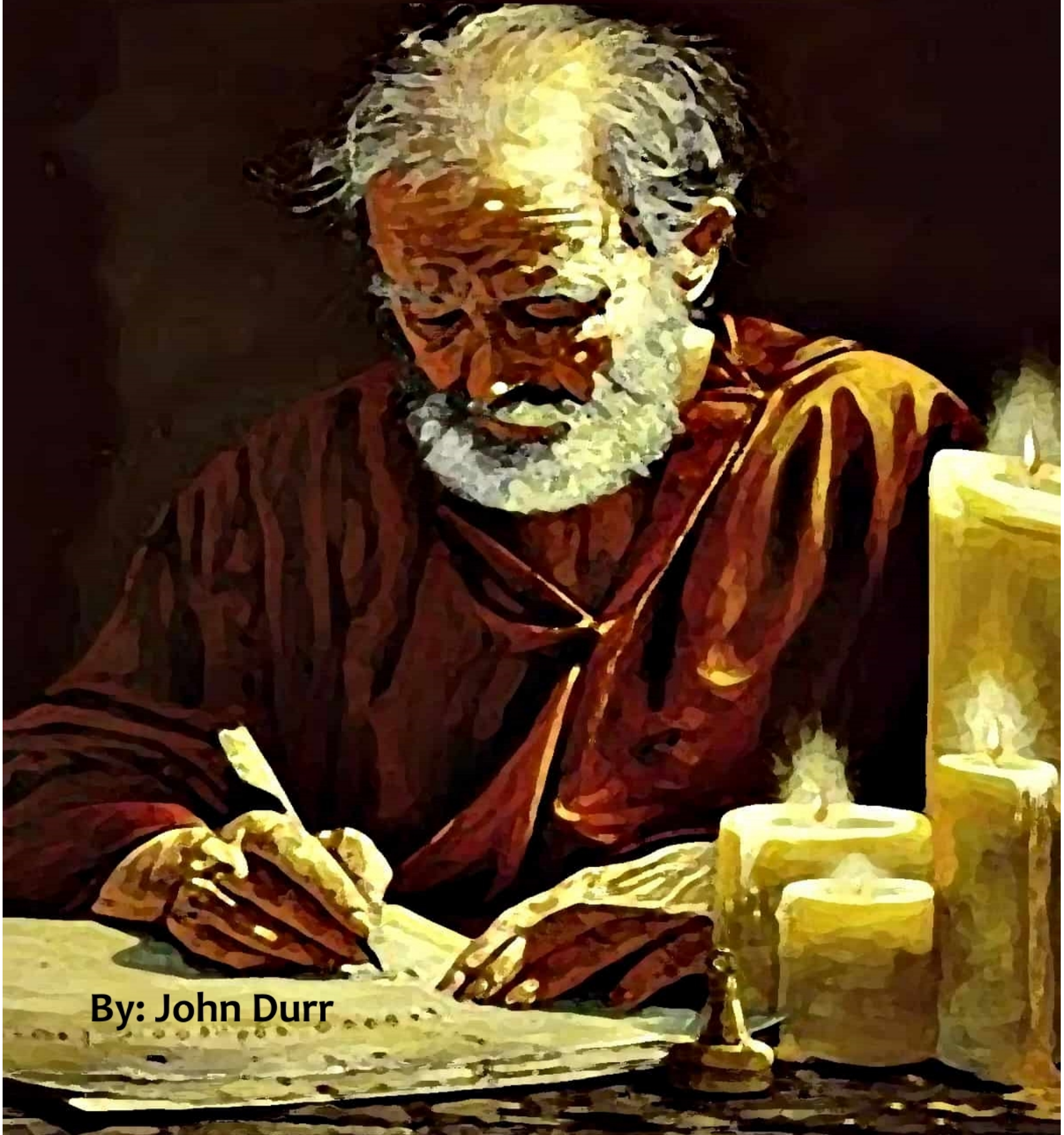


The Secret of Paul's Spiritual Insight



By: John Durr

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Unless otherwise noted, All scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible. The Greek text of the KJV New Testament are translated from the Received Text (also called Textus Receptus, Byzantine Text or the Majority Text). Modern versions of the Bible do not use the same Greek text as the KJV. The Greek text of the modern versions has nearly 6,000 changes. In some cases whole passages have been eliminated.

