

Critical Letter And A Response On "The Truth About Tongues"

Mr. Deaton,

While visiting Lufkin recently I was dismayed when reading your newspaper article entitled "The Truth About Tongues". The reason for my dismay was that you gave me NO REASON to attend your church. You gave me lots of reasons not to attend a Pentecostal Church but not ONE REASON to attend the Loop 287 Church of Christ.

How can I learn the 'truth' if you give me no direction. By pointing out the mistakes others make you gave me no direction of the true way to worship. I am sure I will never attend your church because you wasted all that newspaper room telling me what NOT to do and not one word of what I need to do. I also will never attend your church because if you only have time to criticize others you obviously have NO time to teach the 'truth'.

If you had used the entire article to tell me what I need to do in order to be saved I might want to come to your church to learn more. Just like a politician who only tells me what is wrong with those running against them, I assume they have nothing to recommend themselves and therefore I do not need to vote for them.

Is it possible that you might consider using this newspaper space to encourage people to come to the church of Christ and learn what they need to do to be assured of eternal life instead of criticizing others. If you are adept at getting people in your church and teaching them the truth they will automatically reject the false teachings of others and follow the way that leads to salvation.

I hope that the arrogance of your youth is soon tempered with the milk of human kindness before you self-destruct and find yourself without a church or congregation or friends to encourage you to walk in the true way.

Incidentally, I am a member of the church of Christ and my husband was a deacon until his death. Never would he have thought to put others down but instead spent his time teaching them from the Bible by every word that came out of his mouth and every deed he performed while he was alive on this earth. I can only hope that I am doing the same in some

small way.

My very good wishes for you as you grow in years and the word of God.

W.G.

March 4, 2002

Dear Mrs. G.,

Your criticism of my article, *The Truth About Tongues* (The Lufkin Daily News, Feb. 16, 2002), was unwarranted and unscriptural.

Your criticism of the article was also unwarranted. You complain, "I also will never attend your church because if you only have time to criticize others you obviously have NO time to teach the 'truth.'" The fact that Pentecostal tongues are not Bible tongues is truth! They speak gibberish, while in the Bible tongues were languages (Acts 2:1-12). Truth is both positive and negative. The Spirit said, "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age" (Titus 2:11, 12).

Your criticism is also unscriptural. May I remind you that much of the New Testament deals with false doctrine and false teachers? Jesus dealt with the errors of the Jews, calling them "hypocrites," "serpents, brood of vipers," children of the devil and liars (Matthew 23:13, 33; John 8:44, 55). Paul wrote of some who were "dogs...evil workers" (Philippians 3:2). Do you condemn them for their exposure and criticism of error? If not, then why do you condemn me for following their example?

You mentioned my youth, yet you and I have never met before. How do you know how old I am? "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning me?" I hope that the ignorance of your old age is soon tempered with the milk of the word (1 Peter 2:1).

You said you are a member of the church of Christ. Mrs. G., you may be a member of the church of Christ, but you are not a faithful one. When you carp and criticize those who are striving to teach the lost, you are working against the church, not for it (cf. 3 John 9-11).

You also said your deceased husband, a former deacon, never "put others down." In the context, I assume you mean he never told people about the error of their religion. I seriously doubt the truth of that statement. However, if it is true, then you should not present him as an example for others, nor follow it yourself (which you did not since you put me down). The Bible commands us to expose error, not ignore it; prick men in their heart, not coddle them in sin (Ephesians 5:11; Acts 7:51-54).

You also wrote that in the article I "gave NO REASON to attend your church." Sure I did--we will teach sound doctrine (Titus 2:1; cf. 2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Peter 4:11). We will not deceive men, leading them to hell, as the Pentecostals do (2 Timothy 3:13; Matthew 7:15).

Finally, I always find it amazing when people condemn me for condemning others. They evidently do not see the hypocrisy of such (Matthew 7:3-5).

In The Interest of The Truth,
Steven F. Deaton

PS. I will never consider not exposing error, because people do not automatically reject error by simply telling them the positive truth. For verification of this, read Galatians and Hebrews.