

7-21-2024, COTR Texarkana

Title: The God Connection, pt-11

Purpose: Explain the use of tongues and prophecy in personal and church life and provoke people to pursue both spiritual gifts.

Truth for Today: The Holy Spirit gives us the ability to speak in an unlearned language and prophecy to benefit ourselves and others.

Text: Acts 19:1-6, I Corinthians 14

Topic: Holy Spirit, Spiritual Gifts, Prophecy, Tongues

Series Title: The God Connection...The Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

Series Purpose:Provoke people to (1) Develop a vital relationship with the Holy Spirit, (2) Allow Him to work in us, (3) Have faith to let Him work through us supernaturally using spiritual gifts.

The God Connection, pt-11

- I. Introduction (**Baptism** Sat and SAM2)
 - A. Opportunity for ministry this fall: **Leader application**
 - B. Review series: The God Connection, The Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. Today is part 11. (Walking in the middle movie, app) We're studying the Book of Acts as a handbook to teach us how the believers in the early church used spiritual gifts to accomplish the Great Commission. My hope is we will follow their example.
 - C. Today we're going to explore 2 spiritual gifts that were practiced in the early church but often misunderstood today, speaking in tongues and prophecy. Speaking in tongues, i.e. speaking in an unlearned language or "Spirit Talk", is a spiritual experience mentioned 3 times and inferred 2 other times in Acts. We'll look at Acts ch. 19 because "Spirit Talk" is mentioned with the spiritual gift of prophecy, and I want to talk about the two spiritual gifts together from 1 Cor. 14.
- II. **Believers in Ephesus have an encounter with the Holy Spirit after salvation**
 - A. **Acts 19:1-6 (NLT)**...Paul...reached Ephesus...where **he found several believers, (ESV disciples)** ² **"Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"** he asked them. "No," they replied, "we haven't even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." ³ "Then what baptism did you experience?" he asked. And they replied, "The baptism of John." ⁴...But John himself told the people to believe in...Jesus." ⁵ As soon as they heard this, **they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.** ⁶ Then when **Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues (NCV speaking different languages) and prophesied.**
 - B. Observations: (1) **Christians can experience a filling/ baptism of the Holy Spirit after conversion.** (2) **There is usually a manifestation of the Holy Spirit when He baptizes/ comes upon/ fills a believer.** Here, it was speaking in an unlearned language/ tongues, and prophecy. (3) **Speaking in tongues had several purposes in the NT: in Acts 12 it was a sign to the Jews that Gentiles could be saved; In 1 Cor. 12 & 14 it is a spiritual gift to be interpreted to encourage others and in 1 Cor. 14 it is for personal prayer and worship.** (Acts is a history of what happened. Let's go to I Cor. 14 to understand how we practice these gifts.)
- III. **Context: Some actions do more harm than good in Church gatherings**

- A. Context ch. 14, [1 Cor. 11:17 (NIV) In the following directives I have no praise for you, for **your meetings do more harm than good.**] I.e., Divisions, discrimination during communion, not acting in a loving manner, and misunderstanding and misuse of spiritual gifts.

IV. Speaking in tongues and prophecy in personal and church life (Screen)

- A. 1 Cor. 14 (NLT) ¹ **Let love be your highest goal!** (*being motivated to love other believers, ch. 13. Their misuse of "Spirit Talk" was personally beneficial but wasn't loving others.*) ¹ **But you should also desire the special abilities (ESV spiritual gifts) the Spirit gives (1 Cor 12:7-10, 9 gifts)—especially the ability to prophesy.** (*He's framing his argument why speaking in tongues in a way that distracted other people was out of order. Uninterpreted tongues brought confusion whereas prophecy was understood by others and encouraged them.*) ² **For if you have the ability to speak in tongues, (unlearned language) you will be talking only to God, (That's a good thing) since people won't be able to understand you. You will be speaking by the power of the Spirit, but it will all be mysterious.** ³ **But one who prophesies strengthens others, encourages them, and comforts them.** (*This is what the gift of NT prophecy does; it helps other people. E.g. Wed night, prophecy brought confirmation work in KZ*) *** Prophecy primarily confirm rather than directs and must always be judged, 1 Thes. 5:19-21) ⁴ **A person who speaks in tongues is strengthened personally, (that's a good thing. We all need to be strengthened and this is one way) but one who speaks a word of prophecy strengthens the entire church.** ***This is Paul's main argument. "Spirit Talk" is a good thing for personal edification. [Jude 20 (ESV) But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and **praying in the Holy Spirit,**] *Prophecy, if it is a true Word from God, helps everyone because they understand it.* ⁵ **I wish you could all speak in tongues, (Why? You're talking to God and it personally strengthens you. That's a good thing.** ⁵ **but even more I wish you could all prophesy. (Why? Because it builds up everyone in attendance.)** ⁵ **For prophecy is greater than speaking in tongues, unless someone interprets what you are saying so that the whole church will be strengthened. (12:10 says the ability to interpret "Spirit Talk" is a spiritual gift. Tongues with interpretation is the equivalent to prophecy because people understand what the Holy Spirit is saying.)** ⁶ **Dear brothers and sisters, if I should come to you speaking in an unknown language, how would that help you? (It wouldn't. E.g. foreign language "My prayer is for everyone to believe in Jesus and follow Him".)** ⁶ **But if I bring you a revelation or some special knowledge or prophecy or teaching, (in language you understand)** ⁶ **that will be helpful...** ⁹ **It's the same for you. If you speak to people in words they don't understand, how will they know what you are saying?** (*They won't and that's not helpful or acting in love. However, of the 5 times speaking in tongues is mentioned in Acts, it is understood by others only in Acts 2, Everywhere else it was a language unknown to the speaker and hearer but nowhere is it interpreted, suggesting it was for personal benefit.* ¹²... **Since you are so eager to have the special abilities the Spirit gives, seek those that will strengthen the whole church. (Am I eager to have and use spiritual gifts and am I**

