

SPEAKING IN TONGUES

Text: Mark 16:15-20

INTRO: Our text shows that Jesus foretold that the apostles would receive the gift of tongues, and that His promise was fulfilled before the book of Mark was put into written form.

There has been much discussion about the gift of tongues over the past few decades. This is, of course, a Bible subject. For the next few minutes, we will look at what the Bible teaches about the gift of tongues and note some differences between Bible doctrine and common theories on that subject.

I. THE GIFT OF TONGUES IS DISCUSSED IN THREE NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS.

- A. In our text, MARK 16:14-20.
- B. In ACTS 2:1-21; 10:44-46; 19:6
- C. In 1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-11, 28-31; 13:1, 8-10; 14:1-40

II. THE BIBLE DOCUMENTS ONLY TWO WAYS OF RECEIVING THE GIFT OF TONGUES.

A. By Holy Spirit Baptism. There are two recorded cases, and one implied case of H.S. Baptism.

1. The apostles received H.S. baptism in Acts 2.
Acts 1:5; 2:1-4
2. Though it is not specifically stated, it is necessarily inferred that Saul of Tarsus received the same miraculous gifts & manifestations the other apostles had received.

READ 2 CORINTHIANS 12:11-12

3. The household of Cornelius received H.S. bapt. in
Acts 10:44-47

Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, "John indeed baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

(Acts 11:16)

B. By laying on of the apostles' hands.

Now when Simon say that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money... (Acts 8:18).

And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. (Acts 19:6).

III. THE TONGUES IN THE BIBLE WERE NOT "UNKNOWN" IN THE SENSE OFTEN APPLIED TO THEM. THEY WERE INTELLIGENT LANGUAGES UNDERSTOOD BY INDIVIDUALS IN THE ASSEMBLY.

A. The word "unknown" in the KJV of 1 Cor. 14:2, 4, 13, &c is not in the original Greek but was supplied by the translators as indicated by the use of italics.

B. The tongues (languages) were unknown, or "new" to the speakers, but were understood by those members of the audience who were accustomed to speaking those languages. READ ACTS 2:6-11.

C. If no one in the assembly could understand and translate the message into the language of the audience, the tongue speaker was forbidden to exercise his gift, 1 Cor. 14:27-28.

IV. NOT ALL FIRST CENTURY CHRISTIANS COULD SPEAK IN TONGUES. READ 1 COR. 12:8-10, 29-30

NOTE: In most of our English translations, the answer to these questions must be *inferred*. However, in the Greek that answer is *supplied*! The NASB helps us in these cases: "All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?" (1 Cor. 12:29-30, NASB)

V. THE TONGUE-SPEAKER MAINTAINED CONTROL OVER THE USE OF HIS GIFT. READ I COR. 14:27-33.

VI. TONGUES AND OTHER MIRACLES WERE GIVEN FOR A PURPOSE, BEFORE THE N.T. WAS COMPLETE IN A UNIT.

A. The basic purpose of 1st century miracles was to confirm the new revelations of Christ & His apostles & prophets.

And they went out & preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, & confirming the word through the accompanying signs. (Mark 16:20).

John 20:30-31

B. The N.T. affirms that spiritual gifts were not meant to be a permanent part of the N.T. church, but were to cease when their goal or purpose was accomplished.
READ I CORINTHIANS 13:8-10.

READ EPHESIANS 4:8-13

C. The goal has been reached in that the N.T. has been completely revealed & completely confirmed.
Rev. 22:18-19; John 20:30-31

CONCLUSION: It is not necessary to be able to explain the modern phenomenon currently known as tongue speaking to know that it differs in several respects from that of the N.T. In closing, I borrow an illustration from my friend David Watts. "The Jan. 22, 1977 issue of the Houston Chronicle reported the case of a teen-age girl who saw the movie 'Jaws,' and for some time after she thought sharks were coming after her... The unidentified young woman was one of many victims of 'Jaws' according to an assistant professor of psychiatry at an eastern university." According to the report, the young woman would look out her window, and see sharks coming toward her. By the way, she lived in Kansas. She would "see" those sharks coming across the plains of Kansas. I may not be able to precisely identify what this girl's problem was, but knowing where Kansas is located is

sufficient knowledge to know that the sharks she “saw” were not real. In like manner, I may not be able to explain the modern phenomenon of so-called tongue speaking, but reading what the N.T. teaches about the gift of tongues is enough to know that the modern practice is not the same thing. We need to be guided in our faith & in our practice by what the N.T. teaches, and not by our feelings, emotions & real or imagined “experiences.”

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