

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	ὃ	ἐὰν	
what	speak	neither	do ye premeditate	but	whatsoever	shall be	
G5101	G2980	G3366	G3191	G235	G3739	G1437	
δοθῇ	ὑμῖν	ἐν	ἐκείνῃ	τῇ	ὥρᾳ	τοῦτο	λαλοῦντες οὐ
given	you	in	that	hour	that	speak	not
G1325	G5213	G1722	G1565	G3588	G5610	G5124	G2980
γάρ	ἐστε	ὑμεῖς	οἱ	λαλοῦντες	ἀλλὰ	τὸ	πνεῦμα τὸ
ye for	it is	ye		speak	but		Ghost
G1063	G2075	G5210	G3588	G2980	G235	G3588	G4151
ἅγιον							
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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