

Captive's Corner



"Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ"

2 Corinthians 10:5

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TONGUES

Here is a portion of a letter which I wrote to another student attempting to answer some questions regarding the "speaking in tongues." I believe that you may find the thoughts and Scriptures presented herein of help in your search for the truth.

First of all, you don't have to speak tongues to be saved. Some in the past have spoken tongues when they were saved, but certainly not all. See 1 Corinthians 12:28-31. If you read

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carefully the book of 1 John, you will notice that the purpose for writing that book was to give assurance to those who believe in Jesus that they do have eternal life. See 1 John 5:13. You will notice that tongues are never mentioned in that letter. If they were so necessary for

salvation, then certainly John would have said so.

In today's world I personally believe tongues are not often if ever an expression of God's Spirit. They can be from God as evidenced in the Scriptures. (Here, you need to study carefully the purpose in His use of tongues as revealed in Acts

and 1 Corinthians 12-14.) They can also be from Satan, the great counterfeiter, as revealed by the abuse of tongues in 1 Corinthians 12-14. A third source of tongues is simply ourselves as evidenced by the fact that we learn primarily by imitation as to our speaking skills. Who taught you to speak originally?

As you can see, I believe that tongues can be explained in a number of ways, all of which are not evil. However, I also believe that you must be very careful in regard to them since the enemy has this experience universalized among adherents of all the major religions of the world. Tongues in themselves are not necessarily a manifestation of God's Spirit or, for that matter, a visit from the true God Who made the heavens and the earth and Who has redeemed us with His blood.

It is interesting to consider the motivation to speak in a tongue.

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In correcting the abuse of this gift, Paul points out in 1 Corinthians that we should always have as our goal the building up of others. See 1

Corinthians 14:12. You will notice, too, that the gift of tongues was given for a sign not to the believers but to those who do not believe! 1 Cor. 12:22

Thus, they are not "proof" to anyone who knows Christ of his salvation or of the Spirit's presence as some claim. They were given according to the promise of Isaiah as a proof of the present judgment of God upon Israel. See Isaiah 28:11,12 with 1 Cor. 14:21-22. You will notice that consistent to this fact is the history of the use of this gift in the book of Acts. In every case, Jewish men were present to be witnesses to this gift, and tongues were instrumental in proving that the blessings of the new covenant were to extend also to the Gentiles.

On the personal side, those who speak tongues in private (a practice that has no support or example in Scripture) testify of the good feelings, etc. I believe that if the tongue is self-produced, it is the equivalent to a good cry emotionally, ie. a release of tension. If the tongue is other produced (demonic) it will eventually prove a detriment to the spiritual growth of the believer although at first appearance it may seem to do other-wise.

In testing the spirits within tongue speakers, I

have yet to find one to be the Holy Spirit of God.

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Nevertheless, such a fact does not prove that He is not speaking still through men with this gift. However, it does prove that the persons involved need to be very careful to test the spirits to see if they are of God. You can do this in a number of ways, but the best that I have found is to apply 1 John 4:1-6 to the situation. Addressing the spirit that is speaking, ask it if it believes that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh (the point here is that He continues on as a man in glory). An evil spirit hates this truth and will not testify to it because it carries the sentence of judgment to the spirit as it reminds it of its lost position with God. You can command that the spirit speak in English, a skill which the Holy Spirit can

easily do as well as many evil spirits.

Now, in a practical vein, the sum of what I am

saying to you is that you should not seek this

gift of tongues. There is no Scriptural warrant for such a pursuit since God bestows gifts on man according to His will and the need of others.

You are told to seek to build up others in love.

Love apart from gift will prove effective in the purpose of God. See 1 Corinthians 13.

In Christ you are complete. See

Colossians 2:9-10.

Don't allow anyone to spoil you with vain philosophy or deceitful teachings. If you walk humbly with God in

"The important thing for you to do is to seek the Lord with your whole heart. He alone saves. The Holy Spirit's primary ministry is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to you. Keep your eyes on

righteousness, He will not withhold any good

thing from you. See Psalm 84:11. Be satisfied with the Lord Jesus Christ as His Spirit reveals Him to you. He is the center of the Father's delight (as we are in Him). The enemy is attempting in our world to propagate another terrible lie that God in His goodness would withhold something good from those who love Him. Thus, he is tempting men and women to feed on that which is forbidden. In this case, we are told to avoid having anything to do with demons and their activities. Yet, many "believers" are turning to the dark powers of this world because they do not believe what God has said in regard to His

Son Jesus. Apart from Christ there is no true life. You can read the book of Ephesians to see what I am saying here.

I Hope these few thoughts will help to clarify this

subject for you.

Several of our later courses will also touch on this subject. The

important thing for you to do is to seek the Lord Jesus Christ with your whole heart. He alone saves. The

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Sincerely in Christ,

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