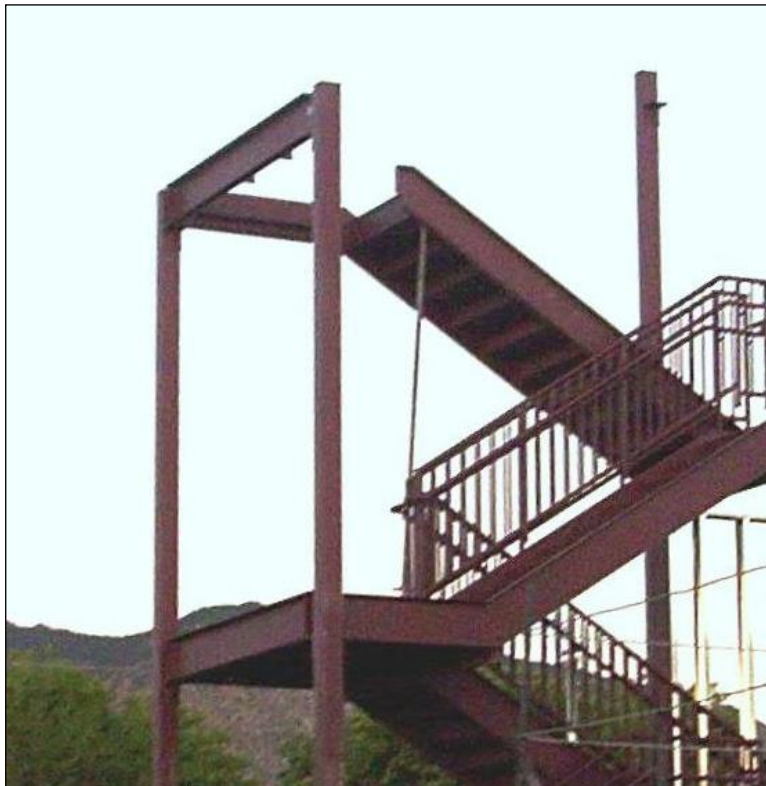


# WALK WITH ME



By  
HARRY BRILEY



# Appendix F – Analysis of Tongues

Revised 6/14/2015

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Cover: “Stairway to Heaven”, Northeast Albuquerque, New Mexico – 2012



## Appendix F – Summary Analysis of Tongues

### On Forbidding Tongues

I debated whether to leave a sleeping dog alone or to include any mention of speaking tongues as part of my memoirs. I realized that for nearly all my friends, what comes to mind with speaking in tongues looks like a mental patient with eyes rolled back in the head, losing grip on reality, and uncontrollably babbling incoherently. I elected that the subject matter at least deserved an explanation to counter that default cultural image.

This appendix explains what I mean by speaking in tongues, and more to the point, what it is not. In my **Coming of Age** and **College with Purpose** chapters, I described my introduction to tongues, my apologetic of it in an English class assignment, my early understanding of it during the Jesus Revolution, and Chuck Girard’s testimony.

Many books cover the subject of the Biblical supernatural charismatic gifts, with volatile diatribes for and against speaking in tongues. This appendix does not rehash available literature. Instead, I offer my own analysis in a condensed summarized form.

I presented nearly all of the following original material twice at Trinity Baptist Church in Livermore, each as a single session within part of my larger theme. I have since slightly expanded the text and added a few newsworthy events for evangelical believers.

I received peer-review comments prior to my original 2007 presentation.

A retired pastor, *“I appreciated again your orderly mind displayed in print.”*

A co-teacher wrote, *“I am skeptical. I assumed that tongues were a faked or delusional thing associated with Pentecostals. It can become “flashy”. Your comments are not contravened within the Bible, but I keep my spiritual gate closely guarded. People getting audibly addressed (an outside voice) by God tends to alert me. Tongues get me standing with attention at that [vital] gate. - - - Is it useful? The original use for exposition to the foreigners in Jerusalem with a rather uneducated first set of missionaries makes sense. The seeming babble associated with tongues (with no grounding in a language) does not seem useful for spreading the gospel or much of a gift for helping the faithful. The other gifts directly minister to the church and are understandable in that context.”*

The 2007 presentation occurred as part of my Sunday morning class on church history. The class met it with skepticism and offered rebuttal questions along with those asked by Pastor Ray Stedman of Peninsula Bible Church in Palo Alto (San Francisco Bay Area).

