

Hebrew or Greek. No more palatable is the idea that it is an initiatory sign, comparable to the scaffolding on a building.

A digression into philosophy discusses the contrasted world-views of Plato and Aristotle, with a strong preference for the element of irrationality in the former. Thus, he can accept that tongue-speaking is an irrational practice and yet need not be refused. A flaw in the rocket mechanism appears momentarily when it is stated on p. 208 that 'tongue speaking is dangerous for the weak ego and should never be forced on anyone', though earlier some space was devoted to descriptions of techniques for inducing tongue speaking and later its psycho-therapeutic value is asserted.

Of psychological explanations rejected are those of hysteria, exalted memory, and suggestion, hypnotic or otherwise. A similarity to dreams and visions is recognised. Here, the claim is made that many persons have been changed for the better by the experience of tongues, by virtue of a 'new integration of the total psyche' which is identified with sanctification without any attempt at Scriptural justification. It is noteworthy that the value of tongues is seen practically exclusively in the psychological benefit to the individual, not to the Church, much less to the Lord.

Now comes the plunge! Frankly facing the negative aspects of glossolalia, Mr. Kelsey becomes devastatingly revealing. 'Glossolalia', he says, seems to the onlooker 'an unattractive, irrational, automatic, non-conscious phenomenon, even in its most devotional atmosphere'. It is 'a deliberate attempt to abandon one's self to the irrational'. In Churches, it has caused conflict and division. Its exponents look down on other people as religiously inferior and act as though they have a monopoly of the knowledge of God. They press the experience on others, at risk of producing psychological illness, especially in children. Such over-emphasis of the gift can lead into a spiritual cul-de-sac and issue in repression, emotional instability and moral rigidity. In short, 'Christian wholeness gets lost' in a search for experience and 'kicks'. At best, glossolalia is one of the lesser gifts which needs restraint in its exercise. At worst, it appears as a menace to individual mental health and Church unity.

A balanced reading of this rather inconsistent and hastily compiled book thus leaves a very unfavourable impression of speaking with tongues.

A FURTHER REVIEW

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Morton T. Kelsey's *Speaking in Tongues* (Epworth; 17/6) should appeal to members of a RESEARCH fellowship. While more thorough Biblical *expositions* of the theme are available, the value of this work lies in its well-documented evidence that tongues (i) have persisted since Pentecost till now, and (ii) are spiritually beneficial. This weighs heavily against two main objections to the current charismatic renewal.

Reviewing the references to glossolalia throughout church-history Kelsey notes one factor which, among other reasons, caused the long absence of the gift during the Dark Ages. According to its *Rituale Romanum* (circa 1000 A.D.), officially Romanism considered tongues to be a sign of demon-possession.

Keen 'Brethren' readers will be quick to note an answer to Sir Robert Anderson's opening 'poser' in his *The Silence of God*. The springboard for his thesis was his rueful comment on the Turkish atrocities against the Armenian believers, that 'In vain do we strain our ears to hear some voice from the throne of the Divine Majesty. The far off heaven where, in perfect peace and unutterable glory, God dwells and reigns, is silent'. From there Sir Robert proceeded to prove (?) that because God was silent, He was therefore no longer wonder-working since the writing of the final verse of John's Revelation. A little story recounted by Kelsey reveals that, while God is silent in large measure, He is ALSO still miracle-working; as He was, of course, in the book of Acts. (Stephen's stoning and James's beheading during that most miraculous age of Bible times, indicates that God's sovereign silence is not limited to such non-miraculous seasons as Job 1 and Psalm 73). In 1855 God gave detailed visions to an 11-year-old Russian lad in the Armenian village of Kara Kala, foretelling the Turkish pogrom against Christians. That same year saw a 'pentecostal' awakening among the Russians in the Black Sea region. In 1880 there was a corresponding revival in Kara Kala, so these Russians started to join the Armenians in 'pentecostal' worship. From time to time God gave a needed 'word of knowledge' (1 Co. 12: 8) to uncover a local sin (as to Peter in Acts 5); and in 1900 He gave a definite prophecy that the time of fulfilment of the original visions was near. By 1912, (2 years before the terrible slaughter) the last Christian family had evacuated the area. Among the refugees to America were the Shakarian family, one member of which (Demos) founded the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship in U.S.A. in 1951. Thus, God was not utterly silent; nor is He completely mute right now in Inland China, where the real church (in contrast to official, hamstrung christendom, an unwilling handmaid of Communism) is a persecuted movement that experiences all the New Testament spiritual gifts. Surely such gifts will also be required by us as persecution tightens against the Church. And, why not in times of quietude, too?

Since Kelsey does not speak with tongues himself, his summing up of the psychological features of glossolalia is objective and unbiased. He indicates that Christian tongue-speaking is not due to demon-possession, schizophrenia, hysteria, repressed memory, hypnosis or autosuggestion. His own investigations led him to the same conclusion as other researchers whom he quotes, that the gift's exercise is generally of marked *therapeutic* value. Paul's statement about 'edifying oneself' is here verified. Paul also said that tongue-speaking is 'praying with the spirit', 'speaking mysteries unto God' with 'unfruitful understanding',—which is to say, the source of the language is the human spirit instead of the rational mind. Kelsey elaborates on this in terms of Jungian psychology. In dreams and visions

the 'Unconscious' produces images and motor responses (e.g. talking and somnambulism) in the conscious 'Ego'; the ego of a *normal*, integrated person is in no way impaired by such mystical, non-rational experiences. *Neurosis* occurs when the ego refuses to accept the impulses from the unconscious; tension is set up as the ego attempts to resist the pressure of the unconscious. *Psychosis* sets in when the ego disintegrates, and the person lives in the dream-world most of his time. Tongues speaking usually has a cathartic effect on the ego and aids integration. (Kelsey quotes two lengthy testimonies to this). It is a mystical experience which off-sets the too-rational bent of our Western minds. The writer is very insistent on the fact that tongues-speaking is generally *not* a highly emotional experience; and it is certainly not involuntary, for 'the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets'. Just as music, a smile, a sweet smell, a beautiful picture can be meaningful, so can a string of unknown words.

On the debit side, Kelsey suggests (although he quotes no case to prove his point) that a person of weak ego may not be able to cope too well with an excessive flood from the realm of the unconscious. Another danger he notes is the abuse that the emotional 'showman' would make of the sacred ability—as in Corinth, of course. Again, the person who is just longing to be recognized as a 'Somebody' might hanker for 'messages' for other people. But, he avows that 'a dead church is more dangerous than a dangerous one'. He quotes that wise veteran of the Assemblies of God in Britain, Donald Gee, warning newcomers to the realm of spiritual gifts against making more of 'utterances' than of the written Word, and of despising consecrated scholarship.

One glaring error appears on the dust-cover, stating that 2 million Pentecostals in America reckon tongues to be the only valid sign of *conversion*. Since this first appeared in the American publishers' blurb, presumably they are culpable and not the author.
