

PRAYING IN TONGUES - PRAYING IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

SPEAKING IN TONGUES - A SIGN OF A BELIEVER IN JESUS CHRIST

Speaking in tongues is perhaps one of the most controversial gifts in the Body of Christ today. Jesus however specifically mentions tongues in Mark 16:17 as a sign of a believer, one who would follow Him. He also told His disciples not to leave Jerusalem until they had received the promise of the Father, and be endued with power from on high. Of all the nine gifts of the Spirit, speaking in tongues is the only gift not already found in the Old Testament. This is perhaps why Jesus mentions tongues as the sign of a New Testament believer. There are many people who wish Mark 16:17 wasn't there. Well, it's there. My heart grieves for the dear folk who have had a wonderful christian heritage, but have been denied this one truth. My own personal experience of tongues has been one of power, wonderful deliverance, and intimate communion with the Lord. If Jesus told the New Testament disciples not to leave town without it, He must have had good reason. We need the power of the Spirit.

PRAYING IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

"A believer operating the manifestation of the spirit called tongues will be edified spiritually, spiritually built-up. He can operate this manifestation in two situations: in public and in private. (1) The bulk of a believer's speaking in tongues is in his own private life. As such, speaking in tongues in private will be prayer or praise to the Father and, therefore is never interpreted. This prayer and praise is spoken of as "praying in the spirit." When you speak in tongues it is the spirit in you which is in direct communication with your heavenly Father, and as such your spirit is edified. (2) A believer can speak in tongues publicly in a believer's meeting. When a person publicly speaks in tongues, he must always interpret. A public message is never a prayer however; it is a communication from God meant for the people present. Both public and private speaking in tongues are called speaking to God.

IS SPEAKING IN TONGUES NECESSARY FOR SALVATION?

No. When a person is "born again" by the Holy Spirit they are saved and have the nature of God in their spirit.

THE PURPOSE OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES

- 1) MK 16:17 - Signs follow - a promise from the Lord.
- 2) 1.COR 14:5 - Paul wanted everyone to speak in tongues.
- 3) ACTS 2:4; 10:45,46; 19:6 - Proof of Holy Spirit Baptism.
- 4) ACTS 2:11 - They speak the wonderful works of God.
- 5) ACTS 10:46 - They magnify God.
- 6) 1.COR 14:2 - Whosoever speaks in tongues speaks to God directly. Speaking divine mysteries
- 7) 1.COR 14:4 - They edify the speaker.
- 8) 1.COR 14:14 - Prayer in tongues is spiritual prayer.
- 9) 1.COR 14:15 - They can be a spiritual song.
- 10) 1.COR 14:16 - Also shows your thankfulness.
- 11) 1.COR 14:16,17 - Also shows praise to God. Giving thanks
- 12) 1.COR 14:22 - They are a sign to the unbeliever!
- 13) 1.COR 14:18 - Paul spoke in tongues more than all !!
- 14) 1.COR 14:26,27 - They are part of a fellowship meeting.
- 15) 1.COR 14:39 - They are NOT to be forbidden!
- 16) 1.COR 14:5 - Assembly also edified - after interpretation.
- 17) ISA 28:11,12 - Rest and refreshing - cf. ACTS 2:11-13
- 18) ROM 8:26 Prayer in tongues helps our problems/weaknesses.
- 19) JUDE 20 - Builds the faith of God in us.
- 20) ZEPH 3:9 & ROM 15:6 - Enables worship in purity and unity.
- 21) Ephesians 3:16 - Strengthening our inner man.

7:14

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THE SCRIPTURAL BASIS FOR THE GIFT OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES

The gift of speaking in tongues as promised by Jesus to His disciples (Mark 16:17, Luke 24:49)

- the sign of a believer
- public versus private use of tongues
- the purpose of speaking in tongues
- an Apologia - A Reasoned Argument In Defense Of Speaking In Tongues

The Biblical Evidence For the gift of speaking in tongues - questions & answers about praying in tongues

Are tongues and other gifts of the spirit for today? Objections, questions and answers about the gift of praying in tongues as promised by Jesus to His disciples. (Mark 16:17, Luke 24:49)

AN APOLOGIA - A REASONED ARGUMENT IN DEFENSE OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES

1. "I don't need the baptism of the Holy Spirit because I got baptised when I was saved."

The Bible teaches that Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a separate experience from salvation.

Acts 8:12-17; John 20:22; Acts 1:4

2. "I'm baptised in the Holy Spirit but I don't have to speak in tongues".

We don't have to do anything we don't want to, but the Biblical evidence for the baptism in the Holy Spirit is speaking in tongues. Mark 16:17, Acts 2:4, Acts 19:1-6

3. "The tongues experience in Acts 2:4 was only to tell foreigners about the gospel."

