

perfect,” they justify their conclusion that God doesn’t do these things anymore. Nonsense!

If you read that passage in its context, you can easily see what it’s really saying. Remember, Paul’s subject for this entire section of Scripture (1 Cor. 12-14) is properly operating in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He just finished saying that the gifts should be used in love (1 Cor. 13:1-3). First Corinthians 13:4-7 describe what that looks like. Then in verse 8, the Word states that when tongues cease, knowledge will too. Living in what’s been popularly called “The Information Age,” you and I both know that this hasn’t happened yet. In fact, God’s Word prophesies that in the end times, knowledge will greatly increase (Dan. 12:4).

*“For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But **when that which is perfect is come**, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but **then** face to face: now I know in part; but **then** shall I know even as also I am known”* (1 Cor. 13:9-12, emphasis mine). The “*then*” in verse 12 refers to “*when that which is perfect is come.*” At the time, “*when that which is perfect is come,*” you will see Jesus face to face. Since that won’t happen until the Lord’s Second Coming or you die and go to be with Him, neither has tongues passed away yet.

“That which is perfect” refers to your glorified body, not the Bible. Yes, the Bible is perfect—inspired, inerrant, infallible—but

it's not what this phrase is pointing to. When you receive your glorified body, you will no longer see through a glass darkly or know in part. In your glorified body, you will see Jesus face to face and know Him even as He knows you—completely. For now, speaking in tongues has been given to help you grow in the knowledge of Him. In your glorified body, you won't need tongues or the other gifts of the Holy Spirit—prophecy, the word of wisdom, discerning of spirits, interpretation of tongues, etc.—to reveal the Lord anymore, because you'll already know Him fully.

The very scriptures people use to dismiss the gifts of the Holy Spirit actually prove their validity for today! As long as your knowledge of Him is incomplete, the gifts of the Spirit will function. Until you see Jesus face to face in your glorified body, you need to be speaking in tongues. Since “*that which is perfect*” has yet to come, God's miraculous power continues on earth today just as it did for the early church. You would have to already be corrupted with a predisposed, religious mindset in order to honestly look at these scriptures and interpret them as saying “God's miraculous power has passed away.” “*Brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues*” (1 Cor. 14:39)!

Miraculous Proof

Why do some people fight so hard against the truth that the baptism of the Holy Spirit and His miraculous power is for today? Two main reasons are wrong teaching and a rejection of personal responsibility. Doctrines of men can render the Word of God

ineffective. That's what happens when you hold on to religious tradition instead of God's Word (Mark 7:13). Also, there's a fear of having to produce biblical results. If you profess to believe in the baptism in the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, casting out demons, healing, and miracles, then that puts pressure on you to manifest them (Mark 16:17-18). Most people don't want to accept this kind of personal responsibility.

Instead, many hide behind a convenient theology. Calling themselves "Christian," they quickly confess that their sins are forgiven, while their lives offer very little proof. It's easy to profess "My sins are forgiven," because you can't see a sin, and you can't see when it's forgiven. However, if miracles are really part of the Christian life, then there are things you can do to prove their reality. For instance, you can speak in tongues, cast a demon out, see blind eyes and deaf ears open, or even raise someone from the dead (I have personally done all of these things on multiple occasions and know many others who have done them as well—to God be the glory). In order to sit in front of the television, living carnal, self-centered lives while defending their position of being forgiven, these people choose to believe only what God's Word says about forgiveness of sins while conveniently ignoring the rest. They may or may not truly be saved. Who would know?

Jesus used miracles to prove salvation. *"Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy*

bed, and go thy way into thine house” (Mark 2:9-11). Confronted by unbelieving religious leaders, Jesus asked them which would be harder to say, “Your sins are forgiven” or “Take up your bed and walk.” No one can see a sin forgiven, but everyone in that crowded room, including the Pharisees, would be able to see if this man was healed or not. Either he would get up and walk, or Jesus’s words would be totally violated. Therefore, “Take up your bed and walk” was definitely harder to say!

The people knew if Jesus could perform that which was hardest, surely He could do the least. “*And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God*” (Mark 2:12). Jesus used the fact that He could heal bodies and perform miracles in the physical realm to substantiate the fact that He could also do things, like forgiving sins, in the spiritual realm.

The reason many people hide behind this false doctrine that miracles passed away is so they can claim to be in relationship with God without ever doing anything to demonstrate it. That’s just a convenient theology! The truth is that God still does miracles today, and you should be speaking in tongues until you receive your glorified body!

Build Yourself Up

The primary purpose of speaking in tongues is to promote personal spiritual growth. *“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. . . . He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself”* (1 Cor. 14:2 and 4). When you speak in tongues, you’re building yourself up spiritually.

