "he that speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself..." (1 Corinthians 14:4).

3. Methodological Concerns

Theological and phenomenological methods were employed for this study. The theological method was versatile because it is concerned with the hermeneutical exegesis of scriptures that has led to theological variables among Church organizations particularly on the significance of glossolalia. It is therefore the interpretation of the gospels according to Acts and Pauline epistles on glossolalia that to date we have some who call themselves *machechi omweya* spirit-type Churches and those who call themselves *hatisi machechi omweya* non spirit type churches.

The phenomenological approach was principally significant because it is concerned with seeing a phenomena, behavior or religion as the adherents see them, rather than imposing any sort of outside value to that which manifest (Shoko 1993). It is crucial in this study because it illustrates the exact and identifies the experience of glossolalia from the insider perspective. This method normally translates into gathering deep information and perceptions through interactions, interviews, discussions and participant observation (Husserl 1965). Therefore in this study for ethical reasons some of the names of my informants are suppressed only those who gave me permission to disclose.

4. Historical background of Glossolalia in the Pentecostal Christianity

The historical background of glossolalia can be traced back to the 1988 to the preachings of Perlham (Hocken 1988). According to (Hocken 1988) when Perlham preached about glossolalia he expected all to be filled with the Holy Spirit as the initial evidence of speaking in tongues but only twelve Bible students spoke in tongues that day. This is clear evidence which posit a possibility of some receiving the gift that should not be disputed by Pentecostals. Luke recorded that the disciples of Jesus were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues 'as the spirit gave them utterance' (Acts 2:1ff). Utterance is given by the spirit suggesting that if one does not speak the same spirit has not given that person utterance. However, Pentecostals are known for their bias on the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues. Great emphasis is placed on the experiential side of the Christian life among Pentecostals. For Pentecostals there are two important spiritual experiences firstly, it is the New Birth; and secondly it is the baptism of the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues as initial evidence. According to (Anderson 1990), this baptism of the Holy Spirit accompanied by speaking in tongues, 'has roots in the Wesleyan teaching of the second blessing of sanctification which they believed purifies the life from sin. For Anderson (1990) speaking in tongue was a prayer language that enabled one to communicate directly with God without the interference of the human intellect and the vehicle of a known language'. He adds that 'the purpose of this communication is personal edification (1 Corinthians 14 vs 2). As Baer (1976) remarked that 'Speaking in tongues' is not a form of

religious hysteria or spirit possession nor is it something uncontrolled expression of emotion'. However, he asserts that 'the use of tongues is similar to the fulfillment a person may find in spontaneous dancing the use of the dance for the expression of religious ecstasy is a well-known and virtually universal experience. This posits that glossolalia is an experience that one finds him /herself impulsively. However, it should not be mistakenly used as an instrument to measure the presence of the Holy Spirit (Spiritometer) as Pentecostals do because it is not always the case that the presence of the Holy Spirit is evidenced by tongues. A number of individuals who were interviewed in this research displayed disgruntlement with this position of glossolalia as the initial evidence of Holy Spirit baptism. Some were saying the church leadership accused us of lack of faith because we can't speak in tongues. A certain Pastor in Z.A.O.G.A F.I.F in the rural Bindura lined up his church leaders asking them to speak in tongues one after the other testing the vitality of the Holy Spirit. Those who would fail to speak in tongues were demoted from Church hierarchy. This becomes a sacred belief and practice of all Pentecostal Churches particularly in Zimbabwe. Members from A.F.M maintained the same position that anyone who does not speak in tongues cannot be appointed into leadership (Machingura 2011).

For (Nichols 1984) 'Pentecostals will not retreat from what they feel is a biblical basis for their position. In their expositions they assert that, 'tongues' were an evidence of the Holy Spirit's descent on the Day of Pentecost (Acts2:4). Speaking in tongues was initial evidence of baptism when the Holy Spirit was poured out on those who gathered in the house of Cornelius (Acts10:45). Pentecostals accepts tongue speaking as an evidence of Holy Spirit baptism. Therefore the book of Acts plays a significant obligation especially in the shaping and direction of almost all doctrinal issues in most Pentecostal churches in Zimbabwe (Machingura 2013). When Paul laid hands upon believers at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7) people spoke in tongues. In his Corinthian letter he writes 'I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all' (1Corinthians14:18). Cox (1995:55) adds that, "Pentecostalism has succeeded because it has spoken to the spiritual emptiness of our time by reaching beyond the levels of creed and ceremony into the core of human religiousness, into what might be called 'primal spirituality.'" He asserts that the reason they continue to attract people is that "Pentecostals have rediscovered a powerful and primal form of religious expression". Cox further asserts that 'Pentecostals interpret tongue speaking as evidence of the wonderful nearness of the spirit. Romans 8:26 *'We are unable to pray but the spirit 'maketh intercession'*. Our corrupt and inadequate language is transformed by God's love into the tongues of angels' (Cox 1995:55).

