

The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness.

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness—Isa. 35-8.

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THE GIFT OF TONGUES

Rev. C. W. Ruth.

We do not for one moment question nor deny that there is such a gift, for the Scriptures plainly state that there is. One might as well deny all the gifts of the Spirit as to deny the gift of "tongues." But I desire to point out some of the errors concerning the present day teaching in the movement known as the "Tongues Movement." It is well to remember that all fanatical movements have some truth; but usually it is distorted truth, and distorted truth is error. The first error is that of giving an undue emphasis and prominence to the gift of "tongues;" putting first what God put last in the order of the gifts. In 1 Cor. 12:28, we find the numerical order of the gifts, given, doubtless, according to their relative value; and the last mentioned is "diversities of tongues." We commit a grievous error when we put last what God puts first or first what God puts last. We must learn to leave truth in the place and order that God puts first things first and last things last.

This is why I do not make use of the term "the four-fold gospel." Says one, "Do you not believe in the four-fold gospel?" I would answer, "Yes, I believe in a hundred-fold gospel." "Then why object to the term 'four-fold?'" Because it places the subject of divine healing and of the second coming on an equality with the subject of pardon and sanctification—as though of equal importance. While I am a glad witness to divine healing, and rejoice in the glorious hope of His coming I am persuaded that it is infinitely more important that men should be saved and sanctified than that they should be healed of physical ills, or accept our view of our Lord's return. And yet the multitude will seek physical health before they will holiness of heart.

The second error of the "tongues movement" is in the teaching that all may have, and should have the gift of tongues. After enunciating the gifts, Paul raises the question, "Are all apostles; are all prophets; are all workers of miracles; have all the gifts of healing; do all speak with tongues?" (1 Cor. 12:29-30). Of course, this is just another way of saying that all do not have the same gift. And no one would teach that all should be apostles, or that all should be prophets, or teachers, and yet when it comes to "the gifts of healing" and "tongues," it is urged that if one was just right and living up to their

privilege, all might be healed and all should speak with tongues. This we deny, and insist that it is wholly unscriptural. As well urge that all should speak with tongues.

It should be remembered that all the gifts are in the sovereignty of God, and that "all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as HE will."—1 Cor. 12:11.

A third error is that of insisting that the speaking with tongues is the necessary accomplishment, and evidence of the Pentecostal experience. This is as though the sun in the solar system needed a tallow dip to prove it is in the neighborhood. The Holy Ghost bears His own witness, and can do so in ten thousand different ways. One might as well insist that unless "there came a sound from heaven as of rushing mighty wind," and the "cloven tongues of fire" were visible, and all the other phenomena of the historic Pentecost were present, the Holy Ghost had not yet been received. Not only so, but it is not said in the second chapter of Acts that "they spoke with unknown tongues," but with "other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." This is different from the "gift of tongues," in that there was no interpreter necessary on the day of Pentecost, "because that every man heard them speak in his own language;" and this was the amazement of the multitude as they exclaimed, "How hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born." The exercising of the "gift of tongues" always requires an interpreter, and is positively forbidden and prohibited in the church when there is no interpreter. "If there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church."—1 Cor. 14:28.

A fourth error is in the assumption that the "gift of tongues" is an evidence of advanced spirituality and superior piety. We would insist that all the gifts are on the side of the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians; that after enumerating all the gifts, the Apostle Paul says, "And yet shew I unto you a more excellent way," and gives then, the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians thus indicating that Perfect Love is "more excellent" than any of the gifts. While evidently the Corinthian church had the "gift of tongues," it may be well to note that this church gave the apostle more trouble than any other church in the New Testament; that they had "divisions;" had gone to law "brotherness. Fourth, because if I should speak in

with brother;" had misused the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; had among them gross immoralities, such as was "not so much as named among the gentiles;" and evidently had misused the gift of tongues which called forth the restriction of the 14th chapter in the exercise of that gift. He said of them in the third chapter, they were "yet carnal;" and "babes in Christ." So the "gift of tongues" among them did not prove advanced spiritually and superior piety.

A fifth error is in supposing that any sort of a mysterious gibberish or jargon—though not understood by themselves or anyone else is the "gift of tongues." The falsity of this claim has been disproved by numbers who have sincerely supposed they had the gift of tongues and gone to the various missionary fields to find they could not speak so as to be understood by the natives at all—though they were sure before going the Lord had given them the language and called them to those fields. Indeed, there have been exceedingly few, if any, of real authenticated cases of the tongues in these latter days. It should be remembered that Satan can manipulate our vocal organs just as certainly as he can any other part of our being, as in the case of witchcraft, sorcery, spirit-rapping, etc., hence we need to heed the injunction, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God." "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace."

I do not seek the gift of tongues, first, because I have that which is "more excellent," and would not know what to do with the gift of tongues if I had it. Second, because the command is, "Covet earnestly the best gifts, and the gift of tongues is not the best, "for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret." (1 Cor. 14:5.) With Paul, "I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." Follow after charity and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye prophesy." Why should I seek that which is inferior as to its usefulness, when I am exhorted to "covet earnestly the best?" Third, I do not seek it because I could not exercise the same without an "interpreter," and I cannot afford to carry one with me for the busi-

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