You also keep yourself in the love of God. *“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life”* (Jude 20-21). God’s love for you never changes, but your experience of it does. Speaking in tongues helps you fulfill your responsibility to keep yourself aware of and enjoying God’s unending love.

Speaking in tongues produces rest and spiritual refreshment. *“For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing”* (Is. 28:11-12). Your spirit is the part of you where God lives. It’s brand new,

pure, righteous, and holy. When you pray in tongues, you release into your soul and body the rest and refreshment that's already in your spirit.

Personally, I encourage myself by speaking in tongues. Whenever I feel tired or discouraged, I pray in the spirit until rest and refreshment come. Despite negative circumstances and emotions, I'll exercise my faith to pray in tongues until I'm aware of and enjoying God's love again.

Once you realize you can pray in the spirit anytime you choose, you have no excuse to ever be depressed again!

Praying Perfectly

When you pray in tongues, your natural mind doesn't understand. *"For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful"* (1 Cor. 14:14). Unless there's an interpretation, your intellect doesn't know what your spirit is praying.

Your spirit has the mind of Christ. *"For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ"* (1 Cor. 2:16). Your spirit knows all things. *"But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things"* (1 John 2:20). *"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him"* (Col. 3:10). Therefore, your spirit always knows how to pray perfectly for situations, yourself, and others.

There's a big difference between praying from your spirit and praying from your mind. Your natural mind typically has incomplete information. It lacks full knowledge of God's Word, the situation, and the people involved. Therefore, you cannot pray from your intellect with completeness and 100 percent accuracy. However, since your born-again spirit knows all things, it's impossible to pray in tongues without praying God's perfect will!

At times, the Holy Spirit may intercede for someone else through you as you pray in tongues. *“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God”* (Rom. 8:26-27). This is especially helpful when your mind is not sure how to pray for a specific person or situation.

As you speak in tongues, you are speaking the hidden wisdom of God. Paul received the revelation for the messages he preached through speaking in tongues. *“Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory”* (1 Cor. 2:6-7). *“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 Cor. 14:2). As Paul spoke God's mysteries in tongues, he built himself

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up spiritually and revelation knowledge came. As you pray in tongues, you'll be built up spiritually as revelation knowledge comes to you too!

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Interpretation

When you speak in tongues, you should believe God for the interpretation. *“Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret”* (1 Cor. 14:13). It’s beyond your carnal ability to grasp the mysteries and hidden wisdom of God that you’re praying in the spirit. However, if you ask Him, God will supernaturally give you the interpretation.

The public use of the gift of tongues in a church service requires interpretation. *“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. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God”* (1 Cor. 14:27-28). Without interpretation of a publicly given tongue, some people will think you’re crazy: *“If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?”* (1 Cor. 14:23).

Certain members of the body are given the vocation of interpretation for public purposes. *“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church,*

first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?” (1 Cor. 12:27-30).

Some people have misunderstood 1 Corinthians 12:29-30 to mean that not everyone should speak in tongues. However, Mark 16:17-18 states, *“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”* Therefore, some have vocations of speaking and/or interpreting tongues given publicly in a church service, but every Spirit-baptized believer can pray in tongues for personal edification.

Of Men and Angels

Tongues come in two different types—tongues of men and tongues of angels: *“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels”* (1 Cor. 13:1).

Tongues of men are languages that either have been or are spoken on earth. When the disciples were first baptized in the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, they spoke in tongues of men (Acts 2:4-12). This wasn't merely a supernatural acceleration of language learning, because the speakers themselves had no idea what they were saying. The disciples didn't study all those different

languages in the room while waiting for the promise! The Holy Spirit suddenly baptized them, and their tongues became a supernatural sign to the unbelievers within earshot whose native languages the disciples were speaking (1 Cor. 14:22).

Tongues of angels are heavenly languages. Every Spirit-baptized believer can pray in the tongues of angels. When you speak mysteries and the hidden wisdom of God, you are speaking in an angelic tongue.

It doesn't matter if you speak in a tongue of men or an angelic tongue—you can ask God for the interpretation!

Light in My Closet

Learning to believe God for interpretation turned my life around! When I first prayed in tongues after being baptized in the Holy Spirit, I remember hearing God speak to me in my heart as revelation knowledge began to flow. However, when I started sharing what God had shown me in His Word, people criticized and informed me I was wrong, because they had never heard these truths before. Feeling isolated and alone, I really struggled with what others were telling me and what I was hearing in my heart. In the midst of all this, I just kept seeking the Lord.

