

Steve Hill: Going to War With the Holy Spirit

Every one of us has incredible stories to tell. Our religious backgrounds are wonderfully different. We all have a myriad of mentors, some who have moved on to their reward, others who are still sowing into our lives.

I was raised Lutheran. Now I'm probably a Luther-costal. This last week I was spending time with a few friends over the phone. One was Church of God, another a former Methodist and the third was Independent. All three have ministries of integrity and are well respected, known by many.

We have four major areas in common: We are saved, love Jesus, have had personal dynamic encounters with the Holy Ghost and regularly speak in tongues.

Perhaps I've already turned off some who don't believe tongues are for today. That's all fine, and I respect your viewpoint on this subject, but what I am sharing is extremely important and relevant to today's fiery religious warfare that no one can deny is picking up steam.

My Encounter With God

When we share our personal experiences, as long as they are genuine, we should do so without apology. I've never been ashamed of my encounter with God back in February of 1976 at a Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship.

A young man shared his story and then called everyone forward who desired an infilling. I jumped out of my chair, began to move forward and suddenly, while walking down the aisle, was filled with the Holy Ghost. In an instant, I began speaking in tongues! No one laid hands on me! It was an explosion of power that has been with me from that moment on. That night I

received a prayer language that has been an integral part of my Christian life for over three decades.

My intention in this short article is to share two benefits for consistently using our prayer language. This is not an essay nor thesis on speaking in tongues but rather a few short lines sharing with you the reasons I adore this gift so much. This is for those who believe in the present-day use of tongues, are not ashamed of the Holy Ghost and have no concern of offending others. It is for those who see the war on the horizon and know that a major spiritual conflict is imminent.

Concerning tongues being an offense to the lost, I have witnessed the opposite worldwide. Like on the day of Pentecost, the Lord will often use this incredible sign to convince the world of a power outside their own: "Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers" (1 Cor. 14:22).

What David Wilkerson Taught Me

Allow me to sidetrack just for a moment and share with you from the life of one of my spiritual fathers.

David Wilkerson was a master at sharing stories from the front lines of ministry. Brother Dave, as we called him, was an amazing man. He not only put Jeri and me through Bible school, but he consistently poured into us, exposing spiritual battle wounds and scars and educating us in the reality of the field of war. Some of his stories were heartbreaking and filled my eyes with tears; other times he lifted our spirits by being there during our roughest trials.

I'll never forget a late-night phone call from Brother Dave after I had received the devastating news that melanoma cancer was spreading throughout my body. He lifted me up! He told me that I would be flooded by well-meaning Christians with counsel and cures but to guard my ears. If I wasn't careful, confusion could easily settle in and overtake God's peace and

direction for my life. He was speaking from experience, having been through many cancer surgeries with his wife, Gwen.

Then he said these simple words: "The same Jesus who saved you can heal you. Stay close to Him."

I thanked him, we shared a few words of love, hung up, and then I did what I learned years earlier in Bible school to do: I began to glorify God in my heavenly language. Of course, I could have prayed in English, but when I began to communicate with my Jesus in tongues, a heavy burden lifted and an incredible peace flooded my soul. Indescribable!

Engaging in Open-Air Warfare

This is a prime example of when Jesus said He must leave but was going to send the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, the called-alongside One, who would be with us throughout our days (John 14:16). This is the opposite of Job's miserable comforters, who did nothing but bring him down (Job 16:2).

That night, when Brother Dave called, I needed the Lord like a hurting son longs for a fatherly embrace. Then later, when I spoke to Jesus in my personal heavenly language, it was like He rushed to my side. Call out to Him, my friend. He waits to be your personal comforter.

Yes, one of the purposes of this special gift from God is for personal edification: "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church" (1 Cor. 14:4).

On a side note, during Pastor Dave's long season of ministry at Times Square Church in New York, he would often be found walking down the crowded streets with his voice raised high, speaking in tongues. Oh, how he loved Manhattan! He would say, "Times Square is full of so many people screaming in the streets, you can speak in tongues at the top of your lungs and no one would even look your way." He cherished that open-air

warfare in the heart of the devil's terrain.

Now, back to my phone conversations.

The other men I was talking to were greatly encouraged when we began discussing intense Christian warfare. Even though these were three totally different conversations, they were linked by a common bond: battling the devil.

In the discussions, we began to delve into the deeper areas of this age-old conflict. We agreed that there are times when all believers need major reinforcement to win the battle. These seasons come quite frequently in my life, my wife's life and my three children's lives. Every other frontline organization dedicated to "taking out" the devil knows how violent this war can become.

The devil and his guerrilla fighters are bloodthirsty cutthroats. Throughout church history, they have used horrific means in order to stop the forward movement of Christianity. Our enemy knows the Bible and is well aware of the end but, like a drowning man, will take down as many as possible as he fights for his life.

My friends and I were doing some intense war-room planning when suddenly something happened that moved us quickly from the trenches. Remember, these were three different phone conversations, at three different times, but with the same intense results.

Explosive, Dynamite Power

Our militant discussions suddenly moved into high gear. We actively began slinging our sharpened swords with incredible accuracy. A sense of invincible victory invaded our conversations as we began to *speak in tongues ... together!*

The combined explosive dynamite power could be felt as we aimed our weapons in harmony at the devil's strategically

focused snipers. We took them out in seconds! If you've never experienced this type of warfare, I would highly recommend it. It seems to bring confusion to the camp of the enemy and gives the Spirit direct aim, through His warriors, at Satan's plans.

The Scripture promises us *power!* And all His promises are yes and amen. Consider these Scriptures:

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

My wife and I have worked all over the world. For three decades we have used this weaponry against the enemy with unbelievable success. Oftentimes we can't decipher our enemy's exact plan of attack, but the Spirit can. So why not take advantage over Satan, speak in tongues with authority, and watch his army fall like dominos in the path of God's mighty, sweeping Holy Spirit?

If you have not yet been filled, call out to Him. Don't stop. He will free your tongue and release it to help bring personal comfort and incredible victorious power over every attack of the enemy.

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