

Medical Study Proves Validity of Speaking in Tongues

In 2008, the University of Pennsylvania released findings from a medical study proving that the practice of speaking in tongues is sourced by the Holy Spirit. In the study, participants' brain activity was monitored while they spoke in tongues, giving the medical researchers scientific insight into the parts of the brain active while speaking in these "heavenly tongues"—and the results were astounding.

Much of the study is outlined in the below piece by ABC News, findings that are well worth the watch.

Speaking in tongues, as ABC News accurately states, "is an ancient practice mentioned in the Bible. [Apostle] Paul called it 'speaking in the tongues of angels.' Jesus' apostles were first said to do it at Pentecost."

It is this spiritual phenomenon that Dr. Andrew Newberg, while at the University of Pennsylvania, set out to find an explanation "for what most regard as unexplainable." While trying to discover the relationship between faith and science, his study quickly ascertained that speaking in tongues is absolutely not regular language. Newberg states to ABC News: "It's not language—it's not regular language at least that would normally activate the frontal lobe [of the brain]."

So what did Newberg's medical study show happens to the brain during one's deepest moments of faith then?

Newberg shares the heart of his study: "If we're really going to look at this very, very powerful force in human history of religion and spirituality, I think we really have to take a look at how that affects our brain, what's changing or turning on or turning off in our brain" during those extremely deep and powerful moments of faith.

And “remarkably he discovered that what’s happening to [the test subjects when they pray in tongues] neurologically looks a lot like what they say is happening to them spiritually.”

When test subjects prayed in their native language, their brain activity indicated normal behavior for speech in the frontal lobe. However, when the same test subjects prayed in tongues, their brain activity showed something extremely different. “[The test subject’s] scan showed that the frontal lobe, the part of the brain that controls language, was active when he prayed in English. But for the most part, it fell quiet when he prayed in tongues.”

Dr. Newberg confirmed this finding saying, “When they are actually engaged in this whole very intense spiritual practice for them, their frontal lobes tend to go down in activity, but I think it’s very consistent with the kind of experience that they have because they say that they are not in charge—it’s the voice of God, the Spirit of God that’s moving through them.”

The study found many other fascinating findings that affirm that speaking in tongues is truly a spiritual gift and not a mental practice. We encourage you to watch the full ABC News piece to learn more. {eo}

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