This was concurred by (Macchia 1992) when alluded that 'indeed Pentecostals have rightly understood glossolalia as the 'sighs too deep for words' in Romans8:26. This quoted scripture suggests that: if speaking in tongue participates in the pain of God it also points to the new creation. Glossolalia is not only a yearning for the liberation and redemption to come, it is 'evidence' that such has already begun and is now active. This evidence of God's transforming and liberating activity is an essential element of divine theophany in Scripture', (Macchia 1992)

For (Cox 1995) "Glossolalia is a mystical experiential protest against an existing religious system that has turned stagnant or been corrupted". He continues saying that "it is a form of cultural subversion, a liberating energy that frees people to praise God in a language of the Spirit that is not controlled by dominant modes of religious schemes". Cox adds that "glossolalia helps to create a new religious subculture, one that in turn amplifies and affirms personal experience" Therefore, the gift of glossolalia or speaking in tongues is one of the important doctrines which produce much spiritual satisfaction for Pentecostals, (1Corinthians14:39). It is against this background that Pentecostal Christianity developed a bias towards glossolalia hence the centrality of its spirituality. However, one would ask is this theological bias justifiable?

This paper argues that every organization for it to stand the test of times, for it to survive, it must provide (casual nexus) the heart of something and that which give the identity. Therefore, speaking in tongues is unquestionably and the most distinctive doctrine of Pentecostal Christianity world over. It becomes a mark, a brand, an identity and a *Sine Qua Non* (without which Not). Taking away Speaking in tongues in Pentecostals is like robbing away one's identity. However, the study also observed that though glossolalia is a theological position of Pentecostals, the churches must not substitute and gravitate from emphasizing on the importance of the fruit of the spirit so as to cultivate a spirituality of love, tolerance ,justice as Paul puts it in (Galatians 5:22).

5. The Centrality of glossolalia in Pentecostal Christianity

Pentecostals have traditionally insisted that speaking in tongues is evidence that a person is filled with the Holy Spirit. Pentecostals' defense is primarily on the basis of a pattern they discern in Acts of the Apostles. In (Acts 2:4) when the disciples were first baptized in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, "all of them...began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability". Similarly, when the Gentiles were initially filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter and the other Jewish Christians recognized it, "for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God" (Acts 10:46). And when the disciples of John the Baptist first received this blessing from God after Paul preached to them and prayed with them, they all "spoke in tongues and prophesied" (Acts 19:6). Pentecostals arguably conclude that speaking in tongue is the pattern set for universal church by the New Testament church. Jesus promised that these signs shall follow the who believe that they will cast out demons... they will speak in new tongues (Mark 16: 15-18). Though it does not indicate that speaking in tongues is the only evidence of Holy Spirit baptism for Pentecostals it is the undisputable evidence that someone has received Holy Spirit baptism. Archbishop Guti defined the gift of tongues as the supernatural utterance by the Holy Spirit in language never learned by the speaker and not understood by the mind of the speaker (Guti 1993). "The only exception is Acts 8, where the Holy Spirit did not choose to focus specifically on speaking in other tongues, but left no doubt that there was visible evidence that this had happened" (<http://www.cbn.com/spirituallife/BiblestudyandTheology/theHolySpirit>). However, this does not mean that is the only evidence that one is Holy Spirit baptized because for Archbishop Guti speaking in tongues alone without the fruit of the Holy Spirit is futile (Guti 1999).

6. Mainline (Missionary) Churches' Theological Position on Glossolalia

For mainline Churches, glossolalia is not always an initial evidence of Holy Spirit Baptism. Most mainline churches reject this line of argumentation on a number of grounds. Firstly, critics of the initial evidence doctrine argue that it is illicit hermeneutics to base a doctrine on historical narrative (Schwab 1985). Pentecostals are criticized for taking an historical event to be an ongoing phenomenon. Luke reported what happened; he did not teach *what should always happen*. His narrative is *descriptive, not prescriptive*. Basing on this argument (Schwab 1985) and other posited that glossolalia was a temporary phenomenon that took place on a particular time in history for a specific reason to a particular group, hence there is no grantee of such an event recurring.

