WHAT THE BIBLE REALLY SAYS ABOUT TONGUES

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Edited by Jeff L. Gay

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> Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. (Hosea 6:3, KJV)

The Night the Power Fell at Leavenworth Penitentiary

The year was 1990. I was facing life in prison without the possibility of parole. I was scheduled for sentencing the following morning. I was a new Christian. Just before bed, I felt convicted to pray before going to sleep. I asked my co-defendant, Sal, who had been born again for about six months, and our other roommate, Big George, to pray with me. They looked at me with pity and said, "Sure." I felt the need to get out of bed and kneel on the cold cement floor as an act of humility before God. Sal and George remained on their beds a short distance from me in that 8' X 16' cell. As we began to pray, the atmosphere was no different than usual. It was a cold-floored prison cell.

I began to pray aloud, asking for the Lord's mercy, wisdom, and favor to go before me at sentencing the following day. After praying for just a few minutes, God's presence began entering the room. The atmosphere was totally transformed. My prayer began to take on an entirely new dimension. Clarity and authority were suddenly in my voice. Faith filled my soul. Something extraordinary was happening. Then, an utterance in tongues forcefully bubbled forth from deep

within my belly. I had never experienced such a flow. Before this, I had experienced the Spirit moving my mouth as I prayed, but this was more profound. It was power such as I'd never experienced before.

At first, it startled me, but I had a peace that passed all understanding. I yielded to the Spirit. I would pray in English, and then an utterance in tongues, beyond my knowledge, would flow forth. Then back to English, my native tongue, with my understanding, then in tongues again. Sal began to experience the complimentary gift, the interpretation of tongues.

Whatever flowed out of me in this unknown language, Sal was supernaturally hearing back in his mind clearly in English. Sal began to speak out the interpretation as I paused for him to speak. It was amazingly natural, although clearly supernatural. We were flowing in the Spirit together, with tongues and interpretation of tongues, just as the Bible said was possible. I had been saved for only a month when this occurred. It was a wonderful, invigorating, and refreshing time in God's presence. Most of the prayers we were led to pray that night were answered miraculously within the next 72 hours. God had shown up in a dirty prison cell in Leavenworth Penitentiary, confirming his presence and power to a couple of repentant criminals. From that day forward, I have prayed in tongues every day. On many occasions, I have experienced the interpretation of tongues, with prayers being explicitly answered in ways identical to the words of the interpretation given.

If You Truly Want to Know

Jesus promises us that if we genuinely want to know, we will know whether this doctrine be of God or man (John 7:17/Hosea. 6:3). If we don't honestly want to know, then we will remain ignorant or misinformed of issues of the Spirit.

Paul's letter to the Corinthians concerning various spiritual gifts begins with the words, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant" (1 Corinthians 12:1, KJV). The Weymouth New Testament renders this verse, "It is important, brethren, that you should have clear knowledge on the subject of spiritual gifts." God spoke these poignant words to His followers, "My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6, NIV). God's Word admonishes us, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved…who correctly handles the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15, NIV).

It is evident from Scripture that God's will is for us to know. Jesus said, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John. 8:31-32, RSV). Do you want to secure the freedom offered by God's Word? Your willingness to honestly know is the only thing separating you from learning and remaining ignorant.

There are two ways to read the Scriptures when seeking to know; exegesis and eisegesis. Exegesis (ex-e-gee'-sis) is the proper way and results in learning the

truth that makes us free. Eisegesis (i-see-gee'-sis) is the improper way and causes us to remain ignorant, misinformed, and stagnant in an area of our faith.

Dave Branon, the author of 24 books, 375 articles, and managing editor of Sports Spectrum (a Christian sports magazine), says it this way:

> "The Bible changes lives...The Scripture can also… provide a firm foundation for society with its clear teachings on institutions such as marriage, family...the church [etc...]. But what happens when what the Bible clearly says...is rejected? Those who reject its teachings [often] try to change the Word.
>
> "Two Greek words can help explain this [rejection and change]: eisegesis and exegesis. Eisegesis is the process of reading into a passage something that is not there – inserting a meaning that flows from a personal agenda. By contrast, exegesis means drawing from the passage the clearly intended meaning, using context, other Scripture passages on the same topic, and legitimate tools of understanding such as Bible commentaries.
>
> "Instead of trying to change God's Word to fit our own ideas, let's allow the Word to change us..." Dave Branon in Our Daily Bread, May 24, 2005 [adapted].

Exegesis is "reading out of the Scriptures what they say" and applying them to our lives. If our life (or theology) contradicts what the Scriptures say, then we must yield and allow the Scriptures to change us. For example, the men and women at Berea applied exegesis when Paul came to town preaching and teaching this new doctrine about Jesus. "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11, KJV). The Bereans had a readiness of mind to receive the word preached. This is the foundation for growth.

"Searching the Scriptures daily to see if these things are so" is how one builds on this foundation; this is a teachable spirit. However, not everyone approaches the Scriptures with a teachable spirit. A few verses later, we see the Thessalonians were resistant and even tried to turn others against the apostle's message (v. 13). Those who maintain a resistant spirit are not as noble as those who have a teachable spirit.

Eisigesis is "reading into the Scriptures what we already believe." In other words, if our life (or theology) contradicts what the Scriptures say, we ignore or reinterpret what these verses must mean. Reading the Scriptures with eisigesis demonstrates that we don't really want to know.

As you further study "The Subject of Tongues," I encourage you to go on to know, asking God to grant you a teachable spirit.

Remember, the Bible says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5, RSV). Another word for proud could easily be resistant, and teachable could be used to refer to humility. Therefore, God gives grace to the teachable but opposes (or withdraws His grace) from those who choose to be resistant. Do you have a teachable spirit today? I hope this is so. Let's move forward and learn more from God's Word on this subject of tongues for today.

Let's pray: Father, I desire to know. I ask you to give me grace to be taught by Your Holy Spirit as I hear Your Word. I choose to grow. I desire everything You have for me. I willingly receive every gift and blessing from Your Hand that will enable and empower me to glorify You in the earth. Today, I ask that You touch my heart and change my mind. I pray this in the Name of Your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Tongues Came First at Pentecost

> When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.
>
> They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. (Acts 2:1-4, NIV)

The day of Pentecost brought the promise of the Holy Spirit to 120 people (Acts 1:15). Speaking in other tongues was the outward evidence that the Spirit had been given. Jesus spoke about the coming of the Spirit in the Book of John:

> Now on the final and most important day of the Feast, Jesus stood, and He cried in a loud voice, If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink! He who believes in Me [who cleaves to and trusts in and relies on Me] as the Scripture has said, From his innermost being shall flow [continuously] springs and rivers of living water. But He was speaking here of the Spirit, Whom those who believed (trusted, had faith) in Him were afterward to receive. For the [Holy] Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified (raised to honor) (John 7:37-39, AMP)

Jesus clearly prophesied the coming of the Spirit. The Spirit would be given after Jesus had been glorified (vs. 39). Jesus was glorified on the Cross for all humanity to see. When He was "lifted up," He began drawing all men unto Himself. Pentecost came fifty days after the crucifixion, and the Spirit fell, just as Jesus had promised. Men and women were filled with the Holy Spirit. They began speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gave them the ability (Acts 2:4). The result of the Spirit's filling was a boldness to be witnesses for Jesus (Acts 1:8).

The Greek word for witnesses here is martoos. It's where we get our English word martyr. In other words, these same disciples of Jesus hiding in an upper room, afraid for their lives before the Spirit's empowerment, would now be bold witnesses for Jesus, even to the point of death as martyrs. As we know from Church history and Foxe's Book of Martyrs, all the apostles (except John) died as martyrs for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. John was boiled in oil twice, lived, and then wrote the Book of Revelation while exiled (for life) on the Isle of Patmos.

Even Thomas, who said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe" (John 20:25, KJV), believed unto martyrdom in India.

Whatever power the disciples received on the day of Pentecost, every Christian should desire to receive it. It

is faith-empowering. It comes with the boldness to evangelize. After Peter received this empowerment, he preached his first sermon, and "...the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2: 41, KJV). It transformed men and women who were previously hiding in an upper room for fear of the Romans and Jews (Acts 1:13-15) into men and women of faith who preached openly on Solomon's porch (Acts 5:12). Not only did fear depart from the disciples once this supernatural power from Heaven was received, but the people now feared the disciples! (see Acts 5:11-13). Can you say the same?

Holy Spirit Power Brings Opposition

For the disciples, the Holy Spirit's power brought opposition from the religious (legalistic) folks. Men and women were converting to Christ as Peter and John preached Jesus and healed the sick in His Name.

"… many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand" (Acts 4:4, NIV). The religious hierarchy in Jerusalem began to question and oppose this move of the Spirit. Peter responded to them by preaching the gospel. They had two choices: exegesis or eisegesis.

They could be teachable, read out of the Scriptures what they had been missing for years, and receive Jesus and the promise of the Holy Spirit. Or, they could remain resistant and read into the Scriptures what they had been wrongly taught to believe about this subject at the first-class rabbinical school in Jerusalem where they had been educated. Sadly, the religious leaders chose eisigesis, a resistant spirit. They missed a sovereign move of God, their day of visitation. They looked at everything the disciples did in the Name of Jesus with an accusatory eye.

The Bereans would later look at the same Scriptures with an inquisitive eye. The former would oppose and persecute the latter. "They (Jerusalem's religious leaders) called in the apostles again. They whipped the apostles and commanded them not to talk to the people ever again about the name of Jesus. After that, they let them go free" (Acts 5:40, SIM). Several years later, the

Thessalonian Jews came to Berea. They opposed Paul and what he taught as he preached in the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 17:12-14).

