

FOREWORD BY BILL HAMON

fire
TONGUES OF
FIRE

101 SUPERNATURAL BENEFITS
OF PRAYING IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

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CHAPTER 2

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Have you ever been filled with the Holy Spirit? When you were saved, the Holy Spirit came to live on the inside of you. But there's a difference between receiving the Holy Spirit at conversion and being filled with the Spirit. Jesus spoke of the latter experience in John 14:16-17:

And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

Even if you have been filled with the Holy Spirit in the past, we see biblically that this glorious infilling is not a one-time event. Christians can be a little leaky at times. Maybe you need to get refilled. We see the apostles in Scripture filled three different times. And Paul the apostle wrote, “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:18-19).

The Holy Spirit Is a Gift from the Father

The first step to getting filled with the Spirit of God is to see that He is a gift from the Father, first given on the Day of Pentecost. This wasn't intended to be a one-time-only event for that generation. The gift of the Holy Spirit has been available to all Christians since that time, and He is available to you now. Let's look at the original outpouring in Acts 2:1-4:

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.

You receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit by faith, just like you received your salvation. We don't have to beg God to give us the Holy Spirit. We don't have to "tarry" (wait) for days and years. Faith doesn't beg. Faith believes and receives. Peter offered these words in Acts 2:38: "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Your Perfection Is Not a Prerequisite

You don't have to be living perfectly to receive the Holy Spirit any more than you needed to be living perfectly to get saved. The Holy Spirit Himself perfects you little by little. He sanctifies you little by little. He is your Helper and wants to help you. He can help you more if you are filled with Him. Jesus said in Luke 11:11-13:

If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 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!

You become a son when you accept Jesus. As sons, we don't work for the Holy Spirit. We receive Him as a gift from the Father, as another Comforter that Christ talked about.

Methods of Receiving the Baptism

You can receive the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands, but that's not the only way. Back in the Voice of Healing days, Oral Roberts and other evangelists who broadcasted their meetings over the airwaves would tell people to put their hands on the TV screen as a point of contact.

I was baptized in the Holy Spirit at a Joyce Meyer conference. No one laid hands on me at all. We see this type of baptism in the Holy Spirit in Acts 10:44-46:

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.

Receive by Faith

When you ask for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, you will have to yield to Him.

You will have to take a step of faith. When you ask Jesus to baptize you in the Holy Spirit, you may feel a bubbling up in your spirit. Or you may feel tingly or warmth. Or maybe you won't feel anything. I didn't.

After you pray, you'll have to open your mouth and yield it to the Holy Spirit. You do the talking as the Holy Spirit gives you utterance. Psalm 81:10 says, "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it." Open your mouth and release your voice to the Holy Spirit. It may sound at first like baby talk or gibberish. That's OK.

Just like a baby's language grows and develops, so will your prayer language grow and develop over time. Remember, we are speaking. The Holy Spirit is not speaking. We are speaking and He is giving us utterance. An utterance is "a vocal expression, power, style, or manner of speaking," according to *Merriam-Webster's* dictionary.

A Prayer for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

If you want to be filled with the Holy Spirit, pray this prayer:

Father, I surrender full control of my life to You. I ask You even now to fill me to overflowing with Your Spirit, just as You have promised to do if I ask according to Your will. I ask this in the name of Jesus and believe that You are pouring out Your Spirit upon me right now.

Now take a deep breath as if you are breathing in the Holy Spirit. I often tell people to drink deep. Jesus told people to come and drink, and

He was speaking of drinking of the river of life, which you breathe in. Again, open your mouth and He will fill it.

If nothing seems to be happening, relax and don't get in your mind about it. Don't get into unbelief about it. Sometimes you'll hear the words on the inside and you have to give voice to them. Speak out in faith—and keep speaking. You can then pray in tongues any time you choose.

CHAPTER 3

YOUR HEAVENLY PRAYER LANGUAGE

When I was in high school I took three years of Latin against the advice of my parents, who wanted me to learn Spanish. After all, you can't really speak Latin in the modern world. Well, I suppose I could have, but nobody in the modern world would have understood me. I may as well have been speaking in tongues. Now, I do.

Paul the apostle shared a marvelous revelation in First Corinthians 14:2 (MEV), "For he who speaks in an *unknown* tongue does not speak to men, but to God. For no one understands him, although in the spirit, he speaks mysteries." The word *unknown* in this verse is in italics because it doesn't appear in the original text. Translators added in the word "unknown" for clarity.

That's partly accurate. When we speak in tongues, we are speaking in a language that is not known to mankind. That's quite something, given that there are over 7,000 known languages in the world today, according to Ethnologue. (That's why Bible translators are so busy!) So, yes, in that sense it's an unknown tongue on earth. But it's not an unknown tongue in heaven. In fact, it's a heavenly language.

If I were to call you on the phone, I would not speak to you in tongues because you could not understand me. When I teach at my Ft. Lauderdale church, Awakening House of Prayer, I do not teach in tongues because that would not build you up. Paul said, “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” (1 Cor. 14:19).

When you speak in your heavenly language, God understands you perfectly. It’s probable no one else on the face of the earth understands a word you are saying. And you may have noticed your tongues for personal edification sound different than other people’s tongues for personal edification. God gave you a unique prayer language just like you have a unique fingerprint.

Have you ever been concerned about people eavesdropping on you while you are praying? When you pray in tongues, you don’t have to be concerned because nobody can understand you.