Secondly, the Bible provides not emphasis on tongues as a gift but on character formation that exhibit the fruits of the Spirit, especially love (Gal 5:22–23; 1 Cor 13:1ff; Rom 5:5). The critics opined that lives that are characterized by a zeal for the Lord, a boldness to proclaim truth, and holiness (Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:2–6; 2 Cor. 3:17–18; Gal. 5:16–18) is evidence enough for Holy Spirit baptism rather than mere speaking in tongues. Thirdly, if speaking in tongues is evidence that one has a unique infilling of the Holy Spirit, we'd expect people who speak in tongues to generally manifest more of the fruits of the Spirit than others. But this is indisputably of the case. It wasn't even the case in the New Testament. The Corinthians spoke in tongues a great deal, but Paul reprimanded them for being spiritual babies (1 Cor. 3:1–4).

Fourthly, it seems clear from Paul's epistle to the Corinthians that he did not assume that all believers would speak in tongues at some point. Paul asks, "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues?" (1 Cor. 12:29–30). The answer, of course, is no. Yet Paul encourages all believers to continually seek to be "filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18). For critics of the phenomenon this seems to undoubtedly suggest that Paul didn't expect all believers to speak in tongues and didn't identify tongues as a necessary manifestation of being filled with the Spirit. The perennial questions remains would be: Is speaking in an unknown tongue a thing of the past? Are those who speak in an unknown tongue possessed of a demon? With these and other question the paper seeks to investigate the theological position of speaking in an unknown tongue from non Pentecostal perspectives.

7. A critical analysis on Pentecostal and Mainline's theological positions on Glossolalia

The research has discovered that there is no middle road when it comes to theological positions. The same issue of glossolalia becomes very disheartening when it is handled by mainline churches. Instead of not appointing a person who speaks in tongues to leadership in their churches, actually a person who speaks in tongues is constantly, labeled a heretic and later is dismissed from the congregation. To date, there are a lot of schismatic movements emerged as a result of an unwelcoming position adopted by mainline churches in regards to *glossolalia*. For (Schwab 1985) glossolalia was a temporary gift of the Holy Spirit for the Early Church and no longer significant today. On the same not (Archbishop Cramer, 2008) of the Catholic Church in Vatican accused members who spoke in tongues to be demon possessed. It is against this background that, today the mainline churches experience serious schismatic occurrences as a result of radical theological position against the phenomenon. Example is a charismatic Roman Catholic Church which congregates every Sunday at Harare Polytechnic College that ascribe to Holy Spirit baptism with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues. The Mainline churches categorically denounce speaking in tongues as demonic oppressed. Members in these churches are told that *hatisi machechi omweya* (we are not spirit type churches), no to speaking in tongues. For them the theological interpretation of (1 Cor 12: 1-11) means God has given some Churches diverse tongues and not us. Quoting Paul, "But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue (1Cor14:19)" is interpreted to mean 'don't speak in tongues while in church.'

Therefore, the study has observed that to dismiss the phenomenon of speaking in tongues as a temporary phenomenon is fallacious because there are five places in the new Testament where speaking in tongues is referred to unambiguously. "Firstly, Mark 16:15-18 which accounts the instructions of Jesus Christ to the disciples, that they will "they will speak with new tongues" as a sign that would follow "them that believe" in him. Secondly, Acts2, which depicts an episode of speaking in tongues in Jerusalem at feast of Pentecost, though with various interpretations. Specifically, "every man *heard them* speak in his own language" and wondered "how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" Thirdly, in Acts 10:46, where the household of Cornelius in Caesarea spoke in tongues, and those present compared it to the speaking in tongues that occurred at Pentecost. Fourthly Acts 19:16, when a group of approximately a twelve men spoke in tongues in Ephesus as they received the Holy Spirit while the apostle Paul laid his hands upon them. Fifthly, 1cor 12,13,14, where Apostle Paul discusses speaking in "various kinds of tongues" as part of his wider discussion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit; his remarks shed some light on his own speaking in tongues as well as how the gift of speaking in tongues was to be used in the Church" (<http://www.goballeader772.wordpress.com>). The Apostle Paul instructed the church in Corinth about speaking in tongues in his discussion of the gifts of the Spirit in a letter to them.

