

Why Tongues

Ten Reasons Why Every Believer Should Speak in Tongues

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. - **Mark 16:17** The Apostle Paul wrote much about the subject of speaking in other tongues. 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 with regularity, and would wish for every believer this same blessing and source of power in his everyday life. The purpose of this chapter is to set forth major reasons why every Christian should speak in tongues and to help believers see the blessings that can be theirs through appropriating the power of the Holy Spirit daily.

Reason 1: Tongues - The Initial Sign

Reason 2: Tongues Are for Spiritual Edification

Reason 3: Tongues Remind Us of the Spirit's Indwelling Presence

Reason 4: Praying in Tongues Is Praying In Line With God's Perfect Will

Reason 5: Praying in Tongues Stimulates Faith

Reason 6: Speaking in Tongues Is A Means of Keeping Free From Worldly Contamination

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Reason 10: Speaking in Tongues Brings The Tongue Under Subjection

Reason 1: Tongues - The Initial Sign

ACTS 2:4 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. 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. It is the initial evidence or sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the first reason people should speak with other tongues is, it is a supernatural evidence of the Spirit's indwelling. In the tenth chapter of Acts, we read where the Jewish brethren who came with Peter to Cornelius' house were astonished when they saw that the gift of the Holy Ghost was poured out on the Gentiles. They thought it was 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 which convinced them that the Gentiles had the same gift they had.

Reason 2: Tongues Are for Spiritual Edification

1 CORINTHIANS 14:4 4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself.... In writing to the Church at Corinth, Paul encouraged them to continue the practice of speaking with other tongues in their worship of God and in their prayer lives as a means of spiritual edification. (Notice it is not for mental nor physical edification.) Greek language scholars tell us that we have a word in our modern vernacular which is closer to the original meaning than the word "edified." That word is "charge," as used in connection with charging a battery. Therefore, we could paraphrase this verse, "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifies, charges, builds himself up like a battery." And this wonderful, supernatural means of spiritual edification is for every one of God's children. **1 CORINTHIANS 14:2** 2 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. Moffatt's translation of this verse says, "He speaks divine secrets." God has given to the Church a divine, supernatural means of communication with Himself! **1 CORINTHIANS 14:14** 14 For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. Notice that this says, "my spirit prayeth." The Amplified translation reads, "my spirit [by the Holy Spirit within me] prays." God is a Spirit. When we pray in tongues, our spirit is in direct contact with God, who is a Spirit. We are talking to him by a divine, supernatural means. It is amazing how people can ask in the light of these scriptures, "What is the value of speaking in tongues?" If God's Word says speaking in tongues is of value - then it is value! If God says that it edifies - then it edifies! If God says it is supernatural means of communication with Himself - then it is! If God says every believer should speak in tongues - then every believer should speak in tongues! Jesus said, "And these signs shall follow them that believe..." (**Mark 16:17**). "Them" is plural - it means all. And one of the signs was, "...they shall speak with new tongues" (v.17).

Reason 3: Tongues Remind Us of the Spirit's Indwelling Presence

JOHN 14:16, 17 16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. Howard Carter, who was general supervisor of the Assemblies of God in Great Britain for many years and founder of the oldest Pentecostal Bible school in the world, pointing out that we must not forget that speaking with other tongues is not only the initial evidence of the Holy Spirit's infilling, but is a continual experience for the rest of one's life. For what purpose? To assist us in the worship of God. Speaking in tongues is a flowing stream which should never dry up, and will enrich the life spiritually. Continuing to pray and worship God in tongues helps us to be ever-conscious of His indwelling Presence. If I can be conscious of the indwelling Presence of the Holy Ghost every day, it is bound to affect the way I live. A minister's twelve-year-old daughter once lost her temper and was talking rudely and hatefully to her mother. A visiting evangelist overheard the scene. When the girl looked up and saw him, knowing he had witnessed her tantrum, she was embarrassed and broke into tears. "I'm so sorry you saw me act this way and heard what I said," she cried. "Honey," he said, "there is One greater than I who saw you and heard you. You are a Christian, aren't you?" "Yes." "And filled with the Spirit?" he said. "Yes." "Well then, the Holy Ghost is in you. He knows what you said and how you acted. But if you will repent, the Lord will forgive you." They prayed together. She repented, and in a little while began to worship God in tongues. Then he said to her, "Here is a secret that will help you curb your temper. If you will pray and worship God every day in tongues, it will help you to be conscious of the indwelling Presence of the Holy Ghost. If you will remember that He is in you, you won't act that way." Some years later, the evangelist returned to preach at that church, and 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. This is only because they haven't been walking in the Spirit as they should. It is so easy, when we are not conscious of His Presence, to become irritated and frustrated. But if we will take time to fellowship with Him, we can be ever-conscious of His indwelling Presence.

