

The below letter is from Carl R. Peterson, MD regarding speaking in tongues and its effects on the body of man.

CHRISTIAN-PSYCHIATRY SERVICES, INC.

Dear friend,

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the relationship of extended periods of praying in tongues and joyful laughter to brain activity. As you will read in the enclosed explanation, I shared some information concerning this with several ministers at a gathering some time ago. I pray this information will be helpful to you.

Respectfully, Carl R. Peterson, M.D.

Enclosure:

EFFECTS OF EXTENDED VERBAL PRAYER AND JOYFUL LAUGHTER

I have had a number of inquiries concerning the efficacy of praying in the spirit (speaking in tongues) and its benefit to the human immune system, i.e., immunity enhanced by chemicals released from a part of the brain. I am attempting to clarify some information I have shared with a number of ministers. This is information that may be deduced from what we know about the way the brain functions. We do know the part of the brain affected most noticeably by extended prayer and laughter represents a significant portion of the brain and its metabolic activity. Therefore, voluntary speech during extended vocal prayer causes a major stimulation in these parts of the brain (mainly the hypothalamus). The hypothalamus has direct regulation of four major systems of the body, mainly: a) the pituitary gland and all target endocrine glands; b) the total immune system; c) the entire autonomic system; and d) the production of brain hormones called endorphins and enkephalons, which are chemicals the body produces and are 100-200 times more powerful than morphine.

In summary, a very significant percentage of the central nervous system is directly and indirectly activated in the process of extended verbal and musical prayer over a period of time. This results in a significant release of brain hormones which, in turn, increases the body's general immunity. It is further enhanced through joyful laughter with increased respirations and oxygen intake to the brain, diaphragm and other muscles. This same phenomenon is seen in physical activity in general, i.e., running, etc.

We know from the Word of God that there is a true joy that builds and sustains. Nehemiah tells us the joy of the Lord is our strength. There is joy in the presence of Jehovah. We, as believers having entered into that wonderful presence of our Lord, know this to be true. What we must continue to remember is that the joy of the Lord spoken of in the Word is so much more than any manifestation. We can truly

have that unspeakable joy in the face of any trials we may encounter, one for joy is grounded in a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I hope the above information helps to clarify the report you received regarding my statement in the area of the physical effects of speaking in tongues and joyful laughter for extended periods of time. Truly, we all benefit -- body, soul, and spirit – from obedience and yielding to the Spirit of God in every area of our lives.

Carl R. Peterson, M.D.