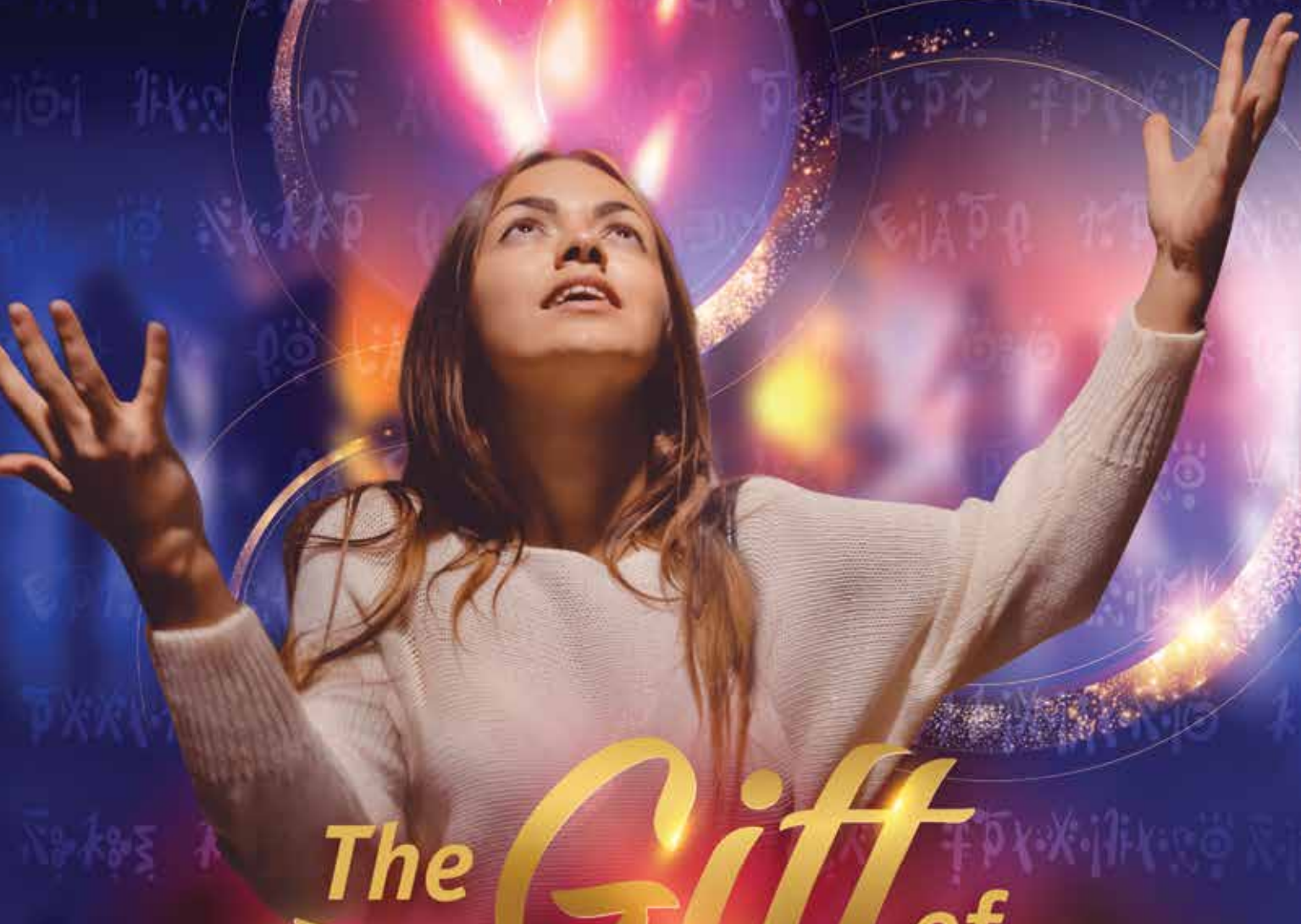


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WINTER 2021



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*and the
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—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 327

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THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

PASTOR DOUG BATCHELOR

AS Bible-believing Christians, you and I are so familiar with Jesus' gospel commission that it hardly needs to be repeated. But after a tumultuous 2020 and a rocky start to 2021, and with many churches' regular public evangelism efforts stifled by ongoing lockdowns, we could all use a good reminder of what God's priority is for His people:

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you (Matthew 28:19, 20).

In truth, even while outreach has been hampered around the world, Amazing Facts International actually experienced a banner year of evangelism—reaching more people than ever with the three angels' messages. (See our News to Note on page 21 for just one example.) That's why I hope you know how much I appreciate you for standing with us in these days of uncertainty. Truly, you have stored treasure in heaven that will last an eternity.


And we also want to keep feeding God's children—like you—even as we reach new hearts. Please know

that whether your church is in lockdown, you are self-isolating, or you just can't get to church, I hope you'll join me and the Amazing Facts family on Sabbath for worship at the new Granite Bay Hilltop Church. We call it "Hilltop in Your Home." Of course, please do support and regularly attend your local church when possible, but we want to make sure you know that we're here for you during these unusual times.

