

The Gift of Tongues

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala's sermon explores the significance and relevance of the gift of tongues within the context of historical revivals and the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in the church today.

Duration: 37:54

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4

Topics: "Tongues"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker describes a revival that broke out in Wales, which started with a small meeting of young people praying for a spiritual awakening. The revival began when a girl stood up and declared her love for Jesus and her desire to live for Him. The Holy Spirit fell upon the group, leading them to worship and speak in tongues. This revival had a profound impact, spreading the Pentecostal movement throughout Brazil, Sweden, and other parts of the world. The speaker emphasizes that God often uses humble and unlikely individuals to accomplish His purposes, and encourages believers to value what God values rather than what the world considers important.

Transcript

So let's talk about something important. Let's talk about speaking in tongues. In the late 1800s, after the Civil War, which ended in 1865, holiness camp meetings and Baptist camp meetings and Methodist camp meetings started to be held in different areas of the country because people were hungry for God.

The Civil War had decimated the country. All kinds of deaths, bloodshed. Remember, more people died in the Civil War, more Americans, than in all the other wars we've fought, put together.

Think of that. But there was a deadness in the churches. And there's always a remnant of people who don't want church.

They want God. You know you can have church? You can have church. But having church and having God is another whole thing.

Experiencing God, seeing people get saved, feeling new love in your heart, being more like Christ, being saved from conformity to the world, worldliness, carnality, having the same value system as the rat race that's in contemporary society of that day. Well, they met and they started to have preaching times and calling on God, especially in the 1880s, 1890s. And then in early 1900s, a revival, same kind of thing

happening in Wales in the United Kingdom.

In Wales, a revival broke out that was very strange. It actually began by some young people having a meeting before the evening service. And people had been praying.

The UK was maybe deader than what was happening in America. Someone asked a girl to just give a testimony in a meeting that didn't even have 40 people in it, if I remember. And she stood up and said just one sentence.

Something, I love Jesus with all my heart and I want to live my life for him. But the way she said it, where it came from, how it was anointed by the Holy Spirit, boom, the spirit fell. And these young people started crying out to God, worshiping God.

The adults came in for the evening service, but they couldn't stop this youth service. So they joined in right with it. And there was deep, deep emotion, a lot of crying, praying.

Suddenly the spirit came on some of those young people and they thought of their mothers and fathers who weren't serving God. And they began to travail like a woman giving birth. And no one had ever seen that.

They weren't even sure of where it was in the Bible. But something happened and it spread like fire. God raised up a young man by the name of Evan Roberts who became the leader, but it was an odd thing.

The fancy well-known preachers from England, London, Birmingham, and all those places, Liverpool, they would come to Wales to see what was going on and they couldn't get in the buildings. Night after night, the buildings were filled. They were smaller buildings, albeit, but still just packed.

And there wasn't a lot of preaching. They was just singing. They loved to sing in Wales and they loved to sing in harmony and they can sing acapella.

And they would just be singing and singing and confession of sin and testifying and someone would exhort and then they'd go back to singing and no one had ever seen anything like that because the order of service was so rigid at that time. And you gotta remember in England, they were charging for the pews. The only people who came to church were the ones who paid for the pew.

You rented a pew. The Welsh revival. You can read about it.

Read about Evan Roberts. Tailed off at the end, went into a little fanaticism, but that's what happens a lot of times when the spirit moves. You have to be very careful.

Can't control it, but you gotta just be careful and prayerful that it stays biblical and right. Well, people in America were praying for a revival, especially out in California. Interracial people who gathered together, some small black congregations started praying, God, we need fire.

Our churches are going to pot. Nobody gets converted. There are no water baptisms.

It was bad. They read this little pamphlet, very famous back in that day, the Welsh revival written by people who observed it. Some came doubting, but they were overcome by the spirit of God.

When it came to America, this little pamphlet, people got stirred up and said, no, we gotta keep praying. We gotta keep believing God. A one-eyed African-American preacher by the name of Brother Seymour was seeking after God.

