

Why Every Preacher Should Embrace Praying in Tongues

In the early part of 2002, I began praying in other tongues at length. I have always made a private practice of praying in tongues quite regularly, but during this period of time I indulged in it on a daily basis. After praying for about two and a half months this way, I then added some extended fasting for several more weeks.

Before this extended time of prayer and seeking God, I had become quite frustrated with my life and ministry and a lack of certain results. At this juncture in my life, I was teaching students and training young ministers on an international platform in a stateside school of revival. I was doing everything I've always dreamed of doing. I was teaching and preaching, traveling both nationally and internationally, mentoring young students, and even found time to do some writing. My family and I were as comfortable as we'd ever been. Our finances were better than they ever were. We were in good health. We enjoyed great friendships. I had every reason to be happy and satisfied, but somehow, I was not.

In my heart, I was not fulfilled. There was an internal struggle. I did not have peace. I was not walking in my authority as a minister. Somehow and somewhere I was knocked out of that position of authority and it was affecting every area of my life.

Even the mentoring times with students that I so looked forward to were no longer enjoyable. After these mentoring times, I would walk away emotionally and spiritually drained. I was hearing a distinct call in my spirit, "Be with Me." And so at the direction of the Lord, I made a determination at the end of 2001 to put a halt to my mentoring groups, stop all extracurricular activities, limit my travels and deepen my

fellowship with the Lord.

When I first started praying in the spirit, I kept having this impression of a glass ceiling over my head. On the other side of this glass ceiling was the glory, the power, the favor, the increase, and the anointing I was seeking. While I was gazing intently at the ceiling, however, God began to deal with me about the floor, my foundation. Here are some of the first words of wisdom I heard from the Lord: "Take away "ministry" over the last 17 years, and what do you have? Your character has not been sufficiently dealt the death blows that it will take to properly develop it to where I can impart to you the mind of Christ. You need more mortification to receive the mind of Christ."

After hearing this word is when I made the decision to add fasting to my time of seeking the Lord. After all, when combined with the Word of God, fasting is the quickest route to mortification and character transformation. And that is what this life in Christ is all about.

To tell you the truth, I thought my foundation was just fine. I had been in the full-time preaching ministry for about 15 years. I had been a faithful missionary. I had seen God work healings and miracles through my life. I had ministered to thousands of people in evangelistic crusades and Bible school settings and made some faithful disciples along the way. Why was the Lord directing my attention to the floor and to my foundation? The ceiling is where I wanted to go. That is what I was thinking and praying about. If I had not been in a position of humility through prayer and fasting, I would've missed the Lord in what He was trying to say to me. Thank God for His patience and long-suffering.

After several more weeks of seeking the Lord and praying, especially in other tongues, revelation began to open up to me concerning my life and ministry. It was as if the Holy Spirit was now helping me to interpret the many mysteries I had been

praying out for months. For several weeks, I heard beautiful words. I wrote them down. God gave me a blueprint of His more perfect will for my life and ministry. You can find this testimony in my book *The Journal Of A Journey* as well as the revelation I received during this time and also the order by which it came. It is important to know that there is an order to each piece of revelation God gives.

1 Cor. 14:4a says, "He who speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself." One meaning of "edify" is to build, organize and order. When I began to pray in other tongues at length I was building, organizing and ordering my life in the Spirit while edifying myself. I was accessing certain mysteries of my life and calling, and God put me on the fast track because of the time spent praying forth those mysteries. My understanding, however, was unfruitful until the interpretation of it came in these documents. Wise ministers and saints will build their lives and ministries this way.

There is an organization and an order in the Spirit that come as a result of the leading and direction of the Lord that you receive through prayer especially praying in other tongues. The apostle Paul also penned these words: "I thank my God I speak in tongues more than you all. Yet in the church..." (1 Cor. 14:18-19a).

As the principal writer of the New Testament, Paul's private use of speaking in tongues was his key to revelation knowledge and to his understanding of the mysteries of God. The same applies today. Time spent praying in other tongues will give you the needed wisdom, knowledge and understanding of God's more perfect plan for your life.

Praying in tongues is both a purifying fire and a devouring fire. As you pray in other tongues, the fire of God will devour your works of wood, hay and stubble while at the same time purifying your works of gold, silver and precious stones. This will save your works at the judgment seat of Christ and

cause you to enter into a sure reward.

How does this happen? It happens through the interpretation processes of revelation and precise instruction from the Holy Spirit. The Bible says we should pray to interpret our heavenly language of tongues (1 Cor. 14:13). The key is to locate the channel by which the Holy Spirit speaks.

Most Christians have a difficult time distinguishing their spirit from their intellect. Your conscience is the voice of your spirit. The Holy Spirit is more closely associated with your conscience than your intellect. As you pray in tongues, you are praying from the channel of your conscience through which the Holy Spirit speaks.

Our problem is that we are more accustomed to looking for God's voice in our intellect. Our intellect is generally an unsafe guide because it is usually clouded with a mixture of the world's thinking, where much of our decision-making is based on our best interests. Most Christians have a difficult time hearing from God, because their soul which comprises much of their intellect, is clouded with self, mingled with the world and yet has some Word in it.

Praying in other tongues will broaden the channel by which God speaks. In my case, I prayed so much in other tongues that eventually those tongues seemed to turn to English at times, and the Lord began to give me revelation and instruction concerning my life and ministry.

Praying in tongues also aligns your heart with the motives of Jesus Christ, especially as you spend time meditating on the life and words of Jesus in the gospels. This will strengthen your conscience. The conscience will then translate those motives into thoughts and order your soul in it through the revelation and instruction you are receiving from the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's purpose is to re-align your soul with the motives of Christ so He can begin to make a real bond-slave

out of you. That is real character transformation which is what the Lord is after.

It is time to double up and triple up praying in other tongues and to get the order and organization of your life and ministry from the Spirit of God. Let Him speak to you and give you clarity.

One of the main themes that has been woven into my preaching and writing over the years has been the great desire of the Spirit to save ministers and saints from dead works and laboring in vain. There are certain admonitions in Scripture that have very strong application toward ministers (Mat 7:21-23, 1 Cor 13:1-3, 2 Cor 3:12-15, James 3:1-2). We must pay very close attention to these. To whom much is given much is required.

It is my earnest prayer that the Holy Spirit will use this testimony and the book below to enlighten you and save your works from being burned so that you will receive the Lord's reward for your labor on that day. {eo}