On the other hand, the Bereans chose to be teachable and received from God. "Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. Many of the Jews believed, as did also many prominent Greek women and many Greek men" (Acts 17:11-12, NIV).

The Infilling of the Holy Spirit

On the day of Pentecost, the 120 were "…filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." (Acts 2:4, NIV).

One of the outward evidences of this Holy Spirit (dunamis) power is the supernatural empowerment of speaking in tongues (Greek, Strong's #1100 glossa). Glossa is the Greek word translated as "tongues" in the New Testament. ***Lexical Aids to the New Testament Greek*** defines glossa as "a foreign or strange language which one has not learned but yet is enabled to speak due to supernatural intervention of the Holy Spirit, particularly in what the New Testament calls the baptism in the Holy Spirit by Jesus Christ.

The historic events of speaking in foreign tongues or dialects came with the Jews at Pentecost in Acts 2:4, 11, the Gentiles at Caesarea in Acts 10:46, and the disciples of John the Baptist at Ephesus in Acts 19:6. These were all languages unknown to the speakers, spoken at that particular time in demonstration of their being baptized into the body of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). These are the same languages demonstrated as charismata (the results of the grace of God in the human heart) spoken of by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:10, 30; 14:5, 6, 18, 22, 39."

Evidences of the Spirit's Baptism

On the day of Pentecost, Peter and the others were filled with the Holy Spirit. He immediately began to preach the gospel. In the midst of his message, he began to quote from the Old Testament prophet Joel to provide a Scriptural basis to those present for this strange phenomenon. He said, "These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was prophesied by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:15-16, NIV, see also Joel 2:28-32).

Peter then began to quote a laundry list of evidence of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that God would release upon all flesh in the last days (Acts 2:17). Dreams, visions, and the gift of prophecy are noted as the signs.

Among this list of manifestations, tongues are nowhere to be found! Yet amidst the gathering of men and women in Jerusalem, 120 clearly spoke in glossa (tongues). "When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language." (Acts 2:6, NIV). Sixteen language groups are identified as being present in Jerusalem during this outpouring of God's Mighty Spirit. Yet others didn't hear these 120 men and women speaking in their dialect. This begs the question, "Why do some hear them speaking in their own dialect while others think these tongue-talkers are stumbling drunks?"

The answer to this question could be explained in two ways; (1) God is sovereign and does what He wants to

do for his own purposes and reasons, and (2) those that God enabled to hear every man in his own dialect may have had a willing heart and were ready to hear what the Spirit was saying at that hour. Jesus repeatedly said in the Gospels, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear" (Mathew 11:15, 13:9, 13:43, Mark 4:9, 4:23, Luke 8:8, 14:35. (See Mark 8:18 and Romans 8:11 concerning closed ears.). Are your ears open to hear?

The outpouring of God's Spirit is the same today. The Spirit of God will fill men and women, and they will receive the boldness to witness for Jesus.

Souls will come to salvation. Dreams, visions, and gifts of prophecy will pour out. They will begin to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gives them utterance. Some standing nearby will hear the beautiful works of God being declared in their own dialects. Others will hear the glossa as mere gibberish.

The results are diametrically opposed to and mutually exclusive of each other. For example, those who experience the former are suddenly open to hearing the gospel. Salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ, often follows. Those who experience the latter are suddenly repelled by what appears to be nothing but an ecstatic utterance, even mocking those speaking in tongues.

Sometimes, accusations of emotionalism, foolishness, and fanaticism result.

Paul said the same message of the knowledge of Jesus was "…to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life" (2 Corinthians 2:15-16, RSV).

What occurred at Pentecost confirmed this truth. Three thousand souls received Christ due to this incredible outpouring of God's Spirit. Thousands of others mocked the 120 who were speaking in tongues, calling them stumbling drunkards. Which group do you want to be in?

Tongues as a Witness and Testimony

In 1998, I was in transit from one prison to another. Upon arriving at the Oklahoma City Federal Transfer Center, I was placed in a unit housing approximately 150 inmates. While standing in line for my noon tray, I saw Mark, an inmate I had known at another prison. A few years earlier, he had been released but had now returned due to another case. He was embarrassed and ashamed that he'd been re-imprisoned. He hoped I didn't recognize him, but I did. God sent me to speak to him. Mark had been raised as an Orthodox Jew in New York. He had been schooled in the Torah (Old Testament) and read and wrote Hebrew.

In the county jail before being sentenced to 10 years, God drew Mark to salvation through his Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ. The testimony of what God did to reveal Mark's personal Messiah to him was tremendous. Little did we know that God had only begun a series of faith-building and life-changing encounters that grew Mark in the faith. Because I had shared the gospel with Mark on several occasions in prior years, he asked me to help teach him the Bible and pray with him daily.

As we began to meet for Bible study, a bi-lingual Cuban man, Juan Carlos, joined us. He was on fire with the Holy Spirit. As we studied the Bible together, other men began to join us. In a few days, the group had grown from the three of us to about 30 inmates. I would teach in English, and Juan Carlos would translate into Spanish for the Latinos. Several men gave their hearts to Christ.

One day, Mark asked if just the three of us could pray together privately. We agreed and went to his cell. We held hands and approached the throne of God in Jesus' Mighty Name. God's presence filled the room. It was glorious. Suddenly, Juan Carlos started to speak in glossa (tongues). Mark looked up and began staring at Juan Carlos intently. Because I am of Hebrew descent, I am familiar with the unique sound of the Hebrew language.

Mark looked at me, then back at the Cuban man across from him. Mark was stunned! Approaching the situation with the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, I asked Juan Carlos how many languages he spoke. He looked at me and said, "Two, Spanish and English." I then asked him, "Do you speak Hebrew?" He said, "No. Why do you ask?" I asked him to allow me to question him in this manner as I sensed the Holy Spirit was doing something special.

He agreed. I asked him what language he was praying in. He replied, "I was praying in tongues, then I began to sing in tongues." I said, "Do you know what language you were praying and singing in?" He replied, "I don't have a clue. I just felt the leading of the Lord to allow Him to flow through me in this manner when I ran out of words in English."

At that point, I turned to Mark and said, "Mark, do you know what language Juan Carlos was praying and singing in?" Mark said, "Yes, I recognized it immediately as Hebrew from the Psalms. He was praying and singing the high praises of God in fluent Hebrew!" Juan Carlos was

just as amazed as Mark was. Through this, Mark realized that “there is neither Jew nor Gentile in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28) and that “all who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved” (Acts 2:21).

Through this experience, Mark felt more at home as a Jewish Believer amongst Gentile Believers, realizing that the God of the Jews is the same God of Gentiles in Christ Jesus. Mark’s faith skyrocketed, and he became more open to receiving this same power of the Holy Spirit, which enabled Juan Carlos to witness the Gospel boldly and lead others to Christ.

A Prisoner's Father on His Deathbed

I was in the Chapel at Florence Prison Camp one morning in 2003. Jaime, another prisoner, had just received news that his father was in a coma on his deathbed. The father had suffered a stroke and was on his last leg. Jaime asked me if I would pray with him. We went into the main room and began praying in English. When we ran out of words in English, I felt a leading to pray out loud in tongues. It was just the two of us, and I didn't know what to pray in English. Distraught and crying tears of anguish and sorrow, Jaime suddenly began to laugh aloud. Tears of grief turned to tears of joy. Jaime said, "Brother David, I can hear what you are saying in tongues back in my mind in Spanish (his native language).

"God's perspective on this is entirely different from what I had seen from an earthly perspective. My father is saved, and Jesus is ready to take him home. I will see my Dad again. Everything is okay." Jaime's father went to be with the Lord several days later. Before he died, he woke up from the coma. He spent time with the children. They spoke to him. They hugged him and expressed their love for one another. He ate his favorite meal. He lay down and stepped into eternity to be with Jesus.

A second miracle also occurred. The staff allowed Jaime to attend the funeral several hundred miles away. He received an unescorted furlough though he still had five years remaining on his sentence (a very unusual occurrence). He saw his father buried and his

entire family was comforted by his testimony. The next day, he returned to the facility to continue his sentence.

Four Different Types of Tongues

The Bible reveals four different types of tongues (glossa) which God has provided for the building up of the Church; 1.) **tongues as a sign to the unbeliever** (1 Corinthians 14:22), 2.) **tongues for personal edification** (1 Corinthians 14:4), 3.) **tongues for interpretation** (1 Corinthians 14:5), and 4**.) tongues for deep intercessional groanings** (Romans 8:26).

I. Tongues as a Sign to the Unbeliever

> Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is not for unbelievers but for believers. (1 Corinthians 14:22)

Each of these different kinds of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:10, NIV) is given "as He (the Spirit) wills" (1 Corinthians 12:11, RSV), and for distinctly different purposes. For example, on the Day of Pentecost, "…tongues as a sign to the unbeliever…" were poured out on 120. "…each one heard them speaking in his own language" (Acts 2:6, 8). The 120 spoke in glossa (a language not naturally acquired by the speaker), while those present heard them in their own language. Hence, in this case, although the speakers did not understand what they were saying, the hearers (at least those for whom the sign was given) understood them clearly in his own language (v. 6, 8). Mark experienced this while Juan Carlos prayed and sang in fluent Hebrew.

II. Tongues for Personal Edification

> Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church. (1 Corinthians 14:4)

Paul speaks about a distinctly different type of tongue in 1 Corinthians. 14:4. This tongue is for personal edification (improvement, growth). This is also known as your personal prayer language in tongues. Paul says that no man can understand this type of tongue (1 Corinthians 14:2). If no man can understand him, we know this is a different kind of tongue than the 120 received of the day of Pentecost because at Pentecost every man heard in his own dialect (Acts 2:6, 8).