You'll also notice recent changes to the magazine you hold in your hands. Because person-to-person

evangelism is not always easy these days, we want to make this magazine as much of an evangelistic resource as possible—one you can use to share with your neighbors, friends, family, and even fellow church members who need a refresher on solid Bible doctrine. We want to offer you more in-depth looks at vital topics, feeding your soul, and helping you lead a more effective life for Jesus, especially in these last days.

With that in mind, would you be willing to let us know what you think of the new format of the magazine? Please drop a note at editor@amazingfacts.org after you've finished perusing this issue. It will help the ministry better identify and meet your needs as we work together for the Lord, eagerly anticipating His soon return.

Until next time! 

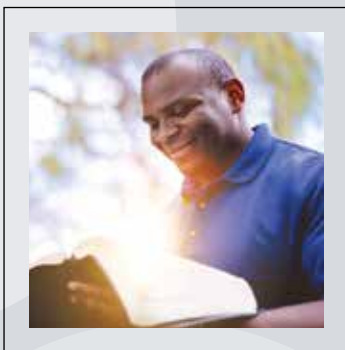


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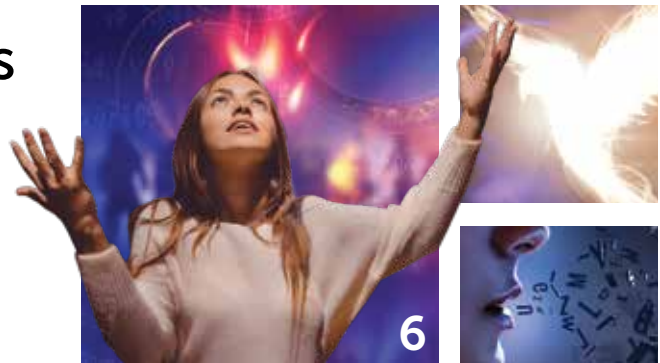
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Amazing Facts publishing is now offering a powerful new way for you to partner with us in reaching your community with powerful, truth-filled resources that reveal God's love, truth, and plan for everyone.

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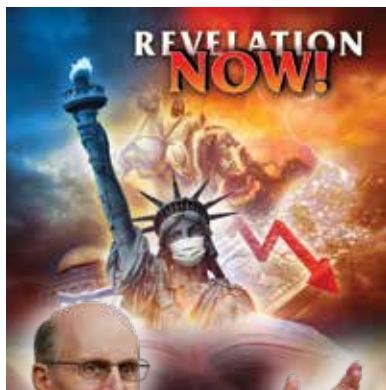
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From the Mail Bag

Revelation Now!

I have been streaming your messages online and watched the *Revelation Now* series, which just ended. I would love to know how to become a member and possibly get baptized. I was born and raised in Mormonism, so I was baptized at 8; however, some things happened to me within the church, so I fell away and wasn't living a Christian life. After many years of struggling and trials, plus everything going on in the world, I knew I needed to change. I went back to my roots, deciding to find God again and try to live like Jesus. I started out at the Mormon Church since that's what I knew, but I couldn't reconcile so many things. It wasn't working out, so I prayed to find the truth. After a long journey, I discovered that the church is more of a cult and most everything I had been taught was false information. I was stunned—but I wasn't heartbroken, because I knew I couldn't be a part of something that I didn't 100 percent believe in. So as I searched for the truth, I came across the *Days of Noah* series with Pastor Doug. The main message was to be ready when Jesus comes again and that worshiping on Sunday is not what God intended. Since Saturday is the true Sabbath that God set aside for us to worship Him, I googled which churches worship on Saturday. ... I finally feel free knowing the real truth and would love to become a part of your church! *Name Withheld*



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The Gift of Tongues

and the Devil's Counterfeit

by Doug Batchelor



An Amazing Fact:

Legend has it that when the Greeks were unable to capture the city of Troy after a ten-year siege, they resorted to a clever deception. Their army pretended to sail away but left behind a giant wooden horse as an apparent gift to the victors. However, the horse was actually hollow and filled with armed warriors. A Greek spy stationed inside Troy convinced the Trojans to bring the horse within the city walls, saying that to do so would magically make Troy invincible. That night, the spy released the troops hidden in the horse who then, after killing the city's guards, opened the gates to the waiting Greek army. Troy was captured and burned in a single night. Beware "gifts" from the enemy!

Shortly after becoming a Christian, I was hitchhiking to Los Angeles and caught a ride with a kind, middle-aged Pentecostal lady. She was quite pleased to hear about my recent conversion and, as we drove along, she asked, "Have you received the Holy Ghost yet?"

I was surprised by her question; no one had ever asked me that before. "Well," I said cautiously, "I've felt God's Spirit in my life. He's been helping me give up drugs, lying, and cursing."

"No—that's not what I mean," she said. "Have you received the baptism of the Holy Ghost? Do you speak in tongues?" I thought it was a little odd that she seemed more interested in a mysterious language than the fact that I was experiencing victory over long-cherished sins. Instead, she was convinced that I was missing out on a vital element of the Christian experience.

Not wanting to be deprived of something important, after that encounter, I began a search into the controversial subject of the gift of tongues. Indeed, the first few churches I attended were Charismatic, a church that believes that the gift of tongues refers to an ability to speak in a heaven-borne, mysterious language—an experience called "glossolalia."

