

# **The Spirit of God Moved: Speaking in Tongues**

## **By Mike Lorence**

### **A Night to Remember**

I was sitting in the small basement room packed with a bunch of teenage hippies and a few adults, wondering what the heck I was doing there. It was the end of August 1971 and I was seventeen years old getting ready to start my senior year of high school in a few days. I recognized a few of the kids around the room. I had seen them before at my high school. The room was full of cigarette smoke and there were pockets of conversation going on. Others would come in and people would go to greet them with a hug and a kiss. Nothing new since I'd seen this in other hippie groups I'd been in. But I sat there quietly not knowing what to expect.

A week earlier, I'd been invited to attend this "fellowship" meeting by a girl I knew from high school while I, along with my brother and a friend, had been in the Denny's late one night. I invited her to join us hoping she'd go out and party with us, but instead she told me that she was now a Christian. After laughing at her recent transition, I began to challenge her with numerous questions about the Bible knowing she wouldn't be able to answer them. Instead, she invited a guy from her group to come over and talk with me. To my surprise, he answered all my questions and then invited me to come to this Bible fellowship at the girl's home. Out of character for me, I said I would come.

Now here I was still not knowing why I had shown up. Finally, a long-haired guy got everyone's attention, the cigarettes were put out and the room became quiet. They pulled out guitars and sang some songs. Then they started to pray. A few different ones prayed for various things. Nothing new here. I'd seen and heard it all before when I attended church years ago. Then someone stood up and started speaking in this strange language followed by some biblical sounding words in English. Then a couple more did the same thing. NOW THIS WAS NEW. I had no idea what had just happened but I was curious to find out more.

Eventually the leader shared from the Bible, they had some more songs and prayer and it was over. Everyone lit up their cigarettes and some started to leave. I wanted to know more about this language thing so I saw two guys talking and one I recognized. They were talking about something called speaking in tongues. I joined in and as they started to leave, I asked if I could go with them, especially if they were still going to discuss this topic. Off we went back to the same Denny's I had been at only a week earlier. I had no idea what to expect.

The "rest of the story" to come later.

### **The Fall of Man**

God always wants the absolute best. He never wants less than that for man. In Genesis 1 we read all that He did to prepare the heavens and the earth for man.

#### **Genesis 1:1-2 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

<sup>2</sup> And the earth was [became] without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Something cataclysmic happened between verse one and verse two that disrupted all that God had originally created to the point the earth was now formless and empty. Only darkness existed. But then something happened. The Spirit of God moved. Stop and think about that for just a minute.

### **THE SPIRIT OF GOD MOVED.**

Whenever the Spirit of God moves, the unimaginable happens. What is wasted is transformed into something wonderful and vibrant. That which is empty is now filled with abundance. And out of darkness light now radiates.

E. W. Bullinger state that the meaning of the word “Spirit” from the Hebrew word *rūach* (roo'-akh) is, “The one root idea running through all the passages [where this word is used] is the *invisible force*. ...[And] always represents that which is *invisible* except by its manifestations. These are seen both externally to man, as well as internally within man.”<sup>1</sup>

You cannot see the Spirit of God, that invisible force, move but you can see the manifestations that result from that movement. God provides everything needed for the man and woman He formed, made, and created in the next several verses of Genesis 1. Nothing was lacking. At the end of each day, God looked at what He had done and He “saw that it was good.” But in verse 31 it states,

#### **Genesis 1:31a (KJV)**

<sup>31</sup> And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.

The manifestation of the Spirit of God moving was that what God had done was VERY GOOD. Man and God were able to commune perfectly with one another and it was truly a paradise on earth. But then man broke the one commandment of God and, as a result, he lost that spiritual connection with God. The ability to communicate openly and freely with one another was gone.

#### **Genesis 2:16-17 (KJV)**

<sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

<sup>17</sup> But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

The death refers to the loss of the spirit God had created back in Genesis 1:27. Just like in Genesis 1:2 when the earth became empty, so now man is empty spiritually. There's a void within him that can only be filled with the spirit of God. As before, it will take the Spirit of God

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<sup>1</sup> Bullinger, E. W. (1974). *The Companion Bible: Being the Authorized Version of 1611 with Structures and Critical and Explanatory Notes with 198 Appendixes. Appendix 9: The Usage of Rūach, Spirit.* Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA: Zondervan Bible Publishers.

moving, that invisible force, to set things right again. God set His plan in motion. He promised a redeemer, one that would pay the price for all. One that would mend the spiritual rift between God and man. That redeemer would be Jesus Christ.

