

# e-CWIP interactive apostolic ministry training

## Class 102 – Doing the Stuff: Session Seven Pulpit Notes

### Study Notes On Speaking in Tongues and Praying In The Spirit

#### **(1) What is happening when we speak in tongues?**

(A) You are the one speaking, not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not taking over your mind or your mouth. He does not possess people.

*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)*

(B) You are speaking speech (utterance) given by the Holy Spirit: Acts 2:4 (see above). This is a stream of utterance from the Holy Spirit into your spirit.

(C) Your spirit is speaking.

*For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful...  
(1 Cor. 14:14)*

What is being emphasized here is that his spirit is praying something his mind does not understand and is not involved in.

(D) This is volitional (meaning it is an act of your own will):

*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.... (1 Cor. 14:15)*

Notice that he can choose which he wishes to do at any given moment, again showing this to be a volitional activity.

*I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all, yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue (1 Cor. 14:18-19)*

## **(2) Tongues are primarily expressions of praise and worship**

(A) Praise

*...we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. (Acts 2:11)*

This shatters the idea that speaking in tongues was preaching. It was not!

(B) Mysteries

*For he who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men, but to God: for no man understands; however in the spirit he speaks mysteries. (1 Cor. 14:2)*

(C) Prayer

*For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful... (1 Cor. 14:14)*

(D) Song (sung worship)

*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.... (1 Cor. 14:15)*

(E) Blessing and thanksgiving:

*Otherwise when you shall bless with the spirit, how will he that occupies the place of the unlearned say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, seeing he does not understand what you say? For you truly are giving thanks well, but the other is not edified. (1 Cor. 14:16-17)*

### **(3) The gift of tongues compared to “devotional tongues” or “prayer language”**

#### (A) Gift of tongues

*Now you are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God has set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? (1 Cor. 12:27-30)*

All of these require a “no” answer. The point is that these are ministries or offices. Not everyone has what we could call an ongoing ministry in speaking in tongues to the body which need to be interpreted.

#### (B) As used personally (commonly referred to as a “prayer language”)

*He that speaks in a tongue edifies himself ... (1 Cor. 14:4)*

Some have frowned on this, as though personal edification was bad or selfish. Would anyone fault you for seeking personal edification through the Word of God? What Paul is complaining about is not the use of the gift but the selfish use of the gift when among others.

*I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all, yet in the church... (1 Cor. 14:18-19)*

This shows that Paul did this outside of the context of church. In fact, he did it more than any of them! This alone should show its value to him – and to us! The Corinthians came behind in no gift [charisma], as he himself had said. (1 Cor. 1:7)

*But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. (1 Cor. 14:28)*

This shows that it is perfectly appropriate to pray in tongues for your own private edification.

#### **(4) God Wants Us To Use Tongues To Edify Ourselves And Help Us Pray**

(A) Praying with groanings, etc.

*Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities; for we do not know what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he who searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he makes intercession for the saints according to (the will of) God. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called [ones] according to his purpose. (Rom. 8:26-28)*

The word “helps” in verse 26 means “pulling with you against something.”

Although this verse is often used in reference to intercession in other tongues, the context is actually groaning. We should remember that there are other forms of prayers such as groanings which are not *praying with the spirit*, perhaps, but are definitely *praying in the Spirit*. Recall that Jesus Himself prayed this kind of prayers, as we read twice in the story of the raising of Lazarus (John 11:33, 38) However, there are simply too many testimonies of intercession in tongues and the miraculous results God has wrought through it to discount the possibility that Paul is also thinking of it here.

Notice that it is not a matter of *how* to pray, in terms of finding the right style of prayer, but a question of *what* - that is, the content. Such praying enables us to pray for things we know nothing about, as the Spirit gives us content to pray. This is another reason why tongues and not merely groanings should be brought in under this verse.

The Father understands the heart of the Spirit as the Spirit and the believer pray together on a matter. Most comfortingly, the person praying this way enters into a new realm of prayer in which, "unconsciously," we join in the Spirit's perfect knowledge of the will of God and how to pray, as Paul says, "according to God."

(B) Communing with God in the various forms described in 1 Cor. 14 such as praise, worship, and thanksgiving. These may be sung as well as spoken. (See references above.)

(C) Edification of your spirit man.

*He that speaks in a tongue edifies himself... (1 Cor. 14:4)*

*I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all... (1 Cor. 14:18)*

*But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. (Jude 20)*

How important is this? Jesus said that out of our innermost being would flow rivers of living waters. (John 7:38) Praying and worshipping in other tongues allows us to release these streams into the deserts of our life and the lives of others... how much we should use it and how often it is neglected!

In our own opinion, the more one speaks and prays in tongues, the more manifestations of the other gifts of the Spirit one will see. This is probably because the spirit has taken its primacy in the person as the dominant “organ” over the soul. The person is therefore quicker and better able to respond to the Spirit’s promptings.