For six months, I meditated on God's Word all day long. As I wrote out hundreds of scriptures daily, I'd focus my attention on each individual word and phrase. After meditating this way for eight to ten hours, God's Word exploded with meaning in my heart, but my mind struggled to understand. So, I'd shut

myself in my closet to pray in the spirit for another hour or two. Sitting there underneath my clothes, I'd ask God to interpret to my natural understanding what I'd been studying. Then I'd pray in tongues for the purpose of personal edification.

At the end of that season, my trickle of revelation knowledge suddenly burst forth into a mighty rushing river! In fact, I received so much so fast that I finally told God I couldn't handle any more. It was just more than I could retain! Much of what I'm teaching today—decades later—came as a result of what I learned at that time. I simply prayed in tongues and believed to interpret.

Gain Understanding

All you need to interpret tongues for personal edification is to gain understanding. When you're praying by yourself, you don't have to stop and get an interpretation in English. This method—praying out loud in tongues, then waiting until the English interpretation is given—works well in public, but it's not the only way to receive interpretation. You just need your mind to become fruitful.

God encouraged me through an experience that happened while I was still quite new at this. Since I'd been taught against tongues so strongly, I still wrestled with doubts about whether all my praying in the spirit was really beneficial or not. After spending two hours speaking in tongues one morning, someone whom I hadn't seen in four years showed up at my house. He knocked on the door, rushed in without greeting me, plopped

down on my couch, and burst into tears. My first thought was, *I should have been praying in English instead of wasting all morning praying in tongues!* Then it dawned on me, *How would I have known to pray for this guy unless I had been praying in tongues?* My spirit had been praying perfectly!

All of a sudden, faith rose up inside as I stopped him mid-sentence, interrupting his blubbering attempt to explain the situation. By revelation knowledge, I finished describing the rest of his problem—and nailed it! This supernatural demonstration of God’s power and love totally set him free! Through this, the Lord confirmed to me that I’d been praying in tongues for this situation earlier, and all I had to do was interpret. What I spoke to this man was the interpretation!

Mind Your Head!

When you pray in tongues, your mind can be occupied with something else. Since your spirit’s praying and not your brain, your mind can wander. You can even think about things totally unrelated to God. That’s why some people like to read the Word, enjoy godly music, or listen to Bible teaching while they pray in tongues. Others pray in the spirit while working, driving, or doing household chores. Personally, I’ve trained myself to pray with my understanding while praying in tongues.

When I’d pray in the spirit over longer periods of time, people whom I hadn’t thought of in years would come to mind.

At first, I just dismissed it, but when they'd suddenly call, send a letter, or even show up at my house—like that fellow did—I began realizing that God was giving me interpretations. They weren't always word for word, but also came as impressions, pictures, and unctions. As I recognized the Lord bringing these people to mind, I'd start praying for them. Then I'd follow through and see miracles happen every time!

God led me to call a good friend of mine one time after praying in tongues. We'd been out of touch with each other for several years. He answered the phone and immediately hung up on me. His reaction seemed strange, since I knew God had prompted me to call. While sitting at my desk pondering this, the phone rang. Sure enough, it was my friend! He explained that he had just told God how he had spent his entire life ministering to others, but now that he was in need, nobody was ministering to him. My friend had barely finished praying "God, please send somebody to encourage me, or I'm going to quit the ministry!" when the phone rang and there I was. He was so startled, he hung up the receiver! This whole incident resulted from interpreting a tongue.

You can do this while praying for people, when you need wisdom for a challenging situation, or simply to understand a particular scripture. Just take the person, situation, or passage, and begin praying in tongues over it. As you're praying, ask the Lord to show you what it means. Although understanding may not always come at that exact moment, God will give you an interpretation.

My friend prays in tongues over church services he's going to minister in. He prefers to receive the interpretation right away so he'll know in advance what God wants to do, who's going to be healed of what, etc. Personally, I don't always like to receive the interpretation right away. If God supernaturally told me what was going to happen at a church service a week away, my mind would try to analyze the situation and figure it all out in the meantime. I pray in tongues often without receiving anything from the Lord at that moment. However, when I need it a week or a month later, I'll ask God for the interpretation of what I've been praying in tongues. At that point, I receive exactly what I need from the Holy Spirit.

As you step out in faith to pray in tongues and believe God for the interpretation, you'll receive exactly what you need from the Holy Spirit too!

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Get Started

Speaking in tongues is not something you do just once to prove you've received the baptism in the Holy Spirit; it's a powerful tool to edify yourself spiritually. Whenever you pray in tongues, you cause yourself to rest, you build yourself up on your most holy faith, and you keep the love of God active and alive in your heart. As you speak forth hidden wisdom and believe for interpretation, revelation knowledge will open up and supply answers you couldn't get any other way. That's why the devil has fought so hard against this gift! He's afraid of what would happen if speaking in tongues ever became part of your daily Christian life.

