

FOCUS – FAITH AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

- We must hear Jesus and we must see Jesus. We must keep the focus of our hearts on Him. That's because hearing Jesus and seeing Jesus and focusing on Jesus builds up our faith, and faith is the antidote to fear.

It's all
about



FOCUS

Do you know that Jesus wanted us to feel close to Him?

John 14:15-27 "If you love me, show it by doing what I've told you. 16 I will talk to the Father, and he'll provide you another **Friend so that you will always have someone with you.** 17 This Friend is the Spirit of Truth. The godless world can't take him in because it doesn't have eyes to see him, doesn't know what to look for. But you know him already because he has been staying with you, and will even be in you! 18 "I will not leave you orphaned. I'm coming back. 19 In just a little while the world will no longer see me, but you're going to see me because I am alive and you're about to come alive. 20 At that moment you will know absolutely that I'm in my Father, and you're in me, and I'm in you.

- 21 "The person who knows my commandments and keeps them, that's who loves me. And the person who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and make myself plain to him." 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said, "Master, why is it that you are about to make yourself plain to us but not to the world?" 23 "Because a loveless world," said Jesus, "is a sightless world. If anyone loves me, he will carefully keep my word and my Father will love him — we'll move right into the neighbourhood! 24 Not loving me means not keeping my words. The message you are hearing isn't mine. It's the message of the Father who sent me.
- 25 "I'm telling you these things while I'm still living with you. 26 **The Friend, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send at my request, will make everything plain to you. He will remind you of all the things I have told you.** 27 **I'm leaving you well and whole. That's my parting gift to you. Peace. I don't leave you the way you're used to being left — feeling abandoned, bereft. So don't be upset. Don't be distraught. MSG**
- What about this friend? The Holy Spirit!

- When the Spirit is mentioned, when He is involved, its often accompanied by action or activity! The other significant thing is He nearly always stirs up words.
 - *Joel 2:28-32 "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. 29 Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. 30 "And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. 32 And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. ESV*
- The focus on prophecy visions and dreams but what about the one spiritual gift that we are told is available to everyone.
- It is the only gift that is for our own good. All the other spiritual gifts we find in scripture are there for others. But this first one is becoming less and less prominent in our churches.

The **Forgotten Gift** is the gift of tongues. **WORDS :**

- The gift of tongues - was the first response from the disciples in Acts 2 when they were filled with the spirit.
- In the New Testament often when people were converted to follow Jesus, especially it seems when they were baptized, the Spirit would come on them and they would speak in tongues.

What is tongues? Strong's #1100: **glossa** (pronounced gloce-sah'). of uncertain affinity; the tongue; by implication, a **language** (specially, one naturally unacquired):-- tongue.

- *The ability to speak to God in a language you don't know and have never learned*
- ***They spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance. The paradox we choose He enables***

- ***Who is it for?***

- Mark 16:15-18 And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover." ESV
- I Corinthians 14:5 Now I want you all to speak in tongues, ESV

- **What is “speaking in tongues”?**

- Speaking or praying in tongues is a form of prayer in *which the* Christian yields himself to the Holy Spirit and receives from the Spirit a supernatural language *with* which to praise God. It is a miraculous manifestation of God's power, **but one which combines both human and divine elements that expresses both human and divine initiative. It is truly a cooperative effort between the Christian and the Holy Spirit.** (A Handbook On Holy Spirit Baptism)

- Many people misunderstand what takes place when they hear someone praying or speaking in tongues. They are apprehensive over what might happen to them if they "let themselves go like that" or "let some other power take over." They assume the person is completely passive and that the Holy Spirit is doing it all. (HSB Book)
 - Lot of confusion and problems - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZbQBajYnEc>
- This is an erroneous impression of what is taking place. The person him-self is actively participating in the experience. As someone once put it, "**Without the Holy Spirit, you can't, but without you, the Holy Spirit won't.**" (HSB Book)
- **Simply stated, man does the speaking; the Holy Spirit furnishes the words. Acts 2:4 says, "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as, the Spirit gave them utterance." A free translation might read, "they...began to speak as the Spirit gave them words to say." (HSB Book)**