But I soon began to see that, like the ancient Greeks, the devil has been using a counterfeit doctrine to gain access to God's church in an effort to destroy it from within. And sadly, I believe that many in God's end-time remnant are being tempted to invite this counterfeit gift into their church gates.

Let's take a closer look together ...

Even among Charismatics, there are vast differences of interpretation regarding the gift of tongues, but for brevity's sake, I generalize here. And although I disagree with some of their beliefs, I do believe that God has many sincere children in Charismatic fellowships. Thus, the case I make is not against people but against doctrinal error. The truth that at times can hurt will also set us free (John 8:32).

Genuine and Counterfeit

The word "tongue" in the Bible simply means "a language." I believe that God gives every gift of the Spirit to fill some practical need in His church. So, what was the need for speaking in tongues?

Jesus told His followers, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19), but this command posed a problem. How could the apostles go out preaching to *all* the

world when they spoke only one or two languages among them? While Jesus' disciples were intelligent, most of them were not formally educated. Thus, to help them fulfill His great commission, Christ would give them a unique gift from the Holy Spirit.




It was a supernatural ability to speak foreign world languages that they had not known—and for the express purpose of spreading the gospel: "These signs shall follow them that believe; ... they shall speak with new tongues" (Mark 16:17).

The fact that Jesus said these new languages would be a sign indicates that the ability to speak them would not come from a linguistic study. Rather, it would be an instantaneous gift to fluently preach in a previously unfamiliar language.

There are only three actual examples of speaking in tongues recorded in the Bible, and all of them are found in Acts, a book devoted to the early history of the Christian church. Looking at these three cases, we discover a clear picture of the gift of tongues.

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 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 2:1–4).

In the Bible, the word "fire" is often used to symbolize power. Thus, God sent this gift of tongues "as of fire" so His apostles would know that He would empower them in the same way He strengthened Moses to go before Pharaoh. (See Exodus 4:10–12.)



“ We hear them speaking
in our own tongues the
wonderful works of God. ”

But why did the Lord wait until Pentecost to bestow this gift? Acts 2:5–11 sets the scene:

And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, “Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? ... We hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.”

The day of Pentecost is a Jewish holy day that falls 50 days after Passover. In those times, devoted Israelites came from all over the Roman Empire to worship in Jerusalem. God chose this timely opportunity to bestow the gift of tongues so the apostles could preach to the visitors in their native languages. At least 15 different languages were represented in the crowd that day (2:9–11). And as a result, thousands of these visitors were converted. After Pentecost, those visitors carried their new faith back home to their respective nations and peoples, exponentially spreading the gospel.

From this example, it's clear that the gift of tongues was given to communicate the gospel in different existing world languages. But some still suggest that the gift is a heavenly language understood only by God and those with the gift of interpretation. Yet the Bible states in this case that both

the disciples and those listening understood what was being preached: “the wonderful works of God.”

More Evidence

Let's look now at another example when Peter preached to Cornelius and his household.

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision 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 (Acts 10:44–46).

Cornelius was Italian, while Peter was a Jew who spoke Aramaic. History also tells us that the servants in a Roman home could be from anywhere in the world. Because there were obvious language barriers, Peter likely began to preach through an interpreter. But when the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius' household, the Jews with Peter could understand the Gentiles speaking in languages other than their native tongues.

The record is that the Jews heard them “magnify God” in these languages. When later reporting this experience, Peter said, “The Holy Spirit fell upon them, *as upon us at the beginning*” (Acts 11:15, my emphasis). He means here that Cornelius and his family received the same gift of tongues that the disciples received on Pentecost.

The third and final example of speaking in tongues is when Paul preached to a dozen Ephesian disciples. Acts 19:6 records, "When Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied."

Paul was well educated and spoke more than one language (1 Corinthians 14:18). When the Holy Spirit came upon these Ephesians, he recognized that they were prophesying—that is, preaching—in languages they didn't know.

Thus, you'll find that the only times the gift of tongues was associated with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is when people from more than one language group were gathered together—and it was always for the purpose of sharing the gospel.

Notice also that in Acts 4, you have a repeat of the experience described in chapter 2. The place was shaken, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit—but because there were no foreigners present, the gift of tongues was absent. Acts 4:31 says, "When they had prayed, the place ... was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness."

The purpose of the baptism of the Spirit is not to make unintelligible sounds to prove that you're saved, but rather to have power for preaching so that others might be saved. This is why Jesus said, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me ... to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The Message to Corinth

Of the 14 books written by Paul, 1 Corinthians is the only one in which he deals with the subject of tongues.

The Corinthian church had a specific and temporary problem. The ancient city of Corinth was famous for its two seaports. Because the church there was a melting pot, its services often became chaotic and confusing. Evidently, some of the members would pray, testify, or preach in languages unknown to the others present. This is why Paul commanded that if they spoke in a tongue unknown to the majority, they should remain silent (1 Corinthians 14:28). In other words, it's not polite to speak in a language that your audience cannot understand.

Now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching?