Some Little Known Facts About Modern Versions of the Bible

Modern versions of the Bible come from the Greek text of the 1881 Revised Version of the Bible. The Greek text of the Revised Version was a completely new text that had never existed before. It was compiled by Westcott and Hort beginning in 1870 from many different ancient texts. Westcott and Hort were authorized by the Catholic Church to form a Revised Revision Committee to update the English of the King James Version of the Bible. Rather than using the accepted Greek text of the KJV, they decided to use the Alexandrian Text (also known as Minority Text or Critical Text). The Alexandrian Text is known by this name because it is believed to have originated in Alexandria Egypt. They used several different versions none of which agreed with one and other.

The Alexandrian Greek texts used by Westcott and Hort are often older than existing copies of the Received Text. Many experts believe these Alexandrian texts to have survived because they were not accepted and used by the Christian Church. On the other hand the Received Text was heavily used and copied and as a result the oldest manuscripts didn't survive. Today there are many people who have to replace their Bible because they wore it out. Now imagine hundreds or thousands of people using the same Bible, it just wouldn't survive.

The Letters of Westcott and Hort were published by their sons. They reveal them to be men of very questionable integrity. In fact, I wouldn't consider them Christians at all. Neither Westcott or Hort believed in the infallibility of scripture. The evidence suggest they believed they knew better than God.

Westcott said that he was a skeptic; he said his faith was weak; and he was plagued with "unbelief". Westcott also didn't believe the creation account in Genesis and said there was no literal heaven.

Hort rejected Jesus' blood atoned for our sins; he called it a "fictitious substitution." He scripture was "perverted" and it was his goal to correct those perversions. He also believed the New Age teaching that man is "divine." He also believed that his changes to scripture would change the Christian Church.¹

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¹ John Durr, *The True and The Corrupt Word of God*, 2006 & 2013, AmericasComingJudgment.com

The Secret of Paul's Spiritual Insight

I've thought many times, if I had just walked with Jesus like the disciples did then I could have done the things the disciples did. I could have had their faith. I could have... Have you ever felt that way? I've sure you've heard others say something similar and I would guess most Christians have felt that way. The truth is, of the twelve disciples who walked with Jesus, one of them betrayed Jesus and one denied him. Thomas the doubter would not believe Jesus had risen from the dead until he had seen him for himself. Jesus responded to Thomas by saying:

...Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. (John 20:29)

Although the disciples walked with Jesus, learned from him and they saw him do miracles, this was not enough. They were still powerless and afraid. It was not until they had received the Holy Spirit in the upper room that they were able to go out and do his will.

¹³ And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. ¹⁴ These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. (Acts 1:13-14)

¹ And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. ³ And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁵ And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. ⁶ Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. (Acts 2:1-6)

Although the disciples had performed miracles while Jesus was on the earth, this ceased after Jesus' ascension into heaven until something special happened. It was not till after the disciples had received the Holy Spirit that they began to do miracles and preach the Gospel message without the physical presence of Jesus. The key element was not that they walked with Jesus but that they received the Holy Spirit.

›The Example of Paul

Jesus is to be our example but he was without sin and we are sinful by nature. Who do we look to who can give us an example of how we can become more like Jesus. It would be nice

to have an example from someone who was like us, sinful, someone who never walked with Jesus and yet someone who was able to take on the nature of Christ. We have this example in the life of the Apostle Paul.

Paul never walked with Jesus; he was the chief of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15), and he was a persecutor of Christians (Acts 9:11-15). Despite Paul's background he was the chosen vessel of Jesus Christ to bear the name of Christ to the Gentiles, Kings and the children of Israel (Acts 9:15). Throughout the past two thousand years Paul has witnessed to the Gentiles through his letters that are recorded in the New Testament. The New Testament in my Bible contains two hundred and thirty-six pages; Paul wrote fourteen of twenty-seven New Testament books or approximately twenty-five percent (25%) of the two hundred and thirty-six pages contained in the New Testament.

