

The Gift of Tongues

If you want a great example of just how confused many people are when it comes to religion, just listen to what many of them say about tongue speaking. For decades tongue speaking has been one of the most controversial religious subjects.

I. What many people believe about tongue speaking:

- It is necessary to be saved.
- It is an extreme experience.
- It is nothing more than unintelligible sounds.
- The gift could occur at any time.
- It continues to exist.

II. What is the truth about tongue speaking?

- It was a miraculous spiritual gift.
 - Christians in the first century had this miraculous gift (1 Corinthians 12:1, 7-11).
 - But there were also non-miraculous gifts in the church (Romans 12:4-8).
- It was miraculously imparted.
 - Through Holy Spirit baptism on the apostles and the household of Cornelius (Acts 2:1-4; 10:44-45).
 - Through laying on of the apostles' hands (Acts 19:5-6; Romans 1:11).
- Not every christian had the ability.
 - The Holy Spirit decided the gifts Christians received (1 Corinthians 12:11).
 - There were many other gifts besides tongue speaking.
- It involved speaking actual languages.
 - The Jews gathered on Pentecost recognized this (Acts 2:4-8, 11-12).
 - Maybe this explains why the gift was not generally practiced in an assembly where the people did not know the language (1 Corinthians 14:2, 27-28).
- It benefited unbelievers.
 - It was a sign to unbelievers that the speakers were messengers of God.
 - That is exactly the purpose it served on Pentecost (Acts 2:11-12).
- It could be controlled by the speaker.
 - This is the implication of everything found in 1 Corinthians 14:27-33.
 - This is NOT what is going on today!
- They were to be exercised one at a time.
 - It didn't matter how many people had the gift, there were to be no more than two or three people speaking in tongues (and they needed an interpreter present).
 - See 1 Corinthians 14:27-28.
- The gift has ceased.
 - The gift would cease when God's revelation was complete and perfected (1 Corinthians 13:8-10).
 - Once God's word was fully revealed the gift would no longer be needed.

III. What can we learn?

- A lesson about the Bible: it is all we need today (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- A lesson about spiritual gifts: every Christian has one (1 Peter 4:11; Romans 12:6).
- A lesson about salvation: Tongue speaking has never been necessary for one to be saved (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 10:46-48)!