Even things without life, whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is piped or played? For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle? So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue

words easy to understand, how will it be known what is

spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.

... Yet in the church

I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue. ... If

anyone speaks in a tongue, let there

be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let

one interpret. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God" (1 Corinthians 14:6–9, 19, 27, 28).

Some take this passage as justification for "speaking in tongues," but the clear message of Paul reveals the opposite intent. In 1 Timothy 6:20, he specifically mentions "avoiding ... profane and idle babblings." And in 2 Timothy 2:16, Paul says,

"Shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness." In other words, the very purpose of the gift of speech is to communicate your thoughts. If those present do not understand your communication, then keep silent.

A Heavenly Language

Many of my Charismatic friends point to what they call another gift: a heavenly prayer language. This gift, they say, is to express the Spirit's "groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26). The purpose, they say, is so the devil cannot understand our prayers. But the Bible does not teach us to hide our prayers from the devil; indeed, he trembles when he hears Christians pray because he is powerless to stop God's purposes.

This doctrine of a "prayer language" is based mainly upon 1 Corinthians 14:14, where Paul says, "If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful." They interpret

(Continued on page 16.)

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BIBLE ANSWERS

WITH DOUG BATCHELOR



Q What do “frogs” symbolize in the book of Revelation?

A I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty (Revelation 16:13, 14).

This verse points us back to a Bible story that took place before a huge battle. Saul, the rebellious king of Israel, was deceived by an evil spirit with a dark, deceptive message (1 Samuel 28:7–20).

It reveals that Satan is a master of deception and works to counterfeit everything that God created to be good. This comes through starkly in Revelation, where we find Jesus, the Lamb of God, and His counterfeit, the “lamblike” beast (Revelation 13:11). Just as there is a true triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—there is also a false trinity seen in this verse: the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. They speak on behalf of Satan. The evil trio of powers has been identified by many Bible teachers as the papacy, apostate Protestantism, and Spiritualism.


The Bible says that the unclean spirits are “like” frogs and come from this false trinity. The frogs are not literal but are simply the apostle’s way of illustrating these “spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth” (16:14). Compared to most creatures, a frog has a disproportionately large mouth. This symbolizes that the biggest danger of these evil spirits is their message. Indeed, frogs are loudest when croaking in the dark yet are elusive like evil spirits. When detected, they slip away and hide beneath the surface of the water.

One of the primary ways we see false signs exhibited in a growing number of churches today is through a counterfeit of the gift of tongues. A frog captures its prey with its tongue, which *could* symbolize the false gift of tongues that is now

sweeping the world. People believe that this “miracle” of tongues is evidence of God’s power. But this verse reveals that Satan can also exhibit supernatural power. He will be so effective that almost the entire world will follow him.

Q Will the New Age movement play a role in the end-time conflict?

A The New Age movement is really an “old age movement” that’s been around since the devil first told Eve that she wouldn’t die if she disobeyed God. “The serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die’” (Genesis 3:4). The New Age movement has elements of older spiritual traditions, including pantheism, polytheism, astrology, and many Eastern religions. It’s a hodgepodge of ideas that gained momentum in the 1960s and 70s when several “gurus” visited the United States.

There is a strong involvement in the New Age movement with the occult, psychic phenomena, and spiritism. Without a doubt, spiritism will be a major factor in the closing drama of Earth’s history. Combined with the supernatural power of the counterfeit gift of tongues and allied with the end-time worldwide coalition of churches, spiritism will sweep the globe. The New Age belief in spirit communication and reincarnation is simply old-time paganism in new garb. Its belief in an immortal, undying soul that can communicate with the living is the same old falsehood Satan told Eve in Eden. 

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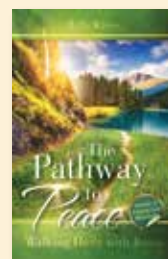
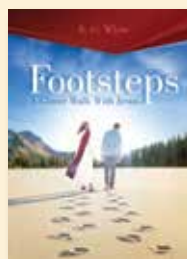
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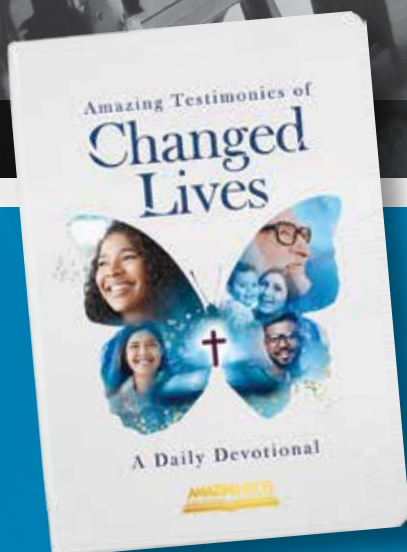
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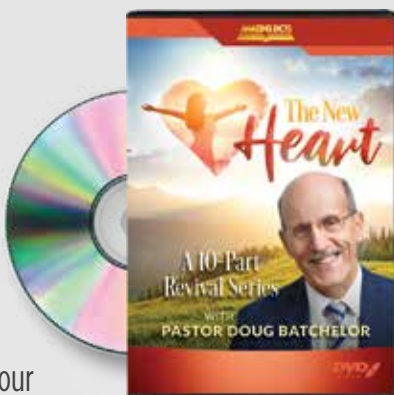
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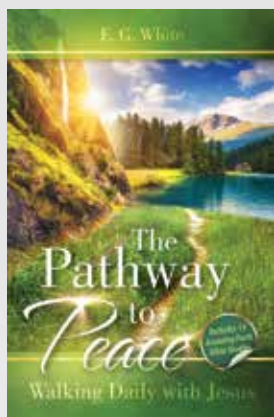
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this to mean that when Paul is said to pray in the Spirit, he used a “heavenly tongue” and did not himself know what he was praying.