### **Romans 5: 12, 14 (AMP)**

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, so death spread to all people [no one being able to stop it or escape its power], because they all sinned.

<sup>14</sup>Yet death ruled [over mankind] from Adam to Moses [the Lawgiver], even over those who had not sinned as Adam did. Adam is a type of Him (Christ) who was to come [but in reverse—Adam brought destruction, Christ brought salvation].

What destruction did Adam bring? It was that God and man didn't have that spiritual connection. The communion between God and man had been lost. Mankind was dead spiritually.

At times, men and women had the spirit of God "upon" them, as it was needed, enabling them to do the works of God. It was upon a condition, that condition being it was done at God's discretion and it was only temporary. Even though some men and women had the spirit upon them, it didn't fill that spiritual void within man. Even Jesus Christ didn't receive the spirit unto his baptism when he was thirty years old.<sup>2</sup> It was necessary for him to be able to fulfill his ministry. Even Christ's coming didn't fill that void within man. It didn't finally come until the Day of Pentecost.

### **Man's Redemption**

#### **Ephesians 2:1, 4-6 (AMP)**

<sup>1</sup>And you [He made alive when you] were [spiritually] dead *and* separated from Him because of your transgressions and sins,

<sup>4</sup>But God, being [so very] rich in mercy, because of His great *and* wonderful love with which He loved us,

<sup>5</sup>even when we were [spiritually] dead *and* separated from Him because of our sins, He made us [spiritually] alive together with Christ (for by His grace—His undeserved favor and mercy—you have been saved from God's judgment).

<sup>6</sup>And He raised us up together with Him [when we believed], and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places*, [because we are] in Christ Jesus,

We were spiritually dead and we were separated from God. The connection was gone. Nothing was there. Yet when the Spirit of God moved, it all changed. To paraphrase Genesis 1:31, "And God saw every thing that he had done and, behold, it was very good" when He was able to

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<sup>2</sup> Matthew 3:16-17 (KJV) - 16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. See also Luke 3:21-22 and John 1:29-34.

finally able to make us “spiritually alive” for the first time since Adam was in the Garden of Eden. It was VERY GOOD to finally accomplish the plan He had set in motion following man’s fall in the Garden of Eden.

We learned earlier that when the Spirit of God moves, the only way to know was that something had to be manifested; it had to be seen externally to man, as well as internally within man. How can we know beyond a doubt that what we read in Ephesians is true? It would have to be manifested. And it was...on the Day of Pentecost.

### **Acts 2:1-12 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup>And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

<sup>2</sup>And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

<sup>3</sup>And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

<sup>4</sup>And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

<sup>5</sup>And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

<sup>6</sup>Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

<sup>7</sup>And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

<sup>8</sup>And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

<sup>9</sup>Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

<sup>10</sup>Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

<sup>11</sup>Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

Something happened on the Day of Pentecost that had never happened before in the history of mankind. It wasn’t seeing fire come down from heaven. That wasn’t new. It had happened before in the Old Testament with Elijah when he stood against the prophets of Baal.<sup>3</sup> But no one had ever spoken in tongues before. The Spirit of God moved in the temple that day and the invisible force manifested itself via the gift of the spirit now in each one of those men and they spoke in tongues “the wonderful works of God.”

What had been lost in the Garden of Eden was finally restored so that man now had a permanent spiritual connection with God. Even Adam’s spirit hadn’t been permanent. He lost it when he broke God’s commandment. Now we have a spirit that cannot be lost. The spirit of God had manifested itself in numerous ways all throughout the Old Testament and the Gospels.

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<sup>3</sup> 1 Kings 18:38 (KJV) - Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

But this was a “new” spirit, an eternal life spirit. It couldn’t be lost because we aren’t just God’s chosen people like Israel<sup>4</sup>, but we are sons of God.

### **1 John 3:1-2a (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup>Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

<sup>2</sup>Beloved, now are we the sons of God

At this point I should clarify something so that there is no misunderstanding. When I am talking about the Spirit of God moving, I mean it from the biblical perspective as we’ve seen in this study. However, today in many Christian practices, this phrase has been woefully misused and is often heard as “moved by the Holy Spirit or the Holy Ghost.” It has been used to mean that you give over your mind and/or body allowing the Holy Spirit to “move” you or control you. God’s Word never teaches that. God never controls anyone. Biblically, when it states that the Spirit of God moved, it refers to God acting in a situation with positive results.

