

Powerful Christian Living

Chapter Seventeen

Speaking in Tongues

The gift of the holy Spirit in a believer is an infusion of divine life. It is the power of God through which we can be all that God has called us to be and do all that He has called us to do. Through the Spirit the Lord Jesus Christ works within each and every believer helping us to live godly and blessed lives. And each and every Christian can manifest the Spirit in the nine ways listed in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11. The nine evidences of the Spirit are:

- The word or message of wisdom is when God or the Lord Jesus Christ grants you special revelation and information for dealing with unique concerns and problems. It is also the wisdom to apply biblical truth to a particular situation.
- The word or message of knowledge is God or the Lord Jesus Christ revealing information to you that you could not know by your five senses.
- Faith is a special ability to trust God to bring to pass His will no matter the circumstances.
- Gifts of healings is the manifestation of the power of the Spirit to bring to pass instant physical, spiritual and emotional healing according to what God reveals to you by a message of knowledge and wisdom.
- The working of miracles is the manifestation of divine power to bring about a supernatural act on God's command.
- Prophecy is speaking forth divinely inspired words to edify, comfort and exhort believers.
- Discerning of spirits is the ability to distinguish between good and evil spirits and if evil whether or not you may cast them out in the name of Jesus Christ.
- Different kinds of tongues are the ability to speak in an inspired unknown (to you) language for personal prayer and praise in order to build yourself up spiritually.
- Interpretation of tongues is the ability to interpret the sum and substance of what you have just spoken in tongues for the benefit and edification of the church.

And the one manifestation of the Spirit that enables us to become strong Christians is speaking in tongues.

Pursue love, and desire spiritual *gifts*, but especially that you may prophesy. 2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands *him*; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. 3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. 4 **He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself**, but he who prophesies edifies the church. (1 Corinthians 14:1-4) [my emphasis in bold print]

When you speak in tongues in your private prayer time you edify yourself. You are built up and made strong spiritually. Jude wrote,

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. (vv20, 21)

Praying in the holy Spirit is praying in tongues. As you build yourself up by speaking or praying in tongues, and as you read the Word of God more and more, you will be prepared to serve and minister and love all the believers. And then you will be able to comfort and edify the church by speaking in tongues with interpretation and prophecy, as well as the other manifestations.

What has stopped many Christians from speaking in tongues is that first; they didn't know that they could speak in tongues. And secondly, they simply didn't know how. If you will remember from an earlier chapter we learned that if we desire to live for God we need to know four great principles. First, we need to know what is available from God. We need to know what he commands us to do and what He promises that He will do for us. Secondly, we must know how to receive the blessings and how to do what He commands us to do. We know what is available with speaking in tongues. We know that God wants all of His people to speak in tongues. The Bible says,

Now I want you all to speak in tongues
(1 Corinthians 14:5)¹

The how of speaking in tongues is to have faith, it is to believe that God will energize His Spirit in you so that you can speak in tongues. The Bible says,

Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual [manifestations],

¹ English Standard Version of the Bible

let it be for the edification of the church *that* you seek to excel.
13 Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.
(1 Corinthians 14:12, 13)

To pray is to believe; it is to ask God to do for you what he has promised to do, and He always will be faithful to you. The third principle we learned is that God is both willing and able to do for you what he has promised. Our Lord Jesus Christ said,

So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 11 If a son asks for bread[d] from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if *he asks* for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!
(Luke 11:9-13)

If you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior you already have the gift of the Spirit of God. All that you are doing now is asking God to energize His Spirit in you so that you can speak in tongues. The fourth principle in receiving from God is that we must be committed to do what we are asked to do and we must be faithful to carry out God's will.

God will never make you speak in tongues. He wants you to speak in tongues of your own free will for your good and His glory. God will never force you to manifest His Spirit. But as soon as you decide to act God will be right there for you helping you and empowering you. God will never fail you.

Now, let me simply go over the mechanics or the process of speaking in tongues. When you speak in tongues, in a divinely inspired unknown language, it involves the same process as when you speak in your own language. For example say the sentence, "I love the Lord Jesus Christ." Go ahead and say it. Say out loud, "I love the Lord Jesus Christ."

What did you do when you said, "I love the Lord Jesus Christ"? You had to breath. You had to move your mouth. You had to form and speak forth the words. When you speak in tongues the only difference is that you do not have to think through the words that you are speaking. You just have to speak forth the first word or sound that God inspires you to speak. What you speak and how the words sound when you speak in tongues is God's business. That you speak is your business. The sounds and words will always be there right at the tip of your tongue. You just need to trust God and boldly speak it forth.

Now, I would like for to you speak in tongues. I am going to pray and I am going to ask you to step out in faith and trust God and speak in tongues to magnify God.² Our Lord Jesus Christ made a great promise to all those who would believe on him. He said,

If anyone thirsts, let Him come to Me and drink.
He who believes on Me, as the Scripture has said
out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”
But this he spoke concerning the Spirit, [which]
those believing in Him would receive . . .
(John 7:37b-39)

When you speak in tongues, you do not receive more of the holy Spirit, you simply bring into evidence that which is already within you. You have the gift of the Spirit. You can manifest the gift by speaking in tongues. But the *act* of speaking is your responsibility. If you do not speak in tongues, it is not because God has not given you the ability. The promise to every believer is that “out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”

Like a flowing fountain, once you begin to speak in tongues, let the words flow out, one right after the other. God is faithful to what He has promised and He will give the gift of the Spirit and the ability to manifest the Spirit to all who are His children.

To begin speaking in tongues get quiet and peaceful. Take a deep breath, let it out, and relax. Verbally, out loud, thank God for saving you through Christ and filling you with His Spirit. Thank Him for His love for you. When you begin to speak in tongues, remember, *you* need to move your mouth, tongue and lips; *you* need to form the words; *you* must speak them forth. Before you speak in tongues, close your eyes and pray the following prayer out loud. Then take a deep breath and begin to speak in tongues.

Father, thank you for loving me. Thank you for saving me through your Son, Jesus Christ. I love you with all of my heart. In the name of Jesus Christ and by the power of your holy Spirit within me, I will now speak in tongues to give You praise and glory. Amen.

Now, speak in tongues and keep speaking. Out of your heart will flow rivers of living water!

² Acts 10:46