For half of our FAITH outreach teams, my second class in 2013 explored the historical record of God’s Spirit and touched upon various charismatic gifts. That syllabus became an orderly overview document in an available PDF file called: *“Holy Spirit and FAITH”*. All such classroom material exposed my bias as a pragmatic supra-naturalist.

## The Promoters

Advocates of charisma gifts that appealed to me came from unexpected theological quarters. The non-controversial magazine “*Guideposts*” did not venture here, but their senior editor, John Sherrill, an Episcopalian, wrote a best seller “*They Speak with Other Tongues*” 1964 (republished in 2004) and routinely prayed in tongues in his office.

Before I knew whether there even was a Holy Spirit in 1970, the war against speaking in tongues was (and is) in full gear. I found Episcopalian priest and his wife, the late Dennis and Rita Bennett, well-suited apologists in their books “*Nine O’clock in the Morning*” 1970 and “*The Holy Spirit and You*” 1971.

## The Prohibitory

Dispensationalists are certain that the gift of tongues (and other non-pastoral gifts) died with the last Apostle, giving “lack of historical mention” as evidence, and then with a wave of the hand dismiss the past 110 years as an aberration. They assure the reader that a great deal of disagreement exists, while implying their own impartial handling.

One will read, “*While some say that we can't be absolutely sure that tongues is no longer one of the gifts*”, their tone is “BUT, we are absolutely sure it is NOT.” Buried in the text, without scriptural foundation, was their doctrinal position. “*The gift of tongues ... is no longer given by the Holy Spirit*”. [Ref: AWANA Journey Workbook “*1 Corinthians*”]

I taught the excellent four-year cycle high school program for AWANA since 2005 but I always cringed when this specific section occurred once every four years. Several student families attended Charismatic type congregations and I balanced the unyielding rhetoric in that specific workbook with my apologetics on the topic.

## The Pickle

Any organization, like AWANA, that serves multiple denominations runs the gamut of liturgical to evangelical to charismatic to dispensational. Inter-tribal concerns affect a host of organizations. Staying close to the Apostle's Creed keeps most out of hot water. However, at the mention of tongues, the picture rapidly reflects the funding denomination and/or the current theological bias of their current board of directors.

If God *especially* shut down the gift of tongues (and of interpretation) while continuing others, this logical inconsistency has no recourse but to conclude that:

1. Everyone else interprets Scripture in error
2. People interpret Scripture to match denominational funding or governing policy
3. Tongue speakers are psychologically delusional (or “of Satan” as one Church of Christ pastor bluntly told me) ... even if one who so spoke was the recent 17-year president of the International Missions Board (IMB) of Southern Baptists!
4. Other scripture might be likewise doctrinally time-boxed (“In as much as they are correctly translated” say the LDS Mormons)

The scriptures do not imply a selective demise of any gift, but lists a minimum of 25 known scriptural gifts (charisma) and possibly more if we dug deeper. God through His



Spirit gives gifts as He so chooses. This is my informed conjecture, but if that were a uniform distribution, only 4% of any congregation would have any particular one of the non-salvation gifts. I know Pentecostals hotly disagree, but that was borne out in my 45 years of observation. It leads me to believe that Paul wisely told the Corinthians about WHO is the Sovereign regarding the distribution of HIS own gifts.

If the proportional distribution holds true, which appears in keeping with how God operates [see I Cor. 12:29-30], and unless there was widespread abuse to warrant a Papal Bull, and since it was rarely pushed into public, it was quite understandable that the gift of tongues was not in the historical narrative.

Paul expressly said not to forbid the speaking in tongues (since his statement implies some in the churches were already forbidding it in his day – I Cor.14:39-40). Restriction even during Paul’s day would be cause of demise in the early literature. Given the chilly reception received in some quarters, restriction by definition blocks public engagement.