Tongues for personal edification is given by the Spirit for a believer to strengthen his own spirit. The word edification means "to be a housebuilder" or "to build up, embolden or edify" (Strong's #3618–oikodomeo). When preaching on the subject of spiritual warfare and the armor of God, Paul began with these words, "Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might" (Ephesians 6:10).

Tongues for personal edification (and spiritual strengthening) is a beautiful gift from God to His Church. Jude alludes to this gift near the end of his epistle. "But you, dear friends, must build up your lives ever more strongly upon the foundation of our holy faith, learning to pray in the power and strength of the Holy Spirit." (Jude 20, LVB). The word for "building up yourselves" is "epoikodomeo" (Strong's # 2026) and comes from the

same word Paul uses in 1 Corinthians 14:4 when referring to tongues for personal edification (Strong's #3618– oikodomeo).

Therefore, building yourself up in this manner can be accomplished by praying in the Holy Spirit (Jude 1:20) or praying in tongues given by the Spirit for personal enrichment (edification).

Is It Right for Me to Edify Myself?

This question was recently asked of me when the subject of tongues came up. First Corinthians 14:4, "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself," was read. The scriptures command us to edify ourselves directly and by example in several places. Since we have already addressed the above two direct passages (Jude 1:20; Ephesians 6:10), let's look at an example from King David's life in the Old Testament.

David had just been attacked at Ziglag by the Amalekites and lost everything. His wives were taken captive, and the city had been burned (1 Samuel 30:3). His band of 600 soldiers was very upset about this. They lost everything, too. They wanted to stone David (1 Samuel 30:6).

David was discouraged, to say the least. But instead of giving up and throwing in the towel, the Bible says, "…but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God" (vs. 6, KJV). The Hebrew word for "encouraged himself" is "chazaq" (Strong's # 2388). It means "to strengthen one's self," much like the Greek word in 1 Corinthians. 14:4 "to edify or build up oneself." In fact, the term was also frequently used for construction (as in Matthew 7:24, 26).

We Are God's Building

"You are God's building" (1 Corinthians 3:9, NKJV). "And now you have become living building-stones for God's use in building his house. What's more, you are his holy priests; so come to him–[you who are acceptable to him because of Jesus Christ]– and offer to God those things that please him" (1 Peter 2:5, LVB). We are a people of God under construction, being built into His spiritual house. God commands us to "build yourselves up on your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit" (Jude 20, RSV). **"He who speaks in a tongue edifies** (builds, strengthens, emboldens, as a house-builder constructs, Editor) **himself"** (1 Corinthians 14:4, RSV).

Paul's prayer for the Ephesians included these words, "that out of his glorious, unlimited resources, He will give you the mighty inner strengthening of his Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 3:16, LVB). How does God grant us this supernatural inner strengthening? One of the ways this occurs is by exercising the God-given ability to pray in the Holy Spirit.

Praying in the Holy Spirit builds (strengthens, emboldens) our own inner man in our most holy faith (Jude 20).

Suppose you want to be built up inwardly as a spiritual house, God's building. In that case, God empowers us to cooperate with His Spirit by personal edification (or building up of God's house) through praying in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:4).

My Personal Testimony

My personal experience in this area has been that the more I exercise the gift of tongues for personal edification in my prayer closet alone with God, the more my inner man is strengthened. For example, if I pray in tongues like this for an hour or two, the presence of God permeates my life. An anointing of joy and praise is released upon me, displacing the spirit of heaviness and mourning with which I entered my prayer closet (Isaiah 61:3).

This personal edification empowers, strengthens, and encourages me to face the day. Though I don't understand how. "The Lord God has given me his words of wisdom so that I may know what I should say to all these weary ones" (Isaiah 50:4, LVB). People are drawn to hear the gospel, and the Spirit suddenly gives me convincing power and the ability "…by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict." (Titus 1:9, NKJV). Sharing the gospel becomes easy, and the words spoken have a positive effect on the lives of the hearers. Souls are saved, and those asking for prayer often receive results on the spot. God's presence is resonant and, at times, tangible. The fruit and gifts of the Spirit flow naturally after spending regular hours of prayer in tongues for personal edification.

On the other hand, when I have been slacking in my prayer time with God in this manner, the opposite is usually the case. The joy of the Lord isn't present in my

life. I am short with people. The fruit of the Spirit seems to be dying on the vine of my life. Sharing the gospel is a labor, and those present are not open to receiving it. My words lack the convincing power of the Holy Spirit that God's Word promises. Few are saved, and few prayers are answered in comparison. Witnessing often results in doctrinal debates instead of winning souls to Jesus.

Because of the above Scriptures, Paul's and Jude's warnings, and my personal experience praying daily in this manner for more than 30 years, I encourage others to seek God for this kind of tongue for their own life, tongues for personal edification and strengthening by the Holy Spirit.

III. Tongues for Interpretation

> I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified. (1 Corinthians 14:5)

This manifestation is typically presented in a public assembly, accompanied by an interpretation by the same or another person. Another name given to this type of manifestation of glossa is "ministerial tongues" because they minister to one, several, or the entire congregation. Paul says that this type of tongues (with

interpretation) should be exercised in the public assembly, not more than two or three times during a service (1 Corinthians 14:27).

If there is no interpreter present, then the one gifted with an interpretable tongue should "…keep silence in the church" (1 Corinthians 14:28). Paul goes on to say, "…let him speak to himself, and to God" (vs. 28), meaning, let him worship in this way in a manner that does not disrupt others. This can include praying quietly in a personal prayer language so that only he and God may hear. In this manner, no disruption occurs, and the individual is edified through prayer.

My experience has been that when the Holy Spirit inspires interpretable tongues, an interpreter will also be given the inspiration to interpret, or the one giving the tongue will also be given the interpretation "that the Church may be edified" (built up, strengthened, empowered, ministered to) through this gift from God.

Sometimes, however, the interpreter will not step out in faith and exercise his gift, rendering the gift of interpretable tongues ineffective. When this occurs, it can appear to be a misuse or a disturbing use of tongues. In reality, it is an incomplete use or exercise of ministerial tongues. A mature Pastor who operates in ministerial-type tongues will say, "Please give the tongue again so I can give the interpretation this time." The speaker will receive the utterance a second time, the Pastor will then receive interpretation, and the church will be edified (1 Corinthians 14:5).

Why All the Confusion?

Why all the confusion when it comes to glossa? The answer is severalfold. First, people gifted with tongues for personal edification misuse their gift ignorantly in the public assembly. As Paul said, "You may be giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified" (1 Corinthians 14:17, NIV).

This is common in many congregations today, just like the Corinthian congregation. Paul responded, "…do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way" (1 Corinthians 14:39-40, NIV). Notice that Paul didn't want tongues to be forbidden in the Church, but rather that "everything that is done must be useful to all, and build them up in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 14:26, LVB). Additionally, Paul said, "Let all things be done...decently and in order" (vs. 40, KJV). Sometimes, it's impossible to put things in order until they have first been done. Said another way, the church should be a place where gifts can be exercised (operated, used, practiced), and the Pastor can help nurture the Church in the use of these "gracelets" from God. "Let all things be done for edification" (vs. 26, RSV).

There is nothing more encouraging to a Christian than being used by God, whether it's a gift of evangelism (leading one to Christ), a gift of healing (that delivers someone from sickness), a gift of prophecy (that brings edification, strengthening or comfort), or a ministerial tongue (that edifies the congregation). A church atmosphere where the congregation is allowed and

encouraged to exercise their gifts can be both wonderful and horrifying! I've witnessed both extremes during the last several years.

I've concluded that I'd rather have the fire of the Lord present in the congregation with a bit of wildfire from the flesh than no fire at all.

When we open the door for God's gifts to be exercised in the congregation, we let all things be done. Then, the congregation understands how to more appropriately "do things decently and in order," and the church may be edified.

Creating A Safe Environment for the Gifts to Be Utilized

To properly understand how to "do all things decently and in order," a safe environment should be created for the exercise of God's gifts given to his children.

For example, a small group setting where people are encouraged and taught how to properly operate in the gifts reduces the potential for confusion in the public assembly. Moreover, this environment helps "…equip the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ... until we all come into the unity of the faith..." (Ephesians 4:12-13, RSV).

A safe environment for the gifts enables the saints to be trained under seasoned ministers. It allows the baby lambs in Christ to grow rapidly into God's sheep, ready to give birth to more lambs through evangelism.

Remember, it's not the Shepherd who births new lambs but the sheep under His shepherding. If the Shepherd will grow lambs into sheep, by proper feeding and the right exercise, the sheep's nature will be to reproduce after their own kind. Converts grow into disciples, and the Church of God expands.

The difference between God "adding to the church" in the Book of Acts and "the church being multiplied" was based on converts (lambs representing addition) and disciples (sheep representing multiplication) being present.

When the Church first started, it had many new converts, and "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). Later, when those same converts became disciples, learning how to properly operate in their God-given gifts, "the number of them multiplied in Jerusalem greatly" (Acts 6:7).

If we want more rapid growth in our congregations, we must seek to build up the church by teaching new converts how to win souls themselves. One of the most effective ways to do this is by growing our lambs (converts) into disciples (soul-winners) for Jesus. This is where the gifts of the Spirit become powerful tools for God.

Present Statistics of World Evangelism

At the time of this writing (2007), statistics on world evangelism indicate that approximately 400,000 souls are coming to Christ daily. More people have become Christians in the last 35 years than in the prior 1975 years combined. Twenty-eight thousand a day are coming to Christ in communist China. Twenty thousand a day are bending their knee to the Cross for the first time each morning in Africa. Three hundred thousand a month are responding to the gospel message in India by sharing the Jesus videos. Evangelism is exploding at exponential rates around the world.