More time than we have could be spent just sharing testimonies of the blessings and answers to prayer that have come as people have sought the Lord in this type of prayer.

Interestingly, modern science is beginning to discover what Paul knew 1,950 years ago. In November 2006, the *New York Times* published a story called “A Neuroscientific Look At Speaking in Tongues.” The *Times* reported:

*Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania took brain images of five women while they spoke in tongues and found that their frontal lobes — the thinking, willful part of the brain through which people control what they do — were relatively quiet, as were the language centers. The regions involved in maintaining self-consciousness were active. The women were not in blind trances, and it was unclear which region was driving the behavior....*

*“The amazing thing was how the images supported people’s interpretation of what was happening,” said Dr. Andrew B. Newberg, leader of the study team, which included Donna Morgan, Nancy Wintering and Mark Waldman. “The way they describe it, and what they believe, is that God is talking through them,” he said....*

*Contrary to what may be a common perception, studies suggest that people who speak in tongues rarely suffer from mental problems. A recent study of nearly 1,000 evangelical Christians in England found that those who engaged in the practice were more emotionally stable than those who did not....*

*The new findings contrasted sharply with images taken of other spiritually inspired mental states like meditation, which is often a highly focused mental exercise, activating the frontal lobes....*

### **Taking Responsibility For Your Growth In The Spirit**

In order to flow in supernatural ministry, we need to change our thinking about the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit. To grow in the gifts, we must begin to see ourselves as people whom God desires to use in the supernatural and then specifically seek to be used Him for it. It is not enough simply to be "willing to be used," especially when the Word of God commands us to be zealous for the gifts of the Spirit. There are some keys in the Scripture which will be helpful here.

**First, see yourself as a gifted person into whom God has placed a supernatural deposit of His grace.** Study 1 Cor. 12:4-11 and note two things. First, Paul says that the "manifestation of the Spirit" is given to each man for the common good (verse 7). Second, he says that the Spirit divides gifts severally to each man (verse 11). This alone should be enough to convince you that all Christians have the potential of being used in the supernatural gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12. See also Philemon 1:6, where Paul said that the sharing of our faith would become effective through acknowledging every good thing that was in us in Christ.

**Second, realize that it is proper and very biblical to pray for miraculous demonstrations of God’s power.** Read Acts 4:24-31 carefully, and see that the apostles and believers specifically prayed for God to grant them boldness by demonstrating healings, signs, and wonders through the Name of Jesus.

*And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant to your servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth your hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of your holy servant Jesus.*

**Third, it is also proper and very biblical to desire spiritual gifts – in fact, we are commanded to do so!** Contrary to much traditional theology, we are told to be zealous for the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives. In teaching about the gifts, Paul states this by a threefold use of the word *zeloo*, which means to be zealous. It’s the word from which we get the English word “zeal.” This word occurs in:

- 1 Cor. 12:31 (“covet earnestly [be zealous for] the best gifts”)
- 1 Cor. 14:1 (“desire [be zealous for] spiritual gifts”), and
- 1 Cor. 14:39 (“covet [be zealous] to prophesy”)

As we’ve discussed previously, the choice between fruit and gifts is a false choice that God does not ask us to make. He wants us to have both, so that He may extend His Power through us to help others.

**Finally, the Word teaches us that we are responsible to develop the deposit of grace God has given us.**

1 Tim. 4:14: *"...do not neglect the gift [charisma] that is in you, which was given to you [accompanied] by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."*

Recognize it and do not make light of it. (This word was used by Jesus to describe those who "made light" of their wedding invitations.)

2 Tim. 1:14: *"Watch over the deposit which was committed to you by the Holy Spirit who dwells in you."*

This word was used of the shepherds who "kept watch" in Luke 2:8.

2 Tim. 1:3-7: *Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God, which is in you by the putting on of my hands. For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

This portrays the character (fruit) and the power (gifts) together. "Stir up" here means to kindle afresh, keep in full flame. "Gift" here means the charisma of God; the same word as in 1 Tim. 4:14 and in 1 Cor. 12:4, 31.

## **As A Steward of God's Grace, Take Heed to Your Ministry**

1 Pet. 4:10: *As every man has received the gift [charisma], even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

Again, contrary to much natural and religious thinking, we are responsible to develop the spiritual gifts the Lord has given to us. We are called to be good stewards of the grace of God. We can do this through prayer, study, submission, and mentoring relationships.

*And say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry [diakonia] which you have received in the Lord, so that you fulfill it." (Col. 4:17)*

Although God has given the fivefold ministry to equip the saints, each of us must take heed to ourselves, as we will one day stand before Christ individually to give account.

We alone are ultimately responsible!