First, this theory raises an important question: How would the supplicant ever know if his prayer was answered?

Second, what is Paul really saying? One problem in understanding this verse comes largely from the cumbersome translation. Please allow me to rephrase the verse in modern English:

If I pray in a language those around me do not know, I might be praying with the Spirit, but my thoughts would be unfruitful for those listening.

Paul is adamant that if we pray aloud, we should either pray so that others around us can understand—or else keep quiet. Notice the next few verses:

What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. ... Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say “Amen” at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say? (1 Corinthians 14:15, 16).

Who has the problem with understanding? The listener—not the speaker, as Pentecostals teach. If you have ever been with someone who is offering a prayer in a language you don’t know,

you get what Paul meant when he said that it is difficult for you to say “amen,” which means “so be it.” Without an interpreter, you have no idea to what you are agreeing!

Thus, from the context of 1 Corinthians 14, the purpose of speaking in tongues is to communicate the gospel and edify the church. If the listeners do not understand the language being spoken, they cannot be edified. Consequently, if there is no interpreter, the speaker is simply “speaking into the air” and the only ones present who know what is being said are God and the speaker. This is the actual meaning of the often-quoted verse 2. “He who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.”

Paul emphasizes again that the languages spoken need to be understood by the hearers:

Unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air. ... If there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God” (vv. 9, 28).

Some ask, “Didn’t Paul say he spoke with the tongues of angels?”

No. He said, “*Though* I speak with the tongues of men and of angels ...” (1 Corinthians 13:1, emphasis added). In its context, the word “though” means “even if.” For example, Paul also said in verse 3, “*Though* I give my body to be burned”—but he was not burned. So another way to read this passage is, “Even if I were to



... speak with the tongues of men and angels ..."

Priorities

It should go without saying that all the gifts of the Spirit, including the gift of tongues, are needed and available to the church today. But Paul also suggests that some of the gifts are more important than others: "Earnestly desire the *best* gifts" (1 Corinthians 12:31, my emphasis).

In fact, when the Bible lists spiritual gifts, tongues is usually found at the bottom.

God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:28).

He who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues (1 Corinthians 14:5).

Yet some have made the gift of tongues the top priority. Some even say that a Christian who does not speak in tongues is a second-class citizen. Yet Paul makes clear that different gifts are given to different people, and no one is expected to have all the gifts: "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?" (1 Corinthians 12:29, 30). The answer is no. Out of more than 50 times in Scripture where God filled His people with the Spirit, only three times is the gift of tongues connected with the experience.

Rather, the Bible says, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Galatians 5:22, 23). But some would have us believe that the fruit of the Spirit is tongues—and that every person who is filled with the Holy Spirit will speak in tongues.

Remember, Jesus is our example. He was filled with the Spirit, yet the Bible never mentions that He spoke in tongues. John the Baptist was also "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Luke 1:15), but there is no record that he spoke in tongues. And of the 27 books in the New Testament, only three make any reference to the gift of tongues.



In other words, we should put the emphasis where God puts the emphasis.

Creative Counterfeit

While the genuine gift of tongues is a powerful tool for the proclamation of the gospel, the devil's counterfeit is a powerful temptation. "Glossolalia" is the word often used to describe the popular experience found in most Charismatic churches. It is defined as "fabricated and non-meaningful speech, especially such speech associated with a trance state or certain schizophrenic syndromes."

Contrast that with the same dictionary's definition for a language: "The use by human beings of voice sounds, and often written symbols representing these sounds, in organized combinations and patterns in order to express and communicate thoughts and feelings."

By any definition, the disjointed sounds of glossolalia are not a language.

I have seen this practice many times. In one church I used to attend, the pastor and his wife were a "tongues team." Every week in the middle of the sermon, the pastor's wife would jump to her feet, throw her arms in the air, and break out in ecstatic utterance. Each time, she said essentially the same thing: "Handa kala shami, handa kala shami, handa kala shami." Over and over again. Even as a young Christian, this seemed suspicious to me; after all, Jesus said, "When you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do" (Matthew 6:7).

Each time this happened, the woman's husband would stop preaching and provide a "translation" for her message. It usually began with "Thus saith the Lord." Yet despite the fact that she always said the same words, the pastor's interpretation was different each time—and sometimes three times longer than the utterance.