He ended up in Los Angeles, and he met in a house, the church he went to that he preached at, when he told the people that the Holy Spirit wanted to do much more and that the people shouldn't be just sitting satisfied, but that we should be hungry for everything God has for us, they locked the church on him and wouldn't let him preach at night. So he ended up in a house at 221 Bonnie Brae Street in California, and he met with some other African-American people there in a house. And one night as they were praying, the spirit came, fell upon the people, as is found in the Bible, and several of them began to speak in an ecstasy in languages that nobody understood, especially the person who was speaking it.

They were speaking syllables and words in an unknown language. But it was accompanied by a deep, overwhelming sense of the greatness of God, the goodness of God. The house got so crowded as the word spread that they couldn't fit the people in the house.

So they went looking for a place to meet, very informal, not the kind of thing we call having a slick church. And they found a building that had been used as a place where horses and wagons were kept, but previous, I believe, had been a Methodist mission. It didn't seat even 120 people.

It was at Azusa Street, A-Z-U-S-A, Azusa Street in Los Angeles. And they went in there and they started to have meetings. They took pieces of concrete or whatever and just ran, had boards, that was with the pews, and on top of another one, and that's how the church was, quote, furnished.

Crude, humble. It humiliated many people who came and who wanted to be associated with something like we have today. Slick people, well-known people, rich people.

We got to hang out with movie stars and basketball players and get them to say something about Jesus once in a while because then you're really important. This was the opposite. There's a man by the name of Brother Bartleman who wrote a great book.

You should read it. It's called What Really Happened at Azusa Street, or the modern rendition of it is called Azusa Street. And he describes the prayer that went before it, and then the Spirit came, although he wasn't there at Bonnie Bray Street, but he ended up coming to Azusa Street, but he had people praying where he was.

They were hungry for God. They were hungry to experience God. How many are hungry like me tonight to experience God in a new, deeper way? Brother Seymour had only one eye.

He was from very, very poor background in Texas, come out from Houston. He was the leader, if you want to call it a leader, because there was no order of service. The meeting started by the folks just singing or calling on God, and then the Spirit, the Holy Spirit ran the services.

He had a big box on the platform, the platform, imagine the building, and he would put his head in the box so that nobody could see him because he didn't want to try to share in any of the glory that only God deserved. We need a few more boxes for a few more preachers, don't you think? They would sing about the blood. They would sing about the cross.

There'd be repentance of sin. People would walk in to mock and then break down and end up coming to the front and confessing their sins in front of everybody. If someone got up full of themselves and was not in the Spirit, everybody in the meeting would just begin to pray.

They were mature. They began to pray, God, shut him down, shut him down, God, shut him down. And then sometimes it would be preachers who wanted to show off their mighty oratorical skills, and they would break down.

The meetings went on, and the building basically was open for three years. But God was so strong there that Bartleman writes, you really had to suck it up and take a deep breath before you walked in because you knew a lie couldn't live there. Sin couldn't live there.

If you went in, it meant business with God. No fancy anything. Some of the other leaders were white, and this was all new.

Remember, we're talking about 1906. So reporters from the San Francisco papers and Los Angeles paper came and wrote mocking articles about these poor people, poor whites, blacks, meeting together, some Latinos meeting together. And then this ecstasy comes on some of them, and they begin to speak gibberish, a language they don't know.

And sometimes there's an interpretation of it and what's going on because to the natural mind, spiritual things are stupid. You understand that, right? If you wanna be cool and fit in with everyone, you can't serve God and be filled with the Holy Spirit. You know that, right? Jesus was born in a manger, not a palace.

But the word spread. Now people came from Sweden, from Norway, from New York. A church was formed on 34th Street, Glad Tidings near Penn Station, which is now closed up, moved elsewhere.

But that was one of the first churches that stressed the Holy Spirit in New York City. And how did it all start? They went out to Azusa Street. They sat in those meetings and they said, oh no, this is a whole nother dimension of God.