Satan can mimic, frighten, and confuse, but he cannot duplicate the fruits of God’s Spirit nor enable a believer joyfully to follow Jesus (both are prevalent outcomes of tongues). Jesus, speaking of exorcism said, “*How can Satan drive out Satan? ... A house divided against itself will not stand.*” - Matt. 12:24-25; Mark 3:22-24; Luke 11:17-18

I observed infrequently but often enough that Baptist missionaries credit the Baptism into God’s Holy Spirit as crucial for the mission field. [Ref: “Spiritual Warfare Conference” at Golden Gate Seminary (Southern Baptist), 2005]

Pastor Todd Wilson in 2006 of Grace Covenant Baptist wrote (edited):

*An increasing number of International Mission Board [IMB] applicants describe a “private prayer language” with reports of it on the field. Dr. Jerry Rankin, **president of the IMB** [1993 – 2010, now emeritus] admitted to using a private prayer language and recently reiterated that it is always in private. [Dr. Rankin did not ally himself with disorderly Charismatic activity. Use of tongues in a public service was already a **cause for dismissal** from the IMB.]*

*In May 2005 the Personnel Committee adopted guidelines: If “private prayer language” is an ongoing part of his conviction, a candidate **has eliminated himself.**” [The policy exempted current missionaries.] *The trustees later adopted this guideline in November 2005 [by a **58% vote** of 25 to 18]. Notice that the decision was based on what the majority of Southern Baptists accept. This can prove to be a dangerous precedent. – Pastor Todd Wilson**

<http://www.baptistboard.com/showthread.php?t=4461> [Bolded font is my own]

Moderation in the IMB policy ten years later in 2015 (edited):

*(RNS) After decade-long resistance, the Southern Baptist Convention will admit missionary candidates who speak in tongues. The new policy, approved by the IMB on Wednesday (May 13), reverses a policy put in place in 2005.*

*Allowing missionaries to speak in tongues, or have what some SBC leaders call a “private prayer language,” speaks to the growing strength of Pentecostal churches in Africa, Asia, and South America, where Southern Baptists compete and where energized new Christians enthusiastically embrace the practice. “In many parts of the world, these charismatic experiences are normative,” said Bill Leonard, professor of church history at Wake Forest Divinity School. “Religious groups that oppose them get left behind evangelistically.”*

*The change does not mean that they will commission missionaries who speak in tongues. However, Wendy Norvelle, a spokeswoman for the IMB, said an affirmative answer regarding the practice would no longer lead to automatic disqualification. Southern Baptists have long prided themselves as among the world’s most ambitious missionaries — reaching countries and regions few dared to go — but they increasingly find competition from fast-growing Pentecostal Christianity. In 2005, the IMB created guidelines that specifically disqualified all missionary candidates who spoke in tongues. For [most] Southern Baptists, the practice, known as glossolalia, ended after the death of Jesus’ apostles. The ban on speaking in tongues became a way to distinguish the denomination from others. These days, it can no longer afford that distinction.*

*“Southern Baptists are experiencing such demographic trauma of membership and baptism they need new constituencies among non-white population,” Leonard said. Indeed, the issue became such a lightning rod for Southern Baptists that it got top billing on the application form. “If someone said they did pray in tongues, they were automatically disqualified, essentially for being honest,” said Wade Burleson, an Enid, Okla., pastor who opposed the ban.*

*The policy changes approved during an IMB trustee meeting in Louisville, KY, will leave the question of tongues on the application. The IMB said it would still end employment for any missionary who places “persistent emphasis on any specific gift of the Spirit as normative for all or to the extent such emphasis becomes disruptive,” an FAQ on the IMB website explained.*

*The IMB will recognize baptisms performed by other Christian denominations so long as they were full-body immersion. Previously, a Southern Baptist minister must have baptized candidates who transferred from another denomination.*

Religion News Service - Greg Horton and Yonat Shimron, May 14, 2015  
<http://www.religionnews.com/2015/05/14/southern-baptists-open-ranks-missionaries-speak-tongues/>

## The Personal

Since 1970, I observed abuses, imitations, bad theology, and disorder for speaking in tongues, but I found cases of proper use and interpretation across all denominations, especially among pastors in the American Southwest and missionaries on foreign fields, all of whom are theologically conservative.

I have not observed speaking in tongues among theological liberals since they consider the supra-natural to be folklore myths held by the less educated classes. However, given that the numerous Jesus People scattered among all denominations, pockets likely occur among political liberals who adhere to a traditional salvation-centric theology.

