

Chapter 9: Ten Reasons Why Every Believer Should Speak in Tongues

I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:

— 1 Corinthians 14:18

The apostle Paul wrote and spoke much about the subject of speaking in other tongues, and he apparently practiced what he preached for he said, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1 Cor. 14:18). I, too, thank God that I speak in tongues regularly, and I wish every believer would make this his habit and enjoy this same blessing and source of power in his everyday life.

The purpose of this particular lesson is to set forth ten reasons why every Christian should speak in tongues, and to help believers see the blessings that can be theirs through daily appropriating the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Reason Number 1

The Word of God teaches that when we are filled with the Holy Ghost, we speak with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance. As we have seen, speaking in tongues is an initial evidence or sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit: "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).

In Acts 10, the brethren of the circumcision who had come with Peter to Cornelius' household were astonished when they saw that the gift of the Holy Ghost was poured out on the Gentiles too. They thought salvation and the baptism in the Holy Ghost were just for the Jews.

How did these Jews know that Cornelius' household had received the gift of the Holy Ghost? "For they HEARD THEM SPEAK WITH TONGUES, and magnify God ..." (Acts 10:46). Speaking in tongues was the supernatural sign and initial evidence that convinced them that the Gentiles had the same gift they had.

Reason Number 2

Paul, in writing to the Church at Corinth, encouraged the Corinthian Christians to continue the practice of speaking with other tongues in their worship of God. He also encouraged them to speak in tongues in their individual prayer lives as a means of spiritual edification or building up. The Bible says, "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifi-eth himself. . ." (1Cor. 14:4).

Jude 20 also links praying in tongues with building yourself up spiritually.

JUDE 20

20 But ye, beloved, BUILDING UP YOURSELVES on your most holy faith, PRAYING IN THE HOLY GHOST.

Howard Carter, who was one of the Pentecostal world's most renowned teachers on the subject of spiritual gifts, said we must not forget that speaking with other tongues is not only the initial evidence of the Holy Spirit's infilling, but is also a continual experience for the rest of one's life.

For what purpose? To assist us in the worship of God. "Speaking in tongues," Rev Carter said, "is a flowing stream that should never dry up, and that will enrich one's life spiritually." '

The Apostle Paul said that speaking with tongues will edify or build us up spiritually. "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).

Moffatt's translation of this verse says, ". . . he is talking of divine secrets in the Spirit." Paul was saying here that God has given to the church a divine, supernatural means of communication with Him.

Paul also stated in First Corinthians 14:14, "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, MY SPIRIT PRAYETH, but my understanding is unfruitful." Notice he said, ". . . my spirit prayeth. . ."

The Amplified Bible reads, ". . . my spirit [by the Holy Spirit within me] prays. . . ." God is a spirit. When you pray in tongues, your spirit is in direct contact with God, who is a Spirit. When you speak in tongues, you are talking to Him by divine, supernatural means.

Reason Number 3

The third reason people should speak with other tongues is that tongues keeps us continually aware of the Holy Spirit's indwelling Presence. Not only is speaking with tongues the initial sign or evidence of the Holy Spirit's infilling, but continuing to pray and to worship God in tongues helps us to be ever conscious of His indwelling Presence. And if you are conscious of the indwelling Presence of the Holy Ghost every day, that is bound to affect the way you think and live.

I once heard an evangelist tell of an experience he had in a pastor's home. As he walked into a room unexpectedly, he heard the pastor's twelve-year-old daughter just throwing a fit. She had lost her temper and was bawling her mother out.

Suddenly she looked up and saw the evangelist. She stopped and put her head in her hands and began to cry. She said, "I am so sorry you saw me act this way and heard what I said."

He said to her, "Honey, there is One who is greater than I am who heard you and saw you act that way. You are a Christian, aren't you?"

"Yes," was her tearful reply.

"Filled with the Spirit?" he asked.

"Yes," she answered.

"Well, the Holy Ghost is in you, and He knows what you said and how you acted," he told her. "Just repent and the Lord will forgive you." They prayed together and she repented. Then in a little while she began to worship God in tongues.

This evangelist then said to her, "There is one secret that will help you curb your temper. If you will just pray and worship God every day in tongues, it will help you to be conscious of the indwelling Presence of the Holy Ghost.

Then he said, "If you will remember that the Holy Spirit is in you, you won't act that way. You were ashamed because I saw you lose your temper. You were embarrassed because I heard you talk the way you did to your mother. But the Holy Ghost is greater than I am, and He saw and heard you too."