Statistically, nearly ninety percent of all souls being won to Jesus occurs through ministries that preach, teach, and operate in the gifts of the Spirit.

They are tongue-talkers. The last days' move of God on the earth is happening just like the prophet Joel foresaw: "And it shall come to pass in the last days saith God, that I will pour out of my spirit on all flesh: and your sons and daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams: And of my servants and of my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they will prophesy" (Acts 2:17-18).

Do you know that in China, the most influential evangelists in rural areas are single females, ages 18-22? They are often martyred for their faith. Their prayers are not for a second car or a new home but that their

faith would not fail them when they are required to give their lives for Jesus. The largest church in the world (nearly a million active members) is in South Korea, led by Pastor Paul Yongii Cho. God has used this church to transform the population from .05 percent Christian to nearly 25 percent Christian.

They speak in tongues and operate in all the manifestation gifts Paul lists in 1 Corinthians 12:7-10. Reinhard Bonnke, an evangelist to South Africa, won nearly twelve million souls to Christ through his crusades in 2003. In one service where God's power was demonstrated, over a million souls (Muslim and Hindu) gave their hearts to Christ. Healings, deliverances, and miracles are commonplace in his crusades when the name of Jesus is proclaimed. He speaks in tongues, too!

The Philippines Survey

The following information is from a recent article entitled "The Holy Spirit," authored by Larry Kreider, International Director of DOVE Christian Fellowship International, a worldwide network of churches. A survey was taken in the Philippines some time back, which found that each Christian who had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit brought thirty-six people to Christ compared to the one person led to the Lord by each Christian who had not received the Holy Spirit baptism. Why? **The Spirit-baptized Christians had the power of God in their lives to witness with more significant effect**. (emphasis mine).

The article goes on to explain that the difference between receiving the Holy Spirit at salvation and being baptized in the Holy Spirit can be explained like this: You can be led to a pool of water and drink from it (receive the Holy Spirit at salvation), or you can jump fully into the water (be baptized with the Holy Spirit). It's the same water (Holy Spirit), but you have an altogether different experience. (Morning Star Publications, Vol. 17, Issue 1, p. 25).

Does Billy Graham Speak in Tongues?

A friend of mine told me he heard an audio tape from a church service at a small congregation in North Carolina. He claimed that on the tape, Billy Graham was speaking in tongues during the worship portion of the service.

This congregation was one of the churches where Billy would steal away to worship with the saints, and everyone would treat him like one of the congregants. When someone asked Billy if he spoke in tongues like this very often, he replied, "Why yes, praying in the Spirit is something I often do in preparation for an evangelistic crusade. Tongues is one way I receive power in private to preach God's Word with convincing power in public."

How long has Dr. Graham felt this way about glossa (speaking/praying in other tongues)? The following story, written by William Martin in his outstanding biography of Dr. Graham, may shed additional light.

"Billy was visiting a Welsh evangelist, Stephen Olford, and Olford shared with Billy his experience with the Holy Spirit...those marvelous eyes glistening with tears, and he (Billy) said, 'Stephen, I see it. That's what I want. That is what I need in my life.' Olford suggested they 'pray this through,' and both men fell on their knees. I can hear Billy pouring out his heart in a prayer of total dedication to the Lord. Finally, he said, 'My heart is so flooded with the Holy Spirit,' and we went from praying to praising. We were

laughing and praising God, and he was walking back and forth across the room, crying out, 'I have it. I'm filled. This is the turning point in my life.' And he was a new man" (Martin, 1991, p. 98-99).

The year was 1947, a year before Billy would be catapulted into international fame as the greatest evangelist of modern times. Three years later, Dr. Graham discussed the subject of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in a message to the Sacramento, California ministerium, as reported by the Church of God publishing house in Cleveland, Tennessee. Dr. Graham said: "In the main denominations, we have looked a bit askance at our brethren from the Pentecostal churches because of the emphasis of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, but I believe the time has come to give the Holy Spirit His rightful place in our churches. We need to learn once again what it means to be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Dr. Graham has won millions of souls to Christ. Although he doesn't talk about it publicly, Billy Graham is also a tongue-talker.

The following passages from Billy Graham's book, The Holy Spirit (Warner Books, 1978), provide insight into his views on tongues: "Concerning the gift of tongues as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:30 and the lengthy discourse on the subject in 1 Corinthians 14, the following points must be noted: First, there is a definite gift of tongues apparently different from the one expressed at Pentecost because no interpretation was required there.

And other signs accompanied it: the tongues of fire and the violent rushing wind. These are nowhere mentioned in connection with the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians.

"Although there is honest disagreement among Christians about the validity of tongues today, I personally cannot find any biblical justification for saying the gift of tongues was meant exclusively for New Testament times…(emphasis mine)

"...what about the private, devotional use of tongues as a means of praising God and experiencing His fellowship? A number of friends have told me that after they had prayed for a long period of time, they suddenly found themselves speaking in an unknown language. For the most part, they have kept it private and have not said everyone else must have the same experience. They have not said that all Christians must speak in tongues as a sign of spiritual maturity. Everyone knew that Corrie ten Boom had spoken in tongues, but she never talked about it and never discussed it. She often rebuked those who did talk about it excessively…

"Actually, the Bible had little to say about this. The private use of tongues are implied by Paul when he remarks that 'I speak in tongues more than you all; however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind, that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue' (1 Corinthians 14:18-19).

"I know of one Bible conference ministry which has been greatly used of God, but it would not knowingly

invite to its platform anyone, however gifted and acceptable he might be in evangelical circles, who professed to speak in tongues…

"On the other hand, many evangelicals who do not themselves profess to speak in tongues now adopt an entirely neutral stance.

"They have seen the charismatic movement penetrate deeply into all the denominations with great blessing and renewal. So they are prepared to recognize that all the supernatural gifts of 1 Corinthians 12 are relevant today and therefore to be accepted as gifts of the Spirit…

"On the occasion of a particular infilling, tongues may be a sign God gives to some, but I do not find that it is a sign for all…

"…Many are convinced that we may be living in what Scripture calls the latter days. Both Joel and Hosea prophesy that in those days, great manifestations of the Spirit and many of the sign gifts will reappear. We may be living in such a period of history.

"Certainly, we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that many of the sign gifts which vindicate the authenticity of the gospel are reappearing at this hour…

"Indeed, tongues is a gift of the Spirit." (Emphasis added, Ed.) Today, there are Presbyterians, Baptists, Anglicans, Lutherans, and Methodists, as well as Pentecostals, who speak or have spoken in tongues…"

If Billy Graham believes in tongues and has won millions of souls to Christ over sixty years of ministry, don't you want this gift, too?

IV. Tongues of Deep Intercessional Groanings

> In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. (Romans 8:26)

The fourth type of tongues disclosed in Scripture manifests as the Spirit wills for "intercessory prayer." This type of tongues empowers the believers to stand in the gap for their own lives, families, church, city, nation, etc. God may also call on them to intercede for someone or some situation totally unknown to them. This is different from the other three manifestations of glossa.

Paul operated in this kind of travail in the Spirit when praying for the Church at Galatia. "My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you!" (Galatians 4:19). The Greek word for travail is "odino" (Strong's #5605).

It means "to experience the pains of parturition (lit. or fig.):–travail in (birth)." (Another translation renders this verse, "Oh, my children, how you are hurting me! I am once again suffering for you the pains of a mother waiting for her child to be born–longing for the time when

you will finally be filled with Christ" LVB). I have experienced this type of glossa on three occasions.

All three times, tremendous breakthroughs occurred in the life (or lives) of those the Spirit was praying for through me. On one occasion, this lasted approximately 45 minutes, and I literally felt as though I was giving birth while groaning in the Spirit mixed with utterances in tongues. Paul, in Romans, describes this type of tongues in this manner: "And as well as this, the Spirit too comes to help us in our weakness, for, when we do not know how to pray properly, then the Spirit personally makes our petitions for us in groans that cannot be put into words" (Romans 8:26, NJB). According to respected Bible and language scholar P. C. Nelson, who spoke more than twenty-five languages, the literal Greek translation of this passage implies "groanings which cannot be uttered in articulate speech."

When this type of tongue manifests, it is overwhelming. The individual can think of nothing but this deep intercession until it lifts. Not everyone who experiences the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the outward evidence of tongues for personal edification will experience tongues of deep intercession. Not all who pray in tongues for personal edification will experience ministerial tongues with interpretation. For the Spirit gives gifts as "He wills" (1 Corinthians 12:11).

But we should, as Paul says, "earnestly desire the greater gifts" (1 Corinthians 12:31), especially those gifts that "build up the body of Christ" (1 Corinthians 14:26).

Since praying in tongues privately edifies us, we should first earnestly seek this gift. Then, once we are strengthened and built up, we can be used to support and build up others.

Some Wrongly Teach That Tongues Have Ceased

Some wrongly teach that tongues ceased after the apostles died. This teaching is neither supported by the clear record of Church history for 2,000 years nor the rules of hermeneutics used for proper Bible interpretation. First, let us look at Church history regarding the outpouring of God's Spirit through prophecy, tongues, exorcism, healing, signs, wonders, and diverse operations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, continuing from the Apostolic Fathers through the present (2,000 years).

