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THE SPIRIT'S WITNESS IS INTANGIBLE, INAUDIBLE, AND INVISIBLE
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My father, Irl Vancleve Maxey, was an old-fashioned, sanctified-wholly, second-blessing holiness preacher, but one time when he was in deep and intimate communion with the Lord he prayed in an angelic or heavenly language for a period of time. It was no doubt a precious experience that he never forgot, but he did not claim this to be any proof of his baptism with the Holy Ghost.

According to 1 Cor. 13:1, it is possible for one to be supernaturally enabled to speak with the "tongues of men and of angels," who without that miraculous enabling would otherwise be unable to speak in that human or angelic language. It is also very clear from the Scripture that such gifts do not constitute the evidence that one has received the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Interestingly, two non-human creatures mentioned in the Bible were given the supernatural ability to speak like men:-- the serpent in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1), and Balaam's donkey (2 Pet. 2:16). While these were indeed striking "gifts of tongues," it is certain that neither instance constituted an evidence that these creatures were filled with God's Spirit. The serpent's "gift of tongues" no doubt originated with and from the power of Satan, and while the miraculous "gift of tongues" bestowed upon Balaam's donkey was obviously given of God, it was nothing more than a temporary miracle designed to awaken the disobedient prophet, and was no sign of anything beyond that.

Further, as related to Christians, the Scriptures teach clearly that not all speak with supernaturally bestowed tongues, (1 Cor. 12:30), and that the gift of such tongues is not a sign to believers, but rather to unbelievers, (1 Cor. 14:22). These facts and Scriptures should settle the question once and for all that **SPEAKING IN TONGUES IS NOT THE EVIDENCE OR WITNESS THAT ONE HAS RECEIVED THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST.**

But there is another aspect of Scriptural truth that also weighs heavily against the error of those who take speaking in tongues as proof that one is baptized with the Holy Ghost -- an argument against this error upon which I have never heard another expound -- viz., that under the

Old Covenant the Divine Witness was often Tangible, Audible, and Visible, whereas under the New Covenant the Divine Witness is inward, being Intangible, Inaudible, and Invisible:

1 John 5:10 "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness IN HIMSELF..."

Whereas, during the times of the Patriarchs, the Prophets, and the Law, the Divine Witness was nearly always by things Tangible, Audible, and Visible -- things discerned by the physical senses -- under the New Covenant "it is the Spirit that beareth witness" (1 John 5:6), and that Divine Witness cannot be touched, heard, or seen, for it is discerned entirely within one's self by the spiritual senses and not at all by the physical senses.

Thus Paul wrote in Romans 8:16 -- "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." This is the entirely intangible, inaudible, invisible Witness of God's Spirit to man's spirit -- an assurance that none other can touch, hear, or see, but which is yet spiritually known clearly by the one who is born of God.

Likewise, to "them that are sanctified... the Holy Ghost also is a witness" (Heb. 10:14-15). In precisely the same manner (inwardly by that which is intangible, inaudible and invisible to the natural senses) those who are sanctified wholly know clearly and certainly that they are indeed baptized with the Holy Ghost and Fire.

I can almost hear someone exclaiming, "YES, BUT AT PENTECOST there was the AUDIBLE SOUND of a rushing mighty wind, the AUDIBLE SOUND OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES, the TANGIBLE FEELING of that wind filling the room, and the VISIBLE, CLOVEN TONGUES OF FIRE sitting on their heads!"

Granted, this is true, but we must realize that Pentecost was yet during a time of dramatic transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant -- and, these signs were given to convince the great multitude of Jews then gathered in Jerusalem of the Truth of Christ. Paul later wrote: "the Jews require a sign" (1 Cor. 1:22), and 1 Cor 14:21 makes it quite clear that the Tangible, Audible, and Visible signs at Pentecost were intended to convince that great crowd of unbelieving, sign-seeking Jews of the Truth of Christ's Gospel: "In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord."