This is not three songs and the announcements and the offering and a sermon, and then let's go out and the meeting's over. This was like just God is moving by His Spirit, moving in all the earth, signs and wonders, when God moveth, move, O Lord, in me. God carved out young men and women and older men and women to go into the ministry who never dreamed it.

People left there and went to China as missionaries. Some people came back and went to North Carolina where the flag of, I don't like to use that word Pentecostal because it has a bad meaning to me now. It's just a traditional name and it's not a biblical word.

But let's call Holy Spirit emphasis churches. Do you get what I'm talking about? That God is alive for today. Not Pentecostal tradition, that's what's followed.

Black style, white style, but this was none of that. You read Bartleman's writings of what went on in those meetings. Book had, I've reread it several, several, several times.

And it has had a very deep effect on my life because it shows that there are hungry people who want God and not church. How many want God and not church? And that's always been my wife who's sitting here

who has built this church with her blood, sweat, and tears as I've tried to. That's always been our dream that there would be a church where people came for God, not for a man or a woman or a choir.

Can we all say amen to that? Was there fanaticism? Yep, at times. But like Paul did in 1 Corinthians, you have to teach. You have to correct, but you can't grab it too tight or you can grieve the Spirit.

They try to keep an openness to the Holy Spirit. They started to search the scriptures, especially 1 Corinthians 12, 1 Corinthians 14 about the gifts and movings of the Holy Spirit. But they were very wise.

They said the more the Holy Spirit moves, the more Jesus is glorified because Jesus said, I'm gonna send the Spirit. And when he comes, he will glorify me. There were no Holy Spirit churches.

There were Jesus churches. The Holy Spirit was there to only lift up Christ and like the Bible describes him, like a dove shy going in the background so all the glory will go to Christ. But oh, how he moved and what happened.

So people around the whole world were affected in some way, shape or form. The whole so-called Pentecostal movement spread throughout Brazil, throughout Sweden, throughout everywhere, started by a man with one eye. No, it wasn't started by him.

God, forgive me to say that. But he was the leader. Third grade education, a joke.

To our society, you gotta be kidding me, right? Always remember what the world calls great is often an abomination to God. And what the world laughs at is special to God. Always remember that.

Never see some poor saint here or somebody who just barely making it and they don't seem to be one of the high and mighty and the elite. They'll never make people magazine but be careful how you treat them. That might be one of God's special flowers in his garden.

Can we say amen to that? The thing that happened and that drew everyone's attention which people thought had ceased when the apostles passed off the scene was this speaking in tongues or glossolalia with a Holy Spirit anointing and quickening people were speaking in languages they didn't know. Now it seems that even after the days of the apostles book of Acts, the last writings of John who lived the longest, it seems like there were still occurrences of this gift of the spirit that's mentioned as we'll see. Then it passed off the scenes.

So people then said that was just for the days of the book of Acts. That's no more for today. Now we have scripture.

We don't need speaking in tongues, the gift of miracles, prophecy, so on and so forth. But there was no scripture that said that. There was no scripture that said this is what God did but he'll never do it again.

There is no verse that says that. So down through the ages, some of the commentators really futile in their attempts to dismiss speaking in tongues because as we're gonna see, it's very uncool. So they said that no, the gift of tongues was given so that you could go to a country and without taking time to learn the language, you could go and just speak Chinese or speak this or that.

There's no record of that in the Bible. There is a record that in Acts chapter two, when they all spoke in tongues, do you know the reference I'm speaking of? When the crowd gathered, they heard these Galileans speaking in some of their own languages, the praises of God. But they had started speaking in

tongues before those people came.

So they didn't speak in tongues for those people. They were speaking languages they did not know. And the Bible is clear that the one who speaks in tongue speaks mysteries to God.

They don't know what they're saying, which is very anti-Western intellectual thought that you're doing something that's valuable, but you don't know what you're doing. That is against everything you're gonna learn in any school system. But God's ways are not our ways.