God has given me this least of the gifts, without my seeking it specifically, and before the pastor had a chance to explain it. The collaborating evidence was clear Bible reading, that an hour before was mere ink on paper. Privately, I have prayed and often sung using tongues nearly daily since 1970 in the quietude of my home or commute about town.

Anne wrote in her Fuller Seminary class journal 2/3/1985 (edited):

*I read the book [written by Dennis and Rita Bennett called “Nine o’clock in the Morning”] last in 1975 and mostly because I recently experienced the baptism into the Holy Spirit. However, I read it fresh [10 years later] with a different eye.*

*So much in this book may be an example of me! Rita Bennett stated that praying in tongues should be a daily matter but did not use her gift for many years.*

*I hardly, if ever, use this gift [in church]. I am not in a charismatic fellowship. One does not use skis in Hawaii but that does not mean you do not use them anywhere else! Praise in English and the other language permeates my life and makes it joyful. I am reluctant to share my experience because I am afraid that people would not understand. However, many do understand.*

*Even so, I want to tell them that tongues do not replace regular prayer, fellowship, Bible study, or formal worship. My prayer at first might be “Oh Lord! I want to be more like Dennis Bennett!” However, it should be “Open me, use me, teach me, and guide me. I want to be what you want me to be.”*

The Lord used me only five times in a formal public setting over the past four decades. I spoke each simply with an ordinary tone of voice. I had no assurance that an interpretation would occur. I had to trust God to follow through. Each public setting occurred with interpretation by another (or two cases, in series, with one person stopping mid-sentence and another finishing without a missed beat).

At a large gathering in Sacramento California of evangelical United Methodist pastors, the conference theme focused upon God’s Holy Spirit. I attended as a certified pulpit speaker. The moderator specifically requested from the pulpit “If anyone has a tongue.” I stood up near the back row, was recognized, spoke, was interpreted, and well received. A perplexed pastor leaned over to ask how I had ever learned that language (10/1999).

A public use of tongues in 2005 offered up a prayer for a specific need at an unnamed congregation. The pastor thanked me later on how quietly and orderly it was offered. It had never been done within his congregation although he was personally supportive. He was given the interpretation, which I suspect left the greater impression. My too few anecdotes shows formal public use can occur, although rarely, in evangelical churches.

God is a gentleman in the Wesleyan understanding. He does not force eternal life (defined as a charismatic gift in Rom.6:23) upon anyone (contrary to strict Calvinist double pre-destination). Likewise, he does not force any other gift upon his people. The text appears as "whosoever will", for salvation in particular, and as His Spirit distributes for the other 24 gifts in general (and still, only to the willing).

## The Paranoia

### The “Strange Fire” Conference in 2013

Pastor John MacArthur asked traditional Charismatics to challenge evil in their ranks. Normally, he has no kind words for any Pentecostal or Charismatic believer. This odd request appeared to give credence to a portion of the more mature leaders in the camp. There was no “meeting of the minds”. He unilaterally called for censorship of the truly bizarre (even though he treats all supernatural gifts as bizarre, if not outright blasphemy).

*“The sold-out ‘Strange Fire’ conference October 16-18, 2013 will [expose] prosperity preachers, faith healers, charismatic aberrations, and blasphemies of the Holy Spirit.” – Conference website*

Rowland Croucher wrote a review of another author, John Stott:

*Stott has “an exhortation” first to “**charisphobiacs**”: “It would be easy, through fear or pride or envy to question or deny the validity of experiences claimed. Provided that there is nothing contrary to Scripture, and provided that the fruits seem beneficial, we must be humbly recognise the unusual operation of the Holy Spirit.”*

*Then to those with unusual visitation of the Spirit: “It is the spiritual graces, which should be common to all Christians, not spiritual gifts. More particularly, I would appeal to you **not** to urge upon people a ‘baptism in the Spirit’ as a second and subsequent experience entirely distinct from conversion, for this cannot be proved from Scripture.” (from “Baptism and Fullness” by John R W Stott (IVP 1975), Page73-74.)*

*[On the other hand] John Wesley was a proponent of the “crisis” rather than the “process” idea in holiness. He advocated both. Many of my Pentecostal Charismatic friends find an affinity with John Wesley. - Rowland Croucher [John Wesley promoted “Sanctification” as that subsequent experience.]*

