

Mark 13:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.

Analysis

When they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak—the Greek *mē* *promerimnate* (μὴ προμεριμνᾶτε) means 'do not pre-plan anxiously.' This isn't prohibiting preparation (Paul reasoned carefully—Acts 17:2) but anxiety-driven scripting. **Whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost** (Greek *to pneuma to hagion, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον*).

This promises supernatural enablement during persecution. The Spirit gives words (Acts 4:8 Peter filled with Spirit before Sanhedrin; 7:55 Stephen saw heaven opened). This isn't excuse for lazy sermon preparation—context is persecution, not regular teaching. The promise applies when arrested for Christ, brought before hostile authorities. God demonstrates power through weak vessels—eloquence comes from Spirit, not human ability. This sustained martyrs through centuries: they testified boldly despite no formal training, confounding accusers.

Historical Context

Early Christians experienced this precisely. Acts records Spirit-empowered testimony: Peter and John confounded Sanhedrin (Acts 4:13, 'unlearned and ignorant men'); Stephen's accusers 'were not able to resist the wisdom and the

spirit by which he spake' (Acts 6:10); Paul's defenses before Felix, Festus, Agrippa demonstrated Spirit's wisdom. Church history records martyrs' Spirit-enabled courage: Polycarp, Perpetua, Reformers—none prepared speeches yet testified powerfully. Modern persecuted believers report similar experiences: words given in moment, clarity under pressure, boldness beyond natural capacity. The promise isn't for comfortable Christians but those facing hostile examination. Context matters: regular teaching requires study (2 Timothy 2:15); crisis testimony receives supernatural aid.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does distinguishing regular teaching (requiring preparation) from crisis testimony (receiving Spirit's words) prevent misapplying this promise?
2. What does Spirit-given speech reveal about God's character—His commitment to sustain and vindicate His people under persecution?
3. How might anticipating Spirit's help during persecution change Christians' attitude toward suffering for Christ's sake?

Interlinear Text

ὅταν δὲ ἄγαγωσιν ὑμᾶς παραδιδόντες μὴ προμεριμνᾶτε
when But they shall lead you up no take
G3752 G1161 G71 G5209 G3860 G3361 G4305

τί λαλοῦντες μηδὲ μελετᾶτε· ἀλλὰ ὁ ἐὰν
what speak neither do ye premeditate but whatsoever shall be
G5101 G2980 G3366 G3191 G235 G3739 G1437

δοθῆ ὑμῖν ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ τοῦτο λαλοῦντες οὐ
given you in that G3588 hour that speak not
G1325 G5213 G1722 G1565 G5610 G5124 G2980 G3756

γάρ ἐστε ὑμεῖς οἱ λαλοῦντες ἀλλὰ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ
ye for it is ye G3588 speak but G3588 Ghost G3588
G1063 G2075 G5210 G2980 G235 G4151

ἄγιον

the Holy

G40

Additional Cross-References

Acts 6:10 (Spirit): And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.

1 Corinthians 2:13 (Holy): Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

1 Peter 1:12 (Holy): Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

Isaiah 50:4 (Parallel theme): The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

Acts 2:4 (Holy): And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 4:31 (Holy): And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

Ephesians 3:5 (Holy): Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

James 1:5 (Parallel theme): If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

2 Samuel 23:2 (Spirit): The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.

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