In addressing the subject of tongues from Church history, it is required to group these gifts and signs mentioned above together because this is the way the Bible groups these manifestations in the New Testament (See 1 Corinthians 12:7-10,28; Acts 2:1-4,15-19; 19:6; Romans 15:18-19; Hebrews 2:4, etc...). Just as "glossa" (tongues) is one of the manifestations of the Spirit operating "for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:7, NIV), these other diverse manifestations and gifts of the Holy Spirit are seen grouped together because they are also for the building up, perfecting, and completing of God's people.

Some Church History on the Gifts of the Spirit

The Patristic Era, 100-600 – This era includes Church Fathers such as Justin Martyr (c. 100-165), Irenaeus (140-203), Tertullian (c. 160/170-215/220), Novatian (210-280), Anthony (c. 251-356), Hilarion (c. 291-371), Jerome the Younger (c. 328-379/80), Ambrose (c. 339-397), Augustine (354- 430), Gregory of Tours (c. 538-594), and Gregory the Great (540-604). Each of the Church Fathers recorded the gifts of the Spirit, including glossa (tongues), exorcism, healings, prophecies, miracles, etc., as God poured out upon His people during the 500 years after the apostles. For example, Novatian (210-280) wrote the following in his ***Treatise Concerning the Trinity***:

"This is He who places prophets in the Church, instructs teachers, directs tongues, gives powers and healings, does wonderful works, offers discrimination of spirits, affords powers of government, suggests counsels, and orders and arranges whatever other gifts there are of charismata; and thus makes the Lord's Church everywhere and in all, perfected and completed." (Coxe 5:641).

The above quote makes it self-evident that the Gifts of the Spirit (including tongues and other charismata) were operating in Novatian's day and age (210-280). The other Church Fathers listed also made similar professions.

The Medieval Era, 600-1500 – This era includes St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226), Vincent Ferrer (1350-1419),

Colette of Corbi (1381-1447), etc... Of Ferrer, the Dominican preacher, it was recorded, "…miracles in the order of nature and of grace accompanied his steps." Speaking of Colette of Corbi, the Dutchess of Bourbon (1447) writes, "I am dying of curiosity to see the wonderful Colette, who resuscitates the dead. For the fame of the miracles and labors of the carpenter's daughter was in every mouth." (Recorded in ***The Lives of the Saints***; Baring-Gould, vol. 3, 1897).

The Reformation and the Modern Era, 1500-1900 – This era includes the Great Reformer, Martin Luther (1483-1546), Ignatius of Loyola (1491- 1556), Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), Valentine Greatlakes (1628-1682), The Quakers (also known as "The Society of Friends") (1640-present), The Huguenots (formally organized in 1559); The Jansenists (1640-1754), John Wesley (1703 - 1791), Azusa Street Revival (1906), The Pentecostal Movement (1906-present), The Charismatic Movement; (1960 - present), The Word of Faith Movement: (1970-present), and The Third Wave Movement (1986-present).

John Wesley wrote a letter to Thomas Church in June 1746 in which he stated:

"Yet I do not know that God hath anyway precluded himself from exerting His sovereign power from working miracles in any degree in any age to the end of the world. I do not recollect any scripture wherein we are taught that miracles were to be confined within the limits either of the apostolic or the Cyprianic age, or of any period of time, longer or shorter, even until the restitution of all

things." One of Wesley's meetings is a prime example of the diverse ways in which the Spirit of God would arrest people with various manifestations. George Whitefield, another great revivalist of the 1700s, was initially critical of the manifestations that occurred during Wesley's meeting. He had opportunity to change his opinion of what God would and wouldn't do.

Wesley said: "I had an opportunity to talk with [Whitefield] of those outward signs which had so often accompanied the inward work of God. I found his objections were chiefly founded of gross misrepresentations of matters of fact. But the next day he had an opportunity of informing himself better: for no sooner had he begun (in the application of his sermon) to invite all sinners to believe in Christ, than four persons sunk down close to him, almost in the same moment. One of them lay without either sense or motion; a second trembled exceedingly; the third had strong convulsions all over his body; but made no noise, unless by groans; the fourth, equally convulsed, called upon God, with strong cries and tears. From this time, I trust, we shall all suffer God to carry on His own work in the way that pleaseth Him." (Michael L. Brown, ***From Holy Laughter to Holy Fire***, p. 124).

During this same time, the Jansenists (1670-1754) experienced this same outpouring of God's Spirit; "The expectation of miracles and other supernatural signs had become almost an integral part of the Jansenist worldview by the end of the seventeenth century," writes

Robert Kreiser in his book ***Miracles, Convulsions, and Ecclesiastical Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century Paris***.

The famous Azusa Street Revival (1906-10) was marked by tongues, interpretation of tongues, and various gifts of the Holy Spirit in operation.

Attendees from all walks of life often witnessed the Spirit's various charismata (gifts) in operation. Many times, the meetings would last for hours upon hours, with people who had never met before, singing in tongues in perfect unity. The English interpretation would follow. Singing that exalted Jesus as Lord and Savior, His sin-cleansing blood, and love of the Father was shed abroad in men’s hearts. Great holiness earmarked this revival.

In those meetings, the Spirit of God dismantled the racial separation that was common in the 1900s United States. Blacks, whites, Hispanics, Asians, educated, uneducated, rich, poor, white-collar, and blue-collar laborers came together to worship God in Jesus’ Name. (May God pour out His Spirit of grace on our churches this same way today so that 11 AM is no longer the most segregated hour of the week in our nation!) Many received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues. Eventually, they took this teaching and the Spirit of impartation to others around the entire globe. This move continues expanding today and numbers approximately 600 million adherents in Christendom.

And Knowledge Shall Be Increased

"…and knowledge shall be increased" are the words of the Prophet Daniel concerning the end days (Daniel 12:4). God told Daniel, "Shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end, many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (v. 4). It is evident from Scripture that the end days will produce an increase in knowledge such as the world has never experienced.

During the last five decades, the world has witnessed an increase in knowledge, technology, and advancements in science that are more significant than in the prior 5,000 years combined. Indeed, this prophecy is coming to pass. Today, computer technology doubles every nine months. Internet servers connect us with people across the planet in seconds. Programs are available to translate English into a hundred different languages instantly.

Never before in the history of humanity has knowledge increased like it is today. God is restoring truth from what has been hidden in the Scriptures until "such a time as this." He is fulfilling his prophecy through Joel: "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And

everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Acts 2:17-21, NIV).

Church history supports the gifts of the Spirit continuing in operation in various parts of the world from Pentecost (30 AD) to the present. Why, then, do some theologians teach that "tongues have ceased" in light of this overwhelming body of facts that speak otherwise? The answer is simple.

Eisigesis versus exegesis. They don't honestly want to know. Moreover, these 21st-century theologians base their position on a single verse in the Bible.

Interestingly, these are the same theologians who require that every other doctrine in the Bible be based on a minimum of three Bible references.

The False Doctrine That Tongues Have Ceased

In Paul's first epistle to the Church at Corinth, he spends three chapters addressing the charismata (gifts of the Holy Spirit) (1 Corinthians chapters 12-14). He identifies the various charismata in 1 Corinthians 12. He explains the proper operation and use of these God-given endowments in 1 Corinthians 14. He holds the gifts and their operations together by the excellent doctrine of love in 1 Corinthians 13. "These gifts operate by faith…" (Romans 12:6), and "…faith worketh by love" (Galatians 5:6).

In addressing God's "agape" love as the source from which faith and the gifts flow into the Church, he says:

> Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. (1 Corinthians 13: 8-10, NIV)

Paul clearly states that both tongues and knowledge will pass away when perfection comes. From Scripture, we know that "…in the last days, knowledge will increase" (Daniel 12:4). We have clear evidence of this occurring exponentially at this hour. Our current era is called the information age. Since Scripture interprets Scripture, we know that if knowledge is increasing on the earth, it is

clearly not passing away. If knowledge is not passing away but is increasing, we also know that perfection has not yet come to the earth.

When perfection comes, we will see Him and be like Him. “We will be changed instantly, like the twinkle in someone’s eye. That last trumpet will sound. Then, people will rise from death, never to die again... Then the message which has been written will come true: Victory has swallowed up death” (1 Corinthians 15:51-54, SIM). When we meet Jesus face-to-face, we won’t need the gifts anymore. Until then, we need all the gifts we can get!

Jesus Is the Perfect One

Jesus is the Perfect One. Jesus is the One who will "…change us, in the twinkling of an eye…" and we shall be made like him. We will no longer need knowledge, prophecy, tongues, or any other charismata of the Spirit. We will receive new bodies (1 Corinthians 15:40-45). We will no longer need gifts of healing. Our bodies will be brand new, celestial in nature (v. 40). We will no longer need knowledge because "…we shall know, even as we are fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12). We will no longer need the gift of exorcism. In the city of God, no demon is allowed. We will have the mind of Christ and be free from the bondages of this world. Until then, however, we need every charism (including tongues) God desires to give us.

The Bible is perfect, but Jesus is Perfection. If you were to walk into a room and a Bible was lying open on a podium, and Jesus was standing next to it, arrayed in all of his glory, which would you bow down and worship? Jesus or the Bible? Jesus, of course. Why? Because He is perfection.

And, one day, we will all bow before Him and throw our crowns at His feet, worshiping the Lamb of God who gave His life for us from before the foundation of the world. In the meantime, thank God for His written Word to guide us, the Gifts of the Spirit to heal, deliver, and empower us, and the Love of the Father to carry us through until God's perfection, Jesus, returns for us, His bride, the Church.

Until Perfection Comes, We Need the Gifts of the Spirit

Until Jesus comes, we need every gift and "gracelet" God is willing to give us.

We need God's charismata (Gifts of the Spirit). The Greek word "charisma" (Strong's #5486) means "a divine gratuity, i.e., deliverance (from danger or passion); (spec.) a (spiritual) endowment, i.e. (subj.) religious qualification, or (obj.) miraculous faculty–free gift." Sometimes, we need the private prayer language of tongues for edification and strengthening our inner man.