Reason 4: Praying in Tongues Is Praying in Line With God's Perfect Will

ROMANS 8:26, 27 26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself [or Himself] maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 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. Speaking in tongues keeps selfishness out of our prayers. A prayer out of one's own mind and thinking has the possibility of being

unscriptural. It may be selfish. Too often our prayers are like the old farmer's, who prayed, "God bless me, my wife, my son John, his wife - us four and no more." In the scriptures quoted above, Paul didn't say we didn't know how to pray, for we do: We pray to the Father in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the correct way to pray (John 14:13, 14; 15:16,23,24,26). But just because I know how to pray doesn't mean I know for what to pray as I ought. 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 scholar of the Greek language, said that the Greek literally reads here, "The Holy Ghost maketh intercession for us in groaning that cannot be uttered in articulate speech." Articulate speech means our regular kind of speech. He went on to point out how the Greek stressed that this not only includes groaning escaping our lips in prayer, but also praying in other tongues. This agrees with what Paul said in First Corinthians 14:14. "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth..." Or, as the Amplified translates, "My spirit [by the Holy Spirit within me] prays." When you pray in tongues, it is your spirit praying, by the Holy Spirit within you. The Holy Spirit within you gives the utterance, and you speak it out of your spirit. You do the talking; He gives the utterance. By this method, the Holy Spirit helps you pray according to the will of God - as things should be prayed for. This isn't something the Holy Ghost does apart from us. Those groanings come from inside us and escape our lips. The Holy Ghost isn't going to do our praying for us. He is sent to dwell in us as a Helper and an Intercessor. He isn't responsible for our prayer lives - He is sent to help us pray. Praying 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 minds, they have received things that were actually not the will of God and were not best. If God's people insist on having things a certain way, even if it isn't best for them, or it is not God's perfect will, He will often permit it. God did not want Israel to have a king, but they kept insisting that they wanted one. So He permitted them to have one (See First Samuel 8:5-22; 10:19). But it was not His perfect will.

Reason 5: Praying in Tongues Stimulates Faith

JUDE 1:20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost. Praying in tongues stimulates faith and helps us learn to trust God more fully. If the Holy Spirit supernaturally directs the words I speak, faith must be exercised to speak with tongues. For I don't know what the next word will be; I am trusting God for it. And trusting God along one line will help me to trust Him in another. As a young Baptist minister, I pastored a community church and stayed in the home of a Methodist couple. The wife was a fine, dear woman who loved the Lord. But she had an ulcerated stomach, which doctors feared would lead to cancer. Her husband made good money, but he had spent everything he had on medical bills. I knew God could and would heal her, but, somehow, I was never able to lift her

faith up to that point. She ate only soft foods and milk and had difficulty keeping that on her stomach. But one day a wonderful thing happened! She received the infilling of the Holy Spirit. When I came in, she was eating foods she'd never been able to eat. "I received not only the baptism of the Holy Ghost and spoke with other tongues," she told me, "but I received my healing too. I'm perfectly well." And she was. I've seen this happen many times. What is the connection? We know that receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost does not heal us. However, speaking with tongues helps us to learn how to trust God more fully. Speaking in tongues helps us believe God for other things in that it stimulates or charges our faith.