Some years later when this same evangelist returned to preach at that church, the pastor's daughter told him, "I have never forgotten what you said. Every day for the past few years I have prayed and worshipped God in tongues, and I have never lost my temper again."

Unfortunately, we all know people who have been filled with the Holy Ghost, yet still lose their temper and say and do things they shouldn't. It is because they have been walking in the flesh instead of in the Spirit, and they haven't been fellowshiping with God as they should have been.

It is so easy, when you are not conscious of God's Presence, to become aggravated and easily exasperated, and to allow yourself to lose your temper. But if you will take time to fellowship with God by speaking in tongues, you can continually be conscious of God's indwelling Presence.

Reason Number 4

Speaking in tongues eliminates the possibility of selfishness entering our prayer life. For instance, if I pray a prayer out of my own mind and out of my own thinking, it may be

unscriptural. It may be selfish. Too many times our prayers are like the old farmer who always prayed, "God bless me, my wife, my son John, his wife — us four and no more."

Paul wrote to the Church at Rome, ". . . we know not what we should pray for as we ought. . ." (Rom. 8:26). He didn't say we didn't know how to pray, because we do know how we are to pray. We are to pray to the Father in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 16:23,24).

That is the correct way to pray. But just because I know how to pray doesn't mean that I know what to pray for as I ought. So Paul said, ". . . we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself [Himself] maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26).

P. C. Nelson, a Greek scholar and the founder of Southwestern Bible Institute, said that the Greek in Romans 8:26 literally reads, ". . . the Holy Ghost maketh intercession for us in groanings that cannot be uttered in articulate speech."

Articulate speech means your regular kind of speech. He went on to point out that the Greek stresses that this not only includes groanings escaping your lips in prayer, but also praying in other tongues. That agrees with what Paul said in First Corinthians 14:14, "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth. . . ." The Amplified Bible says, ". . . my spirit [by the Holy Spirit within me] prays. . ."

People should be careful making fun of tongues, because when people make fun of tongues, they are making fun of the Holy Ghost. When you pray in tongues, it is your spirit praying by the Holy Spirit within you. It is the Holy Spirit within giving you the utterance, and you are speaking from out of your spirit. You do the talking; the Holy Spirit gives the utterance.

By praying with groanings and with other tongues, the Holy Spirit is helping you to pray according to the will of God — to pray as things should be prayed for. This isn't something the Holy Ghost does apart from you. He doesn't groan or speak in tongues apart from you. Those groanings that cannot be uttered in articulate speech come from inside of you — from your spirit — and escape your own lips.

The Holy Ghost is not going to do your praying for you. He is sent to dwell in us as a Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengthenener, and Standby (John 14:16 Amp.). The Holy Spirit is not responsible for our prayer life. He is sent to help us pray. Speaking with other tongues is praying as the Spirit gives utterance. It is Spirit-directed praying. It eliminates the possibility of selfishness in our prayers.

Many times when people have prayed out of their own minds, they have prayed for circumstances to change that were actually not the will of God and were not best. If

God's people want things a certain way, even if it isn't best for them or is not God's will, He will often permit it.

For example, God did not want Israel to have a king, but they wanted one, so He permitted them to have one (1 Sam. 8:4-7). But a king was not His perfect will for them.

Therefore, speaking in tongues eliminates selfishness and praying outside of the will of God because when we pray in tongues, we are praying the perfect will of God.

Reason Number 5

The fifth reason believers should speak with tongues is that it helps them learn to trust God more fully. It builds one's faith to speak in tongues. The Bible says, ". . . building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost" (Jude 20).

Speaking in tongues stimulates faith and helps us learn how to trust God more fully. For example, faith must be exercised to speak with tongues because the Holy Spirit supernaturally directs the words we speak. You see, we don't know what the next word will be — we have to trust God for that. And trusting God in one area helps us learn to trust Him in another area.

As a young denominational minister I was pastor of a community church, and there was a fine Christian woman in our church who dearly loved the Lord. But she was afflicted in her body with sickness. She had an ulcerated stomach, and the doctors feared that it would lead to cancer of the stomach. Her husband made good money, but he had spent everything he had on doctor bills until finally they didn't even own an automobile. He had spent thousands of dollars.