Other times, we might need supernatural words of wisdom to know how to deal with a situation or discerning of spirits to properly recognize the enemy in our midst. Perhaps we need the gift of healing when we get sick. As long as we are in this corruptible body, we need all of God's grace we can get. "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Revelation 2:10, NKJV).

Five Types of People Who Received the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts

The book of Acts records five different types of people who received the Infilling of the Holy Spirit: 1.) **The Prepared** (Acts 2:1-4), 2.) **The Open** (Acts 8:14-15), 3.) **The Antagonistic and Hostile** (Acts 9:1-11), 4.) **The Unlikely** (Acts 10:45-48), and 5.) **The Uninformed** (Acts 19:1-6). Regardless of what type of person you are at this time, I believe God fully desires to fill you with His Spirit today.

The Prepared (Acts 2:1-4)

Our first Book of Acts example where God's people received the infilling of the Holy Spirit occurs on the Day of Pentecost, 50 days after Jesus was crucified. The 120 were prepared to receive the Holy Spirit. These were in an upper room waiting on God in prayer when the Spirit fell upon each of them. "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:2-4, NKJV).

The Open (Acts 8:13-17)

The Samaritans were open to receiving the Spirit's infilling. In fact, these people didn't receive the infilling at salvation and baptism, but several days after, they were water-baptized.

> But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. (Acts 8:13-17, NKJV)

Samaria is approximately 30 miles from Jerusalem. Two thousand years ago, most people walked wherever they went. The average walking distance in daylight during that era was about 12-I/2 miles. People didn't walk at night because it was usually too dangerous. After "…they believed…and were baptized" (Acts 8:12), they sent for the Apostles to lay hands on them so that they

might receive the Holy Spirit. For this to occur chronologically, It would take a minimum of 2-3 days for the trip from Samaria to Jerusalem and 2-3 days back from Jerusalem to Samaria. This means there are times when there is a delay between a person believing in Jesus (being saved) and receiving the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to become witnesses (martyrs) for Jesus. Have you received this empowerment? Have you been delayed, too? Do you want it now? Ask Him.

The Antagonistic and Hostile (Acts 9:1-11)

The Apostle Paul, originally called Saul, was antagonistic and hostile against God, the Gospel, His Church, and the Holy Spirit. "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison" (Acts 8:3, NKJV). Stephen even died at the hands of Saul. "Now Saul was consenting to his death...and devout men carried Stephen to his burial and made great lamentation over him" (Acts 8:2-3 NKJV).

While being stoned to death, Stephen prayed for his persecutors. "And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then Stephen knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not charge them with this sin.' And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (Acts 7:59-60, NKJV).

God answered Stephen's prayer for this antagonistic and hostile man needing salvation by sending Jesus to visit Saul on the road to Damascus.

> Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone

> around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?"Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one. Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank. (Acts 9:1-6, NKJV).

Saul/Paul received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands (Acts 9:9-18). Two things are worth noting here: The vessel God used was a man named Ananias. Ananias was not one of the original twelve apostles but a convert who became a disciple. Second, there is no evidence that Paul immediately spoke in tongues when hands were laid on him.

However, Scripture says that Paul received healing from blindness when this occurred. Paul received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and healing simultaneously. This is common in many people I've talked to who accept this free gift from Heaven. "And immediately something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he

regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized" (v. 18, RSV).

Although there is no evidence in this passage that Paul spoke in tongues when he received the infilling of the Holy Spirit, we do know from Scripture that Paul was an avid tongue-talker. Years later, he wrote, "For I thank God that I speak with tongues more than you all" (1 Corinthians 14:18, KJV). So, it's debatable whether Paul received tongues as the "initial evidence" of the Spirit's filling, but it is not necessary for the purposes of this teaching. What is important is that Paul spoke with tongues at some point. In fact, he claimed to speak in tongues more than anyone! "I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all" (1 Corinthians 14:18, NKJV).

The Unlikely (Acts 10:44-48)

The Gentiles were the least likely to receive the infilling of the Holy Spirit because they were non-Jews. Nevertheless, God filled them, too. "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision (the Jews) who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, 'Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?' And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days" (Acts 10:44-48, NKJV).

Two things are noteworthy here: First, no one laid hands on these people to impart the Holy Spirit's infilling to them, and second, they hadn't even been baptized yet. God desired to fill them so much that He moved on them sovereignly and quickly. "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those that heard the Word" (vs. 44). I've witnessed the same thing happen in the 21st century. Truly, "Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

The Uninformed (Acts 19:1-6)

Finally, 25 years after Pentecost, God filled an uninformed group of John's early disciples at Ephesus.

> And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' And they said to him, 'We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.' And he said to them, 'Into what then were you baptized?' So they said, 'Into John's baptism.' Then Paul said, 'John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.' When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. Now the men were about twelve in all. (Acts 19:1-7), NKJV

God is so merciful in giving the Holy Spirit to those who believe. One might ask how these disciples could have missed this truth from the Scriptures for a quarter of a century? In the same way, many of us miss it until several years after we are saved and serving the Lord. We just haven't been taught about any such thing.

"When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied." (Acts 19:6, NIV). Two things are noteworthy here: All twelve present received the gift of tongues, and they also received the gift of prophecy when the Holy Spirit filled them.

One Holy Spirit imparting two gifts simultaneously. Later, Paul, when teaching on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, said, "It is the same and only Holy Spirit who gives all these gifts and powers, deciding which each one of us should have." (1 Corinthians 12:11, LVB). I've also witnessed people receiving tongues and prophecy when they are filled with the Holy Spirit, or tongues and interpretation of tongues. Whatever God wants to give you from His Spirit, I encourage you to receive it in Jesus' Name.

My Personal Experience

I had been born again for about ninety seconds. The individual that led me to Christ asked me if I wanted to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues. I said, "Sure, I want everything God wants to give me." He laid hands on me and asked God to impart the power of the Holy Spirit to me with the outward evidence of speaking in tongues to glorify God. I felt nothing. No mighty wind came. No tongues of fire appeared. I didn't feel any different.

About two weeks later, he asked me if I had been thanking God for giving me this gift. I said, "Well, I continue to pray for it." He said, "You received the gift by faith." Then he opened the Scriptures to Jesus' words in the Gospel of Luke: "If you believe, you will receive anything you ask for in prayer" (Matthew 21: 22, NIV). He said, "You believe it first, by faith, then it manifests." I thought about this concept for a moment. It was in Scripture, but it was contrary to how things worked in the world I had lived in for 26 years. He told me, "Just begin to thank God for what you received by faith when I laid hands on you two weeks ago, and it will manifest. Trust God to honor His word!"

I lay down on my bed and began to thank God for the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the gift of the prayer language for the personal edification of my spirit. The first time I said this, it sounded ridiculous. But something rose up in me. It was faith. I repeated it. More faith rose in my

heart. I said it a third time, and more faith filled my heart. I fell asleep with the peace of God all over me. I woke up about ten minutes later, and my mouth was moving. It wasn't uncomfortable, but it was unusual. My mind wasn't moving my mouth, but I could feel words bubbling out of my spirit. I had received it by faith, and now it was beginning to manifest.

It would be another two weeks before a whole flood of this language would come out of me. It finally occurred the night before my sentencing when I spoke in interpretable tongues, and my co-defendant, Sal, received a complete interpretation of tongues of everything that came out of my mouth in that heavenly language. The Bible tells us that if we are faithful with a little, we will be given authority over more (see Matthew 25:21). I believe this principle was at work.

God is No Respecter of Persons

"God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34). God doesn't show partiality.

If you ask in faith and believe, He will give you the same gift He has given to countless millions of believers around the world. He wants you to have a gift that will enable you to edify and build yourself up so you can have convincing power to lead others to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Go ahead, ask Him! You have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Step out in faith right now and ask Jesus to baptize you with His Holy Spirit with the outward evidence of speaking in tongues.

How to Receive

How do I receive this or any gift from God? Simple, ask in faith. "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:11-13, NIV). Jesus told us, "Ask, and you will be given what you ask for. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened. For everyone who asks, receives. Anyone who seeks, finds. If only you will knock, the door will open" (Matthew 7:7-8, LVB).

Prayer for Holy Spirit Baptism

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank you for the gifts you have given to your children. I now have a better understanding of the gift of tongues and earnestly desire to receive this gift into my life. I repent for speaking against this gift knowingly or unknowingly. I ask and receive in faith, knowing that even as I pray, You are setting the wheels in motion to manifest this gift in my life. I thank You for the gift of tongues that will deepen my relationship with You and Your Beloved Son, Jesus Christ. I thank You that, through this gift, I will be personally built up and will also edify and build up the church, Your Body. Thank you that I will have that supernatural convincing power of the Holy Spirit as I witness to the lost souls of this world. Give me wisdom and discernment in exercising this gift, that it may only bring greater glory to You. I ask all this in Jesus' Mighty Name. Amen.

Now that you've prayed this simple prayer, trust God to honor his promise to fill you with His Holy Spirit. Begin to thank and praise him for giving you this gift with the outward evidence of speaking in other tongues. Say, "Lord, I thank you by faith for giving me this gift so I can honor you, build up my own spirit by praying in tongues daily, and be able to strengthen and build up others. By faith, I believe I have received and fully expect to speak in other tongues by the Holy Spirit."

