

Eric  
Butterworth  
Speaks

Essay #6

EACH IN HIS OWN TONGUE

One of the strangest stories in the Bible is found in the second chapter of Acts. It is the account referred to as the Day of Pentacost. Many people from far away places were gathered to hear the disciples speak. Though the listeners spoke and understood many different languages, they heard the disciples and understood, "Each in his own tongue." The picture this portrays is startling. But actually, if we look at it analytically, we see that it represents a very fundamental principle of communication rather than an unusual experience or mystical phenomenon.

As I speak to you over the radio, if my voice simply gives utterance to commonplace things, and if it is not inspired, then few will receive any inspiration from it. But, if I speak with inspiration and love, and if the "fire of the Holy Spirit is upon me", then each person will "hear in his own tongue". If your need is healing, you will catch a healing connotation to my words. If your need is guidance, you will find assurance. In this way, no matter what I say, it is possible to reach "each in his own tongue".

The science of semantics teaches us that ideas are not transmitted by speaking or writing alone. I form an idea, translate it into coded signals of written or spoken language. You feel the stimulation on an optic or aural nerve; it's sent to your brain. Finally you form an impression according to concepts in your own mind. My ideas do not send an objective message. Rather, they evoke a different response in every listener. This is a process which is influenced by the communication act, but not performed by it. No word has any meaning at all. Only the listener has meaning. It is possible, and indeed common, for you to totally misunderstand or not even register what I am saying at all. Unless, that is, you listen through feeling and intuition.

It is for this very reason that the Bible has been such a frustrating book for the multitudes. On the one hand, we are told we must read the Book; on the other, we may find it totally unintelligible without some aid or guidance. Obviously, there must be great inspiration in the Bible, for it has lived so long. Each writer expressed an inspiration in the idiom of his time, and each translator the same. Lest we lose the message through this process, we need to get into the spirit of the work and of the writer. To understand the Bible, we need to realize that it is the product of the incurably spiritual nature of man. But it is not the cause of it. Religion came not from the Bible--the Bible came out of religion.

Inspiration is not in the letter of the Bible, but in the spirit of God in man. Jesus said, concerning this, "Ye search the scriptures because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me; and ye will not come to me, that ye may have life." The scriptures point to the spirit in you! "There is a Spirit in man and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding."

Emphasis on the King James Bible as being the "original text" from God has been a limiting influence on man's quest for Truth. But the King James version was no more than a scholarly attempt to put scripture in the words of what was then the common man. Times have changed, now we speak an entirely different language. Actually the more translations of the Bible, the better. The important thing is to keep them from becoming authorized, for this leads to authoritarian interpretations which restrict individual thought and inspiration.

The real purpose of the Bible is not to teach man theology, but to help man know himself. The Bible has many tremendous and inspirational ideas. But it is wrong to teach that it has only one message, or that it speaks in only one tongue. God reveals himself according to our faith, and according to the language we speak. The Bible should be capable of inspiring scientists, inventors, musicians, poets, and priests alike...each in his own tongue.

It is interesting to note that even the lovely Psalms will convey to the individual that which his consciousness needs on the level on which he can receive it. Consider the beautiful 23rd Psalm, one of the greatest poems of all literature:

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want: He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters; He restoreth my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness For His name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley Of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; For thou art with me; Thy rod and thy	Staff they comfort me; Thou preparest a table before me in the Presence of my enemies; Thou anointest my head with oil, My cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow Me all the days of my life; And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.
--	--

Here is a message in the simple language of a shepherd. To have meaning, it must be heard in your tongue. To the person who needs guidance, it means guideposts along the way. To the person meeting bereavement, it is comfort in time of mourning. To one with fear and worry, it has reassurances in yet another tongue. To one who faces a healing challenge, the Psalm might speak in a tongue of faith and healing:

"The Lord is my health, I can't be sick. He maketh me to relax from all tension: He leadeth me into peace of mind and Heart, He restoreth my zest for living. He guides me into using my body wisely For His name's sake. Yea, though I am surrounded by disease And the thought of disease, I will have	No fear, for thou art with me: Thy truth and thy life sustain me. Thou preparest a reserve within me to Meet all life's challenges. Thou chargest my heart with healing Life. My energy is unbounded. Surely health and joy shall follow me All the days of my life. I will dwell In the consciousness of wholeness forever.
---	--

Charles Fillmore, in his book, Prosperity, uses the 23rd Psalm as a prosperity treatment. It is the beautiful psalm in the language of work and supply:

"The Lord is my banker; My credit is good. He maketh me to lie down in the con- sciousness of omnipresent abundance; He giveth me the key to His strongbox. He restoreth my faith in His riches; He guideth me in the paths of prosperity For His name's sake. Yea, though I walk in the very shadow Of Debt, I shall fear no evil.	For thou art with me; Thy silver and Gold they secure me. Thou preparest a way for me in the Presence of the collector: Thou fillest my wallet with plenty; My measure runneth over. Surely goodness and plenty will follow Me all the days of my life; And I shall do business in the name of The Lord forever.
--	---

God is forever speaking His message of Truth to you, and you will hear it according to your present consciousness and in the language and experience most familiar to you. This is as it always has been, and as it should be. In a very real sense, the Day of Pentacost is every day, if we prepare ourselves through prayer and meditation to accept the spirit and inspiration in every communication in our life.