This woman received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and shortly after that I visited in their home again. I noticed that she could eat almost anything, whereas before she could eat only a little baby food and milk, and had even had difficulty keeping that in her stomach.

She told me, "I not only received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and spoke with other tongues, but I received my healing as well. I am perfectly healed."

I have seen this happen many times. What is the connection? We know that receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost doesn't heal you. However, speaking with tongues helps you to learn how to trust God more fully in other areas of life — including in the area of healing.

Reason Number 6

The sixth reason every Christian ought to regularly speak in tongues is that speaking in tongues is a means of keeping us free from the contamination of the ungodly and profane elements of the world. For example, there is much vulgar talk that goes on

around us on the job or out in public. But we can speak in tongues to ourselves (1 Cor. 14:28).

In other words, if you can speak in tongues to yourself and to God in church, then you can speak in tongues on the job, too, in a way that won't disturb anyone. In the barber shops, for instance, if the men are telling jokes that are not edifying, I just sit there quietly and speak to myself and to God in tongues.

Riding the train, bus, or airplane, you can speak to yourself and to God. On the job you can speak to yourself and to God. Speaking in tongues to yourself and to God is a means of keeping yourself free from the contamination of the world.

Reason Number 7

The seventh reason every believer should speak in tongues is that it provides a way for things to be prayed for about which no one thinks to pray, or is even aware of. We already know that the Holy Spirit helps us pray for things we do not know how to pray for as we ought. In addition, the Holy Spirit, who knows everything, can pray through us for things about which our natural mind knows nothing.

When a missionary to Africa was speaking at a missionary conference in England once, a woman asked him, "Do you keep a diary?"

When he replied that he did, she said, "Two years ago I was awakened in the night with a burden to pray. I got out of bed and I was speaking in tongues before I ever got down on my knees."

She continued, "I prayed for an hour in tongues. It just seemed as if I was wrestling in the spirit. I didn't know what I was praying for, but as I finished praying, I had a vision in which I saw you in a little old grass thatched hut. There weren't any other white people there. The natives were gathered around you, and you were extremely sick. Then you died. The natives pulled a sheet up over your head and went outside of the hut.

"Suddenly," she said, "I saw you come out of the hut and stand in their midst, and they all rejoiced! Did anything like that ever happen to you?"

In response, he asked her, "Do you keep a diary?"

"Yes," she answered.

"Bring your diary this afternoon and I will bring mine, and we can compare notes," he said. They had never had any connection with one another before this time; this woman only knew that this man was a missionary.

Comparing their diaries and making allowances for the differences in time between the countries of England and Africa, they learned that the time of the woman's prayer burden coincided exactly with the time when the missionary was sick with a deadly fever.

The missionary related that his partner had gone to a neighboring village and he had been left alone with the natives. Things happened just as she saw them. The missionary had died, the natives saw him die, and they pulled a sheet over his head. Then suddenly the missionary rose up well because of the power of God made available through this woman's praying in other tongues.

In 1956 when my wife and I were in California ministering, I was awakened suddenly in the night. It was as if someone had laid a hand on me. I sat bolt upright in bed, my heart beating fast as though I were afraid.

I lay back down and said, "Lord, what is the matter? I know something is wrong somewhere." It was as if the Spirit of God had awakened me.

I said, "Holy Spirit in me, You know everything. You are everywhere. You are everywhere present at once, as well as dwelling within me. Whatever is the matter, please give me utterance to pray about it."

Then I began to pray in tongues, and I lay there and prayed quietly to God for about an hour. Then I began to laugh and sing in tongues. When you pray this way, always continue praying until you have a note of praise or victory. Then that means whatever it is you were praying about has been prayed through.

When I got that note of victory in my praying, I knew that what I had been praying about had been prayed through. I had the answer, so I went back to sleep.

As I slept, I dreamed that I saw my youngest brother in a motel in Louisiana. I saw him awaken at midnight. I saw someone summon the doctor, and I saw an ambulance come. I saw them put my brother in an ambulance, and I saw the red light flashing as they took him to the hospital.

In the dream I stood in the corridor of the hospital just outside his door. When the doctor came out, he pulled the door closed behind him and then he saw me standing there. He shook his head and said to me, "He's dead."

In the dream I said, "No, doctor, he is not dead. The Lord told me he would live and not die

The doctor became angry and said, "I know when people are dead. I have pronounced many hundreds of people dead." He grabbed me by the hand and said, "Come, I'll let you see for yourself."

