

Why Do Believers Hesitate and Struggle to Speak in Tongues?

My introduction to the religion of Christianity, like many people, was through a church. I entered a church and was immediately introduced into a world that confused me and even rubbed me the wrong way.

I walked in and the members were speaking gibberish (in tongues). The service itself was OK, but nothing worth remembering.

After the service, as I was walking to the car using a walker (I was in the early stage of Lou Gehrig's disease), a woman approached me and asked to pray for me. She put her hand on my shoulder, which I did not like at all, and started to speak gibberish (in tongues). I could not wait to get to the car and get out of there. When we got to the car, my wife tried to explain to me about tongues. She had little understanding of it herself but having been raised in a church, it didn't bother her. Eight months went by before I would brave this strange world of religion again. I felt no compulsion to buy a Bible or to find out about this person named Jesus.

My introduction into relationship with Christ was entirely different. The initial introduction was through my wife, the way she lived her life and her relationship with Jesus, which is why after forty-three years of being an atheist, I agreed to attend that church service. The experience at the service, however, dampened my desire to seek Jesus. I'm just being transparent.

The spark for my desire and earnest seeking of a relationship with God and Jesus came about through my healing and the vision that catalyzed my healing. Immediately after I was healed, I wanted to learn about Jesus and get to know Him on

an intimate level. On that day, July 4, 2012, my relationship with Jesus began. I dived into Scriptures, which then pointed me in the direction of the person called the Holy Spirit. Scriptures did not become the totality of my relationship with God; rather, they were the guide that pointed me toward a relationship with the Holy Spirit.

As my relationship was being kindled, a special form of communication started developing, otherwise known as tongues. Just as in any relationship, a special way of communicating starts to happen. A husband and wife will communicate with each other in ways that they will have with no one else. A baby will start stuttering out syllables that he or she heard the parents speak. A special language then develops between the parent and child. Pet names develop between people in a relationship, no matter what type of relationship it is. This is the natural course for developing a bond and intimacy between two people. We think nothing of it; there's no debate about it; it just naturally flows as the relationship grows and matures.

Out of this private language between two people in relationship, they each get love, strength and assurance from this way of communicating. Take a moment and think about it: What are some of the things that are just between you and your spouse, children or friends? Things that are mutually beneficial that sow into each person love, strength and trust in one another?

In a healthy relationship, this is what naturally develops and there are tangible benefits from this form of private communication between human beings in a relationship. A relationship counsellor might call this a love language. This is what speaking in tongues should be all about because that is exactly what it is; an intimate form of communication between two beings. One of the two just happens to be the Holy Spirit, who is the very definition of intimacy.

The Holy Spirit, who is the source of everything, wants this personal connection with each and every person. Through this private communication, He pours into you love, strength and energy. By cultivating this personal language, He imparts into you everything that you need. Hopefully this will help you to take down the religious barriers that have been built around tongues and you will begin to desire this level of intimacy. Your tongue will then loosen up and you will start communicating in a private prayer language that is just between you and the Holy Spirit. As you do so, the benefits of this healthy, intimate relationship will never cease, and you will reach a point that the desire is always there for this connection. This, in turn, will lead to even deeper intimacy.

Why then is there such a struggle and hesitancy for people to speak in tongues? The reason is the way that speaking tongues has been taught and portrayed. In a human relationship, when the language of love is first being developed, imagine a situation where one of the spouses suddenly spews out the “pet name” that they have for the other person in public. For example, early on in our relationship, my wife called me “Pokey” in front of company. I was shocked, hurt and embarrassed. Because of my reaction, the situation became instantly uncomfortable for all involved.

This is comparable to the first encounter with tongues through the church experience I described at the beginning. I was suddenly thrust into something I was unfamiliar with, which made me shocked, embarrassed and put off. Notice I am no longer embarrassed by tongues, because my relationship with Holy Spirit has matured. In the book of Romans chapter 14, Paul is addressing this very issue. The way in which tongues are to be used in a public gathering is different from how we use them in our private communication with the Holy Spirit.

Speaking in tongues is a vital tool both in the corporate body and in our personal relationship with God. My prayer for you is that speaking in tongues becomes a private love language in

your personal relationship with the Holy Spirit. {eoa}

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