Now when this surfaced here again in, as I just said, the beginning of the 20th century, 1900s, a new study began of all of this. Is this for today? And the general understanding of anyone who's honest with the scripture is that there are no verses that says the gifts of the Spirit, what God can do, is no longer for today. That's just, it's called cessationism.

The ceasing of all the charismata, the gifts of God's Spirit poured out on his people. Now, two things you must remember before I give you these verses. You don't mind I give you this little study tonight, amen? In 1 Corinthians 12, it says that the manifestation or the gift of the Spirit, the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

So listen, the general rule is that when the Spirit comes on a person and uses them and some gift is imparted, it's not for their benefit only, but it's mostly for people's benefit. God loves us so much that if he's gonna anoint Carol to write a song or someone to sing or someone to prophesy or whatever, or someone to preach, it's for the people. We need the Spirit so we can bless people.

We don't need the Spirit so that we can be, woo, I got a blessing. You get a blessing to be a blessing. How many say amen, right? You have to know that because otherwise this thing becomes self-centered and it can actually be a form of pride.

Who has more spirit? Who's more spiritual? Who can pray better? Who can worship better? And all these silly, abominable things that can happen in churches. No, the true Spirit makes you go low and makes you just wanna minister to people. Now, when it lists, not an inclusive list in 1 Corinthians 12, but when it lists different gifts of the Holy Spirit, on the end of it is the gift of tongues and the interpretation of tongues.

It just lists those along with the gift of healing that God can give people, that they can pray for people, and they're healed. Doesn't say they're ministers. Doesn't say they went to seminary.

They just got the gift from God. Oh, how we have twisted this. God, please forgive us.

And the gift of faith, to have special faith, to bring people through situations. Supernatural faith, faith from God that it just can move mountains. That's something God gives someone.

You don't work it up and you're never worthy of it. It's a gift. Obviously, if it's a gift, you didn't work for it, or else it wouldn't be a gift.

Then it's pay. God's not paying anybody. He's giving gifts.

How many are happy for that? Say amen. So, with that background, Paul outlines that, and then 1 Corinthians 13, he shows them the better way, and says, if I speak with the tongue of men and of angels, but have not, what am I? Nothing, zero. So, he shows that love is greater than any of the gifts, and that's true.

Now, he returns in 1 Corinthians 14 to this matter of stuff that was going on in the church. So, let me just get one other thing out of the way, because that's been used by people to dismiss speaking in tongues, and the importance of tongues, which is, since we're to bless people, and tongues are an unknown quantity, unknown thing, a mystery, tongues is the least of the gifts in many ways, and that's true. And what was happening in the church at Corinth was they got taken up with tongues, and they had so much speaking in tongues that the meetings were getting chaotic.

And Paul is now writing, because he must have heard of this, what was going on, to give them balance. So, a lot of what's written in 1 Corinthians 14 is, remember, tongues have their place, which is all I wanna talk about tonight as I close. Tongues have their place, but remember, it's better to prophesy, why? Because the person who speaks in a tongue only edifies himself, but that's a very important thing, as we're gonna see.

God has given us something where you can build yourself up and be stronger spiritually, and have more endurance and more everything by praying in the spirit by speaking in unknown tongues, as we're gonna see that. So, he says, if tongues are used in a meeting, it must be accompanied, or should be, by the gift of interpretation of tongues. That doesn't mean a translation of the tongues, whatever they might be, but it means that the person who translates, gives the interpretation, I should say, speaks in the language of the people, because if the meeting is interrupted, which is something that we should always be careful about, it's sacred, and it's of God, it can be a great blessing.

