



22. Talking in Tongues - A New Look at Bible Evidence

Everyone who responds to God's love wants one blessing above all else: the gift of the Holy Spirit. If one doesn't have the Holy Spirit, he is like a body without the breath of life. He is spiritually dead. Wherever the Holy Spirit of God is being poured out, that is where God's people should be.

There is harmony between Bible teaching and the true gift of the Holy Spirit. This study is devoted to the work of the Holy Spirit, how we can recognize Him. Especially we want to see what the Bible says about the gift of tongues as it was prominent in the New Testament church of the apostles. We want to look deeply into their actual words.

How do you understand the phenomenal growth of the tongues-speaking movements today? They are uniting Roman Catholics, Baptists, Lutherans, Episcopalians, people of almost all denominations.

It's time to let the Bible shed some much-needed light on this phenomenon.

Should We Be Afraid of the Holy Spirit?

1. Here is a clear answer to that question. John 14:16, 17.

ANSWER: "The Father ... shall give you another _____, that he may _____ with you _____."

2. What is the real meaning of the word "comfortless" in John 14:18?

YOUR ANSWER: _____.

The real meaning of "Comforter" is one-who-is-called-to-sit-down-beside-you. The Holy Spirit is your constant Companion. Jesus said that He will never leave you, for "He shall abide with you forever." You would be an orphan without Him.

3. See what Jesus said as to how the Holy Spirit will "comfort" us. John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:13.

ANSWER: "He shall teach you _____." "The Spirit of truth ... shall testify _____." "He will guide you into _____, ... and he will shew you _____ to _____."

4. How can you know whether or not you have already received the gift of the Holy Spirit? Read carefully John 16:7-11 and note the three things the Holy Spirit does for you.

ANSWER: "When He is come [to you], He will _____ the world of _____, and of _____, and of _____."

Have you begun to see your sinfulness? Then you have received the Holy Spirit. Only He can give you that conviction. Have you begun to realize how high and pure is God's standard of righteousness? That is an evidence of His work! Have you begun to grasp the fact that Satan is "judged," condemned, cast out of your life? This is further evidence.

Some have not received this Heavenly Gift, for they are proud of their own righteousness and their hearts are as hard as concrete. According to Jesus, repentance and heart-sorrow for sin are the first evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit. See Luke 18:9-14.

"While the work of the Spirit is silent and imperceptible, its effects are manifest. If the heart has been renewed by the Spirit of God, the life will bear witness to the fact." Happiness Digest, p. 26.

What Was the Gift of Tongues On the Day of Pentecost?

5. Read the simple story of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-11. Did the people hear a babble of unintelligent words, or did they hear actual languages?

ANSWER: "How hear we every man in our _____, wherein we were born?"

(Compare Revelation 14:6 to find the common meaning of "tongue" as a spoken language). There are two words translated "tongue" in Acts 2-glossa and dialektos.

We get "glossary" from the first and "dialect" from the second. Glossa is spoken languages, and dialektos is spoken dialects or mother-tongues. Glossa is used in Revelation 14:6. The miracle of Pentecost was the gift of genuine spoken language and dialects.

6. Is there any evidence that the gift of tongues spoken of later in the Book of Acts was the same? Acts 10:46 and 19:6. (Glossa is used in both texts.)

ANSWER: "They heard them speak with _____ and _____ God." ... They spake with _____, and _____."

These instances were repetitions of Pentecost on a smaller scale. The miracle was the use of languages new to the speakers, but understood by the hearers. The great diversity of languages was a serious barrier to full communication in the days of the apostles, much as it is in undeveloped areas of the world today. The Holy Spirit enabled these men to express themselves freely.

7. As we read what Paul said to the Corinthians, is there any different kind of gift of "tongues" brought to view? 1 Corinthians 12:1, 28.

YOUR ANSWER: "God hath set some in the church with gifts of _____ of _____."

Again, glossa is used, with the modifier, "kinds of languages," clearly spoken languages. Glossa is never used of any but spoken languages in the New Testament, including those of angels (1 Corinthians 13:1).

What Are "Unknown" Tongues? (1 Corinthians 14)

8. Why is the word "unknown" in italics in the King James Bible? 1 Corinthians 14:2, 4, 13, 14, 19, 27.

YOUR ANSWER (see note below): _____.

In the King James Version, italicized words have been supplied by the translators, who were honest enough to tell us that they are not in the original Greek or Hebrew. The translators thought the sense required the addition of these words, but sometimes the additional words bring confusion. The apostle Paul never once used the term "unknown tongue;" what he said in every instance was "language," meaning "foreign language." The church in Corinth was composed of many nationalities and cultures. Their Sabbath meetings would be confusion unless Paul's counsel regarding translating was followed. His concern was not that they speak babble, but understand!

9. Should one ever speak in an unknown or foreign language in a public meeting--without someone translating for the benefit of all? 1 Corinthians 14:26-28, 33, 40.

ANSWER: "... If there be _____, let him keep _____ in the church. ..."

Mark in your Bible the many clear things Paul says about how important it is that every word spoken be clear and intelligible (1 Corinthians 14:5-20). He is clearly talking about languages (verses 21-25). He says that if you can show off your knowledge of foreign languages, all you do is dazzle the unbeliever; but if you communicate some sensible truth, you convict the unbeliever. Paul is in favor of the latter. If a preacher preaches to you in Chinese, the only one who understands him is God (unless you are Chinese). His soul may be stirred as he delivers a marvelous sermon, but it is all "Greek" to the listeners ("mysteries"). All he is doing is preaching to himself ("edifieth himself").

The Gift That Is Better Than "Tongues"

10. Has God given you the gift of His Holy Spirit? 1 Corinthians 12:7-11.

ANSWER: "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to _____ to profit withal. ... The selfsame Spirit, dividing to _____ severally as _____."

11. The Holy Spirit gives to everyone a different gift. We must never expect others to have the same gift we have, or make them feel that they must get a certain gift-experience in order to receive the Holy Spirit. What "more excellent way" is better than talking with all the languages of men and angels? 1 Corinthians 12:29-31 and 13:1-3.

ANSWER: It is to have "_____."

Whatever is your mother-tongue (dialektos), pray that the Holy Spirit will set you free from the timidity that has hindered you from telling someone what Christ has done for you. When you can convey to someone an uplifting spiritual truth that will turn him to everlasting life, you have done what Paul says you should do. "Follow after agape," he says, and desire "spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." To prophesy in this sense means to help someone spiritually by communicating truth. "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification [building them up spiritually], and exhortation [encouraging them spiritually], and comfort" (1 Corinthians 14:3).

12. If one receives the Holy Spirit, what is the first fruit that he will receive in his life? Galatians 5:22.

ANSWER: "But the fruit of the Spirit is _____."

This is a fruit that can be received only as one follows Christ by faith in His work of cleansing the heavenly sanctuary, in His final atonement. God's answer to the challenge posed by a false and counterfeit, so-called "holy ghost baptism" that is based on false doctrine and disobedience to the commandments of God is this gift of genuine love, -agape. It is priceless!

13. Do you ask the Lord to show you what "gift of the Spirit" He has already given you? _____.

"Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." 1 Peter 5:7 "Pray without ceasing." 1 Thessalonians 5:17

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