*seeking/ asking God to give me a particular gift? If I'm not, He probably won't.)*¹³ **So anyone who speaks in tongues (in a church service) should pray also for the ability to interpret what has been said. (Why? So other people will understand and be spiritually helped.)**¹⁴ **For if I pray in tongues, my spirit is praying, but I don't understand what I am saying. ("Spirit Talk" is prayer from our born again spirit, not our logical mind or feelings. When a person prays in tongues, they don't mentally understand what they're saying and that is ok Biblically. There's also another reason why speaking in tongues can be a problem.)**²³ **if unbelievers or people who don't understand these things come into your church meeting and hear everyone speaking in an unknown language, they will think you are crazy.... (And that's not good. **Personal testimony Adak AG**)**¹⁵ **Well then, what shall I do? I will pray in the spirit, and I will also pray in words I understand. (This is Paul's answer to the proper use of "Spirit Talk", Do both, but be sensitive to others. This is why I discourage people praying or singing loudly in tongues during weekend services. However, I think it's perfectly acceptable to pray and sing softly in tongues in church as long it isn't a distraction to others. I do! I believe it's ok in small groups where everyone understands and practices "Spirit Talk". The main issue in ch. 14 isn't the validity of tongues, it's vs. 4, "strengthening the entire church".**¹⁵ **I will sing in the spirit, and I will also sing in words I understand. (Some of the most meaningful worship we can offer to God comes from our spirit, being inspired by the Holy Spirit, not words on a screen.) ...**¹⁸ **I thank God that I speak in tongues more than any of you. (This is the greatest affirmation why every believer should seek to ask the Holy Spirit to give you this ability. Paul the apostle practiced "Spirit Talk" and changed his world. Maybe we can too. Paul received the ability to speak in tongues when Ananias laid his hands on him and he was filled/ baptized with the Spirit. [Acts 9:17 (NLT) Ananias...laid his hands on him and said...Saul...Jesus...has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.] This is why many believe speaking in tongues is the normative evidence of being filled/ baptized with the Holy Spirit.)**¹⁹ **But in a church meeting I would rather speak five understandable words to help others than ten thousand words in an unknown language. (The issue isn't that tongues are good or bad but is to be practiced at the right time and in the right way, depending on who is present.)**²⁰ **Dear brothers and sisters, don't be childish in your understanding of these things...but be mature in understanding matters of this kind. (Rebuke: Childish Christians considered themselves 1st; mature Christians recognized others 1st.)**

V. Conclusion:

- A. **Video Zach Ratliff**, the gift of prophecy

VI. Response

- A. Prayer: (1) Lord, fill me with your Holy Spirit like the disciples in Ephesus, (2) Lord, I want spiritual gifts to operate in me to help people. (3) Lord, help me be able to pray and sing with "Spirit talk" from my spirit.
- B. Souls

VII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

VIII. Supplemental Material

A. Questions:

1. What does it mean to speak in tongues?
2. What are Biblical examples of speaking in tongues in Acts?
3. Are there different expressions/ uses of speaking in tongues?
4. Are there personal benefits from “Spirit talk”?
5. How do we receive the ability to speak in tongues?
 - a. Personal testimony, Adak AG
6. What is the spiritual gift of prophecy?
7. What are the purposes of prophecy?
8. Who can prophesy...seek to prophecy?
9. Must all tongues be interpreted?

B. Acts is a historical record of the early church and doesn't offer a lot of details about the gifts.

C. [1 Thes. 5:19–21 (NCV) Do not hold back (*ESV quench*) the work of the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ **Do not treat prophecy as if it were unimportant.** ²¹ But test everything. Keep what is good,]. Personal prophecy is primarily confirmation, not directive.