But the interpretation is the important part, because if someone interrupts me right now and speaks in tongues for two minutes, it doesn't help any of us, because we don't know what they're saying. But the interpretation that is given, which means understanding the heart and mind of God, what he's saying through that prayer or exhortation in tongues, why God does that, why he has tongues before interpretation, why he would have meetings with that, we have no idea, but it is a very humbling thing, isn't it? Oh yeah, you get someone with a PhD, or a billionaire walk in, with a limo outside waiting, and they come in, and here's a lady with a fourth grade education, who knows a million times more about God than that person, and they're used by God, it's demeaning to the pride of man. I'm gonna give myself over to a language and to speak in ecstasy, and I don't even know what I'm saying, and you're telling me that's God's plan for my life at times, yes, that's God's plan for your life at times, but you see that humiliates our pride, because a lot of us don't wanna let go.

I'm not talking about letting go and being crazy and unedifying, I'm talking about letting go and letting the Holy Spirit so possess our spirits and be so open to his inspiration and quickening that he can do amazing things through us, very hard, that's hard for preachers, that's hard for a lot of people. That's why God usually works among the lowly people, the less educated people, and the less moneyed people, it's just a fact, not because he's against the rich and the educated, but usually there's a pride with that that won't humble itself down to God's level, to where God wants us, I should say, and that's why Azusa Street and every other revival, what did they say when Peter and James and John were being used by God? Are you kidding me, fishermen? Come on, be real. Fishermen are gonna tell me what God is saying.

See, you and I know a Saint Peter, Saint, all that, but they were a joke in their day, like Brother Seymour was a joke, and like people who are filled with the Spirit, sometimes they come across very unsophisticated, but if you're spiritual, you can discern who God is with that person. When I'm in trouble, how many don't want a billionaire next to you when you're in trouble? How many want a man or a woman of God can pray? Money can't help us all the time. So now, that's the setting where Paul is actually not

speaking against tongues, as you'll see, but he's trying to bring a balance and saying don't let your meetings go to pot because if the stranger comes in and everyone's speaking in tongues uninterrupted and there's just tongue speaking going on all over the place, he's gonna say you're crazy because there's nothing intelligible, but notice these other values of praying in the Spirit by the Holy Spirit in tongues.

Let's look. Sorry for the long intro. Let love be your highest goal, but you should also desire the special abilities that the Spirit gives, especially the ability to prophesy.

Can I just say something about that? The ability to prophesy isn't to foretell the future. It's to bring a message from God, and it can be done over lunch when you're talking to someone. You can prophesy to someone, not by stopping and saying thus sayeth the Lord, I say it to you, but just by God coming on you, you can convey a message.

People have prophesied to me, didn't even know they were prophesying, but they spoke God's message to me by the Spirit. So it's not predicting the future, there's that element, but it's mostly a message from God that meets the need of the moment. So he's saying that's the best thing in your public meetings.

For if you have the ability to speak in tongues, you will be talking only to God. Since people won't be able to understand you, you'll be speaking by the power of the Spirit, but it will all be mysterious. So you'll be talking only to God.

What a help praying in the Spirit is. For me, I've learned this, when my mind is assaulted, and I got myself so many distractions and pressures, I struggle even to pray. I can't get focused.

How many know what I'm talking about? To be able to, by the Spirit, to pray from my spirit right to God, and the Spirit knows what I need, so he's praying better for me, through me, than I could ever pray for myself, because how in the world do I know everything I need compared to the Holy Spirit? So notice here, the person who prays in the Spirit, in tongues, is talking directly to God. Notice now, you can pray in the Holy Spirit. This is not speaking now in a meeting so much.

He's saying you pray, and people won't be able to understand you. You'll be speaking by the power of the Spirit. Notice that this ability does not come by something someone teaches you.

When I was right around college age, the charismatic movement came, and people were teaching other people to speak in tongues. Repeat, you're a child of God, aren't you? Yes. All right, what do children say? I don't know.

Dada, say dada. Say mama. Say dada, mama, sasa, dada, mama.

Oh, you got it, praise God, you got it. How many know that's not by the power of the Spirit? That was back in the days also when they were faking the Holy Spirit by pushing people over. Everybody was falling.