Now, as an act of faith, begin to praise and thank God until the Holy Spirit wells up within your spirit and bubbles forth with words in another language you have never spoken before. It may be somewhat strange to you initially because it is supernatural. The Holy Spirit is giving you these words, His words, to glorify the Father. Trust Him and yield to the Holy Spirit. Spend a few minutes now yielding to the Holy Spirit and praising God, trusting Him to do the rest.

"I Believe I Received When I Prayed!"

If you've taken a few minutes to praise and thank God from your heart, you've probably experienced the Holy Spirit's presence, and several of you have been released into this new prayer language in tongues. For others, there may be a delay between the time you prayed and the release of this gift into your life.

Remember my story; it took two full weeks from when I prayed to when tongues began to bubble forth out of my belly and spirit (p. 28). It took another two weeks before I was fully released into a fluent prayer language. I share this as an encouragement for those who have prayed the above prayer but are not yet fully experiencing this very wonderful gift from God. Stay encouraged. God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34).

If He did it for a prisoner in a cell at Leavenworth Penitentiary and hundreds of others I've met since that day, He'll do it for you, too. Remember what the man who prayed for me to receive this gift told me to begin to proclaim? "I believe I received when I prayed...Father, I thank you for giving me this gift...I thank you that I have received because you are faithful to your promises. If I ask you for a fish, you won't give me a stone, and if I ask you for a piece of bread, you won't give me a serpent...so I know that since I asked you for the Holy Spirit and you are my Heavenly Father, you have blessed me with the Holy Spirit because I have asked you in Jesus' Name. Amen."

In the following section, I'm going to share what to do with your new gift of private prayer in other tongues. This will help you develop this gift and enrich your walk with Jesus. As you grow more rooted in your personal prayer language in tongues, God will mature you into the other three types of tongues that are available in Scripture; ministerial tongues (tongues with interpretation for public ministry use), tongues for deep intercession (to intercede for others in another language) also known as "travail" (to birth things from the heavens to the natural, so "it might be done in earth as it is in Heaven"). Remember, "He who is faithful with little will be given authority over more" (Matthew 25:23). This principle is true with the gifts of the Spirit, too.

And, finally, tongues as a sign to unbelievers [where no interpretation is necessary – like on the day of Pentecost when "every man heard him speaking in his own (native) language" (Acts 2:8). This caused those standing by to take notice because of this strange phenomenon. "We hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God" (v. 11).

Once God had their attention, He had Peter rise up and preach the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. The result: 3,000 souls saved! And it all started with tongues. May God teach us how to yield to Him so that He might continue to plunder hell and populate heaven through our willingness to be "fools for Christ," not caring what the religious folks might say about us in the process.

"Others mocking said, 'These men are drunk'" (v. 13). "But Peter said, 'This is what Joel prophesied...I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh...'" (v. 14-22). Hallelujah! I want to be in the spiritually drunken group, winning souls for Jesus. How about you?

Now That You Are Filled With the Holy Spirit

"What do I do with this new heavenly language of praying in other tongues?" is a question you might be asking yourself. Is this a one-time experience? Is this gift only for special occasions? Does the Spirit have to "prompt me" to use this gift? Don't the gifts "operate as the Spirit wills" and not as man wills? How often can I pray in tongues? These are some of the questions I had after receiving the infilling of the Holy Spirit and my personal prayer language in tongues.

When I sought advice from other Christians on this subject, I received every kind of answer one could imagine. Some said, "Only use that gift when an interpreter is present, or you will offend the Lord and His Word." If that were true, why wouldn't the same Holy Spirit that gave me the utterance in tongues in the first place just withhold this utterance in Church? Does God's Spirit bring confusion? That doesn't make sense! Others told me there was a difference in the private prayer language in tongues and the public ministerial use of tongues, where interpretation is necessary "for the whole church to be built up and edified." That witnessed in my spirit, but I was at a loss as to determining which utterance was which.

Was I using my private prayer language in Church and edifying myself, when I should have remained silent in the Church and prayed like this at home before the service?

Or was someone failing to get up and interpret, causing the Church to miss the blessing of the heaven-sent interpretation from the Lord? After seeking the Lord on these matters, I better understood the distinctions between the four types of tongues outlined earlier in this booklet and how to determine when each should be utilized.

Using Tongues for Personal Edification

Tongues for personal edification is the gift most commonly given by the Lord. This is also known as your personal prayer language from God. This gift can be used at any time. The other three types of tongues (tongues as a sign to the unbeliever, ministerial tongues, and tongues for deep intercession/travail) only operate on certain occasions, "as the Spirit wills" (1 Corinthians 12:11), that "the church might be built up and edified" (1 Corinthians 12:7). So what is the Scriptural basis for praying in tongues for personal edification as I will? Let me share with you what the Holy Spirit illuminated for me out of the Scriptures.

"Pray Without Ceasing"

The Apostle Paul, who teaches us extensively about the different uses of tongues, declared, "I thank my God that I speak in tongues more than all of you" (1 Corinthians 14:18), and also said, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Have you ever tried to pray "without ceasing" for even a few hours? It's difficult. I usually run out of words in English after only half an hour or so. When I run out of words in English (things I know I need to pray about), I use my personal prayer language in tongues (things beyond my intellect and knowledge that the Holy Spirit knows about) to effectively pray through.

Paul experienced the same weakness you and I experience. In the natural, we are limited. But God, by His Spirit, is unlimited. This is why I believe Paul wrote to the Church in Rome these words:

> In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. (Romans 8:26, NIV)

When we run out of words in our native tongues, that's when the Holy Spirit gives us the help we need in our human weakness. The Spirit says, "Well, he's done praying about everything he knows; now I'll help him with what he doesn't know about." Then, we sense an utterance in tongues begin to bubble forth from within the depths of our belly. As we yield to the Holy Spirit, He

begins to pour forth His words out of our mouths, a perfect prayer unto the Father.

When the Father hears those prayers, He says, "I'm sure glad you asked, son. I've been wanting to do that for some time now. Now that you've asked, I can give it to you. My will in Heaven can now be done in the earth, just like my Son taught you to pray for it to happen on earth as it is in Heaven" (Matthew 6:10). God's kingdom is released through prayer, and powerful things begin to occur.

Another benefit of yielding to the Holy Spirit in this way is that the devil can't understand your prayers because it's in a supernatural coded language that "no man can understand" because "in the spirit you are speaking mysteries" (1 Corinthians 14:2) that only God understands. I believe this really upsets the devil. He can't try to thwart your prayers in this private prayer language between you and the Father.

I think this is one of the reasons the devil tries to keep Believers from using this gift. If the devil can't keep you from believing this gift is for today, he'll try to get you to think it's reserved only for a few. If he can't keep you from believing it's for you, he'll try to keep you from using it except on special occasions, like Christmas and Easter, or five minutes during Sunday worship.

The last thing the devil wants you to do is to pray in tongues several hours a day, on your way to work, or under your breath while standing in the chow line, waiting

for commissary, etc... I often pray in tongues under my breath when stuck in a waiting situation. This keeps my mind focused on Christ and out of vain conversation. Could you imagine what would happen if everyone who was a Christian would pray in tongues like this under their breath while waiting in line for something? My goodness, it would keep them from complaining, murmuring, or being angry. It would keep them from listening to or engaging in conversation they must repent of later during prayer in English.

And it would recharge their spirits, making them stronger and stronger in the process. And who knows what could be prayed down from heaven while praying out these mysteries in the spirit. The person in front of them could be getting healed. The person behind them might be getting a demon cast out of them. The person two people ahead of them might become open by the Spirit to hear the Gospel and be saved. A Word of Knowledge or a Word of Wisdom (two other commonly given gifts of the Spirit, see 1 Corinthians 12:7-10) might come into manifestation, and the person praying in tongues under their breath might now have the power to speak forth God's wisdom or knowledge in English to others.

The results of this type of work are innumerable. I've experienced this on many occasions, and each time, it seems like it begins by making a conscious effort to allow the Holy Spirit to pray through me in tongues, my private prayer language between God and me. I don't have a clue

as to what I'm saying most of the time, but the results are often effective. And since I don't know (under my breath, so only God and I can hear it), God does the rest of the work. Let's look at an extreme example from Paul's life as a prisoner in the Book of Acts.

Paul Is Transported on a Ship

(ACTS CHAPTER 27-28)

Paul was a prisoner who appealed his case to Caesar. Paul went off to Rome by prison transport ship. Two hundred seventy-six men were aboard. Paul, by supernatural word of knowledge, spoke these words to the centurion in charge of the ship:

> Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives. (Acts 27:10, RSV)

The centurion rejected Paul's word of warning and listened instead to the ship's captain (v.12). Off to sea went Paul and the 275. "But soon a tempestuous wind, called the northeaster, struck down from the land" (v. 14). The storm became so fierce that the captain and crew threw the cargo overboard and even started dismantling the rigging (v. 18-19). Things became hopeless. "And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away" (v. 20, KJV). This went on for fourteen days and nights (v. 27).

What do you think the Apostle Paul, "who prayed in tongues more than anyone" (1 Corinthians 14:18), was doing during this time? Do you think he was whining and murmuring, complaining to the centurion, saying, "I told you so, now we're all going to die." I doubt it. I imagine that Paul was praying for the deliverance of all 276

passengers on board. What do you think Paul was praying during this time? Do you think he knew exactly how to pray in this situation? It was pitch black (no sun or stars) for two weeks. They didn't eat anything during this period. "This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing" (v. 33).

Picture the situation. You are a prisoner on board a ship that is lost at sea. You haven't eaten for two weeks. You can hardly tell up from down, let alone north from south, as the storm tosses the ship "to and fro" on the sea.

Before boarding the ship, God has spoken to you by word of knowledge that everyone's life is in jeopardy if you sail, and you can't do anything to stop it.

