

ELDER STATEMENT ON SPEAKING IN TONGUES

Fellowship Bible Church is not a “charismatic” church in the sense that term is understood in many churches today. By this we mean that we will not practice speaking in tongues in our public meetings. We do not mean that God does not give spiritual gifts to His people nor that He does not work miracles in our day. We affirm that God gives every believer a spiritual gift (or gifts) to be used for the building up of the body of Christ. We do not say that God cannot nor will not give the gift of tongues. He dispenses gifts of the Spirit as He determines (1 Cor. 12:11). However, we feel that, for the most part, the modern tongues movement does not fit the biblical guidelines. This is based on the following considerations:

1. The “baptism of the Holy Spirit” is a once-for-all event in which every believer is placed into the body of Christ, the Church, at the moment of his/her regeneration (1 Cor. 12:13).
2. The gift of tongues, or the lack thereof, is not an indication of spiritual maturity. It is clearly evident that not every believer had the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 12:30).
3. The gift of tongues was considered the least important in comparison to other spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:27-30; 14:1-2, 12).
4. The majority of the occurrences of the word tongue (glossa) in the New Testament when not used of a physical tongue refer to a human language or a human language group.
5. The purpose of tongues was primarily a sign to unbelievers, especially to unbelieving Jews (1 Cor. 14:21-22).
6. Spiritual gifts (as a whole) were given for the purpose of edifying the body of Christ, whereas much of the modern tongues movement emphasizes a personal, private and self-edifying experience (1 Cor. 12:7; 14:5-7, 9, 12).
7. The biblical mandate is that when the gift of tongues is practiced, an interpretation of that tongue should also accompany it (1 Cor. 14:26-28).

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