### **The Manifestations of the Spirit**

Before the Day of Pentecost, there were nine manifestations of the spirit available.

1. Prophecy
2. Word of Knowledge
3. Word of Wisdom
4. Discerning of Spirits
5. Faith (Believing)
6. Working of Miracles
7. Gifts of Healing

But on the Day of Pentecost, two new manifestations were available.

1. Speaking in Tongues
2. Interpretation of Tongues

Have you ever wondered why these were the two manifestations that God provided? He could have added more than two. He could have made the new manifestations anything He wanted but He chose these two manifestations and they deal specifically with God’s ability to communicate directly to His people. Isn’t that interesting that being able to communicate was so important to God that this is what He chose?

Interpretation of tongues, along with speaking in tongues, is used when believers get together to receive a message from God that will edify them.<sup>5</sup> But it has specific stipulations on where and how it’s to be used. The manifestation of prophecy is also used in believer’s gathering and

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<sup>4</sup> Deuteronomy 7:6 (KJV) - For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:5 (KJV) - I would that ye all spake with tongues but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

its use is also clearly defined in 1 Corinthians 14. The manifestations of word of knowledge and wisdom and discerning of spirits are available only at God's discretion, not ours. And the other three manifestations of faith, miracles and healing are connected to what is received by way of word of knowledge, wisdom, and the gifts of healing. Why am I sharing this information regarding these eight manifestations of the spirit? Because there is only one manifestation that is available for us to utilize whenever we desire and that is speaking in tongues.

### **Speaking in Tongues**

Many others have done the research and study on speaking in tongues. I've seen listings of many of the attributes and benefits of this manifestation (see Appendix). I don't want to take the time here to go through all of them with you. That's a study you can do on your own. But I do want to focus on one aspect of speaking in tongues. It's our spiritual connection with God allowing us to truly and spiritually commune with Him, something that was lost in the Garden of Eden.

Can you imagine the wonderful things that God must have shared with Adam? And Adam was able to communicate back with God. But when Adam died spiritually, that spiritual avenue of communication was lost...until it became available again on the Day of Pentecost.

#### **Romans 8:26, 27 (KJV)**

<sup>26</sup> 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.

<sup>27</sup> 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.

#### **Romans 8:26, 27 (AMP)**

<sup>26</sup> In the same way the Spirit [comes to us and] helps us in our weakness. We do not know what prayer to offer *or* how to offer it as we should, but the Spirit Himself [knows our need and at the right time] intercedes on our behalf with sighs *and* groanings too deep for words.

<sup>27</sup> And He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because the Spirit intercedes [before God] on behalf of God's people in accordance with God's will.

#### **Romans 8:26, 27 (Aramaic Peshitta<sup>6</sup>)**

<sup>26</sup> So also, the Spirit aids our weakness, for we do not know what is right to pray for. But the Spirit prays on our behalf with groans that are not describable.

<sup>27</sup> Now he who searches the hearts knows what is the thinking of the Spirit that prays on behalf of the holy [ones] according to the will of God.

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<sup>6</sup> Magiera, J. M. (2006). Aramaic Peshitta New Testament Translation: With Explanatory Footnotes Marking Variant Readings, Customs and Figures of Speech. Truth or Consequences, New Mexico: Light of the Word Ministry LWM Publications. .376.

Just this benefit alone makes it all worth it. When we speak in tongues God is energizing the spirit within us to pray on our behalf for all the things on our heart and it's always according to the will of God.

**I Corinthians 14:2 (AKJV)**

<sup>2</sup>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.

Speaking in tongues provides a way to speak mysteries (or divine secrets) to God. We wouldn't be able to even comprehend in our minds what God is telling us, but our spirit does. Amazing.

**I Corinthians 14:17a (AKJV)**

<sup>17</sup>For thou verily givest thanks well...

Don't you want to thank God for all He's done for you? Of course, you do. When we speak in tongues, we do it well.

**I Corinthians 12:3 (AKJV)**

Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

Speaking in tongues provides a perfect way for us to declare Jesus as Lord. When we got born-again, we confessed Jesus as our lord. Now we can do it whenever we speak in tongues.