Anybody remember those days when everybody was falling? But then they had to get catchers to catch you because it wasn't of the Spirit, and they knew that if you fell, you crack your head open, right? So they had to have people catching. I was once at a meeting, still in college. We were married though, I think.

No, we were married, so I wasn't in college. We were married, and someone said to me, would you help us, young man? And I went, yeah, what do you want me to do? They said, would you catch people while we pray for them? And I went, no, I don't do that, I'm sorry. I'll catch a fly ball, but I won't catch anybody

falling down.

But see, that's forcing the Holy Spirit. Because if the Holy Spirit wanted someone to fall, would he let them crack their head open? Would he tell me something? But if it's auto-suggestion, then you better have a lot of catchers because they'll get hurt. But the person who speaks in an unknown language, they're speaking by the power of the Holy Spirit.

He gives you the ability to speak. It's you, your voice, but it's by the Spirit. But who prophesies, but one who prophesies strengthens others, encourages them, comforts them.

That's the purpose of prophecy. A person who speaks in tongues is strengthened personally, but one who speaks a word of prophecy strengthens the entire church. So we get that.

Prophecy is much more valuable than speaking in tongues. My wife, if the Spirit would come on her and she exhorts you and the Spirit helps her to say something to encourage you, that is very valuable. But notice this, the person who speaks in tongues is strengthened personally.

Or as one translation has, he that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifies himself or herself. In other words, when you pray in the Spirit, you're building yourself up. You're building yourself.

Who here does not need to be built up spiritually? This is why Satan hates the idea of praying in the Holy Spirit, praying in tongues. Makes us self-conscious or defensive about it because he knows when the Holy Spirit is helping us pray, we're getting edified, we're getting stronger. I know, but what's happening? I don't know what's happening, I just know we're getting stronger because God said that's the truth.

Come on, can we say amen to that? Now, verse five, I wish you could all speak in tongues, but even more, I wish you could all prophesy. For prophecy is greater than speaking in tongues unless someone interprets what you're saying so that the whole church would be strengthened. How many understand that verse? Say amen.

In other words, speaking in tongues should be interpreted in a public meeting. But notice this, I wish you could all speak in tongues. Why? Because he who speaks or she who speaks in tongues builds themselves up.

Why wouldn't we want everyone to speak in tongues? Oh no, Pastor Cimbala, I don't know if I could do that. I know you can't do that, I can't do that either, but the Holy Spirit will make that ability for us because it can only help us. Notice what Paul says for those who are against this idea.

He said, I wish you all could speak in tongues. I want you all to speak in tongues. I want you all to speak in tongues.

Where are you going with this, Pastor Cimbala? I'm just reading the Bible to you. I wish you all could speak in tongues. Say it with me, I wish you all could speak in tongues.

Come on, say it louder. I wish you all could speak in tongues. And notice this, not like how I grew up when people were seeking God and this developed in Pentecostal tradition, especially in the denomination I was drug through when my mom and dad were taking me to church.

You spoke in tongues once and that was it. And people would get up and testify when I was six, seven years old. I can remember it like yesterday.

They would get up and say, I want to thank God I'm saved and sanctified and I'm filled with the Holy Ghost. I was filled with the Holy Ghost when I was 19 years old. I want to thank God.

Haven't spoken in tongues for the last 30 years, but I want to thank God that I, but you see that was like a pinnacle to reach rather than a blessing to have. A mountain, a big thing that you could say, I once spoke in tongues. And thus, where I grew up, when I was baptized as a little kid, they jumped on me right in the tank when I came up out of the water.

And they were praying, screaming at me in both ears, hoping I would stutter or choke on some water or any kind of thing if I would just gurgle and they would say, praise God, that's it. No, I feel like there are some people here, my wife and I understand these things. How many have grown up around a little of that or seen a little bit? Wave your hand at me, yeah.

Yeah. It's a wonder we're all sane, right? After all this stuff we've seen. So anyone who speaks in tongues should pray also for the ability to interpret what has been said.

