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*May 2018*

## WHY TONGUES?

Greetings, saints!

We pray that you all are doing well and experiencing the goodness of God right here in the land of the living! The Dickerson family sure is!

You know, when you are walking with the Lord it is an exciting life! As I have been teaching over the past few months at High Point Church, God has a good life prearranged for each and every one of us to live. This good life includes (but is not limited to) good relationships, health in our bodies, financial freedom, and most importantly, being used of Almighty God to minister His goodness into others we come into contact with. This is the good life, my friends, and it is available for all of us!

This particular series entitled "The Good Life" has been based on the 23rd Psalm, where we have gone verse by verse through this very popular psalm. And we have seen how this Psalm describes the good life that God has prepared for us to a "T."

If you are interested in hearing more on this subject, please visit our church website at [www.highpointmacon.com](http://www.highpointmacon.com) where all of the audio messages from this series are available. Be built up by God's Word, church! Let His Word change your heart, and in doing so, change your life! Live the good life today, my friends!

Regarding our family, we are doing very well (I thought to include some pictures at the end of this newsletter that we had made at the church recently):

Shannon is keeping herself busy with homeschooling Levi, taking care of our home, and doing various ministerial things at the church. She currently is leading our Women's Ministry and heads up a monthly women's meeting at the church. She speaks from time to time at other meetings as well as at the church, and always gets raving reviews at her ability to communicate the truth. However, when she is not too busy with all of these things, Shannon has adopted that "if you can't beat them, join them" mentality and has taken up golf with me and Levi.

As for Levi, he is growing up fast! He is currently in the 5th grade and excelling in so many areas. We constantly hear of how "helpful" he is in our children's ministry and can quote all the Bible verses that his teacher uses. He is also really doing well with his piano playing. It is amazing how he learns to play by ear. He also has been playing baseball of recent and, of course, plays a lot of golf with his momma & daddy. Levi is such a sharp and good-hearted young man, and we look forward to seeing how the Lord uses Him throughout his life.

As for myself, as you can imagine, I am keeping myself busy with the church. Pastoring is such a joy as you get the opportunity to do life together with your flock and see their progress in the faith. There is truly a reward in it all! The Lord has been growing us up in Him, and as my father in the faith, Andrew Wommack, once told me- "You will never stop learning." This is so true!

I am currently getting very close to completing my next full-length book entitled The Epistle of Joy. It will be a real "joy-ride" as I go verse by verse through the Book of Philippians and uncover all of the keys to unlocking the joy of the Lord in our life. My plan is to have it complete and available by November of this year. Be sure and plan on getting one!

Now, as for this month's teaching I want to talk a little about the power and benefits of praying in other tongues:

You know, in my experience as a born-again, Spirit-filled Christian, I have noticed that most people who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit and speak in other tongues have no clue what the purpose of their prayer language is. There are many who think that it was only the initial evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit or that it is just something that comes over you every once in a while, when you get goose bumps in a church service. But how many of you know there is much more to our prayer language than that?

So, let's look at the Scriptures and see what they have to say about this peculiar language that has been made available for us today. But before we get into these benefits of praying in other tongues, let's correct some of the wrong belief systems about this gift of the Spirit.

### **TONGUES ARE FOR ALL BELIEVERS TODAY**

One of the false doctrines that are in the church today is that tongues passed away with the apostles and now that we have the Bible we do not need tongues, nor any other gift of the Spirit. This teaching comes from 1 Corinthians 13:8-10- where the Apostle Paul says when that which is "perfect" has come, that which is in part will be done away with (and he specifically mentions tongues as being one of those things that will pass away). Now there is a specific group of Christians that say the Bible is that which is "perfect" and since it has come, tongues and all of the other gifts of the Spirit have passed away.

