

(Texas 2009) Question Answers Part 2

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen discusses the principles of giving, the significance of personal conviction in practices, and the importance of prioritizing Christ in relationships and finances.

Duration: 53:07

Scripture: Romans 2:13

Topics: "Question Answer"

Description

In this video, the speaker discusses their personal experience with preaching and teaching the word of God. They believe that teaching is their gift and have found fruit in it through evangelism. They also talk about the importance of having a close relationship with Jesus and making disciples. The speaker shares their views on the Holy Spirit and how it operates in a person's life, mentioning their position between Baptist and Pentecostal beliefs. They also mention the use of speaking in tongues and advise seeking the power of the Holy Spirit without prejudice.

Transcript

Sometimes we can't do anything, but if it's a matter of money, I think you should definitely return it. Whoever you took it from, add the interest and give it back. And it's best that you identify yourself, don't send it as an anonymous gift or something, because you never know, the person may be convicted through the fact that you have repented and you've gone back and told them what you did when you were not converted.

If you've cheated somewhere, as far as possible, set it right. And even if you hurt somebody, if it's an unbeliever, that's fine. You can write a letter or make a phone call and say, you know, I feel convicted, I'm a Christian now.

It's a good opportunity also to give a testimony at that time of what Christ did for you. And that's what made you realize that before you leave this earth, you must have a good conscience before God and men. And just a simple statement like that may bring conviction to the other person.

So I would recommend that if you feel in some situation that it would cause more problems by your saying that, then avoid it. Because in some situations, to go and confess to someone may create more problems. In that case, it's better to avoid it.

Tithing and giving offerings, are they different in the New Covenant? If you read, if you take a concordance and look up the word tithe or tithing, you'll never find it in the New Testament after the day of Pentecost. Jesus said to the Pharisees, don't forget to, whenever you read the words of Jesus, always ask Him, to whom did He say it? Did He say it to His disciples or did He say it to the Pharisees? To the Pharisees He said, you tithe, dill and mint and come in, you should have done it. But you should have done these other things more.

But when He spoke to the disciples in the Sermon on the Mount, Luke chapter 6, He said, give and it shall be given to you. He never used the word tithe. So, should Christians give or tithe? Give, not tithe.

Then how much should they give? No rule. As God has prospered you, it says in 1 Corinthians 16 verse 2. But more important, give cheerfully. 2 Corinthians 9, I think it's verse 7 or 8. Give cheerfully, for God loves a cheerful giver.

So, the Old Testament, the emphasis was on how much you give, 10%. In the New Covenant, the emphasis is on how you give, attitude. So, God sees.

And the other thing I would say is, Jesus said, render to Caesar what is Caesar's and give to God what is God's. So, if you have Caesar's money with you, Caesar means any person in the world, government or individual. Don't give to God when you owe money to somebody on earth.

Clear your debt. I'm not talking about a mortgage or something. A mortgage is not really a debt.

Because you've taken money and you've got a house. The two sides of the balance are equal. Or you borrowed money and you got a car.

But if you borrowed money and you've spent it on a vacation or something like that, there's nothing, that's a debt. So, we must give back to man what belongs to him before we give to God what belongs to him. And what does belong to God? Jesus said all of our money should belong to him.

And it's a different attitude, you know. I say my wife and I have a joint account in a bank. And I say Jesus and I have a joint account.

I don't say that part of it is mine and part of it is his. I say, Lord, all that I have is yours. And it's ours.

Yours and mine. I never tell my wife, this is my money, this is your money. And she doesn't say, this is my money, your money.

It's ours. Because our relationship is so good. Many people pay tithes like they pay income tax, you know, to some other authority.

The government and I are not one, like me and my wife are one. And that's not the way to have a relationship with Jesus. In the Old Testament it was.

Tithing was something like paying income tax. But in the New Covenant our relationship is with Jesus as a bride. And there are people who say, this is great, then I don't have to give God anything.

Absolutely right. If that's your relationship with Jesus, don't give him anything. It all depends on our relationship with Christ.

But he doesn't want any forced giving. But one thing is true, the Bible does say, if you give God a teaspoon, you'll get a teaspoon from God. And if you get so little from God, you know the reason.

Because the measure in which you give is the measure in which God gives to you. And you can't out-give God. That's impossible.

I've seen through many years of my own life that God will honor you and give you far more than... It's a tremendous delight to see how when we give to God and we're not calculating, like they were in the Old Testament, if you're calculating in your giving to God, your spirit is wrong. How would you like a wife who's always calculating in whatever she does for you, makes a list of all the things she's done for you? I don't want a wife like that. And Jesus doesn't want a wife like that either.