An anonymous blogger responded to the Conference on 10/28/2013:

*Pastor John MacArthur graduated from BIOLA with Honors[, not a Seminary. Yet, he] should read books by the first Dean of BIOLA, R.A.Torrey. Books like, "What the Bible Teaches," "The Baptism of The Holy Spirit," "Prayer," and the sermon R.A.Torrey gave at D.L. Moody's funeral.*

*D.L.Moody and R.A.Torrey [together] had quite a difference in theology on the Gifts of the Spirit, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, the Apostolic Age than do Scofield ... and Pastor MacArthur.*

## Cessation Objections

The open questions remain open. Here are my proposed answers to common objections.

### **Q: What is the value of tongues?**

A: We immediately tend to observe the auxiliary fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5) at greater levels than before ‘experience X’ occurs (as Episcopal Father Dennis Bennett wound up calling it). There is alertness to things of God compared to a general dullness of interest. Generally, the theology of the participant becomes significantly more conservative and certain, as compared to more liberal and tenuous.

### **Q: What about the audio recordings of tongues worldwide by a linguist known to Ray Stedman (a cessationist) determined to be linguistic nonsense.**

A: According to Wycliffe Bible Translators and Summer Institute of Linguistics (2008), there are 6909 spoken languages; the majority being quite alien to Western ears. I always harbored an inner concern that despite my enunciated and measured speech patterns in tongues, there is the distinct likelihood of it being nonsense. Yet, I can easily distinguish gibberish that passes as tongues from those with the gift. There is something happening that cannot be explained by psychological pressures. If we assume that even tongues not affected by some wild emotional state are not real languages, what do we make of the presumed interpretations? Could the miracle be in the hearing and not in the speaking?

### **Q: If neither the speaker nor interpreter knows the spoken sounds, what makes the resulting message different from Mormon theology claiming God’s message?**

A: Refer to I Corinthians 14 regarding both tongues and prophesy. There is a call for one to judge and to edify the community. We must check that the interpretation does not contradict known scripture, history, and fundamental theology. The Wesleyan theology would check a message against rational judgment. The same checks we test against Joseph Smith’s writings would apply to anything in the spiritual realm. John commands us to evaluate everything that claims to be from God (I John 4:1)

### **Q: Ray Stedman (1979) argues that Paul’s use of tongues was solely to the Jews to satisfy Isaiah 28:11 (which Paul himself quotes) and not for private use.**

A: Isaiah 28 in context referred to the Assyrian empire fulfilling the judgment against Israel. I was astounded that Paul used this passage to refer to tongues. The cessationist dogma that tongues are not for private use does not square with Paul’s argument in context. I strongly suspect that Paul had contemplated the use of tongues for Cornelius (non-Jews) and usages by Jewish believers to reach the conclusion that it was an external sign of an internal transformation of something significant (not necessarily of salvation), sufficient enough to warn against its restriction. John Wesley would call this secondary experience ‘sanctification’ (to signify that a full surrender to Jesus as Lord versus accepting his offer only as fire insurance against hell) which yielded a dramatic assurance of salvation within the individual. Pastor Jim Meek, my former Baptist pastor, would call this ‘dying to self’ to distinguish this full surrender from the traditional Southern Baptist meaning of the ‘Baptism of the Holy Spirit’. I prefer to call it the “NesTea Plunge” (with the image of a man holding a glass of iced tea falling backwards into a pool of refreshing water). If the Bible does not support my daily use privately according to Stedman, then

to what shall I attribute the phenomenal lifelong biblical engagement and inner transformation to a godly lifestyle that began within the span of a few minutes?

**Q: If God is Sovereign [he is] and if he gives gifts [he does], what happens if we do not like the gift that he has given us or if we dislike a specific ‘flashy’ gift?**

A: God is Sovereign. He gives gifts of his choosing through his Holy Spirit. He does not force himself. However, with the gift, he enables a willingness and faith to exercise it. Isaiah said that it was presumptuous for the pot to say to the potter, “Why hast thou made this way!” I personally did not want the gift of the Discernment of Spirits. I dislike working in that part of the spiritual realm, but this needed gift alerts upon influence of demonic activity. Despite my protestations to the Lord, when critical situations occurred, God gave me both the willingness and the wisdom in use of that undesired gift.