Baptized Paganism

This Pentecostal manifestation of tongues finds its roots not in the Bible, but rather in ancient pagan spiritualistic rituals. In the sixth century BC, the Oracle of Delphi was housed in a temple built near the foot of Mt. Parnassus. Delphi was also sacred to Dionysus, the god associated with wine, fertility, and sensual dance, and to the nine Muses, patron goddesses of music.

While exhilarating music was played, the chief priestess, named Pythia, would breathe intoxicating vapors, go into a



frenzied trance, and then begin jabbering. The weird sounds the priestess muttered were then interpreted by a priest, who usually spoke in verse. Her utterances were regarded as the words of Apollo, but the messages were so ambiguous that they could seldom be proven wrong.¹

While living with Native Americans in New Mexico, I witnessed a similar ritual. The Indians would eat hallucinogenic peyote, sit in a circle, and chant and pound drums for hours. Before long, several were spasmodically muttering. Indeed, Charismatic churches are the most popular among Native Americans because it is a natural transition from their religion.

Among many tribes in Africa, to invoke the blessing of their gods, people sacrifice an animal and then dance around a fire, chanting songs to the hypnotic rhythm of a drum beat. Eventually, some begin speaking eerie messages in the supposed languages of the spirit world. A local witch doctor then “translates” the messages. This ritual is also practiced among Voodoo Catholics in the West Indies.

This pagan form first found its way into North American churches in the early 1800s. Many of the African slaves who were brought to America and forced to accept Christianity were unable to read the Bible for themselves. Even though they came from a variety of tribes, one practice most tribes held in common was the “spirit dances” with a “spirit-possessed” person muttering.

The slaves mistakenly associated this with the Christian “gift of tongues” and began to incorporate a modified version into their meetings. These services, which were accompanied by heavy rhythmic music, began to spread in the South, and the participants were mocked by mainline denominations as “Holy Rollers.”

However, the national expansion of the Pentecostal movement among Caucasians began in Los Angeles at the Apostolic Faith Gospel Mission on Azusa Street in 1906. The leader was a former holiness preacher named William Seymour. From there, leaders continued to refine the doctrine and make it attractive and palatable to mainline Christians.

In about 1960 the charismatic movement began attracting followers within traditional denominations. From then it continued to have explosive growth until now there are several million charismatics in Protestant and Catholic churches throughout the world.²

Now the devil is using this counterfeit gift of tongues as a Trojan horse—to introduce pagan worship styles into Christian churches. Why? He wants to shift the attention of believers from faith to feeling. Some Charismatic churches go so far as to say that the Bible is the “old letter” and that messages that come through tongues are fresh revelations of the Spirit and are more dependable.

Thus, the stage is being set for Satan’s final attack.

How God’s Spirit Affects Us

“God is not the author of confusion” (1 Corinthians 14:33). The concept that a person who is “slain in the spirit” should fall to the ground, wallow, and mutter is frightening and dangerous.

The reason God gives us His Spirit is to restore in us His image—not rob us of all dignity and self-control.

This begs the question: If it isn’t God behind this ritual, who is responsible?

- On Mount Carmel, **the prophets of Baal** jumped on the altar and shouted and moaned. They even cut themselves. By contrast, Elijah quietly knelt and said a simple prayer (1 Kings 18:17–46).
- After Jesus saved **the berserk, demon-possessed man** by the sea, the healed man was seen “sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind” (Luke 8:35).

The invitation of God is, “Come now, and let us reason together” (Isaiah 1:18). He wants us to use our heads.

You might be thinking: “I have spoken in tongues for years, and I know it is from God!” As Christians, we should never base our conclusions on how we feel. After all, the devil can certainly make

us feel good. Rather, we must base our beliefs upon the sure Word of God.

One friend of mine was an active Charismatic who often “spoke in tongues.” When he studied these things, he began to question if this supposed gift was from the right spirit. He prayed, “Lord, if this is not Your will and if I am not experiencing the true gift of tongues, then please take it away!” He told me that from that day on, the experience of glossolalia never returned. A Christian should be willing to surrender every cherished view on the altar of God’s Word and forsake any questionable practice, no matter how popular or accepted among other Christians. After all, some things are highly





esteemed among men but are an abomination to God (Luke 16:15).

Babbling in Babylon

Why is understanding the subject of tongues so essential for us today? For one, I believe the modern Charismatic movement was foretold in Bible prophecy.

He cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen." ... And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues" (Revelation 18:2, 4).

One of the principal characteristics of ancient Babylon at the tower of Babel was the confusion of tongues (Genesis 11:7–9). Revelation 18 is telling us that in the last days, God's people are to be called out of Babylon and its confusing counterfeit religious systems.

"I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet" (Revelation 16:13). The phrase "out of the mouth" represents speech, and don't miss the fact that a frog's main weapon is its tongue.

Remember that the confusion of tongues at Babel was not a blessing of the Spirit, but rather a preventative measure to keep evil minds from overtaking the world. In fact, we get our modern word "babbling" from the story of ancient Babel. However, in Acts chapter 2 at Pentecost, the curse of Babel was reversed so others might understand and unite under the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ!


Given to the Obedient

Some have told me they've had the baptism of the Holy Spirit because they spoke in tongues, yet their lives are otherwise full of sinful living. So let's get something straight: There are basic requirements for receiving any gift of the Spirit.