Paul wrote more than any other New Testament writer. How did he do this? How could Paul have written more than those who actually knew Jesus and learned directly from him? We don't know that Paul actually wrote more, what we know is that more of his writing are in the Bible and that Jesus Christ chose him as a vessel. Why did Jesus choose Paul rather than one of the twelve disciples? I believe that Paul was chosen because he didn't walk with Jesus and therefore he could be an example of what the Holy Spirit could accomplish through a persons life. Of course as mentioned above, it was the Holy Spirit that enabled the original disciples to accomplish all that they accomplished but of course they walked with Jesus. When we look at Paul's life we cannot create the excuse, well if I had walked with Jesus – then I could have been like him! Well Paul never walked with Jesus so we don't have that excuse.

Paul was able to do all that he did through the indwelling Holy Spirit. This is also how Jesus was able to accomplish his ministry; "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power" (Acts 10:38). After Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power, he "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38). The Word of God indicates that with the Holy Spirit comes power. This power is not something that we use for our own purposes, it is directed by the will of God. Jesus stated he did nothing of his own will but only those things that he saw the father doing (John 5:17, 19-20).

¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.... ¹⁹
Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. ²⁰ For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.(John 5:17, 19-20)

But don't all believers have the Holy Spirit? So what makes Paul different? There is one statement that Paul made that set him apart from others. It is something Paul said that he did more than everyone else. Now let me remind you that these are Paul's words and not mine. This is what he said; "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1 Corinthians 14:18).

Now, you may be surprised or puzzled. You may be thinking, what does this have to do with what Paul accomplished? Before Paul's encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus he was a Persecutor of the believers in Jesus Christ (Acts 7:58; 8:1-3 & 9:1-2). Paul considered himself the Chief of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15). Paul needed to change, he needed to know the heart of God and have the heart of God. He needed to know the teachings of Jesus Christ. How could Paul accomplish this, he had no New Testament and he never walked with Jesus? God

provided a way for Paul to be built up in his faith, his wisdom and his knowledge. Paul said that he prayed in the spirit and that when he did this his spirit prayed but he didn't even know what he was praying (1 Corinthians 14:14). Paul said he did this more than all the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 14:18). Further, Paul said that when you speak or pray in the spirit, you edify yourself (1 Corinthians 14:4).

Edifieth comes from the Greek word "*oikodome*". The definition of this word from Strong's Greek Dictionary is shown below:

*3618. oikodomeo, oy-kod-om-eh-o; from the same as 3619; to be a house-builder, i.e. construct or (fig.) confirm:— (be in) build (-er, -ing, up), edify, embolden.*¹

According to Webster, "*edify*" means "to instruct and improve spiritually", build, establish, or "to instruct and improve especially in moral and religious knowledge: ENLIGHTEN".²

Therefore, Paul was saying that he who prays in the spirit is building himself up spiritually or building his spiritual house and emboldening himself. Praying in the spirit is more typically called speaking in tongues. The proof in what Paul said is in what he accomplished. He spread the testimony of Jesus Christ throughout the known world of his time and wrote twenty-five percent of the New Testament despite being whipped five times, being stoned, beaten with rods three times, put in prison and shipwrecked three times (2 Corinthians 11:23-28).

Just as Paul built himself up spiritually and emboldened himself, so to can we. In Romans Paul states that when we don't know what to pray the Holy Spirit intercedes for us; the Holy Spirit makes intercession according to the will of God (Romans 8:26-27). Further, in Corinthians Paul states, He that speaks or prays in tongues doesn't speak to men but to God and no man understands him because he is speaking mysteries (1 Corinthians 14:2). Paul was not the only one to talk about this. Jude, the brother of James, instructs us to build up our holy faith by praying in the Holy Spirit (Jude 1:20).

For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. (1 Corinthians 14:2)

What Paul is saying is, when you speak or pray in tongues, you are praying to God but what you are praying is a mystery since no one understands. If no one understands then it doesn't have to be a known language. Speaking in tongues is a gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit uses that gift for you to intercede and bring God's will into your life. We know that it is God's will that we are to be built up spiritually and emboldened. As we saw above, this is what happens when we pray in tongues and now we see further that God uses this gift to bring about his purpose for our lives and in our lives.

Did you know that God has an assignment or a purpose for your life? Jeremiah states that before he was born or even before he was formed in the belly of his mother that God sanctified him and ordained him as a prophet (Jeremiah 1:5). Just as God had ordained a purpose for Jeremiah, he has ordained a purpose for you and for me. For God is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34) and since he had a purpose for Jeremiah he has a purpose for you and me. Paul makes this clear in 2 Timothy where he states that we have a holy calling which is according to God's purpose (2 Timothy 1:9). Now, we know part of this calling is to accept Jesus Christ as

our saviour (1 Timothy 2:3-4) but beyond that Christ has a calling for us to be a member of the body of Christ.

Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. (Jeremiah 1:5)

Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (2 Timothy 1:9)

As a member of the body we have a purpose just as the members of our own body have a purpose. We know the purpose of our hands and our feet but we must discover the purpose God has ordained for us in the body of Christ. Jeremiah's purpose was that of a prophet, Paul's purpose was that of an Apostle, part of my purpose is in writing this book. I discovered my purpose by praying in the spirit (praying in tongues).

Less than two years ago I didn't believe in the gift of tongues. I developed a friendship with an old street evangelist who I later discovered prayed in tongues. Before I chastised him, I decided I would carefully study the topic for myself. I went through each scripture on the topic and I discovered that what the Bible was saying didn't agree with what I had been taught. I had previously decided that I wanted the power that Jesus promised his believers and I prayed for it (Mark 16:15-18). As I studied the topic of tongues I discovered that tongues had something to do with the promise that Jesus had made. Therefore, I decided I wanted this gift and I sought it out and obtained it. I assure you, if you want to achieve all that God has purposed for your life, as God is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34), you can do it. There is only one catch; God wants you to do it his way. Lets study what the word of God says about the gift of tongues.

›A Scriptural Study of the Gift of Tongues

There are eight verses that use the word "*tongue*" and sixteen verses that use the word "*tongues*" in reference to the spiritual gift of tongues. Whether the verse uses the word "*tongue*" or "*tongues*", the meaning is the same. There are six verses that use the adjective "*unknown*" to describe the spiritual gift of tongues. This word has been added by the translators; it does not appear in the original Greek. Therefore, there is no difference between the meaning of "*unknown tongue*" or "*tongues*"; both these phrases are equivalent.

In the book of Isaiah we see the first mention of the gift of tongues and Isaiah Prophesied that the people would not hear what God had for them (Isaiah 28:11-12). Isaiah said that this other tongue would bring the weary to rest and would refresh them. I say amen; I can testify personally of the refreshing that the Holy Spirit brings on me when I, in faith, pray with stammering lips in a another tongue that I do not understand. It does seem like foolishness but I trust in God and his word. Paul stated "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

⁹ Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. ¹⁰ For

precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: ¹¹ **For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.** ¹² To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear. (Isaiah 28:9-12)

John the Baptist said that Jesus would baptize us with the Holy Ghost and with fire (Mathew 3:11). I believe this fire is a burning in us to fulfill the purpose of God. Jesus said there would be certain signs that follow those who believe: One, they would cast out Devils and two; they would speak with new tongues (Mark 16:17). As we shall see there is one gift of tongues that manifests itself in three ways. One of these manifestations of the gift is always under our control; this is the ability to edify ourselves as we learned above. The other two, which we'll learn about below, are under the control of the Holy Spirit.

Before Jesus ascended to heaven he stated that he would send the Holy Spirit and with the Holy Spirit would come power (Acts 1:8). That's exactly what happened. Didn't the disciple perform miracles of healing the sick and casting out demons? Below is the account of the disciples receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost:

³ And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁵ And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. ⁶ Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. ⁷ And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? ⁸ And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? ⁹ Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, ¹¹ Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. ¹² And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? ¹³ Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

¹⁴ But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: ¹⁵ For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; ¹⁷ And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: ¹⁸ And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: (Acts 2:3-8)

Lets take a careful look at the above texts. When the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit they began to speak in tongues. Verses 9 through 11 show us that the disciples were

speaking at least 16 foreign languages. Now you've probably heard that this proves, that when you speak in tongues, you must speak in a known language. Paul said he spoke in the language of Angels (1 Corinthians 13:1), this is not a known language. Additionally, Paul said that when you speak in tongues you are speaking to God and no man understands (1 Corinthians 14:2). If no man understands, there is no one to tell us if it is in a known language or not. Now in the verse above, men understood; God had a purpose for this.