Reason 6: Speaking in Tongues Is A Means of Keeping Free From Worldly Contamination

1 CORINTHIANS 14:28 28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. The sixth reason every Christian should speak in tongues is that this is a means of keeping free from the contamination of the ungodly and the profane, and all the vulgar talk around us on the job or out in public. Notice from the scripture above that we can speak with tongues to ourselves. Paul said that in the church service, "If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God" (1 Cor. 14:27,28). If we can speak to ourselves and to God in a church service, we can also do it on the job. It won't disturb anyone. In the barber shop, for instance, when men tell risque jokes, I just sit there and speak to myself and to God in tongues. Riding the train, bus, or airplane - we can speak to ourselves and to God. Talking in tongues to ourself and to God will be a means of keeping free from contamination.

Reason 7: Praying in Tongues Enables Us to Pray for the Unknown

Praying in tongues provides a way to pray for things for which no one thinks to pray or is even aware of. The Holy Spirit helps us pray, for "we know not how to pray as we ought" (Rom. 8:26). But in addition, the Holy Spirit, who knows everything, can pray through us for things about which our natural minds know nothing. An English missionary to Africa was home on furlough speaking at a missionary conference when a woman asked him if he kept a diary. He replied that he did. She began to relate to him, "About two years ago, I was awakened in the night with a burden to pray. I got out of bed and was talking in tongues before I got down on my knees. Then for an hour, I prayed in tongues, and it seemed as if I were wrestling. When I finished praying I had a Vision. I saw you in a little grass hut, surrounded by natives. You were sick. Then you died. I saw the natives pull the sheet over your head and walked sadly outside the hut. Suddenly, you came out of the hut and stood in their midst, and all the natives rejoiced." This woman also kept a diary. The missionary requested she bring it that afternoon. Comparing diaries, and making allowances for

time differences in England and Africa, they discovered the time of the woman's prayer burden exactly coincided with the time when the missionary was sick with a deadly fever. His partner was away, and he was alone with the natives. Things happened just as she saw them. The missionary died, the natives saw him die and pulled a sheet over his dead. Then he rose up suddenly well! Why did this happen? Because of the Spirit of God! In 1956 when my wife and I were in California, I was awakened suddenly in the night. It was as if someone laid his hand on me. I sat bolt upright in bed, my heart beating rapidly. "Lord," I cried, "what is the matter? I know something is wrong somewhere. Holy Spirit within me, You know everything. You are everywhere as well as within me. Whatever this is, You give me utterance." I prayed in tongues for an hour and then began to laugh and sing in tongues. (When praying this way, always continue praying until you have a note of praise. Then you will know that whatever it is you are praying about, is settled.) I knew what I had been praying for had come to pass. I had the answer, so I went back to sleep. I dreamed that I saw my youngest brother become extremely ill in Louisiana. I saw an ambulance with flashing lights take him to the hospital. In the dream, I stood in the corridor outside his hospital room door. The door was shut. Then the doctor came out that door, pulled it shut behind him, shook my hand and said, "He is dead." "No, doctor, he is not dead," I replied. "What do you mean, 'He is not dead'?" "The Lord told me he would live and not die." At that, the doctor became angry and said, "Come with me, and I will show you that he is dead. I have pronounced too many people dead not to know when someone is dead." He took me by the arm and led me into my brother's room. He walked over to the bed and jerked the sheet back. When he did, my brother's eyes opened. The doctor saw that he was breathing. He began to stutter, "You knew something I didn't know. He is alive, isn't he?" In that dream I saw my brother rise up from the bed, well. That was what I had been praying about. Three months later, we came home to Texas. My youngest brother came by to see me and said, "I nearly died while you were gone." I told him that I knew he'd had an attack during the night while staying in a motel in Louisiana and that he had been rushed to the hospital. He thought someone had told me about it, but they had not. I told him about my burden of prayer, followed by the dream. "That's exactly how it happened! They told me that for about forty minutes at the hospital, the doctor thought I was gone." Praying in the Spirit provides a way for things to be prayed for that we wouldn't know anything about in the natural. The Holy Ghost, however, knows everything.

