

The Holy Spirit and Your Mouth *by Wendell Smith*

The Coal Minor's Ponies

They say the ponies that were used to haul coal in the coal mines of Wales had to be replaced during the Welsh revival because the coal minor's language changed so drastically after having been converted. The ponies had been trained to only respond to the profanity of the miners and having been truly converted the miners could no longer mobilize the animals.

Surely the simplest interpretation of Mark 16:15 where Jesus said, "*these signs will follow those who believe, ... they will speak with new tongues*" is the understanding that after a person is born again, they talk different. Something so wonderful and dramatic happens in the human heart that it affects the tongue. The Bible says, "*out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.*" But **the most dramatic demonstration of the influence of the Holy Spirit at work in the conversion of the first century disciples, was the baptism of the Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.**

When the disciples were empowered with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, they spoke in tongues (Acts 2:4). This was certainly a fulfillment of what Jesus had prophesied in Mark 16. One hundred and twenty zealous believers in that upper room came out speaking in tongues.

Similarly the Gentile disciples of Samaria were baptized in the Holy Spirit. And whatever happened to them must have been so powerful that the town's local drug dealer, Simon the sorcerer, offered money in exchange for the power to impart such an experience (Acts 8:18).

When the Gentiles who gathered at Cornelius' house received the Holy Spirit, Peter and those with him heard them speak with tongues and magnify God (Acts 10:46). And when Paul found disciples at Ephesus who had not even heard of the Holy Spirit, he laid hands on them and they also received the Holy Spirit and spoke with tongues (Acts 19:6).

When I read these passages in my Bible I realized that almost all the references to the baptism of the Holy Spirit are connected with the manifestation of speaking in tongues, which Jesus Himself said would be a sign (Mark 16:17). Paul the Apostle also said that he spoke with tongues "*more than you all*", and that no one was to "*forbid*" speaking in tongues (1 Cor. 14:18, 39). I saw for myself that these scriptures were clear. If the Bible only requires two or three witnesses to confirm any word of God, these multiple verses certainly confirm the reality and power of speaking in other tongues.

The Beauty and Power of Speaking in Tongues

When I was first baptized in the Spirit I was surprised and delighted to discover that speaking in tongues was so wonderful. It was a cold December evening at church when I received.

I was raised to believe that speaking in tongues was not for believers today and my grandfather actually warned us it was of the devil. But then I decided to read and

study the Bible for myself. It is the traditions of men that make the word of God of no effect. I had been told by well meaning people that this experience was not of God. But when I read about it in the pages of the Bible and then discovered it for myself, I realized they had been wrong and the Word of God was still working today. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Faith came into my heart as I read and meditated on these verses. Not only did I know that this was the will of God but I hungered for it myself. And when I sought the baptism of the Holy Spirit, I received and also spoke in tongues. When we ask for the Holy Spirit, the Father does not give us a stone or a scorpion. He gives us the most beautiful gift of all—the down payment of the Holy Spirit Himself manifested in our heart and in our mouth through speaking in tongues. **I have since found speaking in tongues to be one of the most beautiful and rewarding experiences of the Spirit filled life.**

My Grandson's own language

My grandson, Benjamin Jesse Perez is only two years old this year, and he speaks a language that only his parents and God can understand. Every once in awhile, as his grandfather, I am given the interpretation of tongues myself and I think I know what he is saying. He is still forming words and figuring out how they all go together. He imitates his daddy and his grandma and others, but he still doesn't have the language thing down yet, although to him everything is perfectly clear. His little mouth just can't quite verbalize, in a known language, what his little heart feels or his little eyes perceive. But no one belittles him for it and no one thinks it odd. They give him grace since he is only two and just learning to talk.

Many things were a fresh revelation to me, having our first grandchild, and watching him go through stages that went too quickly when we were raising our own children. And this language issue is the cutest. His little utterances that he uses to explain this or name that are worthy of tape recordings, video clips and hilarious memories. But I think I learned something new about language.

BJ (as we call him) is growing up in a family that speaks English. He is learning the sounds and vocabulary of the English language. He is learning to express himself in a language that fits his environment. One day he will speak (and no doubt preach) with words that all English speaking people will understand.

When believers in Christ are baptized in the Holy Spirit (which John the Baptist said Jesus would do with His followers) they are given supernatural signs to confirm this spiritual experience and to bring them into a new dimension in the Kingdom of God. That new dimension includes the experience of speaking in tongues. **This heavenly language immediately enables the new convert to communicate on a spiritual level with the Holy Spirit.** Why should we be surprised that the new spiritual kingdom into which the new believer enters would have a new spiritual language with which to communicate?

Fire from Hell or Fire from Heaven

The Apostle James describes the tongue as the most unruly member of the body and declares that if a man can control his tongue, he can control his entire life. The Bible says the tongue is "*set on fire from hell*". It is no surprise then that the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is speaking in "tongues", which was manifested first on the

day of Pentecost in the lives of the apostles as tongues of fire, a fire that came from “heaven”.

This heavenly fire purges and burns out the old ways, the old conversation and the old vocabulary of the fallen nature. The born-again believer erupts with an expression of praise and glorification of God. Out of the abundance of the newly filled heart the mouth speaks with Holy Ghost words. The fire from hell is extinguished with a greater fire, the fire of the Holy Spirit come down from heaven!

If the mouth is the rudder of the ship of life, as James also describes it, then it becomes imperative that the mouth is regulated by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit. A dominant aspect of success in the Spirit-filled life is the control of the tongue. **When the Holy Spirit has His way in the heart of a committed believer, the mouth speaks with faith, wisdom, grace and authority.** This confession of power helps bring supernatural control to every area of life. The Bible says, “*death and life and in the power of the tongue*” (Prov. 18:21).

How to Use your Tongue to Rule your Life

Your mouth can either be your ruin or your making. It can either set the course for the fulfillment of your destiny or it can take you on the detours and dead ends of frustration and failure. The words you let out of your mouth can determine your future, good or bad. Make a commitment today that your mouth and your confession will be surrendered to the Holy Spirit’s guidance. We can be led by the Spirit not just in daily decisions, but also in daily confessions. Here are some godly guidelines for taming your tongue and allowing the Spirit to rule in your confession.

First, read the Bible every day. The Word of God itself actually admonishes us to meditate in the Word day and night (Ps. 1:2). Meditation on the truths of God’s Word will bring success to every area of our lives (Josh. 1:8).

Second, learn to speak God’s Word in daily conversation and prayer. We should fill our mouth with scriptures and speak to our mountains (Mark 11:23) and pray to our God using His own words (Ps. 119:76). Our daily conversation should be governed by the Holy Spirit and guided by the perimeters of the Word of God. We should be careful to edify and build others up with truth, and speak life into all our situations.

Third, we should pray in the Spirit daily and build ourselves up in our most holy faith (Jude 20). The power of speaking in other tongues is to our spirit what weight training is to our body—it builds up our spiritual muscles. **Praying in the Spirit is a wonderful secret weapon for 21st Century believers.** It enables us to communicate and pray to the Lord in an effective and supernatural way.

Finally, we should allow the Holy Spirit to lead and direct our words. A word spoken at the right time is beautiful (Prov. 15:23). Silence can also be very wise (Prov. 21:23). And Spirit led conversation can be life changing for those who receive words of life from us (John 6:63). The Lord will lead us to call someone on the phone, or give a word of encouragement to a person at church or even boldly share the gospel with a stranger. The Spirit indwells us. Our heart and mouth become His instruments and His guidance can prompt us to say the right thing at the right time in the right situation and have the most wonderful results.