The Holy Spirit inspires the words, but you have to say them. *“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). Notice that the Spirit gave **them** utterance. It's not just purely the Holy Spirit speaking through you. He gives you a prodding and a desire, but you must do the talking.

It's similar to how the gift of teaching works. If I stood before a group of people and prayed “God, please speak through

me, but don't let me say anything that's not of You" and then waited for Him to make me speak, I'd never say anything. It's my responsibility to step out in faith and start talking. God inspires the messages, but they come out through my personality, vocabulary, and mannerisms. God doesn't speak in a Texas drawl; I do! The Holy Spirit supplies the content and I deliver it!

Fear short-circuits your ability to speak in tongues. You might have trouble at first, if you worry about it or try to analyze what you're saying. The Holy Spirit is inspiring you to speak, but it's your fear that's blocking it. Yield your tongue to the Holy Spirit, and then speak forth by faith the words He gives you.

Breakthrough!

For months, I struggled to pray in tongues. Even though I was convinced it was of God and wanted it, I had a hard time receiving my prayer language.

A man came over to my house in an attempt to help me. He asked, "If you repeated something I said in Spanish, would you be speaking in Spanish?" I nodded. "Then if I spoke something in tongues and you repeated it, would you be speaking in tongues?"

"Yes, but I don't want to just repeat something; I want to speak in tongues on my own!" He kept insisting, so finally I gave in. However, I stopped after only getting through the first couple

of words. Embarrassed, I told him I wasn't doing a very good job repeating what he said.

He argued, "Yeah, but you were speaking in tongues. That wasn't English!"

By then I had reached my limit. "No; I don't accept that. I wasn't speaking in tongues!" He just threw up his hands in frustration and left.

Immediately after this, I was on my way to minister to someone. In desperation I declared, "God, I'm just going to start talking. I believe that You are going to help me speak in tongues." Then I began making up nonsense words and saying them out loud. It seemed silly to me, so I didn't feel very good about it. However, I realized that I'd said two words that did sound pretty decent. Since they seemed like a real language to me, I figured they must be tongues. So, I took those two words and started speaking them over and over again all the way to my destination.

Upon arrival, I experienced the best time of ministry I'd ever had before. I was convinced it was because I'd been praying in tongues. On my way home, I started praising God in the car and decided to pray using those two words some more, but I panicked when I couldn't remember them. After struggling so long to pray in tongues, I had forgotten the only two words I'd received!

Then I thought, *I'll just get another two!* So, I started the process over again until another two words came. After using them for a while, I added a couple more. Within a few moments, I was speaking fluently in tongues!

Looking back, I know now that I could have spoken in tongues all along. However, I was under the false impression that the Holy Spirit would come upon me with such force that I wouldn't be able to keep myself from blurting out in tongues. When that never happened, I discovered He doesn't work that way. The Holy Spirit was just waiting for me to speak out in faith the words He'd been gently inspiring me to say.

Now it's your turn to do the same!

Let's Pray

“Father, thank You for baptizing me in the Holy Spirit! I'm so grateful You gave me this wonderful gift. Please help me to walk in all of its benefits!

“Through speaking in tongues, I can draw on the power You've placed within me: for rest and refreshing, for building my faith and keeping myself in Your love, and for revelation knowledge as interpretation comes.

“I am a believer! Your Word says, ‘These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues (Mark 16:17). By faith, I will speak in tongues from this day forward, in Jesus's name. Amen!’”

Father Is Proud of You!

Now, by faith, say out loud those sounds coming up from deep within. You'll be talking in a language unknown to you,

but the Holy Spirit is the One inspiring it. You'll be speaking in tongues!

Go ahead—practice awhile! Enjoy yourself in the Lord!

If you aren't fluent right away, don't worry—God is proud of you! When little children start to speak, their parents know what they are trying to say. Even though it's baby talk, they're pleased. Your heavenly Father is proud of you, even if your tongue isn't fluent yet. If you'll just keep using it and not worry about yourself so much, tongues will begin to flow out of you unhindered!

As your brother in the Lord, I welcome you to the Spirit-filled life!

About the Author



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Andrew's life was forever changed the moment he encountered the supernatural love of God on March 23, 1968. The author of more than thirty books, Andrew has made it his mission for five decades to change the way the world sees God.

Andrew's vision is to go as far and deep with the Gospel as possible. His message goes *far* through the *Gospel Truth* television and radio program, which is available to nearly half the world's population. The message goes *deep* through discipleship at Charis Bible College, founded in 1994, which has campuses across the United States and around the globe.