

June 15, 2024

Speaking in Tongues

Part 3

Years ago, while in Israel along with a group from a large church in the Houston area, my dad was asked to speak to the church group at the Mount of Olives. As he spoke, the presence of God settled upon him and those who were gathered there. There was silence for a long while after he finished, then finally the Armenian tour guide, who was a professor at the Hebrew University, stood with tears in his eyes and said, "This man has prepared the way for me to give you the tour I have always wanted to give instead of what I am instructed to tell you.

Two days later at the Sea of Galilee, an elder from the large church approached my dad and asked if he would go for a walk with him. He said, "I love my church. The worship is wonderful, and we have all the gifts of the Spirit in operation in every service. We used to believe we had to wait on the Spirit of God to speak in tongues, but now we understand these things are our gifts and we can use them at any time. But when you spoke yesterday evening, I felt the presence of God for the first time in many years. Will you pray with me? I want to feel the presence of God again.

The contradiction in this man's words was astounding. He was convinced that his church was experiencing the great gifts and manifestation of God's Spirit, while at the same time it was also void of the presence of God. Such is never the case. Yet tens of thousands if not millions think they have the same great spiritual manifestations without God's presence upon them. Something is very wrong when that is the case.

Above fifty years ago, a "new revelation" began to take hold in Spirit-filled churches. Until that time, it was known by those who received the Holy Ghost Baptism that the operation of the spiritual gifts came and operated at the express will and visitation of God. The Bible says, *"But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit..."*

I Corinthians 12:11. The "new revelation" said that speaking in tongues and the gifts of the Spirit were our gifts and we could use them at our will. People began to be taught how to speak in tongues. Others were given "primer" words to repeat. While still others were told to simply speak what they heard in their mind.

Even many of those who had received the Spirit by visitation from Heaven were seduced by this "new revelation." I remember how strange it was the first time I heard a minister instruct everyone to speak in tongues. This was a startling thing! We knew tongues came by the moving of God's Spirit and not by the urging of man. It soon began to be taught that tongues were our prayer language and we could and should pray in tongues at our will. It sounded spiritual to some, but it was not. It became mechanical. Entire congregations of

people would supposedly pray “in the Spirit,” and the Spirit of God was not even in the building. You could go to an altar and there was no need to really talk to God. You could just speak in tongues. You could do it in church, while watching television, or after committing fornication. It was your gift. But was it from God?

I do not write these things because I do not believe in the Baptism with God’s Spirit and spiritual gifts, but because I do! The speaking in tongues that is God’s witness to you and everyone else that His Spirit has come still works exactly the same way as on the Day of Pentecost. They spoke in tongues “*as (and only as) the Spirit gave them utterance.*” Acts 2:4. What a mistake it is to lose that sovereign visitation in order to join the voices of tens of thousands who speak in tongues or prophesy at their will, that is, if you are one who would rather have the presence of God.