Reason 8: Praying in Tongues Gives Spiritual Refreshing

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, the refreshing, the above scripture refers to? Speaking in tongues Sometimes the doctor recommends a rest cure, but I know the one in the world. Often when you take a vacation, you have to come home and rest before going back to work! But isn't it wonderful that we can take this "rest cure" every day? "... This is the rest... this is the

refreshing..." (Isa.28:12). We need this spiritual refreshing in these days of turmoil, perplexity, and anxiety.

Reason 9: Tongues Are For Giving Thanks

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 in verse 16, "... he that occupieth the room of the unlearned...", he was referring to those who are unlearned in spiritual things. If you invited me to dinner and said, "Please give thanks"; and if I prayed in tongues, you wouldn't know what I said. You wouldn't be edified. Therefore, Paul said it would be better to pray with your understanding in such cases. If I did pray in tongues, I should interpret it so everyone would know what was said. But notice that Paul says praying in tongues provides the most perfect way to pray and to give thanks, for he said, "Thou givest thanks well" (v.17). In the presence of people who are unlearned, however, Paul said to pray with your understanding so that they can be edified and understand what you say.

Reason 10: Speaking in Tongues Brings The Tongue Under Subjection **JAMES 3:8** 8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Yielding the tongue to the Holy Spirit to speak with other tongues is a giant step toward fully yielding all of our members to God. For if we can yield this most unruly member, we can yield any member.

The Public Side of Tongues In conclusion, I want to point out that, while we have dealt primarily with tongues in the individual believer's private life, it is also true there is a public side to tongues. First, when people receive the Holy Ghost publicly, they speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. Secondly, the church is edified by speaking with other tongues in the public assembly with interpretation. Paul plainly stated that to prophesy is to speak unto men "... to edification, and exhortation, and comfort" (1 Cor. 14:3). But he said, "...greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret..." (1 Cor. 14:5). Paul was saying that tongues with interpretation is equivalent to prophesy. For example, if the utterance in tongues is interpreted so that the church can understand what is said, then the one prophesying is not greater. To illustrate this point, two nickels equal one dime. However, the two nickels are not a ten-cent piece. Prophesy is the dime, the ten-cent piece. Naturally, it would be better to have the dime (prophesy) than to have the nickel (an utterance in tongues). But if interpretation (another nickel) went along with it, then the two would be equivalent to the dime. Let me say here that prophesying is not preaching. If prophesying were preaching, then you wouldn't have to make any preparation to preach. But you have to study and prepare to preach. Paul said, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God..." (2 Tim. 2:15). You don't have to study to speak with tongues or to interpret. You don't have to study to prophesy. These come by inspiration of the Spirit. Of course, when one is preaching under the inspiration of the Spirit, and suddenly he says things he never thought of, that is inspiration, and

there is an element of prophesy to that. Tongues with interpretation edifies the church. When used in line with the Word of God, speaking with tongues with interpretation convinces the unbeliever of the reality of the Presence of God, and often causes him to turn to God and be saved. Jesus said, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues" (Mark 16:17). This, too, can be both private and public. Of course, we don't want prolonged praying in tongues in the service, because unless there is an interpretation, folks don't know what is said and are not edified. It is all right to pray in the alter service as long as you want, for you go there to be edified. If people in the service are lifting their hands and praying, it is all right to pray in tongues. I stand on the platform and pray that way every night. But when the congregation ceases praying, I cease praying. The congregation wouldn't be edified if I went on and on. We do need to know how to use what we have to the greatest advantage.

Praise the Lord

Reference: Kenneth E. Hagin (2001). "Welcome to God's Family" Faith Library Publications. USA Chapter 4, Page 57.