

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

The Prayer Language Trap

I was speaking with a business owner about the gospel of Christ. When I mentioned the Spirit of God, he said to me, “I received the Holy Spirit Baptism at my church, but there really was not much to it.” Seeming to ignore his statement, I began to speak of the glory of what happens when Jesus Christ baptizes a person with the Spirit of God. I referenced both from the scripture and personal experiences. After a few minutes the man looked at me and said, “I didn’t receive the baptism of God’s Spirit, did I?” “I knew that,” I said, “but you needed to recognize this for yourself.”

I believe and preach the baptism of the Holy Spirit, subsequent to salvation, and evidenced by speaking in other tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance. I want this known in case any should think I am anti-Spirit or anti-speaking in tongues. Yet much of what I see today in the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements is very far from the reality of a true manifestation of God’s Spirit. I call it “The prayer language trap.”

I was very young when I first heard the “strange” exhortation for all the saints to begin to pray together in tongues. I say “strange” because we had never before heard of this. Speaking or praying in tongues was not initiated by the believer. As the Spirit-filled children of God began to pray or worship God in their native language,

they would at times be “caught up” in the Spirit, and God’s Spirit would begin to give them utterance in tongues. They called this “praying through.” When the Spirit of God came upon them, some might resist speaking in tongues, but no one could initiate it because they could speak only as the Spirit of God gave them utterance. Acts 2:4. They simply yielded to the Holy Spirit who had already come upon them. At times the Spirit of God would come upon individuals and begin to make intercession through them, sometimes in English and sometimes in tongues. Romans 8:26. This was not a dry form where they just began to speak words in tongues, but it was a visitation of God’s Spirit. In these times the saints were truly built up, or edified, by the Spirit of God. I Corinthians 4:14, Jude 20. This is why the exhortation to speak in tongues at your will was a very “strange” thing to hear. Still, many thought “What harm could it bring?”

We began to hear of others who claimed they could teach you how to speak in tongues. Multitudes flocked to these teachers, and sure enough, they “spoke in tongues,” but something was missing. Gone was the visitation of God’s Spirit. Where once the speaking in tongues came only when the presence of God moved upon the worshipper, it became common to hear people who were spiritually dry and cold turn their “tongues” on and off like a light switch. Yes, many were speaking in tongues, but where was the presence of Almighty God? The reality had been exchanged for something far less. It’s like owning a three dollar bill. It may arouse curiosity for some, but it is worthless.

Many times over the years, I have seen people come for prayer for salvation or deliverance from sin. Yet when you begin to pray with them they immediately begin to speak in their “prayer language.” They never make the connection that God and sin are not co-inhabiting the same Temple. Their “tongues” are as far from being of God as their sin is. They can know that something is very wrong concerning their walk with God, but their “prayer language” gives them a false assurance of spirituality. This “assurance” is the greatest guarantee Satan has to keep this person from knowing the reality and freedom that is in Christ Jesus. Until they lose that false “assurance” they will never find the answer they seek. I fear such in the case for many, many souls.

Today, many ministers are teaching the people to receive the Holy Spirit baptism by saying words they hear in their mind. These ministers claim to be different from those ministers who once gave the people words to say in order to speak in tongues, but they are not different at all. They are giving the people a false assurance of spirituality whose only evidence is they can speak in tongues at their will. Multitudes who are bound by sin, Satan, and other demonic power believe themselves to be saved, Spirit-filled, and possessing “spiritual gifts,” because they have a “prayer language.” It grieves me to acknowledge that no one loves the sound of their tongues more than Satan himself.

Your native language is your prayer language. That is the language God wants to hear from you. There are things you need to tell God that must come from your heart in words that you understand. The Spirit of God will not repent for

you! Neither will he express to the Father your hunger and thirst for heavenly things. You must do this in a language that you understand. It is a sad truth that a “prayer language” has in many cases eliminated the true prayers of the saints.

The baptism of God’s Spirit is real, and its evidence is speaking with other tongues. On the other hand, speaking in tongues without the Spirit and presence of God upon you ...is worthless. Do not seek the tongues, but seek the true infilling and manifestation of God’s Spirit. When the Spirit of God comes to you, he will give utterance at his will. I cherish the times the Spirit of God falls upon his saints until they can no longer speak in their native language, but I loathe the *“sounding brass and tinkling symbols”* | Corinthians 13:1 of the prayer language gatherings of our day. Ignore those who seek to get you to speak in tongues at their will. Stay out of “the prayer language” trap!