Three Thousand WERE CONVINCED by those signs on the Day of Pentecost, and many more later, even though "for all that" many thousands more "would not hear" Christ speaking through them:

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? 8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? 9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and

Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, 10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God... 37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. 40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. 41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

Yes, 3,000 unbelieving, sign-seeking Jews were convinced by those tangible, audible, and visible signs at Pentecost, BUT PLEASE NOTE: -- THOSE SIGNS WERE NOT THE EVIDENCE TO THE 120 THAT THEY WERE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST! for "tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not" (1 Cor 14:22). Had there been no SOUND OF WIND OR TONGUES, had there been NO FEELABLE ATMOSPHERE in the upper room, had there been NO VISIBLE TONGUES OF FIRE sitting on their heads, those 120 would still have known clearly that they were baptized with the Holy Ghost and Fire!

How do you know? It happened thus to me, and it has happened thus to countless thousands of others down across the centuries -- clear, undeniable, and indisputable knowledge being received from God's Spirit that the mighty Baptism has been received -- and that, without a touch, a peep, or a sight of anything discerned by the outward man, the physical senses.

When it comes to the Witness of the Spirit to one's New Birth and to one's Baptism of the Holy Ghost, the physical "eye hath not seen, nor [the physical] ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man [through these naturally senses], the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit" (1 Cor 2:9-10). The sure evidentiary knowledge that one is born again and that one is baptized with the Holy Ghost and Fire is revealed entirely by God's Spirit to the inner, spiritual man, independent of anything discernible to the natural senses.

Furthermore, Hebrews 12:18-22 Makes it exceedingly clear that those things pertaining to the New Covenant are spiritually -- not naturally -- discerned: "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be TOUCHED, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, 19 And the SOUND of a trumpet, and the VOICE of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: 20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: 21 And so terrible was the SIGHT, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) 22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels."

Under the Old Covenant, there were TANGIBLE sacrifices and blood -- a man could touch them; whereas under the New Covenant Christ the Supreme Sacrifice of God is now INTANGIBLE to the natural senses. Under the Old Covenant there were also many tangible

things: -- Mountains that could be touched, feelable waters that miraculously divided and then closed again at the Red Sea and at the River Jordan, drinkable waters that miraculously gushed forth from a rock, etc., etc., etc., -- all tangible and discernible by the natural sense, but under the New Covenant, "ye are not come unto the mount that might be TOUCHED... but unto the INTANGIBLE "MOUNT SION" whose lofty peaks can only be touched, stood upon, and ascended by one's spirit.

Under the Old Covenant there were AUDIBLE SOUNDS on Sinai and elsewhere, sounds heard by the natural ear; whereas under the New Covenant the Holy Spirit speaks to the human spirit in words that cannot be heard by one's own physical ears nor by the physical ears of those around the one receiving the Spirit's Witness.

Under the Old Covenant, there were many VISIBLE SIGHTS: -- the Pillar of Fire at night, the Pillar of Cloud by day; and many other sights both assuring and terrifying: "so terrible was the SIGHT (on Sinai), that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake" -- whereas, under the New Covenant the natural "eye hath not seen" what is clearly perceived by one's spirit.

In short, in the Old Covenant God employed many things discerned entirely by the outward man, the physical senses -- and, even during Christ's Ministry, at Pentecost, and shortly thereafter, some of such naturally discerned things were used in order to convince natural-sense oriented mankind of the Deity of Christ and of the Truth of His Gospel.

But the Law, and even the Earthly Ministry of Christ, were only Schoolmasters to bring natural-sense oriented and unbelieving doubting-Thomases to the Spiritual Christ and to the things of Christ which are both known and Divinely attested by SPIRITUAL WITNESSES. Therefore, when "certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee," Jesus replied that it is "an evil and adulterous generation" that "seeketh after a sign" (Matt. 12:9). Christ had little sympathy for those who continually wanted "signs" discernible by the natural senses. Again, when "the Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would show them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them... O ye hypocrites... a wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign" (Matt. 16:1-4).