"His purpose was to encourage them to value the gift, but not too highly; to practice it, but not abuse it. In the letter, Paul commands church brethren, "Do not forbid to speak in tongues" (1 Cor 14:39), while warning them that "all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner" He further expresses his wishes that those to whom he wrote "all spoke with tongues" (1 Cor 14:5) and claims himself to speak with tongues more than any in the church at Corinth ("I thank God I speak with tongues more than you all" 1 Cor 14:18). At the same time he argues that not everyone can speak in tongues (1 Cor 12:29) and discourages simultaneous speaking in tongues directed at people rather than God, lest unbelievers should think that the assembled believers were "mad" (1 Cor 14:23-27). Tongues, says Paul, is speaking to God, rather than men ("in the Spirit he speaks mysteries" (1 Cor 14:2)). Paul claims that speaking in tongues edifies the person speaking (1 Cor 14:4), that it is the action of a praying speaker's spirit (as opposed to his or her

understanding, and that praying in tongues serves both to bless God as well as to give thanks (1 Cor 14:16-17)" (<http://www.apostolicarchives.com/glossolalia.html>).

Evidently, the study has noted with concern that over emphasis on Glossolalia by the Pentecostal churches has caused a lot of disharmony both internally and outside Pentecostal community. It carries with it the honor and shame model where one who does not have a gift feels inferior to the one who speaks in tongues. This has resulted to some Church members fake the phenomenon thereby imitates the speaking in tongues. The emphasis on Glossolalia depicts a picture that one who speaks in tongues is not of this world but represent a different world the world of the spirit whereas those who do not speak in tongues represent the world of carnality. It is on this background that the study seeks to discuss spirituality from a performativity theory Butler (2007) a presumption which dismisses for instance the restricted understanding that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is only evidenced by glossolalia.

8. What is to be Spiritual or to be in the spirit?

This paper argues that spirituality cannot be defined by such theological positions such as emphasis in dress code (most mainline Churches), facing east when praying (*Masowe echishanu*) and speaking in tongues (Pentecostals Churches). According to Paul's theology, being spiritual is more than speaking in tongues and denominational affiliations (1Cor 3:4). To be spiritual cannot be defined with one's uniform, one's denomination but by the fruit of the Spirit as according to Galatian 5:22) and (Ephesians 5:15-18). The study postulates that what makes this world habitable is not the religious people but those whose decisions and works are influenced by the Holy Spirit hence thus to be spiritual.

There is an error of measuring Christian Spirituality with glossolalia. The thrust of this paper is to show that speaking in tongues only cannot encapsulates what it entails to be spiritual or *Kupinda mumweya* (Machingura 2012). Being spiritual has been defined by (McGrath 1999, p.9) as a phenomenon that arises from "a creative and dynamic synthesis of faith and life, forged in the crucible of the desire to live out the Christian faith authentically, responsibly, effectively and fully". For (Principe 1983) the term spirituality is an authentic Christian term derived from the Latin word spiritualities, a theoretical word related to *spiritus* and *spiritualis* both terms used to translate the Greek words *pneuma* and *pneumatikos* as used in the Pauline epistles". One can auxiliary argued that Paul's understanding of pneumatic or spiritual person is one, whose whole being and life is ordered, led, or influenced by the Spirit of God. In contrast with this position one who is not led by the Spirit of God is referred to by Paul as '*sarkic*,' (Walter 1993) which means, the 'carnal' person whose being and life oppose God's Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:1-4).

Peck (1992) argues that, "Christian spirituality is the cognitive human response to God that is both personal and ecclesial – it is life in the Spirit". As concurred by (Sheldrake 2005) to be spiritual refers to the whole of the Christian's life leaned to self-transcending knowledge, freedom, and love in light of the decisive values and highest ideals perceived and pursued in the mystery of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit – that is, spirituality concerns everything that constitutes Christian experience..." A Christian acquires spirituality by following the teachings of the Bible and following the examples of Jesus Christ. This suggests that what differentiates Christian Spirituality from other spiritualities is its rootedness in the Bible, following the teachings of Jesus as the role model.

The study posits that to be spiritual is to live under the influence of the Holy Spirit. It is one thing to speaking in tongues and another thing to be influenced by the Holy Spirit. Christian Spirituality becomes therefore, a set of beliefs, a set of values and a way of life a Christian can do guided by the Holy Spirit in such a fraudulent and cunning world. The world we live is full of short cuts, corruption and exploitation. Christian spirituality becomes a way of life Christians should display when everybody else is dishonest. The exegesis of Paul in (Ephesians 5:15- 18) is a work up call to all God's children to be controlled by the spirit of God. For Paul to be pneumatic means to be someone whose life is guided and subjective to the Holy Spirit.