- Speaking in tongues is a way of praying that liberates the spirit within and strengthens the Christian in a wonderful manner. The primary purpose of it is for use in one's own devo-tional life. Careful restrictions are placed upon its public use. (See I Corinthians 14:18-19, 27-28.) (HSB Book)
- **The Apostle Paul's View of Tongues**
- Interesting that he wasn't there on the day of Pentecost. And yet at his conversion he received the Holy Spirit when Ananias laid hands upon him (Acts 9:17) and a few chapters later as he begins to preach we see the people he prays for speak in tongues as they give their lives to Jesus.
- **Paul's teaching:**
- I Corinthians 12:1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. ESV
- I Corinthians 14:5 Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. ESV
- I Corinthians 14:18-19 I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. 19 Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue. ESV
- I Corinthians 14:27-29 If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. 28 But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God. ESV

Anytime you enter into to a discussion around spiritual gifts, and in particular tongues, it is important to look at all of I Corinthians 12-14.

What does the Bible say?

1. I do not want you to be uniformed. New Century Version reads, “I want you to understand about spiritual gifts”. **WHY?**
2. Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. Here is Paul with all his apostolic grace, scriptural understanding and experience, wanting us all to speak in tongues. Does it make anyone else ask the question; **WHY?**
3. **The strongest thinker, the greatest theologian, to the most prolific church planter, arguably the greatest apostle, “I thank God I speak in tongues more than all of you”. WHY?**
4. “If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret” **WHY?**

- **Why #1 - Confusion**

- Paul was addressing the confusion concerning the “Gifts of the Spirit” and in particular confusion concerning “tongues”.
- The confusion is cleared away when we consider the two sets of circumstances in which speaking in tongues appear in the New Testament, They appear both as a **sign** and as a **gift**.
 - They appear as a **sign** or outward evidence that accompanies the baptism in the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:4, 10:45-46, 19:6, and Mark 16:17.
 - They appear as a **gift** in Paul's references in I Corinthians 12 and 14. (HSB Book)
 - No limitation or restriction is placed on the manifestation, nor is there any suggestion that some received tongues while others did not. Nor is there any attempt to teach or instruct the recipients in the "proper use" of tongues. Speaking in tongues came to all, serv-ing as the **sign**, or **evidence**, of the Holy Spirits arrival in power upon them, I believe it is safe and correct to say that there is no such thing as misuse of tongues when they initially appear at the time of one's receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit. (**HSB Book**)

- **Why #2 – Surrender**
- The willingness to yield our tongues to God may also indicate a more profound surrender than almost any other act. The tongue is the primary instrument of expression of the human personality, and until God has dominion over the tongue, His control over us is relatively slight. (HSB Book)
- James 3:5-9 In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches. But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. 6 And the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself. 7 People can tame all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and fish, 8 but no one can tame the tongue. It is restless and evil, full of deadly poison.
- In addition, experience shows that prayer in tongues, which the Scriptures also refer to as "*prayer in the Spirit*" (see I Corinthians 14:14-15; Ephesians 6:18), enables us to pray with an ability and authority not our own. We do not always know how to pray in a given situation, but, holding the need up to the Father, we pray in tongues, knowing that our prayers are guided by the Holy Spirit. (HSB Book)

- **It empowers my prayer - beyond my mind**
 - I Corinthians 14:14-16 For if I pray in a tongue, **my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful.** 15 What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also. ESV
 - I Corinthians 14:2-3 For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, **but he utters mysteries in the Spirit.** ESV
 - **We get in direct contact, fellowship and communion with God**
- How many times have you been in a situation where you just don't know how to pray or what words to say. Romans 8:26
- **My mind is unfruitful** – somehow neurologically the use of tongues bypasses the mind. (Remember the YouTube clip – Dr. Andrew Newberg, Radiology Department, Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania)
- **Tongues seem to bypass the mind** - In disappointments, disillusionments, and discouragements tongues can take us beyond our emotions and beyond our minds
- Bryn Franklin has a friend in the Oxford church who had a stroke more than 10 years ago and who cannot speak. But he can speak in tongues. Somehow tongues by-pass the part of the brain that was afflicted by the stroke and doctors and neuroscientists have witnessed it and are baffled and intrigued by it.