He opened the door, led me to the bed, and jerked the sheet from my brother's face. When he did, he saw that my brother was breathing and his eyes were open.

The doctor said, "Why, you knew something I didn't know! He is alive, isn't he?" I saw my brother rise up well. Then that was the end of the dream. I knew that was what I had prayed about.

Three months later we came back to Texas. My brother stopped by to see me and said, "I nearly died while you were gone."

"Yes, I know," I said. "You were down in Louisiana, weren't you? It was in the nighttime and you had an attack and you were taken to the hospital in an ambulance."

"Yes. How did you know?" he asked.

When I told him about my burden for prayer followed by the dream, he said, "It happened just like that. They told me that for about forty minutes there at the hospital, the doctor thought I was dead."

Praying in the Spirit provides a way for things to be prayed for that people wouldn't know anything about in the natural. The Holy Ghost, however, knows everything. And He is our Helper in prayer.

Reason Number 8

Paul says in First Corinthians 14:21, ". . . With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people. ..." Paul was saying this in reference to Isaiah 28:11 and 12. And this passage in Isaiah gives us the eighth reason that every Christian should speak in tongues.

ISAIAH 28:11,12

11 For with stammering lips and ANOTHER TONGUE will he speak to this people.

12 To whom he said, THIS IS THE REST wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and THIS IS THE REFRESHING: yet they would not hear.

What is the rest? What is the refreshing? Isaiah 28:11 and 12 says the rest and the refreshing is speaking with other tongues.

Sometimes the doctor recommends a rest cure for exhaustion or for some sicknesses. And often when you take a vacation, you have to come home and rest before you go back to work!

But I know the best rest in the world! Isn't it wonderful that we can just take this "rest cure" every day? The Bible says, ". . . This is the rest . . . this is the refreshing . . ." (Isa. 28:12). We need this rest in these days of turmoil, perplexity, and insecurity.

Reason Number 9

The ninth reason we are to pray in tongues is to give thanks to God.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:15-17

15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

16 Else when thou shalt BLESS WITH THE SPIRIT, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy GIVING OF THANKS, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?

17 For thou VERILY GIVEST THANKS WELL, but the other is not edified.

When Paul said, ". . . he that occupieth the room of the unlearned. . . ," he was referring to those who are unlearned in spiritual things.

Let me illustrate these verses of Scripture. For example, if you invited me to dinner and said, "Brother Hagin, please say the 'thanks' for the meal, if I prayed in tongues, you wouldn't know what I said. You wouldn't be edified.

Therefore, Paul said in a situation such as this, it would be better to pray with the understanding. If I did pray in tongues, I should interpret it so you would know what was said. Then you could be edified too, for Paul said, ". . . thou eerily giuest thanks well, but the other is not edified" (1 Cor. 14:17).

In other words, praying in tongues is the best way to give thanks. But in the presence of people who are unlearned, pray also with your understanding so they can be edified. Offering your thanks in your understanding allows people to be edified because then they will understand what you are saying.

Pay special attention to what Paul said in First Corinthians 14:17. He said praying in tongues provides the most perfect way to pray and to give thanks to God. Paul said when you offer thanks in other tongues, ". . . thou verily givest thanks well. . ." (1 Cor. 14:17).

Reason Number 10

The tenth reason why every believer should speak with tongues is found in James 3:8. "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." Yielding your tongue to the Holy Spirit to speak with other tongues is a big step toward being able to fully yield all of your members to God; for if you can yield your tongue, you can yield any member of your body to God.

Speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of the infilling of the Holy Spirit. God has given us this wonderful spiritual gift to bless us, edify us, and refresh us throughout our lives on this earth. Let's receive what God has provided, and enjoy the benefits of speaking in tongues!

Questions For Study

1. This chapter list ten reasons why every believer should speak in tongues. What are they?

2. How did the Jews know that Cornelius' house had received the gift of the Holy Ghost?

3. When you are not conscious of God's Presence, what can easily become?

4. What can happen if you will take time to fellowship with God by speaking in tongues?

5. According to John 16:23-24, to whom are we to pray?

6. According to P.C. Nelson, a noted Greek scholar, how does the Greek in Romans 8:26 literally read?

7. What does “articulate speech” mean?

8. Why should people be careful about making fun of tongues?

9. What have people prayed for many times when they have prayed out of their own mind?

10. Speaking in tongues stimulates _____ and helps us learn to _____ God more.