

TO FALL IN LOVE WITH PRAYER

By Dave Roberson

While in prayer, the Lord took me back to the early days of my ministry and gave me the understanding of many things—in my first year of ministry, day after day I would spend a certain amount of time praying in tongues. I was too stubborn to quit even when there were times when every cell within me was screaming in resistance.

I will have to admit it was hard for me to understand why something that was supposed to be so edifying, such as praying in tongues, was so hard to stick with. But, since then, I have come to understand the war that was raging around me and in me and now I can understand why so many people that start out with such fervency will sometimes become discouraged and give up. So let me help you get past all that **TO FALL IN LOVE WITH PRAYER!**

The human creature is prone to legalism and, for a person who is walking in grace, there is nothing the devil would like more than to impose a set of rules on us. Then he takes away our confidence by convincing us that God is not going to move for us anymore because we are breaking those rules.

To give you a classic example, when people finally commit to an early morning hour of prayer, they look like a militant marching off to war. They have that look in their eye that says, *“By golly, don’t anyone try to stop me!”* Then all they have to do is miss one, maybe two early morning sessions and the devil will say, *“That’s it, you blew it!”* The only reason the devil can convince a person of this level is because, in the back of their mind, they have been convinced it is their bodily effort of filling a certain cubical of space in a certain location for a certain hour that is that is pleasing God.

Now please don’t get me wrong, discipline is good. But if you are going to base your relationship with God on whether or not you prayed yesterday, then there is something you must know. God does not keep score based on the days we prayed last month, but, rather, on how much change has taken place in our lives.

The anointing of God rests on a person’s life. He literally anoints your life. Therefore, when you and He enter into new places of change together, it is in that new place of change that He continues to flow through you. And, thank God, He is not the one who slaps you down with condemnation and takes your anointing because you missed two days of prayer.

Please believe me when I say that our heavenly Father is delighted in whatever fellowship we want to give Him. Our prayer time should not be looked upon as something we have to do to avoid condemnation, but, rather as those blessed times of fellowship that bring forth change.

In order for you and me to enjoy all the wonderful things God has prepared for us, **WE MUST FALL IN LOVE WITH PRAYER!** And, in order to do that, we must understand God is not disgusted with us for all the well-meaning times we started to pray and failed to finish.

Knowing that I should pray was not enough. **ALL** the preaching I heard about prayer being my obligation was not enough, shaming me into condemnation was not enough. It was only when I come to understand the nature of God and fell in love with praying to God that it became enough.

So let me help you fall in love with prayer. Let me help you understand what will get you to pass the point where so many people fail to the same common denominator. Let us go on to a place where God is unrestrainedly pouring out His blessings upon His children.

There is nothing like the disappointment of having given yourself faithfully to a season of prayer and then have it appear as though God has done nothing. We can be so disappointed, but the truth of the matter is God did not let us down. **HE IS INCAPABLE OF LETTING US DOWN!** The breakdown occurs when we do not understand how God moves in our lives because of prayer. At this point we usually stop praying before He can manifest Himself in the areas that we are asking Him to move in, like miracles and prosperity.

One of the main reasons praying in tongues is so misunderstanding is because we do not tend to classify it as the kind of prayer that receives answers from God in any traditional sense or methods that we can understand. Yet, praying in tongues is like any other prayer. It is definitely designed to be answered and answered in such a way that we will be benefited by edification.

I almost fell into the same trap many of my friends had fallen into. They would hear a message on praying on the Holy Ghost and building themselves up on their most Holy faith and they would jump headfirst into hours of praying a day. They would come to my meetings bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, very pleased with themselves because at last they were committed to God in Prayer.

Then it would happen. After a few months of this kind of prayer, they would hit a plateau. They expected God to seize control of every situation that surrounded them and get them out of debt, heal their bodies, prosper them, etc. But, instead, it seemed as though just the opposite was taking place. Many of them would enter into a crisis mode. Their emotions would go crazy, some had emotional fits of despair, and still others displayed a rather weird side to their personality. Consequently, many of these same people went on to give praying in tongues a bad name and still others down-played the importance of tongues by preaching against it!

When this same kind of crisis hit me during the course of that first year of ministry, I had just become an avid faith man. You know, *“Bless God, if the Word says it, I believe it, and it is so!”* I was determined not to be moved by what I saw, heard, or felt. I was only going to be moved by what the Word said and, if the Word said that “he that prays in an unknown tongue edifies himself,” then he does edify himself. And, when I came through it, I noticed that some of the old fears and uncertainties that used to have control of my life were gone, they had somehow died.

So, let me help you fall in love with Prayer, not because it is your legalistic duty, not because you live under antagonistic condemnation if you don’t, but because I know you will come to treasure those special times with the Father. Those times are when you and He share those precious moments that can change our life forever.

