

## Tongues

### I. Intro

- A. I believe that the enemy has fought in every way that He can to neutralize the American church, causing us to be domesticated so we become powerless. He has gone after the gift of tongues with a vengeance – something so offensive to our natural minds and unable to do in our human nature. (God chose the foolish things to shame the wise...so that no one may boast before him. 1Cor 1:27,29)
- B. There is simply no reason why it has garnered so much opposition (what is so truly offensive about it?) except what I believe to be a plot of the enemy to take out a huge cornerstone of power in the church.
- C. I believe the Lord is wanting to help the church understand what it does and once again walk in more power.
- D. Before I begin, share my testimony with tongues.

### II. Tongues: Power of Self-Edification

**“The one who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but the one who prophesies edifies the church.” 1Cor 14:4**

- A. According to Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, the definition of edification specifically used in this verse is this: to promote growth in Christian wisdom, affection, grace, virtue, holiness, blessedness.
- B. To get a better idea of this, I want to compare it to a passage that I think helps shine light in a similar way. Galatians 6:2 says, **“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”** Yet 3 verses later it says, **“for each one should carry their own load.”** Why in the world would Paul tell us to carry each other’s burdens but then say that each person should carry their own load?!
- C. I want to read an excerpt from a book called “Boundaries” by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend:

“We are responsible to others and for ourselves. “Carry each other’s burdens,” says Galatians 6:2, “and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” This verse shows our responsibility to one another. Many times, others have “burdens” that are too big to bear. They do not have enough strength, resources, or knowledge to carry the load, and they need help. Denying ourselves to do for others what they cannot do for themselves is showing the sacrificial love of Christ. This is what Christ did for us. He did what we could not do for ourselves; he saved us. This is being responsible “to.”

On the other hand, Galatians 6:5 says that “each one should carry his own load.” Everyone has responsibilities that only he or she can carry. These things are our own particular “load” that we need to take daily responsibility for and work out. No one can do certain things for us. We have to take ownership of certain aspects of life that are our own “load.”

The Greek words for burden and load give us insight into the meaning of these texts. The Greek word for burden means “excess burdens,” or burdens that are so heavy that they weigh us down. These burdens are like boulders. They can crush us. We shouldn’t be expected to carry a boulder by

ourselves! It would break our backs. We need help with the boulders — those times of crisis and tragedy in our lives.

In contrast, the Greek word for load means “cargo,” or “the burden of daily toil.” This word describes the everyday things we all need to do. These loads are like knapsacks. Knapsacks are possible to carry. We are expected to carry our own. We are expected to deal with our own feelings, attitudes, and behaviors, as well as the responsibilities God has given to each one of us, even though it takes effort.

Problems arise when people act as if their “boulders” are daily loads, and refuse help, or as if their “daily loads” are boulders they shouldn’t have to carry. The results of these two instances are either perpetual pain or irresponsibility.”

- D. Just like we can get caught up in bearing each other’s burdens, but forget that we are also supposed to carry our own load, we can also swing the other way in edification, where we **only** begin to focus on edifying others and never actually take care of edifying our spirit man.
- E. What would it look like if everyone felt it was their responsibility to show up to church already having built themselves up in the way Paul described rather than sitting there, feeling it was someone else’s responsibility, and not being edified unless they do? Sunday mornings would be completely different! Prayer meetings would be COMPLETELY different!!!
- F. Jude gives us this exact same concept in verse 20 saying, “But you, beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in *the* Holy Spirit”. We are actually commanded in the Word of God to build ourselves up, and Jude connects this to praying in the Spirit!
- G. 1Sam 30:6, “And David was greatly distressed...But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.”
- H. Satan has tried to steal away the value of personal tongues because of the power of what it can bring to our personal lives, and the breakthrough it can provide in our areas of struggle and weakness (addiction). It’s really time we begin to learn how to edify ourselves in the body of Christ again!

### III. The “Conflict” of Corporate Tongues

- A. Much confusion with tongues corporately comes from people 1 Cor 14. Some have felt that what Paul is saying means that you can never speak in tongues where anyone can hear you because you have no interpretation. I literally have a friend whose *spouse* has *never* heard them pray in tongues, nor have they ever gotten to do it together, simply because they feel no one is ever allowed to hear their tongue from what they have been taught from this passage.
- B. He gives such strong imagery of what tongues do in combatting darkness in prayer and teaching us what to pray when we don’t know what to pray. It seems difficult, then, to think that we are all supposed to come into a prayer meeting to hear a topic, go out into separate rooms so that we can all pray in the spirit to get understanding and fight the enemy, and then come back together when we are ready to all pray in English. Sounds to me like the enemy is bringing confusion to undercut the power.

- C. I believe the context of the passage is referring to the actual corporate gift of tongues, which is a specific corporate gift just like interpretation for people who have a tongue for the corporate body, and giving instruction that the service needs to pause in order to receive it, followed up by someone speaking a corporate interpretation to the body.
- D. Most of the context of 1 Cor is Paul addressing a church plagued with selfish ambition, division, and pride leading to conflicts, sin, and abuse of gifts. It is important that we heed rightly his instructions, while not giving into the schemes of the enemy to confuse and strip us of the Spirit's power in and through us. It is most often through praying in the Spirit together in a corporate prayer meeting that I am able to receive from the Holy Spirit what His heart and direction is to then release it in English for the group around me to pray together. I have found that through everyone doing this, we are better able to come into one accord (Acts 2:1-4) and the unity of the Spirit (Eph 4:3)
- E. May self-edification and the power of praying in the Spirit continue to increase!

#### IV. Tongues: Power in Prayer

- A. In 1 Cor 14, Paul says that he who speaks in a tongue speaks to God (vs 2). He also says in verses 14 and 15 that when he prays in a tongue, his spirit prays instead of his understanding and calls it praying with the spirit.

**“For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. <sup>11</sup> For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup> Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.” 1Cor 2:10-12**

- B. There are deep things of God that only the Spirit of God can search out. We are able to begin praying in the Spirit where He begins to reveal them to us.

**“Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. 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. <sup>27</sup> Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is*, because He makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.” Romans 8:26-27**

- C. The Spirit helps us in our weakness in prayer. We do not know how to pray for various people, circumstances, and places yet He makes intercession according to the will of God. We are able to begin praying in the Spirit and start making intercession according to the will of God.

**“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.... And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.” Eph 6:10-12, 18**

- D. Whether we choose to engage it or ignore it, there is real darkness with real authorities and a real battle in the spirit realm. Praying in the Spirit allows us to know how to engage in this fight and wrestle with things beyond this realm.

V. Tongues Exercise (group or individual)

- A. Must focus and engage. Mindless anything is nothing.
- B. In groups of 3, edify yourself for 2 minutes. Share how that went.
- C. Now pick a topic on someone's heart in the group that is outside of you. Pray in the Spirit for 2-3 mins, asking the Holy Spirit to reveal to you how to pray about it (light switch analogy - may be hazy but get into more focus).
- D. Share together