Anyone chosen by God for unusual roles and demonstration of signs typically tried to get out of the job (Moses at age 80, Jonah) or told God that they were unqualified (Jeremiah, Isaiah). This was not false humility. They truly were not seeking the assignment.

**Q: Since we can interpret “Gifts of Healing” to be receiver-specific (the one healed), could tongues be the same to the hearer rather than the speaker?**

A: This appealing proposition is perhaps not far off the mark. While the miracle may be in the hearing, the speaker is still the person speaking. Paul always addresses specific individuals as having the gift as the speakers, and the judges as the hearers.

**Q: How does one know if an interpreter is present? Is there a roster in the church?**

A: Stedman (1979) and others, while denying the gift for today, nevertheless insist on proper use when it occurs. Something is lost in that logic! I think they use the emphasis of Paul requiring an interpreter as evidence that the gift is not in use today. However, Paul asks the speaker to pray that they themselves might interpret, without insisting that only they may do so. From my observations, no one can claim to be an official interpreter. Only from a willingness and experience, can a person say they have that gift. There are no guarantees as each situation is an unknown case. Both the speaker and the available interpreters are working fundamentally on faith in the thing not seen, knowing from experience they had past evidences for the things hoped for (an application of Hebrews 11). Without evidence or knowledge of any interpreters in my public speaking, I indeed prayed to interpret as needed but trusted God would defend his own best interests. The interpreters always captured the words better than I would have done.

**Q: Stedman (1979) insists that tongues can never bring a message to edify the church, since Paul says that without interpretation, the speaker is speaking to God.**

A: This is a curious dogma forcing scripture to fit a theology. God is Sovereign. Paul clearly only reserves tongues without interpretation for private use. However, when interpretation occurs, tongues follows the pattern of prophesy and must be judged as a public event. Else, why would Paul so fervently care if it never bore a useful message?

## **My Observations**

### **Faked or mimicked - What general public thinks**

- No visible fruit of Jesus
- Clearly not in control of themselves
- Mumbled
- Drug/Alcohol induced
- Frenzied
- Frothing at mouth
- Mental patient with eyes rolled back in head
- Oracles of Delphi (Ancient Greece)
- Occult

### **Forced or imitated - What people typically see**

- Old style Pentecostalism of working up the crowd
- Clearly “getting into” the atmosphere or “letting themselves go”
- Shrill repetition of a single or few syllables
- Sometimes an attitude of contention
- Often the loud ones in the congregation
- Used as a “proof” that a person is spirit-filled
- Dogma that all members can and should speak
- Members forcing it to avoid being left out (and ironically, missing out)
- Self-assured that other churches are missing the boat - Not humble

### **Factual - What people rarely see**

- Often the quiet ones in the congregation
- Not driven by “mood”, being “worked up”, or loud music
- Can sometimes be “deep in worship” but clearly in right mind
- Enunciated and measured speaking
- Can be unusual to Western ears given 6909 (mostly non-Latin) languages
- Attitude of thankfulness, prayer about a concern, or presenting a message
- Can start and stop at will
- Can interleave and pause to allow for interpretation
- Interpretation is not translation (e.g. language interpreters in business meetings)
- Minority of believers (Only 4% if the known 25 charisma gifts given equally)
- Aware that they are a minority, and often self-censure



### Which of these is Babble?

Pastor Jim Meek often said, “*The ‘Barbarians’ were those people groups whose speech sounded like ‘Bar-Bar-Bar’ to the ears of cultured Roman and Greek citizens.*”

At first glance, consider whether the following list of words and phrases are senseless babble or represent languages. Do not overthink it. What is your first impression? It looks to me like I randomly whacked at alphabetic letters on my computer keyboard.