I pray in the Spirit as much as I possibly can. I wake up most mornings and pray at least 30 minutes in the Spirit before doing anything else. (I used to pray in the Spirit while I was trying to go to sleep but it kept me up because it energized me!) I accomplish this by praying in the Spirit from the moment my feet hit the ground, while I’m in the shower, while I’m making my coffee, etc. The time flies!

I pray in the Spirit while I am in my car. I even broke out in tongues on the treadmill at the gym accidentally—because it’s automatic—and everyone started to stare at me! I have sticky notes in certain parts of my house that say “Pray in tongues” to remind myself lest I forget. When the handyman or other workers come to fix things, they aren’t sure what to think about those sticky notes. But I don’t care.

I’m not telling you this to create a law, but to encourage you to allow praying in the Spirit to become so natural that your immediate response in times of need is to lift up Spirit-led prayers. When something bad happens—or sometimes when something good happens—I immediately

burst out in tongues. When you yield your tongue to the Holy Spirit, you will too.

Prayer

Father, in the name of Jesus, would You remind me to pray in the Spirit? Help me to make praying in the Spirit a Holy Ghost habit that becomes automatic when I wake up in the morning and as I walk through my day. I yield my tongue to the heavenly language You have given me.

CHAPTER 4

EFFECTIVE, FERVENT TONGUES

James, the apostle of practical faith, shares some wisdom in the fifth chapter of the book that goes by his name. James 5:16 tells us, “The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” If you can pray effectively, that means you can pray ineffectively. Likewise, if you can pray in the spirit effectively, you can pray in the spirit ineffectively.

I like the Amplified Bible translation of this verse: “The heartfelt and persistent prayer of a righteous man (believer) can accomplish much [when put into action and made effective by God—it is dynamic and can have tremendous power].”

The Amplified version gives you more insight into what *effectively* means—heartfelt and persistent. Other translations use the word *earnest*, *urgent*, *continual*, and *insistent*. You can feel the passion in those words, and it’s with passion we should pray in the spirit.

Many people have told me, “I pray in tongues in my head.” Let me correct this belief. You can’t pray in tongues inside your head. You may hear tongues inside your head, but you have to give voice to the Holy Spirit’s utterance. You don’t have to pray loud. You are talking directly to God. He can hear you. You can speak softly. You can even whisper.

Tongues make noise. That's why it's often called speaking in tongues. You can pray other ways in your head because God hears everything, but you must pray in tongues audibly, even if it's just a quiet whisper, as you are yielding your tongue to the Spirit of God who is praying with you.

God Himself sometimes speaks to us in a still small voice (see 1 Kings 19:11-13). Likewise, God whispers to us in our dreams (see Job 33:15). You are not effectively praying in tongues if you are not expressing the prayer verbally. Again, you can't pray in tongues in your head. You have to put your natural tongue in motion.

You can pray loud if you want to. Sometimes passion will cause you to pray loud. Many times when I pray in the spirit I am loud and demonstrative. Sometimes the Holy Spirit is more fervent about a thing and you will feel that fervency and get louder or even demonstrative. Let the Holy Spirit lead you.

Prayer

Father, in the name of Jesus, help me to flow with You in my spirit prayer life. Show me the prayer power I am releasing when I yield my tongue to Your utterance in prayer so I can pray effectively, fervently, earnestly, urgently, continually, and insistently.

CHAPTER 5

YOUR BRAIN ON TONGUES

Remember the “Your Brain on Drugs” campaign? The 1980s initiative by Partnership for a Drug-Free America aimed to help people understand what happens when people take drugs. The commercials show a man holding up an egg saying, “This is your brain.” He then points to a frying pan and says, “This is drugs.” Next, he cracks open the egg over a frying pan and, as the eggs start sizzling, he says, “This is your brain on drugs.”

Dr. Andrew Newberg, a University of Pennsylvania researcher, released study findings that prove the reality of Holy Spirit-inspired tongues. He did this by monitoring the brain activity of people as they prayed in tongues. Newberg concluded our heavenly language is not a natural language because the frontal lobe of the brain—where natural languages originates—is not activated in brain scans when people are praying in tongues.

Dr. Caroline Leaf, a neuroscientist and born-again believer, indicates speaking in tongues increases mental health and emotional stability. She said, “When we speak in tongues, the frontal lobe of the brain, which is involved in intentionality, decreases in activity showing that we are not consciously controlling the process.”

Newberg told ABC News, “When they are actually engaged in this whole very intense spiritual practice for them, their frontal lobes tend to go down in activity, but I think it’s very consistent with the kind of experience that they have because they say that they are not in charge—it’s the voice of God, the Spirit of God that’s moving through them.”¹

Newberg’s study co-author, Donna Morgan, a born-again Christian who says she considers the ability to speak in tongues a gift, told *The New York Times*, “You’re aware of your surroundings. You’re not really out of control. But you have no control over what’s happening. You’re just flowing. You’re in a realm of peace and comfort, and it’s a fantastic feeling.”²

So, if you needed science to back up your faith you have it. You don’t have to get into your head about praying in tongues. But know that it does impact your brain in a positive way, literally renewing your mind.

Prayer

Father, in the name of Jesus, help me not get into my head about praying in tongues. Help me rest in faith knowing that You are really speaking and praying through me so I will be encouraged to lean into my heavenly language all the more.

Notes

1. “Speaking in Tongues Medical Study proves Holy Spirit praying,” YouTube, Jul 18, 2008, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZbQBajYnEc1>.
2. Benedict Carey, “A Neuroscientific Look at Speaking in Tongues,” November 7, 2006, <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/07/health/07brain.html>.