The paper has argued that if a person is controlled by the Holy Spirit produces fruits of the spirit as according to (Galatians 5:22). Paul is giving his Church an analogy of a person drunk of alcohol and a person drunk of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:15-18). He starts from the known to the unknown, by this analogy Paul is saying one who is filled with alcohol is led into wickedness and exhibits certain characteristics but the one who is filled with the Spirit of God is led into good works. Wickedness is a result of being carnal minded and good works is a product of the Holy Spirit in a believer. This paper argues that Christian denominations have neglected the core values of Christian spirituality and emphasis on doctrinal differences which does not bring solutions to existential problems but rather create more enemies than friends. Emphasizing on the day of worship, the direction to face when praying, speaking in tongues, dress code (Church uniforms) and many other theological positions have weakened the Christian fraternity. Much time is spend speculating on our differences than spending time on how to solve our problems as human Christian beings by allowing the Holy Spirit to led us. The paper has highlighted that authentic Christian Spirituality is determined by acts of love, forgiveness, peace, justice efforts of reconciliation, because such acts necessitate nation building (1 Cor 14:1-19). Paul in 1cor 13:1-13 argues that: ¹If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, and it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres. ⁸Love never fails...¹³and now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

It is also imperative to not that the ZAOGA founder and AFM Leader of the Zimbabwean chapter seems to have gravitated from their early theological position on the significance and meaning of tongues. Archbishop Ezekiel Guti reprimanded his church members when he raised rhetorical questions in his last episode of preaching-;

“How, does a person know that he is born again? Does he know by speaking in tongues, Archbishop Guti said NO!!!, Does he know by going to church, Archbishop Guti said NO!!!, How does a person knows that he is born again, Archbishop Guti said by loving one another(Ezekiel TV 12/10/2014).

Also an Apostolic Faith in Zimbabwe Church Leader, Reverend Titus Murefu, on a different occasion shared the same sentiments when he was also quoted by an inside informant lamenting that *‘kunyangwe ndikataura ne ndimi dzakareba ndisina Rudo hazirevi chinhu’* (thou I speak with many tongues without love its meaningless) (interview 24/11/2013). Speaking in tongue is very central in Pentecostal Spirituality but this paper has highlighted that theological positions are trivial hence the Church should move forward to emphasis on the works of the Holy Spirit for nation building. These boundaries created are not porous enough to create a meaningful dialogue as Christian community.

In other words, to be spiritual is to be able to sacrifice religious beliefs and denominational theological positions and become conscious of life and the importance of serving life at all cost. Jesus gave a parable of a Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) to draw people’s attention on the importance of serving life at the expense of religious differences. Arguably, the Priest and the Levite could not extend a hand because of religious constrains. According to the Jewish law, one was not allowed to touch or attend to a bleeding person or attend to a corpse on your way to the temple to minister. Since these two were on their way to the Jerusalem temple, they could not religiously attend to their own fellow Jew who was bitten by robbers and was left half dead. Religiously, the Priest and the Levite were justified to ignore a man who was desperately in need of help. Paradoxically, a Samaritan was also justified religiously not to help the man who was left half dead by robbers because he was a Jew. However, Jesus gave that parable to show that though the Samaritan had religious justification to ignore the injured man as well, he forgoes such constrains and extended a helping hand hence Jesus called him a ‘Neighbor’. This paper argues that nation building is possible when citizens completely and genuinely burry political, denominational and theological position and move on to exercise agape love, reconcile to each another and employ justice as much as possible, forgiving each other. Archbishop Guti raised it when he said people will know that one is born again not by speaking in tongues, not by going to church, not by being religious but by the works of love. Love is the most important ingredient of nation building. It is this love that will create a conducive environment for peace, forgiveness, reconciliation longsuffering as highlighted in this research paper.

9. Conclusion

The doctrine of glossolalia has created an animosity within the body of Christ. It has been an issue from time immemorial hence Paul through God’s wisdom tried to solve it. The paper has shown that: Firstly, tongues (Greek: glossa) as a spiritual gift to speak an unknown, unfamiliar language without learning it before hand is just a gift of the Holy Spirit and is not the Holy Spirit, those who have the gift should not look down upon those who do not have the gift(1 Cor 12:4-7, 11). Secondly, the gift of tongues is to be used in public to bring praise to God (1 Cor. 14:2), to edify oneself (I Cor. 14:4), and to be used as a warning of judgment against unbelieving Jews (I Cor. 14:21-22). Thirdly, people should not unfriendly those who speaking in tongues (1Cor 14:39). Fourthly, the research has established that Paul’s spirituality is about the fruit of the spirit hence agape love is an integral part of Christian Spirituality and not glossolalia. Jesus taught that the world shall know that we are his disciples if we love one another, (John 13:34-35). Therefore, it can be concluded from the exposition above that, most denominational theological positions have been postulated by mere literal interpretation of the Bible, also by interpreting scriptures to suit certain biases. Over and above what is more important is to pursue love peace, longsuffering, forgiveness and reconciliation and not denominational theological position for the sake of nation building.

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