

The Spiritual Tongue
By Gary Carpenter

One of the hardest things for people to discern is the difference between their soul and their spirit. We have no trouble distinguishing between our body and soul, but what is the difference between our spirit and our soul? What is our spirit like? Can it be described? Since we are admonished to “walk in the spirit,” we should know something about it.

We are given a glimpse beyond the veil of the flesh to see some of the attributes of our spirit in a lesson Jesus taught as recorded in Luke’s Gospel. This lesson is normally taught in the light of being wary of greed during our lifetime—and that is correct. However, let us take another look at it to see what we can learn about the human spirit. Here is the entire teaching from Luke 16:19-31:

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father’s house:

For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

First of all, it is important to understand that this is not a parable. This was an actual occurrence involving actual men. We know that because Jesus gives us the name of one of the men involved—that being Lazarus. We are being given a glimpse into the lives of these two men after they had physically died and their spirits had departed from their bodies. In this lesson we have a rare opportunity to learn more about the human spirit.

One thing that is immediately apparent is that the spirit of the rich man retains his knowledge and memories from his former life on earth. What we would normally call the

soul is intact with him. The *soul* is generally described as “the will, intellect, mind and emotions of man.” He still knows who Lazarus is. He remembers that he has five brothers. Abraham tells him to remember how he had lived his life on earth. All of these things tell us that when we die, our soul is still part of us.

So what we are seeing is the spirit of the rich man, separated from his corporeal body but still retaining his soul within his spirit. Now, what more can we learn about the spirit of man from this lesson? Notice the three words that I underlined in those verses. The rich man lifted up his “eyes.” Your spirit man has eyes! He also asked for Abraham to send Lazarus to dip the tip of his “finger” in water. Your spirit man has fingers! In addition, the rich man’s desire was that water could be placed upon his “tongue.” Your spirit man has a tongue!

What conclusion must we come to? Does our spirit have eyes, fingers and a tongue but not all the other parts of the human anatomy? No, our spirit has all the corresponding parts of the human anatomy that our corporeal body has. We have spirit ears, a spirit mind, and so forth.

This helps answer an age-old question that many have asked. What is happening when a born-again person is speaking in other tongues? The answer is now obvious. It is the spirit of the man using his spirit tongue to pray by using the corporeal tongue of the physical body. Just as the physical mind of man sends signals through the nervous system which results in what we call “intelligent speech” between men, so the spiritual mind of man sends signals through the nervous system to speak “intelligent speech” between man and God. What could be more simple?

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.

First Corinthians 14:2

The question might be raised, “Since all men have a spirit, why is it that only born-again people have the ability to speak in other tongues?” The answer is that even though it is our spirit doing the praying, it is the Holy Spirit who is creating the language within us. If you are not born again, the Holy Spirit is not within you to create this language. He is the One who gives the “utterance.” Notice these two verses:

For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.

First Corinthians 14:14

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

The Holy Spirit helps us to pray beyond the confines of our limited intellectual knowledge by helping us pray in a perfect language which He Himself creates within our spiritual mind. As we yield to our spirit man to let him take control of our physical tongue, these prayers are offered unto the Father according to His perfect will:

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.**

Romans 8:26,27

As the Holy Spirit creates these syllables of language within our spiritual mind, we hear them with our spiritual ears. This allows us to speak them out in the natural realm as we yield our physical tongue to the dominion of our reborn human spirit.

Many a precious saint has encountered difficulty at this point in the process because they have spent their whole lives depending upon their own intellect (an attribute of the soul) to control the speech of their tongue. For many it is a struggle to yield their tongue over to the control of their spirit even though they desire to do so.

Because they are so accustomed to hearing words in their physical mind, when they desire to speak in tongues, they automatically begin listening for the Holy Spirit's "utterance" in their natural brain instead of listening in their spirit. Nowhere does the Bible say, "God is a mind." No, the Bible says that "God is a Spirit"! (John 4:24)

The number one way that God communicates with His children is with their spirit—not their mind, although He is perfectly capable of doing that also. The supernatural language of tongues is created in the mind of your spirit by the Holy Spirit. They are not created in your natural mind.

So how do we answer those who have honestly sought to receive the Holy Spirit and this supernatural ability to speak in a spiritual language to God, yet to them, it seems as though He has not given it to them? They must understand this first: Jesus made it very clear that those who ask for the Holy Spirit would receive the Holy Spirit:

**If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children:
how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that
ask him?**

Luke 11:13

From this we know that every time any child of God asked for the Holy Spirit, the Father gave the Holy Spirit to him. Then what is the problem? Why is it that some people who asked never went on to speak with tongues? Because of their failure to distinguish between their spirit and their soul! They want to hear the words in their physical mind before they begin to speak with their physical tongue. That will never happen! This language is created in the spiritual mind of reborn human beings. It is passed directly to the spiritual tongue of every person without passing through the natural mind first. The sequence is from spirit mind to spirit tongue to physical tongue. That route bypasses the natural mind of man.

That's why Paul said in First Corinthians 14:14 that while he was praying in an unknown tongue, his "understanding" was unfruitful. That is correct! This language is created in the spirit and spoken by the spirit through the physical tongue of man. It bypasses the natural mind. But never underestimate the power of this spiritual communication. This is language of the highest order of communication. This is fellowship between spirit-born children and their Father God, who is a Spirit! The "understanding" of the natural mind is bypassed during this most intimate fellowship, but as revelation knowledge is

communicated between the Father and His children, even the natural mind is eventually edified because of these seasons of prayer.

With spiritual fellowship comes spiritual understanding. As our own reborn human spirit is built up and taught during these times of fellowship, the spiritual understanding we receive is later passed on to our natural mind directly from our human spirit. Spiritual understanding culminates in natural understanding also. This is the process Paul referred to as renewing our mind:

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 12:2

Notice that this statement in Romans chapter 12 comes after Paul's discourse on how the Holy Spirit helps us pray in Romans chapter 8! Yes, the end result is that we receive spiritual understanding in our natural minds. But this comes about as we spend time in fellowship with the Father spirit to Spirit with the help of the Holy Spirit who creates for us a supernatural language that must first bypass the intellect. Why? Paul told us in Romans 8:26: **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.**

These things are all “mysteries” to us at first. We simply don't know what God's perfect plan is for our lives; therefore, we cannot pray that perfect will from the intellect. The intellect does not know what to pray for as it ought. The Holy Spirit does! That's why God has given us this wonderful ability to cooperate with the Holy Spirit to allow Him to create the perfect prayers for us in a language that is not limited by the carnal mind.

Is there a remedy for those who have repeatedly asked for the Holy Spirit and this ability to speak in an unknown tongue yet have never experienced this precious gift? Yes there is. As always, the only valid pattern is the one given in the Bible:

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

From the words of Jesus Himself in Luke 11:13, we know that the Father gives the Holy Spirit to every child of God who asks. That is not the problem. The problem is having enough faith to do as Acts 2:4 says and begin to speak, trusting that the unintelligible syllables proceeding from your mouth is the utterance of the Holy Spirit! This requires faith! This requires trust! This requires turning control of your physical tongue over to the use of your spiritual mind instead of your mental intellect. Will the language sound foolish? Yes! Will you understand it with your mind? No! Will God the Father understand this language created by His own Holy Spirit? Yes!

Once more—ask the Father to fill you with His Spirit, believing you receive the Holy Spirit when you pray, and begin to speak, trusting it is the Holy Spirit Himself who is giving you the utterance, for He truly is!

Your fellow servant for Christ,

Gary Carpenter