**It's Our Choice**

When I think of all that God has done for me and how thankful I am, I want to share my heart with Him and Him with me. I have the choice to do it anytime, anywhere. I don't need permission, there are no restrictions, it's only a matter of choosing to do it. Can you think of anything better to do? And I only touched on the topic. Like Paul, I encourage you to speak in tongues a lot. Put up signs or notes to remind you.

When I first got in the Word, there was a sticker that everyone had and they posted it everywhere and on everything to remind them to speak in tongues. I used to keep one tacked to my wall in front of desk at my office at work. This sticker was a stop sign and it had "S.I.T." printed in bold, white letters. It was to remind us to STOP – Speak in Tongues. We should think about reprinting them again.



## **The Rest of the Story**

When I started this study, I was telling you about my first fellowship and my initial experience with speaking in tongues. I told you how I went back to Denny's with these two believers to learn more about this strange language I heard some of them speaking.

Mark shared with my schoolmate Joel and me, that anybody who was born-again of God's spirit could speak in tongues. It was a sign that we had confessed Jesus as our lord and we had eternal life. He asked if I was born-again and I told him I didn't know. So, he shared with me Romans 10:9<sup>7</sup> and asked me if I would confess Jesus as lord and did I believe that God had raised him from the dead. I said I did. A couple of hours later, while sitting in the backseat of my green 1965 Ford Fairlane 500, Mark shared with us how to speak in tongues. And we both did.

NOW THIS WAS SOMETHING REALLY NEW TO ME. As I spoke in tongues, I felt as if I was walking two feet off the ground. My mind was clear for the first time in a long time due to my daily use of drugs over several years. And I felt a peace and a wholeness I had never experienced in my life. Since that night, it was the only time I ever had those feelings when I spoke in tongues. But that night it was enough to convince me that what I had received was real and there was nothing or no one who would ever convince me otherwise. That night was August 27, 1971. Because I spoke in tongues that early morning it changed my life and started me on a path that I'm still traveling to this very day, 51 years later as of this writing.

God's Spirit is still moving today and that invisible force continues to be manifested. Every time someone confesses Jesus as their lord and believes that God raised him from the dead, the Spirit of God moves and another individual receives that spiritual life and connection with God. I saw it externally when I heard them speak in tongues at that fellowship, and then I experienced it internally when I was born-again and spoke in tongues. Whenever I speak in tongues, I continue to acknowledge and manifest that the Spirit of God is still moving today.

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<sup>7</sup> Romans 10:9 (KJV) - That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.



## APPENDIX

### Attributes of Speaking in Tongues\*

1. Speaking in tongues is a legitimate, genuine language of men or angels. 1 Corinthians 13:1
2. Speaking in tongues confirms the written Word. Mark 16:17
3. Speaking in tongues edifies you. 1 Corinthians 14:4a; Jude 20.
4. Speaking in tongues is God bearing witness with our spirit that we are His children. Romans 8:16
5. Speaking in tongues is a witness that we are joint heirs with Christ. Romans 8:17a
6. Speaking in tongues strengthens us with might in our inner man. Ephesians 3:16
7. Speaking in tongues is a sign to unbelievers. 1 Corinthians 14:22a
8. Speaking in tongues produces the fruit of the spirit. Galatians 5:22,23
9. Speaking in tongues declares Jesus is Lord. 1 Corinthians 12:3
10. Speaking in tongues is profitable. 1 Corinthians 12:7
11. Speaking in tongues provides a way to speak mysteries (or divine secrets) to God. 1 Corinthians 14:2
12. Speaking in tongues provides a way to speak the wonderful works of God. Acts 2:11
13. Speaking in tongues magnifies God. Acts 10:46a
14. Speaking in tongues provides a way to pray perfectly. Romans 8: 26
15. Speaking in tongues provides a way to give thanks well. 1 Corinthians 14:17
16. Speaking in tongues gives rest to the soul. Isaiah 28:11,12
17. Speaking in tongues provides a way to worship in spirit and in truth. John 4:24; Philippians 3:3
18. Speaking in tongues provides a way to make intercession for the believers and the work of the ministry. Romans 8:26,27; Ephesians 6:18
19. Speaking in tongues, when exercised with its companion manifestation of interpretation of speaking in tongues, brings forth a message of edification, exhortation, and comfort to the believers. 1 Corinthians 14:13,27

*\*This list is not intended to be a complete list of the attributes of speaking. The original author of this document is unknown.*