What the above texts show is that, on Pentecost, the disciples spoke in at least 16 foreign languages as a sign to the people who were present from at least 16 nations. For Paul states, that the gift of tongues is a sign to the unbelieving (1 Corinthians 14:22); Paul was basing this statement on Isaiah 28:11-12. This doesn't change the fact that, you are edified by speaking or praying in tongues. So now we have one gift that manifests itself in two ways: one edifies the believer who is speaking in tongues and the other is a sign to the unbeliever. Now you can edify yourself at any time but speaking as a sign to an unbeliever is not under our control but under the control of the Holy Spirit.

Now the third manifestation of the gift of tongues is a Prophetic word from God that must be interpreted because it is in an unknown language. Again this gift is under the control of the Holy Spirit and it is manifested to edify the body of believers. Neither I nor anyone else can stand up any time they please and utter a word from God unless the Holy Spirit places those words within them. Our God is a God of order (1 Corinthians 14:40). Therefore, if he gives a prophetic word to someone he will give an interpretation; the interpreter could be anyone including the one speaking in tongues himself (1 Corinthians 14:5, 13 & 27).

I would that ye all spake with tongues but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying. (1 Corinthians 14:5)

Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret. (1 Corinthians 14:13)

If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. (1 Corinthians 14:27)

Are you surprised that God says he would give a prophetic word to his sheep even in our day? The prophet Amos says that God would do nothing before he has revealed it to his prophets (Amos 3:7). God still has a lot to do; therefore, he has a lot to reveal!

Much of what God intends to do will be done through his believers, us! Jude reminds us of the perilous times in the last days from the words of Jesus. He said there would mockers in the last days, people who are ungodly and seek to enjoy themselves in every evil way imaginable (Jude 18). He says they were among the believers of his day, and they are the ones who were creating divisions among the believers. "They lived by their natural instinct because they did not have God's Spirit living in them" (Jude 19).³ Jude tells us that we are not to live this way. We are to wrap ourselves in the love of God; we are to look towards our eternal life in heaven, which we have obtained through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (Jude 21). We are to make a difference in the lives of others, and we are to have compassion on those who are suffering for any reason (Jude 22). We are to rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment. There are still others to whom we need to show mercy, but we are to be careful that we are not contaminated by their sins (Jude 23).⁴

¹⁷ But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; ¹⁸ How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. ¹⁹ These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. ²⁰ But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, ²¹ Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. ²² And of some have compassion, making a difference: ²³ And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. ²⁴ Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, ²⁵ To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 1:17-25)

How are we to do this? In today's world how can we keep ourselves from evil and help others at the same time? This seems like an impossible task and of course it is, if we try to do it in our own strength. Jude tells us that the key to accomplishing what God has for us to do is by building up our holy faith by praying in the Holy Spirit (Jude 20). Paul showed us that praying in the Holy Spirit requires praying in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:14, 2). Paul also indicated that we should pray as much as possible in the spirit, which is in tongues (Ephesians 6:18).

But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, (Jude 20)

For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. (1 Corinthians 14:14)

For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. (1 Corinthians 14:2)

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; (Ephesians 6:18)

Tongues is an important gift because it edifies us. By edifying ourselves, we are preparing ourselves to achieve God's purpose for our lives. God's purpose for our lives always includes the edifying of others (1 Corinthians 14:9-26). Therefore, tongues is the cornerstone. Once we have edified ourselves we can use God's other gifts he has given us in order to edify others in accordance with his purpose for our lives. This is why Paul states that prophecy is better than speaking in tongues unless there is an interpreter because prophecy edifies the body of believers (1 Corinthians 14:5, 22). Paul says we should covet the opportunity to prophesy but we should not forbid speaking in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:39).

Now a careful reading of 1 Corinthians 14 will reveal that the problem Paul was having with the Corinthians was that they understood that speaking in tongues edified themselves but they were not concerned with the edification of others. They were speaking in tongues during the service to edify themselves with no concern for others. As Paul stated in verse 23, if you walked

into a church and there were a hundred different people speaking at the same time in a hundred different languages, wouldn't you think they were mad.

According to Paul, he spoke in tongues more than all the Corinthians because it is a good thing to edify yourself (1 Corinthians 14:18). But when the brethren came together Paul didn't speak to them in tongues; Paul spoke to them in their own language. Paul said it would be better to edify them by speaking only five words they could understand rather than babbling ten thousands words no one could understand (1 Corinthians 14:19).