- **WHY #3 – Thanksgiving and Faith**

- 1 Corinthians 14:16-17 Otherwise, **if you give thanks with your spirit**, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say "Amen" to **your thanksgiving** when he does not know what you are saying? 17 For **you may be giving thanks well enough**, but the other person is not being built up. ESV
- Why speak in tongues? Because it grants the Christian a free-dom in prayer that enables him to praise God extravagantly, beyond the limiting confines of known speech. Our Lord had nothing but praise for those who have worshiped Him extravagantly, or served or trusted him extravagantly—the poor widow who gave God all the money she had (see Luke 21:1-4), the Roman centurion and his tremendous faith in Jesus' healing power (see Matthew 8:5-13), and Mary, who was extravagant in her devotion in anointing Him with precious ointment (see John 12:3). Yet, many of us are so stingy and pinched in our relationship with God that any real free-dom in prayer or worship is beyond us. Such freedom can come through praying in tongues. (HSB Book)
- 1 Corinthians 14:4 The one who **speaks in a tongue builds up himself**. ESV
 - NT:3618 oikodomeo (oy-kod-om-eh'-o); from the same as NT:3619; to be a house-builder, i.e. construct or (figuratively) confirm:
- Jude 20 But you, beloved, **build yourselves up** in your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit;
 - NT:2026 epoikodomeo (ep-oy-kod-om-eh'-o); from NT:1909 and NT:3618; to build upon, i.e. (figuratively) to rear up:
- **Battle between your mind and the Spirit!**

- **WHY #4 – Common Good**

- But in I Corinthians 12 and 14, we find Paul discussing speaking in tongues as a *gift* among other gifts, to be used in the services of the church, only as the Holy Spirit directs, for "*the common good*" (I Corinthians 12:7). Here, Paul treats speaking in tongues not in terms of *receiving* but in terms of *exercising* the ability at a given time in the service of worship. He was explaining to those who had received the *sign* of tongues when they were baptized in the Holy Spirit, and who could now manifest this ability to praise God in other languages, how, *in church*, any manifestation of tongues should fall in the same category as other manifestations of the Spirit, such as prophecy, the word of wisdom, etc. Paul made it clear that, *in church*, if some individual is moved by the Holy Spirit to manifest tongues, it should be accompanied by the gift of interpretation so that the whole worshiping assembly may benefit by it. (See I Corinthians 14:27.) Yet, even here, Paul qualifies his statement by adding that prayer in tongues *without interpretation*, i.e., the sign tongue, may also be exercised during the church service, but only *silently*, so as not to disturb or disrupt the public worship service. (See I Corinthians 14:28.) (HSB Book)
- Certainly, in regard to speaking in tongues aloud, in church, with the gift of interpretation to follow, the question, "Do all speak with tongues?" must be answered with an emphatic no! (HSB Book)
- Experience indicates that only a small percentage of those who manifest speaking in tongues at the time they receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit will ever be used for a public manifestation of tongues and interpretation in church. By far, the most common use of tongues is during one's own private prayer time.

- **Seven things The Bible says We Can Do With It**

- 1. We can speak
- 2. We can sing
- 3. We can utter mysteries
- 4. We can thank
- 5. We can praise
- 6. We can pray
- 7. We can do our warfare

- 1 Cor 14:2 For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he **utters mysteries in the Spirit**.

- 13 Therefore, one **who speaks** in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. 14 **For if I pray in a tongue**, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. 15 What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; **I will sing praise with my spirit**, but I will sing with my mind also. 16 Otherwise, **if you give thanks with your spirit**, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say "Amen" **to your thanksgiving** when he does not know what you are saying? 17 For **you may be giving thanks well enough**, but the other person is not being built up. 18 I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. 19 Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue. ESV