Now, although I do believe that the Bible is indeed perfect, I also believe that it is a huge stretch to say that is what Paul was referring to here. If you read those Scriptures in context it is rather obvious that Paul was talking about God's Kingdom coming and us receiving the fullness of our salvation. The main reason I can say this is because, along with tongues ceasing, Paul also said knowledge will end. Now we all know that we are all still growing in knowledge, so how can we say that now that we have the Bible we know all things just as we are known? The only time we will know everything just like God knows us is when we receive our glorified bodies and are not limited by this carnal mind that we now have. No, that which is perfect has not come yet and therefore praying in other tongues is still available to us! Amen!

Another damaging doctrine in the church today is that speaking in other tongues (which just literally means "languages") is having a gift that enables you to learn and speak in another known language in the world today. Those that believe this use Acts chapter two as a reference because when the disciples in the upper room spoke in other tongues they spoke in languages known to those that heard them. That, however, is just one of many different kinds of tongues available to us. That is what is called "tongues as a sign to the unbeliever" (see 1 Corinthians 14:22).

You see, in 1 Corinthians 12:10 when the Apostle Paul was describing the gifts of the Spirit, he said that there were "diverse (or different) kinds of tongues." That means that tongues as a sign to the unbeliever is just one kind of this gift of tongues that we have been given. And if you look at 1 Corinthians 13:1 you will see that Paul mentions another kind of tongue other than a known tongue in the world today. In this verse, he says, "*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels...*" This Scripture makes it clear that speaking in another tongue of men is not the only kind of tongue available to us! We also can speak in a heavenly language, unknown to mankind!

And while I am at it, allow me to dispel another wrong teaching about tongues: In 1 Corinthians 12:29-30, Paul asks several questions- one being, "Do all speak with tongues?" Many use this to say, "You see, not everybody speaks in tongues! It has been given to some, but not to all!" Well, you have to catch the heart of what Paul was saying here: In every one of the questions that he asks, he is referring to the specific gifts of the Spirit that benefit somebody else. Like, for instance, he refers to the gifts of an apostle, a prophet, a teacher, a miracle worker, etc. And after he asks the question- "Do all speak with tongues?" he asks, "Do

all interpret?" It is obvious that Paul is referring in these two verses to the public use of the gifts of the Spirit for the purpose of edifying others. Sure, not everybody has the gift of speaking in other tongues to edify the Body of Christ, just like not everybody has the gift of being a prophet to edify the Body of Christ.

You see, this is not referring to another kind of tongues which is for our own personal edification. This tongues for personal edification is a gift that is available for every believer in the Body of Christ.

So now that we have dispelled some of the misconceptions about tongues in the Body of Christ, let's look at some of the benefits of praying in the Spirit by turning over to 1 Corinthians chapter 14:

### REVELATION KNOWLEDGE

I believe that 1 Corinthians chapter 14 gives us the most detailed description of what praying in other tongues accomplishes in our lives. In verse 2, the Apostle Paul said, *"For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries."*

Notice that Paul said when we pray in the Spirit we are speaking directly "to God." You see, we are not just aimlessly babbling a bunch of weird syllables together. **We are speaking directly to the God of the universe when we pray in our heavenly prayer language!** So, don't ever think that using your prayer language is a waste of time because, as Paul goes on to say, *"in the spirit (we) speak mysteries."*

You see, this is why sometimes we do not "feel" like we are accomplishing anything when we pray in other tongues. It is because the impact is being made "in the spirit" (that is, not in this natural realm). You do not contact the spiritual realm with your feelings, emotions, or intellect. You probably will not sense anything most of the time you pray in other tongues because you are affecting things in the spiritual realm and not the natural. So, do not allow the enemy to convince you that you are wasting your time when you spend time praying in tongues just because you don't feel anything. Just remember, the impact is being made *in the spirit*, not in the natural.