There are two exceptions to the rule that tongues are for edifying yourself, which we already covered above. The first exception is when the Holy Spirit enables someone to speak in a foreign tongue as a witness to an unbeliever. The second exception is when the Holy Spirit moves on a person with a prophetic word and an interpretation for the body of believers (1 Corinthians 14:5, 13 & 27). Both of these exceptions are under the control of the Holy Spirit and can only be initiated by the Holy Spirit.

Can anyone receive the gift of tongues? There are some who teach in their genuinely honest belief that not all can have the gift of tongues. They cite 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 and 1 Corinthians 12:30 as their scriptural authority. I believe scripture and I believe these passages. These passages state that not all have the gift of tongues but they don't say, not all can have the gift. Anyone who wants the gift can have the gift. Luke quotes Jesus as saying that the heavenly Father will pour out his spirit on all those who ask (Luke 11:10-13).

¹⁰ For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. ¹¹ If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? ¹² Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? ¹³ If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: **how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?** (Luke 11:10-13)

We see in Acts that typically when the Holy Spirit was poured out; those receiving the Holy Spirit began to speak in tongues. More importantly, in Acts 10:45-47 we see Peter using the gift of tongues as a sign that the gentile believers had indeed received the Holy Spirit.

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

⁴⁵ And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, ⁴⁷ Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? (Acts 10:45-47)

¹ And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, ² He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. ³ And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto

John's baptism. ⁴ Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. ⁵ When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ **And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.** (Acts 19:1-6)

In Acts 8:17-18 the Apostles lay hands on some believers who receive the Holy Spirit. Simon saw some outward manifestation that they had received the Holy Spirit because Simon offered money to the Apostles that he might receive the same power. The only outward manifestation recorded for other believers is the gift of speaking in tongues. This is one of the signs Jesus said would follow them that believe, they shall speak with new tongues (Mark 16:15-17). In my personal experience, it required a new tongue to speak the words and sounds that came out of my mouth. It took practice; my tongue needed to learn to move in new ways that it had not previously done.

¹⁵ And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. ¹⁷ **And these signs shall follow them that believe;** In my name shall they cast out devils; **they shall speak with new tongues;** (Mark 16:15-17)

If you're a believer and you've given your life to Christ then you have the Holy Spirit. You do not have to pray in tongues to have the Holy Spirit. But if you are not praying in tongues then your not praying in the Spirit. If your not praying in the Spirit, your not praying the mysteries of the spirit in order to bring forth God's purpose for your life; your not edifying yourself; your not building up your spiritual house; and your not emboldening yourself. These are things that every Christian should desire and every Christian needs. Paul said that we are to "covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues" (1 Corinthians 14:39) but Paul was speaking to people who had and used the gift of tongues. Today he would ask us to covet the gift of speaking in tongues.

It is possible that you have the gift of tongues but have not used it. Contrary to what many believe, few people who receive the gift start speaking tongues spontaneously. It is an exercise of faith. In faith you must open your mouth and began to speak. At first you may only get one or two syllables but as you exercise your faith your gift will mature. Soon you'll be able to speak as long as you like whenever you like.

Now you have a choice, you can seek after the gift of tongues and all the blessings that come from praying in the spirit or you can reject what God's word says as nonsense. The choice is yours. Jesus promised that if you desire the Holy Spirit and you ask for it, his Father would give it to you (Luke 11:13). I pray that the our heavenly Father may richly bless you and that he may give you an earnest desire for all that is good, holy, and righteous and that he will give you a desire for that which will enable you to achieve God's holy purpose for your life. Amen.

If you desire the gift of tongues and you need help, find someone or a church who practices praying in tongues and ask them to pray for an outpouring of the gift on you. Jesus promised that his Father would pour out his Holy Spirit on all those who ask (Luke 11:10-13).

He also promised that where ever two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus Christ, he would be in the midst of them (Mathew 18:20). There is nothing to fear, just ask and it will be given!

¹Strong, J. 1997, c1996. *The new Strong's dictionary of Hebrew and Greek words*. Thomas Nelson: Nashville

²A Merriam-Webster, *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1969, G. & C. Merriam Company, Publishers, Springfield, Massachusetts.

³*Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. 1997 (Jud 19). Tyndale House: Wheaton, Ill.

⁴*Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. 1997 (Jud 23). Tyndale House: Wheaton, Ill.