For if I pray in tongues, here's where intellectuals have a problem. For I pray in tongues, my spirit is praying, but I don't understand what I'm saying. See, now right there, that goes against everything about our society that's cool.

What? You don't know what you're saying, but you're gonna keep saying it. And it's gonna help you somehow. Yeah.

And if it's interpreted, it could even help the church, but you don't know what you're saying. Yep. Well, that's foolishness.

No, that's what you say. It's a gift from God. You see why so few people wanna deal in this and wanna even investigate it because carnal people who come to church, they don't wanna be around anything like that.

And there's been wildfire and craziness and people speaking in tongues who weren't in the spirit. The devil can impersonate tongues. Look, I'm aware of all those things, but just because the devil counterfeits something doesn't mean there's not the real.

Right? If there's a counterfeit \$20 bill, that's fine, but I got a real one right here someone gave me. The counterfeit proves that there's the real. So whenever you hear people say, oh, there's a lot of crazy stuff going on in those circles, say, yeah, I know that.

I don't discount that at all. That is absolutely true. There's a lot of crazy people blaming things on the Holy Spirit, but there's the real.

And it edifies us. And my spirit is praying, but I don't understand what I'm saying. My spirit is praying.

You know what Carol and I are longing for when she has the choir sing and when I try to lead you is to get your spirit to worship God. Not just your head, not just your hands. I love when you lift your hands.

I love when you sing. But what changes your life is when your spirit makes contact with God, who is a spirit. And then come on, everything changes in your life.

So let me close. Well, then what should I do? I will pray in the spirit, that should be capital S, or our human spirit activated by the Holy Spirit. And I'll also pray in words, I understand.

I'll sing in the spirit and also sing in words, I understand. How many churches, I wonder, out of all the churches in America believe that? What is Paul saying? Okay, so what am I gonna do? He said, I will pray with words, English. I'll pray that way.

We just did. But he said, I'll also pray in the spirit. I'll let the Holy Spirit get ahold of my spirit and I'll pray right to God.

And you won't understand how I'm praying. And the devil won't understand either. The devil can hear our verbal words, he cannot understand what the spirit is saying when we pray.

So I'll pray both ways. Oh, Pastor Simba, that's fanaticism. Look, I don't wanna argue with anyone.

I'm just telling you what the Bible says here. Paul says, the greatest Christian we know of, I'll pray both ways. I'll pray in words, I'll pray in the spirit.

You know, somebody here, you once used to pray in the spirit and it helped you so much, and now you hardly give yourself to that. Don't let God exercise your spirit anymore. And now your life is a lot drier and more barren, isn't it? You know who I'm speaking to here tonight.

So you're more together, but you're not together, are you? By being more together, you've lost out with God because you're afraid of what, being ridiculed? What does it matter what people say? When the Christian church began, did the people come and cheer and say, what an amazing praise and worship they got going here. You see the smoke and the mirrors and the camels and the cannons that they got going on here? No, they said, these guys are drunk. See, that's what's the problem with us.

We don't want anybody to mock us. But sometimes God puts you in situations that are very powerful, but it's mockable to other people. So I'll also sing.

Look, I'll sing, I will sing in the spirit. I'll also sing in words, I understand. I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.

And by the way, the construction of that Greek sentence is, I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you put together. Not just more than any of you, more than all of you. You're into tongue speaking there in Corinth? Remember, keep control in the services.

God never makes you get out of control. Make sure there's an interpretation. Make sure the people are blessed.

But when it comes to praying in the spirit and singing in the spirit and edifying myself, I speak in tongues more than all of you. I know, but Paul, you saw Jesus on the road to Damascus. Yeah, I know I saw him, but I still speak in tongues more than all of you.

I can't live off of what he did for me years ago. I gotta have him every day. I gotta be strengthened every day.

Come on, can we give a big amen?

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/28/SID28707.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jim-cymbala/the-gift-of-tongues/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net