Paul goes on to say in verse 2 that when we pray in these other tongues, we are praying "mysteries." So, do you suppose that these "mysteries" are for God's benefit? Of course not! So, then they must be for ours, right!?! Then what are these "mysteries" that we are praying? This word "mysteries" is the same word that Paul used in his epistles when describing the "mystery" of the New Covenant (see Ephesians 3:3-5). Therefore, these mysteries that we are praying in the spirit are the mysteries hidden in God before the foundation of the world! They describe the wonderful works of the Cross- that is, the great redemption that we have experienced. The mystery also goes as far as speaking of all that Christ is in us, and all that we are in Christ.

In Colossians 1:26-27, Paul explains this mystery of the New Covenant beautifully! He says, *"...the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."* The mystery is how Christ has come to make His abode in our hearts and how this results in us having an expectation of a glorious future. **Therefore, when we pray in other tongues we are praying out the revelation knowledge of the New Covenant mystery so that we can become enlightened to its truths!** Glory to God! Now that makes me want to stop writing this and spend some time praying in the Spirit, amen?

I believe this benefit of praying in tongues is a significant part of what Jude was referring to when he said in Jude 20- *"But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit."* When Jude uses the phrase "your most holy faith" he is not referring to our own personal faith, but to the Christian Faith in general. Jude is saying that when we pray in the Spirit, we build ourselves up upon the

foundation laid by the apostles and the prophets- that is, the truths contained in the mystery of the New Covenant! You see, praying in other tongues is an integral part to us growing in the understanding and revelation knowledge of the Truth.

I think the best example of this is in the ministry of the Apostle Paul: Why do you think that this mystery of the New Testament was revealed to Paul and not to Peter, John, or James? I believe the reason is found in 1 Corinthians 14:18 when He said, *"I thank my God I speak in tongues more than you all."* In this verse, Paul gives us a little insight into what he spent a lot of his time doing. If he spoke in tongues more than the whole church of Corinth- which was a tongue talking bunch- then he must have prayed in the Spirit day and night.

So, I believe it is no coincidence why he possessed more revelation knowledge than any other believer seeing that he spent a lot of time praying in tongues. And if we would spend time praying in the Spirit, we too would grow in the revelation knowledge of the mystery of Christ. This is one of the main benefits of praying in the Spirit.

### **EDIFICATION**

Paul describes another benefit of praying in other tongues a couple of verses down in 1 Corinthians chapter 14: In verse 4, he says, *"He who speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself..."*

The word "edifies" literally means "to build up." Some Greek scholars say that the word used to translate "edifies" describes a battery getting charged. You see, we all need to get a little juiced up by the Holy Spirit every now and then and praying in tongues is one way we do this!

This is another possible meaning of what Jude wrote when he said- *"But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit."* If you look at the verse before this, Jude was describing "sensual" persons- that is, "sense-ruled" people (see Jude 19). Then in verse 20, he began by saying, "But you..." You could interpret this as- "You, on the other hand..." In other words, the way we can keep ourselves from living like "carnal people" is to build ourselves up by praying in the Holy Spirit. You see, by praying in tongues we can charge our spiritual battery to the point where we live above this carnal sense-ruled body that we live in. This is the power that is in our prayer language! So you could say- **Another way to walk in the Spirit is to pray in the Spirit!**

I can testify to this too: On the days where I have been disciplined enough to start my day by spending time praying in other tongues, it was rather obvious to me that I was walking in the Spirit the rest of that day. It seemed like there would just be a flow that I was in on those days. For example, I would just be in the right place at the right time, either receiving the favor of God or being in a position to minister to somebody. Man, I'll tell you- the days that I have taken the time to do this have been exciting days! That is because living a Spirit-controlled life is "living the life!" Amen!