Partly true, initially. But the real ongoing purpose of tongues was for the believer's own edification, not for preaching the gospel.

Tongues is for our own personal edification. 1Cor. 14:2,4

Tongues is for the Believer's own personal time of prayer. 1Cor.14:14

The Holy Spirit is given to us as our personal helper, comforter and teacher. John 16:7,13

4. "Tongues isn't for everybody." 1Cor.12:30

It's for everybody who wants it. Acts 2:39 The passage in 1 Corinthians 12:30 is referring to the public operation of the ministry gift (which must be interpreted) and not tongues as a private prayer language. 1Cor.14:14 Note also: "Not all are prophets" 1Cor.12:29 but all may prophesy. 1Cor. 14:31

5. "The Bible says only 3 people should speak in tongues in church - no more! and it should be interpreted." 1Cor.14:27

Again this is with reference to the public operation of tongues as a ministry gift (which should be interpreted) and not the believer's own personal use of tongues. Paul is simply saying, if anyone has a tongues message - one at a time please - and after 3 tongues messages hold it! we need the interpretation of the tongues messages we have already received!

6. What about the "not for today" argument?

(i) "Tongues and prophesy are not for today." 1Cor. 13:8,10

The key issue, is when does the bible say tongues and prophecy will cease? The answer is found in verse 12 -

when my knowledge is complete, when I know "just as I also am known."

The word PERFECT (teleios) means "complete, mature, having reached its end."

Paul is saying that in the fullness of time, when this age has reached its end, we will enter a new age where I will see face to face and I shall know just as I am also known, and then I won't need these spiritual gifts because they are only temporary. But please note, the fact that they will one day cease does not minimise their importance now!

(ii) "The N.T. church was in its infancy and so it needed the gifts to get established."

The gifts are needed till we all come to full spiritual maturity! Ephesians 4:11 says that apostles and prophets are for building up the church till we all reach the stature of the fullness of Christ.

(iii) See also Acts 2:39 "The promise is to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God shall call."

7. "The Corinthian church was the only church that Paul wrote to about tongues and other spiritual gifts and it was a church full of immorality."

True, but does that justify the transfer of something negative (eg. immorality, being labelled a fanatic) by implied association?

Yes, the Corinthian church had problems with immorality. Does that make the Holy spirit unholy? Because of God's unmerited favour and grace towards sinful humanity are His gifts now to be despised?

Do we throw out the New Jerusalem, the marriage supper of the Lamb and the Lamb's Book of Life because they are only mentioned in the book of Revelation?

It is obvious from the book of Acts that the operation of the spiritual gifts was the New Testament norm; it was not just some isolated phenomenon associated with the Corinthians.

8. "Most of the tongue-talkers I know are nothing but hypocrites and clanging cymbals."

If I find a red apple with worms in it I choose not to eat it. But I don't stop looking for red apples. We do not earn the gifts, they are received as gifts. So operating a spiritual gift is not evidence of holiness or Christian maturity, it is evidence of having received the gift.

9. "Much damage has been done through the misuse of the gifts, how could they be God?"

The gift leaves heaven perfect. God has chosen to use imperfect vessels. The spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet. Much harm is done through misquoting the Bible - do we throw out the Bible? We know in part and prophesy in part. The gifts are not perfect in their operation which is why the Bible says they must be judged. When proper Biblical guidelines are followed error and abuse is minimised and the gifts - as intended - are a great blessing. We are commanded not to despise spiritual gifts just because of someone's ignorance and abuse of them.

10. "There are African tribesmen who speak in tongues as part of their devil worship, and the occult uses it too."

The counterfeit proves the real. I do not discard the genuine \$100 bill just because someone is reported to have made a counterfeit. Luke 11:11-13 tells me if I ask my heavenly Father for a fish He'll make sure I don't get a snake.

11. "Tongues is of the devil"

No it's not. It's of God. Mark 16:17 specifically says it's the sign of someone who believes in and follows Jesus Christ.

12. "People who speak in tongues end up in the funny farm."

So do those who don't.

13. "It's too embarrassing! Why do you have to lift your hands and dance and do all that emotional happy clappy stuff?"

I have yet to meet someone who refuses to go to a social function (eg. the races, a disco or sports match) because other people who go get too "emotional".

14. "You've been brainwashed."

Dirty old brains needed a wash!

15. "It's a cult!"

How would you define a cult?

16. "I don't believe all this tongues and healing stuff." Well, don't worry about it - it'll never happen to you!

"GOD IS A SPIRIT: AND THEY THAT WORSHIP HIM MUST WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH." JOHN 4:24