



When I was at school I was very sporty and interested in hockey, tennis and netball. During the athletics season my favourite was the high jump, mind you, I always stayed upright and was never brave enough to tackle the Western roll like this! I often used to go to the school sports field during the dinner-hour and practice the high jump. Each time, at some point, I would raise the bar that extra half an inch in order to try and beat my own personal best record. Sometimes, for two or three weeks, the bar would continue to fall from the stands because I had not quite managed to heave myself over at the new height, but every now and then I would be really chuffed as I leapt over the bar and it stayed in place. The result of this of course, would be that on the next occasion the bar would be raised another half an inch for a new record to be attempted.

Normally when I write these Doodles I try to encourage most of you in some way or other. Sometimes I try and write something of relevance to those who are searching and wondering if Christianity is for them, but today my aim is to challenge those of you, who have been Christians for a while, to 'Raise the bar' on your spiritual life. I want to try and explain about the 'Baptism of the Holy Spirit.' Many of you may already know about this but some of you might find this Doodle rather strange and have to put it in a folder for a later date.

Definition There are various definitions used by the different denominations. This is the definition I am going to use in this Doodle. Even though the Holy Spirit comes into our lives when we accept Jesus as our Saviour, there is also this 'Baptism of the Holy Spirit' when we are absolutely swamped with His Spirit and receive another language that is not our native tongue. This is usually referred to as the gift of tongues. It is a supernatural phenomenon and is God given; we are unable to make this happen ourselves. Can I please encourage you to put aside opinions, definitions and denominations and go for whatever God has for you as an individual – 'Raise the bar'!

Personal I had been a Methodist Local Preacher for 25 years and had read about the Day of Pentecost, and other references to this, many times over, but thought that it was something that only happened in Bible times. I suppose that there must also have been an element of disbelief about this event on my part as it certainly did not sound very feasible that a person could receive a new language in seconds when I had spent hours and hours learning French vocab. Due to certain



circumstances in my life there came a point when I 'Raised the bar', knelt down by the side of my bed and prayed, "Lord, teach me to pray." I must have made myself open in a new way to what God wanted to show me and that week I was told about the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Well, what a surprise I had – Never in this wide world did I realize that it was something that could happen today – to ME! I was so hungry to have a deeper relationship with God and said, "No limits God". He took me at my word and my life was completely changed in a very short time and the impact of that time has never left me.

Receiving We can choose when we accept Jesus as Saviour at any time. We can have a desire to want the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues, but it is God given in His time and in His way. Often people receive the gift in their private prayer time or when someone prays directly for them. Sometimes a person can desire to receive for years, but for some reason God does not give them this gift. I have noticed that this is often when a person is fearful and finds trusting difficult or very set in their ways and reluctant to

change. On other occasions a person may have a very low self-worth and feels that they are not good enough for God to answer their prayer. I know of one person who told God that he did not want the gift but God gave it to him anyway as he was walking along praying! God is sovereign and He does what He wants to do even though there are times in our lives when we do not understand why God works in a particular way.

What is it? When we speak in tongues they are actual languages. (Either of people or of angels – hence it is sometimes referred to as a ‘Heavenly language’.) Linguistic tests have been applied to tongues and have shown that they are actual languages. Occasionally – but not very often – there has been someone who has heard something said in tongues and it has been a language that they recognize and can speak. Normally we do not know what language it is. There is only one person I know of who is aware of what language God has given to them. There is no-one in our church who has spoken one of the tongues that God has given to me. If you listen carefully you will hear that the languages are different. God is likely to give you more than one tongue if you use this gift regularly.

What use are tongues? Tongues is when the Holy Spirit within us prays to God the Father on our behalf. It is very powerful when we are praying for someone. Usually, when someone goes out to the front for prayer, the person praying for them will pray in English and then in tongues. If someone is standing near or is laying hands on them at the same time, then he/she will be praying quietly in tongues or in their heads as the prayers are taking place. When we pray in our native tongue then it is us praying to God. When we pray in tongues, it is the Holy Spirit who is praying on our behalf and who knows, better than we do ourselves, what is our hearts desire, how to pray and what to pray. In the Bible it is sometimes referred to as ‘Praying in the Spirit’.

We have complete control of tongues exactly as we have in our normal speech. We can start, stop, talk, sing or think in tongues. Receiving the gift makes a massive difference to our prayer time. It is like going from a little black and white 12” screen to one twice the size in lovely colours! It is something that should be the norm for every born-again believer to use in their own private prayer time.

Tongues in a service Sometimes God gives a person something to say in tongues in a service or group setting. Not everyone is given this gift. I use tongues a great deal in my own prayer time but have never yet been given anything to say in tongues in a service. If someone speaks like this in a service then the person convening up front should wait for an interpretation before going on with the service. God will have given someone in the service an interpretation of what has been said. An interpretation is not necessary for us when we use it in our own private prayer time. It is possible to interpret your own tongue but it is not something we would normally do on a regular basis.

Empowering A churchy word I know, but do not know how to describe what happens in another way. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit makes you bolder to speak about Jesus and will give you a strong desire to have a closer relationship with God.

Related Bible Readings Mark 1: 4 – 8 What John the Baptist said Acts 1: 1 – 55 What Jesus said
Acts 2: 1 – 4 Receiving in the upper room Acts 19: 1 – 7 Paul praying for people
Acts 10: 44 – 46 Peter preaching



Pray, pray, pray until you receive, then you will pray, pray, pray because you have received!