I believe Paul felt weak, to say the least. He remembered the truth, "When I don't know how to pray as I should, the Holy Spirit helps me in my weaknesses and makes intercession for me with groanings that cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26, KJV). Based on the other passages of Scripture, Paul, who "prayed without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17) and "prayed in tongues [privately] more than all the Corinthian church members" (1 Corinthians 14:18), was probably using his prayer language in tongues for several hours a day! I know I would be doing the same.

Here are the results of Paul's willingness to allow the Holy Spirit to use him in this manner. God sent a messenger angel to Paul, imparting a message of hope with instructions to save all 276 men (v. 22-25). "And now

I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar; and lo God hath given thee all them that sail with thee" (v. 23-24).

What did the angel say? "And lo, God hath given thee [Paul] all them that sail with thee" (v. 24). What happened between the time of sailing, "I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives" (v. 10), and fourteen days later when God said, "Lo, I have given thee all them that sail with thee" (v. 24)? I believe hell's plans were thwarted by Paul's two weeks spent in prayer and fasting. Most likely, he was praying in other tongues, as was his habit and discipline during his private prayer time (1 Corinthians 14:18).

Paul most likely operated in several of the four types of tongues during this time. This could be how God taught Paul about tongues so he could later write to the Churches. As we know from the rest of the story, the ship wrecked on an Island called Malta. Paul stepped off onto dry land and immediately became the servant, "gathering a bundle of sticks to lay on the fire" (Acts 28:3). Paul must have been strengthened supernaturally to go right into servant's work upon arrival on the beach after more than two weeks in a pitch-black storm and a shipwreck. Not only were the 275 others saved because of Paul's prayers, but Paul was built up, strengthened, and edified from

praying in the Spirit for an extended time. Hell's plans were foiled, and God's plans were prayed from heaven to earth for the Island of Malta and its people.

Hell's second attempt to knock Paul off was by a viper. "And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat and fastened on his hand" (v. 3). Just like the devil. You get out of one catastrophe, and here comes another. Notice that the viper didn't attack any of the other 275 passengers but instead went after the one who had prayed to Almighty God for their deliverance. The enemy knew who had been praying. He also knew the principle, "Strike the shepherd and the sheep will scatter" (Matthew 26:31). Paul's response to this second attack: "And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm" (v. 5).

Paul remembered Jesus' words, "And these signs will follow them that believe; In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover" (Mark 16:17-18, KJV). God had prepared Paul for this situation while praying in tongues. Paul didn't know a viper would attack him once he landed on dry ground. It had to be the farthest thing from his mind in the natural.

He would have had no ability to know such a thing in advance. But "when we don't know what to pray for as we should, the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness [limited understanding and knowledge] and makes

intercession for us with groanings that words cannot express" (Romans 8:26, KJV).

Thank God, Paul knew how to stay disciplined in his private prayer language.

"In the spirit, he was speaking mysteries" (1 Corinthians 14:2). The devil didn't know Paul had already prayed through attack number two. In fact, likely, Paul didn't know he'd prayed through it either. He just had God's peace from Heaven and a messenger angel to tell him that God had intervened through Paul's prayers and all 276 on board would be saved. I believe that Paul's spirit was not only charged up and ready for revival, but God used Paul's tongue in prayer during those two weeks to prepare the hearts of the people on the island of Malta, where Paul would become shipwrecked.

The result: a healing revival broke out. "It happened that the father of Publius lay sick with fever and dysentery, and Paul visited him and prayed, and putting his hands on him healed him" (Acts 28:8, RSV). They stayed there for three months. This same Paul later testified to the Church at Rome of the signs and wonders ministry God gave to him: "Through mighty signs and wonders: by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ" (Romans 15:19, KJV).

Paul told the Church in Rome confidently, "And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ" (v. 29). How

could Paul be so confident? I believe it was because he kept his inner man charged up with God's power by praying in tongues privately. Paul could also confidently say, "For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you" (Romans 1:11, RSV). He could publicly impart spiritual gifts to other believers because Paul had privately prayed for God to "fill them with all the fullness of the knowledge of God" (Colossians 1:9).

Paul likely received these gifts from God while in prayer, with direction for him to impart them by laying on hands. I believe the same can happen through us if we follow Paul's example.

Conclusion

Praying in tongues privately gives you the power to preach the gospel publicly. Praying privately in tongues releases heaven's will into situations you don't even know about, but God does. This is why I encourage people to pray in tongues as often as possible. "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

May God richly bless you as you continue to seek His face daily and trust you with more and more of his wisdom, power, healing virtue, revelation, and miracles to reach others with the love of Christ.

If you enjoyed this book and want to experience more of God's supernatural power to heal the sick, cast out devils, and see the lost come to know Jesus, I highly recommend two of my books, ***Dealing with Demons*** and ***Hearing God 25 Different Biblical Ways,*** available on Kindle and Amazon.

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HEART Prison Ministries

If you want to read more of David's or Jeff's teachings or for speaking/preaching engagements, please contact HEART of America Prison Ministries at 449 W. Silver Star Rd., Unit 12, Ocoee, FL 34761, or visit us at:

www.HeartPrisonMinistries.org

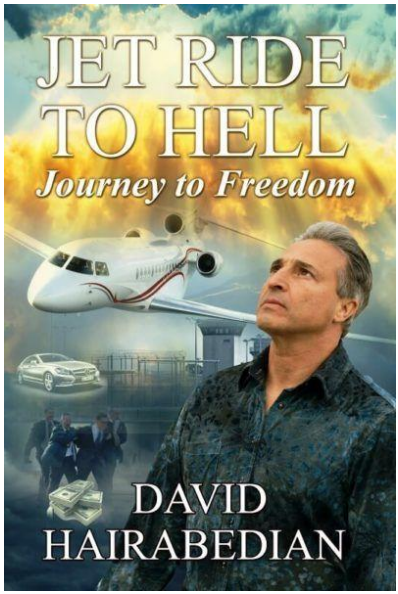
HEART Ministries provides first-quality study Bibles, devotionals, Bible study courses, videos, and newsletters to inmates in over 1,000 prisons and jails nationally and internationally. As HEART grows in the future, we look forward to contributing to your ministry efforts in prevention, prisoner support, and aftercare.

HEART has the vision to become a clearinghouse for ministry resource materials for free use by chaplains and inmates nationwide.

HEART Publishing

HEART Publishing is the media subsidiary of HEART of America Prison Ministries. Our primary purpose is to provide Christ-centered educational material for our brothers and sisters who desire accelerated growth in Christ through the empowering relationship of the Holy Spirit.

To purchase a copy of David's autobiography, ***Jet Ride to Hell, Journey to Freedom***, visit VirtualChurchMedia.com or Amazon.com



To learn more about how you can help change lives, one Bible at a Time, or to donate for Bibles to prisoners, visit HeartPrisonMinistries.org.

HEART of AMERICA
PRISON MINISTRIES

Partner with us to Help Raise 12 Disciples a Year through our Bible-a-month program. It can be life-changing for the prisoner and the supporter. Visit our website to learn more about how you can be the answer to someone's prayers

For additional teachings, video sermonettes, Christian resource materials, and ministry updates visit these sites:

- ✓ www.VirtualChurchTV.com
- ✓ www.HeartPrisonMinistries.org
- ✓ www.DavidHairabedian.com

Through the generous donations and prayers of people like you, our sister ministry, HEART of America Prison Ministries helps provide first-quality study Bibles to inmates on our waiting of more than 2,000 prisoners.

HEART Ministries was initially received through a vision from the Lord while David Hairabedian was sitting in a prison cell in 1990 awaiting sentencing. During David's incarceration, God answered his mother's prayers, and Jesus visited him. David's life was forever changed. Shortly after that, David received the gift of a leather-bound study Bible in the mail from a former prisoner. For the next twenty years, David spent 3 to 5 hours daily in this Bible, learning more about God's love for the world. His heart now desires to see others arrested and transformed by the same irresistible love and power of the Holy Spirit that transformed his life.

To learn more about how you can help change lives, One Bible-at-a-Time, or to donate for Bibles for prisoners, visit HeartPrisonMinistries.org.

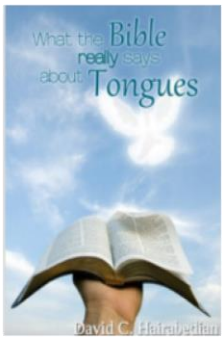
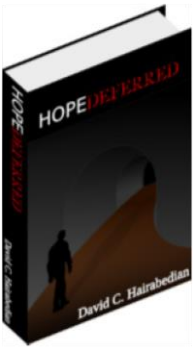
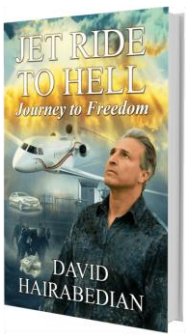
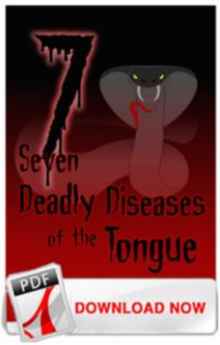
Virtual Church Publishing

Virtual Church Publishing is the media subsidiary of VirtualChurchMedia.com.

Our primary purpose is to provide ministry resource materials to enable others to Hear the Voice of God, empowering others to fulfill their God-given destinies.

For additional teachings, eBooks, videos, spiritual development materials, music, ministry updates, and more, Please visit these sites:

- ✓ www.VirtualChurchTV.com
- ✓ www.HeartPrisonMinistries.org
- ✓ www.DavidHairabedian.com

Additional eBooks authored by David Hairabedian are available on Kindle for instant download.

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