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Fruit of Praying in the Spirit

Growing up in a non-Christian home, I was surrounded by typical worldliness. Alcohol and drug abuse were common in both my family and the community around us. Raised in a northern Canadian oil town, the atmosphere was much as you'd expect, especially in the 1970s. We had a few churches, and I thank God for the pioneering pastors who had the vision to establish His Word in such tough places.

At thirteen, I had to testify against my stepdad in court, which ultimately sent him to prison. Shortly after, my mom took us to a small Pentecostal church, where I found salvation and light. But it wasn't until I was eighteen that I fully surrendered my heart to God.

When our family moved to a different city, I became involved with a new church. Before long, I stepped into leadership, working with young people only a few years younger than me. It was during this time that I started to recognize the effects of my upbringing—I carried deep internal struggles I hadn't even been aware of. I hadn't grown up with Bible stories like David and Goliath, nor did I have a strong foundation of faith guiding me. I was full of passion but lacked the substance to sustain me. And yet, I was in leadership.

I tried countless ways to change but always ended up back in the same brokenness. I focused on discipline in the early years, only to land in the same place again. I cried out to God, yet nothing changed. I had people lay hands on me, but I remained the same. I sought the anointing, hoping for transformation, but the hidden battles in my heart persisted. I stood in faith, rebuked the devil, and exercised spiritual authority—yet I kept returning to the same struggles, over and over again. But God heard my cries, and in a single moment, He answered them all. He introduced me to a personal Helper—the Holy Spirit.

I moved to Cleveland, Tennessee, at twenty-three to attend Bible school. That week, our guest speaker was Dave Roberson. He made a statement that stirred something inside me: If you pray in tongues a lot, it will change you. Hope and excitement surged within me at the thought—nothing else had worked to free me from my dysfunction. I had been baptized in the Holy Spirit years earlier but had never understood that consistently praying in tongues was the key to transformation.

Romans 8:26 tells 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."* Every weakness hidden within us can be met with the strength of the Holy Spirit when we surrender to Him and allow Him to pray through us.

I didn't fully grasp how this worked, but I had a fresh hope of overcoming it. In those meetings, I realized I could have as much of God as I wanted and pray in the Spirit as often as I desired. A light went on inside me. I had struggled to break free from brokenness, but I knew I could discipline myself to spend time in prayer.

I set ambitious goals, planning to pray for hours, thinking it would be simple. I made a pot of coffee, set aside time, and began—only to be overwhelmed by mental resistance. It was as if my mind was trying to force me out of that prayer room. Sadly, I gave in. After barely five minutes, I left, looking for something—anything—else to do. Strangely, I could spend hours serving God and witnessing with enthusiasm, yet the moment I attempted to pray in the Spirit, my peace vanished.

It took a whole week of failed attempts before I finally broke through. Determined not to quit, I pushed myself to reach one full hour of prayer. Every minute felt like an eternity, but I had hope, a Helper, and a deep desire to break free from hidden struggles.

When the clock finally passed the one-hour mark, a wave of God's presence washed over me. It felt as if I had been swept up in a river of His grace, and I loved it. I loved it so much that I didn't want to leave. Soon, the next hour passed faster than the first few minutes had.

Transformation had finally begun as the Holy Spirit worked in me to shape me into all that God intended. 2 Corinthians 12:9 says, *"And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."* Paul describes how every battle he faced—where his own strength failed—was won through God's power, not his own.

This is the key to personal transformation. Strength is never found within ourselves—it comes only from the work of the Holy Spirit within us. No amount of human willpower can accomplish what God's Spirit can do.

Many believers never step into the fullness of what God has for them because they rely on their own ability. Looking back, I'm thankful for my brokenness because it made me realize early on that my only hope was in Him.

You can overcome anything and change your future by allowing the Holy Spirit to pray through you. You are not hopeless. You are not a victim. You are not destined to stay the same. You are an overcomer, empowered by the grace of God, and nothing can stand in your way anymore. Let's walk into victory, making time to pray in our heavenly language.

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