1. Boe Ker Tov
2. Goo Tentahg
3. Kakah Hee Akah
4. Bwen Doe Ming Oh!
5. Paahk Tshoi
6. Dobra Djeen
7. Alo Ha Oyie
8. Chee Chee Casta Nengo
9. Bonn Jurr Mesamee
10. Ba Ruuk Atah
11. Mn-yah Zavoot
12. Cho Cho
13. Ho Eu Ang Elion
14. Alaban Zas Adee Ohs
15. Kana-hoe Kai Loo-ah
16. Domo Aree Gato
17. Wen Dee Sheekah Goh
18. Oh Chin! Hara Show!
19. Sahnc Toos Keer Ree Ay
20. Sahn Gray Day Krees Toe

**Answer:** They are all babble

... to the one who does not speak the language. ☺  
(Ref: I Cor. 14:11,14-15,18-19)

Translations: 1 Good Morning, 2 Good Day, 3 Good Morning, 4 Good Sunday,  
5 a Chinese Vegetable, 6 Good Day, 7 Welcome You All, 8 Mayan town in Guatemala,  
9 Hello My Friends, 10 Blessed Are You, 11 My Name is ..., 12 Butterfly, 13 The Good  
Message (Gospel), 14 Praise to God, 15 a region on Oahu, 16 Thank you very much,  
17 Windy City, 18 VERY Very Good!, 19 Holy Lord, 20 Blood of Christ

## How Should Tongues Start?

God's Spirit uses the avenue of **forgiveness** upon the heart (our seat of emotions).

First, and foremost, God must change the heart/soul:

Jer 17:9-10

Matt 15:18-19

Second, God engages the redeemed heart/soul:

Matt 7:20-24

John 7:38-39

Our fully engaged brain is observing, governing, listening, but not speaking.

I Cor 14:14-19

I Cor 14:32-33 and 39-40

Examples subsequent to Acts chapter 2 were not languages listed by name.

Acts 10:1-2, 33-46     Cornelius and his friends

Acts 11:1-4, 15-18     God used the redeemed heart to glorify himself

Acts 19:1-7

Acts does not record when Paul started using tongues

I Cor 14:14-19

He expressly equates "in the spirit" with his own tongues

## Consider These Things When Seeking God

God wants a sincere, diligent seeker (in all aspects of his/her faith walk)

Matt. 5:6

Hebrews 11:6

Discover WHO the Sovereign is and learn about HIS intentions towards us

John 6:37

Romans 8:32

John 1:32-34

Jesus is the agent

John 16:24

Pray with confidence that God wants the best for us

James 1:17

Thank God for His attributes

I John 1:9

Confess sins, any guilt, and any condemnation

I Tim.4:14

Ask mature believers to put their hands on your shoulders

II Chron. 1:11-12

Seek the Giver ("Thy Will") and not the gift ("My Will")

Praise God in advance for whatever gifts HE has chosen to give you.

## God-Engendered Transformation

If the scriptural passages (which I presume you did not bypass) presented the realm of the supra-natural sufficiently for the cognizant, engaged, rational Christian, then begin to act upon that conviction with our loving God.

Resist the temptation as my dear Anne had done in college before she became a believer when a friend suggested she read I Corinthians 12. Anne wrote back a bald-faced lie, “I read it! It was a wonderful chapter!” She recounted that God always bought that lie to mind whenever she felt tempted to run in the spiritual life under her own steam.

Check off the passages listed on the prior page as you read them in the order proposed. Many people know some of the verses well, but take the time to re-read each afresh.

God does not force any gift upon His people. It is always for "whosoever will", for salvation in particular, and as His Spirit distributes all 24 other listed gifts in general.

- Accept the offer of forgiveness authorized by the death and resurrection of Jesus
- Be consciously engaged (with no New Age emptying of the mind)
- Avoid hyper-intense or pressured situations
- Someone yelling in my ear never made me worshipful
- An attempted tongue forced under obligation or pressure is human-driven activity

What does a renewed life and transformed mind look like?

- Assurance of sins fully forgiven
- Deeply affirmed that God is worth life itself
- Naming of this follow-on transformation varies across denominations
  - If asking a Catholic, “Are you living in a State of Grace?”
  - If asking an Evangelical, “Are you dying to self?”
  - If asking a Wesleyan, “Are you experiencing a sanctified life in Jesus?”
- Reasonably expect a surge of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5) in bloom

Since this appendix is mostly a theological presentation and reflects over 45 years of contemplation, it did not fit directly into the early chapters of my memoir. Even so, it is essential to know how I approached this material to best comprehend my memoirs as a whole. My life story so repetitively derives from a close relationship with Jesus that my memoirs cannot be isolated from an understanding of an engaged Judeo-Christian faith.

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