God filled me with compassion for all those people who came to that impasse and stopped praying before they entered into the glory that was on the other side. So now I want to help you understand the nature of this impasse because there is so much waiting for you if you will press on.

When we give ourselves to any amount of time praying in the Holy Spirit, something very interesting takes place. Because it is our human spirit doing the praying as it says in 1 Corinthians 14:14, “For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my Spirit prayeth...”, then it is also our human spirit that eventually receives the answer to that prayer.

When a person does not understand that it is our spirit receiving the answer to that prayer, we tend to look for the answer in other places. It is so easy, especially after praying for long periods of time, to want to see God do something in those situations that, according to our estimation, could use some change.

So, while looking for change in the outward circumstances that surround us, the Holy Spirit is attempting to bring change on the inside of us. He brings this change through what 1 Corinthians 14:4 calls edification, *“He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself...”*

The word edify comes from the word edifice which means a superstructure or a large massive magnificent building. So a man who prays in tongues is actually building a superstructure or a large edifice on the inside of his spirit to house the anointing of God.

It is at this point that things begin to get real interesting. Light expels darkness and a person cannot pray in tongues very long without igniting a brilliant light that will burn brighter and brighter. And this brilliant light will begin to expose everything that is hidden in darkness. That reminds me of some of the motels I have been put in when people have invited me to minister. When I walked in, turned the light on, all the little cockroaches fled.

So it is with the flesh. This is why Romans 8:13 says: “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” The problem is, when this edification begins to throw a

light on these things that are hidden in darkness, it does not just illuminate the things we want to get rid of. It also illuminates the things we **don't** want to be free of and this is where we can sometimes hit an impasse.

And, because the Holy Spirit will pull these things out of darkness and put them on display, we can then see more clearly what it is we are dealing with. It is during these times a person's emotions can sometimes go wild. As the light of edification burns brighter and brighter, it will uncover things like unforgiveness and selfishness. It's at this point that some people will stop praying because the more they pray the stronger these emotions become.

So here they are praying and, instead of feeling better, they begin to feel worse. The emotions of unforgiveness and selfishness can become so strong they become impossible to ignore. It is at this point, when a person recognizes these things for what they are, the power of the Holy Spirit is there to deal with them.

Sometimes we cannot see issues for what they are, so we never really deal with them. But, when a person comes to the place where they see how ugly these things are, true repentance can follow which leads to mortification, victory, and freedom.

Many people pray themselves to a place of edification where these things begin to surface. Then the Holy Spirit will cast a light on certain things that they really do not want to get rid of. When this happens, many times there are emotions involved. They hit an impasse; to go on praying means the light that is exposing the things they don't want to get rid of burns brighter and brighter—then the battle begins.

Every time they report to their prayer closet the edification leaves them dealing with strong emotions. These emotions can flood over them with such a vengeance it leaves them feeling troubled. So the next time it is time for prayer, antagonistic feelings begin to rise. A person's emotions will lead a revolt against praying in tongues saying, "What good is it doing me anyway? I am not any worse than anyone else. If praying in tongues is so important, then why do I feel the way I do?"

What we were really hoping for was some magical formula that would activate God into changing everything around us. God forbid that we need any changing ourselves! We want to be left alone and for God to use us just the way we are. The truth of the matter is, a man does not have to pray in tongues at all. God loves us and accepts us on whatever level of Christianity we may be walking in. He will do all that He can for us right now...right where we are walking!

But, when a man WANTS to draw closer to God, when he wants to put to death those things that stand between him and a closer walk with God, things like fears, uncertainties, pressures, cares, and even those things we know are wrong but our flesh has us bound habitually to them, then praying in tongues is such a precious key.

You see, praying in tongues not only exposes them, but in the process of exposing them, God brings us to a place where, through edification, we somehow find the inner strength to deal with them.

So, the next time you are ready to launch yourself into a season of praying in tongues, just remember, whenever you hit any kind of impasse, the best thing you can do at that point is to **STAY IN THERE!** Even when your emotions begin to fight you...even when you feel a season to pray in Tongues, God can bring us to a place of true genuine peace of mind and joy in the Holy Spirit.

You are approaching a critical point in life. You are about to have the equivalent of a nuclear meltdown, only the things that are about to melt down are the cares, fears, and emotions that begin to fight with you, that even when you feel antagonistic you can arouse!

And when we come through, if we want to, take some time off and enjoy life, walk with God, for He truly loves you. Allow Him to minister to you in special times just because His love reaches out for you, then when you are ready to enter in for another round, go ahead. Each time God will fellowship with you around your new place of change...so be continually at Peace in the Holy Spirit! Prayer is not just a chore—its bringing to us the power of the Holy Spirit...so continue ministering in His Spirit and remain in His peace and Joy in His Spirit.