- Jesus says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth" (John 14:15–17).
- Acts 5:32 adds, "We are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."

In the late 1980s, several famous TV evangelists fell by the way. They all claimed to be filled with the Holy Spirit and have the gift of tongues, but they were living immoral lives. They would speak in tongues on TV, then leave the studio to live a compromised life of adultery and theft. Furthermore, if this were the genuine gift of tongues, why did these evangelists need an army of interpreters to translate for them when they preached overseas?

Why does God give the Spirit? "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me" (Acts 1:8). God does not give us the Spirit to babble but as power for witnessing!

How can we receive the *genuine* gift of the Holy Spirit? Submit to God, be willing to forgive others, obey Him, and ask for it. "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:13). 

1. *The Concise Columbia Encyclopedia and Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia*, under the entry "Delphi."

2. *Ibid.*, under the entry "Pentecostals."



Giving Back

Every morning for more than 25 years, Elizabeth rose early to drive a school bus, ferrying young minds to receive an education. She spent another five years as a bus assistant, helping special needs students. Now retired and living in Nevada, she still helps out with kids on the local school bus route.

Staying active is a part of Elizabeth's life: "I'm a walker, and I walk all three hills in town," she says. Now 76, Elizabeth credits Jesus with healing a painful knee condition, which has allowed her to remain active and busy.

But she's also known trials during her lifetime. Elizabeth's second husband left her for another woman, an immigrant from Vietnam. That caused Elizabeth to have bitter feelings about the Vietnamese people, and she asked God to help her overcome those attitudes. Today, she's free of bitterness and has sponsored relief projects in southeast Asia.

Her giving doesn't stop there, however. Moving from Oregon to Idaho, Elizabeth applied for mortgages at two different rates; one was six-tenths of a percentage point lower than the other. Again, prayer made a difference: She asked God for the lower rate loan, promising to give the difference to a Christian radio ministry that used shortwave broadcasting to reach remote areas. The lower rate was approved, and Elizabeth made good on her promise.



Now, Elizabeth has made one more giving promise: When she no longer needs her house, which she says is "all paid for," it will go to Amazing Facts International. The proceeds from the sale will fund the ministry's outreach in the United States and around the world.

"I just love Pastor Doug and his story," Elizabeth says. "When I hear some people who've grown up in the church, they're worldly. But Pastor Doug doesn't want the world," she shares.

Our Friendly, Knowledgeable Team Is Ready to Help You!

Elizabeth also credits the friendly estate and planned giving team at Amazing Facts with helping set up her bequest. Her representative has "become a friend" in the process, she says. The representative "was patient with me in setting up my will. I called him many times, and I know he is a busy man, but he was always willing to listen."

Like Elizabeth, you can learn how a gift through your will, trust, or retirement account can benefit you and your family today through tax advantages—while ensuring that God's truth will be broadcast around the world through Amazing Facts for years and years to come.

It is easy and convenient to leave a gift to Amazing Facts through your will or trust. Request our free **Estate Planning Guide** or call the Amazing Facts planned giving team at **800-436-2695**.

"God's been awfully good to me," Elizabeth says, and she wants to continue the blessing by helping the ministry reach others. "I chose Amazing Facts" for this gift, she says. "And I'm glad I did!"

Amazing Facts News to Note

In 2020, the Bible School Shattered Records

"I was a pastor of Southern Baptist churches for 40 years. These studies have been a light for things I never studied in four years of college and three years of graduate school. They set me free! I now see the truth of God's Sabbath day rest!" —Larry

As the world battled coronavirus and other crises in 2020, tens of thousands sought the only vaccine against the spiritual darkness of our time—the Bible truth! Indeed, according to Tammey Steenson, director of the Amazing Facts Bible School, more seekers than ever discovered the real



Jesus through our online and mail-based Study Guides.

Across all our online and mail-based courses, we saw nearly 61,000 new enrollments,

and your support helped our team grade 157,835 Study Guides—that means dedicated volunteers and staff graded more than 80 lessons per hour! One student, Paul, writes, "Your Bible studies are awesome. Visually and intellectually stunning, shattering many of my long-held false notions and teaching. Thank you!"

By God's grace, more than 11,650 seekers responded by requesting further resources, contact with a local church, and even information about how and where to be baptized. Moreover, in August, our Spanish-language Bible lesson course began in earnest, with 2,500 lessons already received. And in an effort to make deeper connections with students, the correspondence team also responded to 21,388 personal letters. Explains Tammey, "We don't want

to be just an acquaintance for our students; we want to be long-lasting friends."

We thank you for making this a banner year for spiritual growth for tens of thousands of seekers. It is only through God's committed, sacrificial people like you that this vital work can continue and expand. You're making a difference—take it from Charles: "Thanks for all the amazing facts that you have brought to light. My life has changed since I started my journey with your wonderful people. I have been baptized [and am going] to church every week with my family!"

Amazing Facts Evangelists

Due to the ongoing complications of the COVID-19 pandemic, Amazing Facts live prophecy seminars haven't been possible. We ask you to join us in prayer that God will open the doors to live evangelism—as it remains one of the most powerful ways to share truth! While we have removed the evangelist page from this issue, we hope you'll see it again soon. Until then, visit prophecyseminars.com for updates and share it with your friends and family!