One of the weightiest charges against the error of taking AUDIBLE TONGUES as the evidence that one has received the baptism of the Holy Ghost is that IT PANDERS TO THE FLESHLY SENSES! -- THE SENSATIONAL -- and gives credence and precedence to that which is heard by the physical ear over and above that which is heard by the inner man with his spiritual ear!

Shame on those whose religion demands assurances through fleshly senses! Shame on those who exalt such physical sensations as those heard by the physical ear, seen by the physical eye, and touched by the physical hand above those spiritual witnesses FROM GOD'S SPIRIT TO MAN'S INNER SPIRIT! IT IS AN EVIL, THOUGH SOMETIMES VERY RELIGIOUS, CROWD THAT DOES THIS!

In so far as they constitute Divine Witnesses to the New Birth and to the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, things tangible, audible, and visible to the physical, the natural, man were "done away in Christ" (2 Cor. 3:14).

Those who insist that AUDIBLE TONGUES are the evidence that one has been baptized with the Holy Ghost both greatly err, and clearly reveal that they are close kin with the sensual and natural man. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God... neither can he know them, because they are SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED" (1 Cor. 2:14).

Did you get that?! The things of God's Spirit, including both the New Birth and the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, ARE SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED!! GOD'S SPIRIT DOES NOT BEAR WITNESS TO THEM BY THINGS TANGIBLY, AUDIBLY, AND VISIBLY DISCERNED BY THE NATURAL SENSES!!

Make no mistake about it: -- when one is genuinely BORN AGAIN and when one is BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST AND FIRE, he "HATH THE WITNESS IN HIMSELF" that these things are so! He knows it beyond all doubt, but he has not discerned these things by his natural senses -- he does not know them because he audibly voiced some words in a tongue that was heard by the natural ears of both himself and others! Away with this unScriptural and Christ-dishonoring fallacy! -- this dependence upon, and giving credence and precedence to, things discerned by the natural senses as constituting the Divine Witness to either work of grace!

A MAN BORN AGAIN AND A MAN BAPTIZED BY THE HOLY GHOST, KNOWS THESE THINGS INWARDLY, WITH SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT! His own inward, spiritual senses touched God, felt the inflowing life of the New Birth, and felt the purifying Pentecostal flame as it purged his heart! His own inward, spiritual ear heard God speak peace and second, speak purity! His own inward eyes first saw the illumination of Christ when he was born again, and next saw the cleansing stream when he was sanctified wholly! He discerned them spiritually, but definitely and clearly in his inner, spiritual man -- and that without one touch, one sound, or one sight, seen by his natural, physical senses!

THE OLD SAYING: "Brother, if you ain't felt nothin' -- if you ain't heard nothin' -- if you ain't seen nothin' -- then you ain't got nothin'" MUST NOT BE TAKEN TO MEAN feeling, hearing, and seeing that are discerned by the natural man! One does indeed feel the intangible, hear the inaudible, and see the invisible when the Holy Ghost ushers in the New Birth and outpours the Baptism of the Holy Ghost -- but none of these things are discerned by the natural senses! They are discerned and known entirely by the inner, spiritual senses. Then, after they are thus known, one may feel and manifest much that is discerned by the natural man, but these outward sensations are the aftermath, the results of what has already been made known, and not the evidence that the work is done.

When sense-oriented and carnal professors insist upon audible things "that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God?" (Isa. 8:19). "IT IS THE SPIRIT THAT BEARETH WITNESS" to one's New Birth and to one's Baptism with the Holy Ghost," (1 John 5:6), and that Witness is "SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED" by the inner, spiritual senses, AND NEVER BY THE PHYSICAL EAR! Therefore, tongues never was, is not now, nor ever shall be,

the true evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). Selah.

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THE END