### **REST AND REFRESHING**

In Isaiah 28:11 & 12, we are given a prophetic glimpse of this benefit of praying in other tongues. In this passage of Scripture, we have what many consider to be the only reference to this particular manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. In fact, we know these verses in Isaiah are prophetic of this New Covenant gift because the Apostle Paul made reference to this Scripture in 1 Corinthians 14:21 when admonishing the Corinthians on the subject of tongues. So, let's look at these Scriptures in Isaiah chapter 28:

In verse 11, Isaiah says, *"For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people..."* The Apostle Paul used this particular statement to show how one of the many diversities of tongues is to

be a sign for the unbeliever (see 1 Corinthians 14:21-22), but if you look on to verse 12, I believe the Holy Spirit through Isaiah gives us a result of these “stammering lips and other tongues”... He says, “*To whom He said, ‘This is the **rest** with which you may cause the weary to rest.’ And, ‘This is the **refreshing**’; yet they would not hear.*” Notice in this verse we are told that two of the results of praying in other tongues are that we enter into a **rest** and that we experience a **refreshing**. These are two of the specific characteristics of what Paul deemed “edification.”

Did you know that when you become weary in well doing and begin to grow faint in your race of faith, that praying in other tongues is a way that you can enter into a supernatural rest? Did you know that when you feel dry and empty in your soul that you can experience a supernatural refreshing through your prayer language? That’s right! You don’t need to run to someone else to pray for you or to the nearest revival service to get a fix.

You see, this is what so many believers do: They look for a place where God is moving and drive miles to go get that quick fix from God. But that is only a superficial way of experiencing a personal revival. **The best way to experience a personal revival is to get it from the inside/out and not the outside/in!** All you need to do to enter into the rest and refreshing of the Holy Spirit is to set aside a period of time, go into your prayer closet and pray in other tongues for an extended period of time. I guarantee you if you do this, your battery will get charged up and you will experience more peace and joy than you were previously experiencing!

I can recall the first time when I just decided that I was going to pray in tongues for one hour. Now up to that point I had never prayed in the Spirit for anywhere close to that amount of time, but I just wanted to see what would happen. Well, for the first 30 minutes or so I did not see any difference, but once I got around 40-45 minutes into it, I had so much energy just burst forth out of my spirit that I did not know what to do with myself! The closest thing I can liken it to was like my body got filled with a bunch of caffeine and sugar (without the edge, of course)! Man, I felt full of the life of God! This was obviously that refreshing Isaiah prophesied about!

Now am I saying that you too will experience that same exact thing 45 minutes into your prayer time? No, I’m not. It may be that you enter into that rest 15 minutes or either an hour into your prayer time. It may take well over an hour. What I am saying is that you can expect a spiritual edification to occur if you will commit yourself and not let a clock determine your decision to sow to the Spirit.

Yes church, there is a spiritual edification that takes place when we spend time praying in other tongues to where our spiritual battery gets charged up. We need to take advantage of this awesome benefit of our prayer language. Amen?

Now there are many other benefits to our prayer language, and while I lack the time here to be able to expound on all of them, let me quickly just mention a couple of them: Number one, praying in other tongues is a way of allowing the Holy Spirit to intercede through us when we do not know what to pray for as we ought (see Romans 8:26-27). Number two, praying in other tongues is a great way to sing unto God. Paul said when we sing in the Spirit we are praising and thanking God well (see 1 Corinthians 14:15-17).

Saints, with all of these awesome benefits of this prayer language that we have been given, it would behoove us to make time in our daily routine for it. I mean, just think if we were to set aside an hour every day to pray in the Spirit, what a difference it would make in our lives!

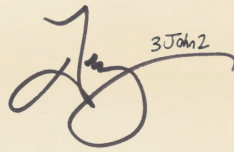
But you know, it is easier said than done. When you make the decision to make this more of a priority in your life, the enemy will fight you tooth and nail. You see, the enemy fights the gift of tongues almost more than anything else as evidenced by the many false doctrines we discussed earlier. He will put every

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reason in the world into your mind to try and distract you from going into your prayer closet. And if this doesn't work, he will lie to you during your prayer time telling you that you are just wasting your time. Why do you think that he does this? How about because he knows its benefits to the believer and he doesn't want us tapping into those divine secrets and edification. So, don't let him do this to you! Make a commitment and stick to it. You will be glad that you did. Selah!

Until next month, Blessings from the Dickerson's to your household!

Victoriously,



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