New Sharing Magazine Around the Corner



The Amazing Facts publishing team is working hard on its next powerful sharing resource; this time, they're tackling the controversial but vital last-day truth about hellfire and what the Bible facts say about God's character and kingdom of love. As a recipient of the *Inside Report*, look for your free copy in your mailbox in the second or third quarter of this year.

Be a Medical Missionary at Home

(Without Meddling!)

by Laurie Lyon

For many of us, the term “medical missionary” evokes images of poor, malnourished people in underdeveloped countries suffering dreadful diseases like malaria or typhoid. Of course, not all medical missionaries live overseas. In fact, some work exclusively in their own homes. Did you know that *you* may already be a medical missionary right now?


Since God is concerned with all aspects of our health—spiritual, emotional, and physical—doesn’t it make sense that He wants His followers to be interested in the health of others as well? He wants all of us to “prosper in all things and be in health” (3 John 1:2). Maybe that’s why the Bible brims with health insights.

So, are you ready? Your primary goal as a medical missionary is to share with others in the basic principles of healthful living. Naturally, we never want to give medical advice or try to diagnose an illness, leaving that to those with advanced medical degrees. Yet we can often bless those around us by sharing scientific, health-promoting principles from the Word of God. Here’s how:

- 1** Number one rule—**never judge or criticize friends or family**. Whacking someone over the head with your ideals is always counterproductive. Honor the Golden Rule. If someone’s choices are concerning, pray for them but keep your lips sealed. The exception would be your own young children. But even then, don’t browbeat them, and do reward their healthy choices.
- 2** **Set a good example**. Studies confirm that our lifestyle has great potential in influencing those close to us.^{1,2} Using reliable sources, strive to expand your understanding of health. Then live up to what you know, and be ready to explain your convictions if asked.

- 3** **Be supportive**. If someone expresses interest in improving their health, offer helpful material—for example, loan a cookbook to someone who would like to try plant-based eating. You may want to gather pamphlets and other resources on biblical health principles to share with interested friends or neighbors. Or perhaps someone in your life communicates a desire to improve their fitness. If possible, why not offer to exercise with them?
- 4** If you’re the cook in your household, wielding the power of the spatula, **make any dietary changes gradual ones**—and be sensitive to how they’re received. Offer choices, and don’t become a kitchen dictator!
- 5** **Remember that emotional and spiritual wellness are tightly intertwined with physical health**. You can boost the well-being of others daily through encouraging words and acts of kindness. Cheer someone! (See Proverbs 16:24.) You may find this approach often paves the way to someone considering healthy changes in their life.



In your role as medical missionary, practice patience. Any seeds you may plant—whether direct or by example—will take time to sprout and grow. Meanwhile, you’ll be reinforcing your own healthy choices. Best of all, by continually seeking the good of others, you will be following in the footsteps of the greatest Medical Missionary of all! 

¹ <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMs066082>

² <https://news.gallup.com/poll/163880/smokers-overweight-associate-others.aspx>



“Are We Doing Any Good?”

Thank you for being a supporter of Amazing Facts International. This inspiring testimony comes from Danny in Alaska—and we’re sharing it with you because your faithfulness to God’s work makes this great news possible!


During Christmas some years ago, I was at a gathering of bush pilots and fishermen with their wives. We had a gift exchange and one of my good friends, Jim, opened his package and saw that he had received a book called *The Richest Caveman* by Doug Batchelor. My friend really enjoyed that testimony, so not long after, I gave him another book by Pastor Doug—*Broken Chains*. Jim and I talked about the lessons from that book on our fishing trips and hikes in Alaska.

Flash forward to 2020 and the COVID pandemic. Jim and his wife were looking to have “online church,” flipping through the channels. Jim found a program called “Amazing Facts” and was pleasantly surprised to discover that Pastor Doug was the speaker. Ever since, Jim has made Amazing Facts a part of his family’s Sunday morning church service.

Recently, Jim was sharing with his 99-year-old cousin about the sermons. He was surprised to learn that his cousin is also watching Amazing Facts—and loves the programs!

This past summer, Pastor Doug was our speaker at the Alaska Conference Men’s Retreat. We hold this retreat in the mountains, and it is not an easy place to access. To get to the retreat requires backpacking, mountain biking, an ATV, or flying. To shuttle guests in, we use an airstrip on the road system about 20 miles from the retreat. Gary, the owner of the airstrip, who has been very gracious to us, is a Christian and a retired 747 captain. I have always invited Gary to join us for the retreat, but he hasn’t attended yet. When I texted him that Pastor Doug was our speaker this year, I was surprised to read his comment: “I love Doug Batchelor!”

I just wanted to share these stories because we all wonder at times, “Are we doing any good?” Ecclesiastes 11:1 says, “Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days.” This is what Amazing Facts is doing. We don’t yet see all of the results, but bread is being sent over the airwaves to many receptive souls.

We have no idea who most of them are ... yet. One day, we will. 

Some names have been changed.



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