But so many Christians are calculating, who have a very warm relationship with their earthly husbands and wives, but when it comes to Jesus, they're calculating. And I see such Christians, they're old covenant Christians. They don't have a bridal relationship with Christ.

And that's why their Christian lives are so miserable and so defeated. So, it's all got to do with relationship. When you have a bridal relationship with Christ, you don't calculate anything.

You don't calculate in terms of giving. You don't calculate in terms of anything. You say, Lord, all that I have is yours.

Many preachers warn that we are robbing God if you don't give the tithes. And that they are cursed with a curse if you don't. See, the favorite verse of many preachers is Malachi 3.10. And what they fail to tell people is that's the Old Testament.

The New Testament, by the way, in case you didn't know, begins with Matthew, not with Malachi. It's true. In the Old Testament, there was a command.

And if you didn't obey the command, Deuteronomy 28 said you'd be cursed. And if you did obey the commands of God, you'd be blessed. But Jesus changed all that and said, if you love me, keep my commandments.

Deuteronomy 28 was if you're afraid, if you don't want to be punished, if you want a blessing, keep my commandments. Jesus changed it in the New Testament. So it's important to recognize that and don't be fooled by money-loving preachers.

Can you explain the head covering according to Scriptures? I pray many times a day before meals, sometimes in the car with my children. While taking a walk, do I have to put on a head covering? See, the head covering is a symbol. In 1 Corinthians 11, it refers to a woman symbolically saying a number of things.

If you read 1 Corinthians 11, the first half. Now, there's a lot of difference of opinions among Christians on this. And I'll tell you what I believe.

But I'll also tell you that in our church, on matters that are not central to the Christian faith, I don't force people to accept my view. But I don't change my view. I have my own view on the wearing of jewelry.

My wife and I have never worn jewelry at any time, not even a wedding ring. But I don't say that that's the basis of acceptance of Christ. For example, I don't celebrate Christmas because I think it's a pagan

festival.

But I work with a fellow elder who celebrates Christmas and we have wonderful fellowship. To me, Romans 14 is a very important chapter if you want to save your church from becoming a cult. And Romans 14 says, let, you know, permit people to have different views in the church on a lot of these non-fundamental issues.

Concerning the person and the work of Christ, we have to be absolutely clear. If we don't have the same view on the person of Christ, the work of Christ, then we can't really work together. But a lot of other things, there are different degrees of importance.

For example, baptism. Baptism is not as important as the person and work of Christ. But it is important when it comes to building a church because my co-worker wants to baptize children and I say, no, you have to part.

But there are certain other things which are lower down the scale like head covering, jewelry. And my understanding is that head covering is symbolic where a woman covers her head to show that the man is the head of the woman, like it says in 1 Corinthians 11. But if a person does anything, whether it's head covering or removal of jewelry or even baptism, because they are forced to do it, it's a dead work.

Or in order to please somebody, it's a dead work. The Lord wants us to do everything out of personal conviction. And if you don't have personal conviction, I tell people, okay, don't do it until you have personal conviction.

A dead work is a work that we do in order to be accepted by somebody or in order to please someone or something like that, or in order to please man. So, you don't have to get into bondage saying, oh, I'm driving a car, should I cover my head before I pray? God's not a legalist. He'd be happy to hear you pray.

What would you do when you're in the shower if you want to pray? You'd have a problem to cover your head there. Okay, we go to a church where two of the three elders are divorced and remarried. How do you respond to this? What is the Bible teaching on divorce and remarriage? Well, there, I'm a little more clear and would be a little more, not just a little more clear, a little more assured of what my position is on this.

1 Timothy 3 says, elders should be the husband of one wife. How is he the husband of two wives? When he's married one and then he divorces and marries again, he's got two wives, then he's not fit to be an elder. Now, in our churches, and we have 40, 50 churches, I can't think of anyone who is divorced.

This is one of the blessings of being in a poor country. Divorce is almost unheard of. It's a rare thing, even among the Hindus.

It's not culturally accepted. And because of poverty, a woman wouldn't be able to go back to her parents or find a job herself if she divorces. It doesn't mean marriages in India are happier.

It just means they stick together and don't separate. So at least the children are protected from a broken marriage. So we haven't dealt with this much at all in India.

Hardly ever. I never have to deal with it. In fact, most of the time, I'm dealing with emails that come from other countries asking for advice on it.

But I'm very clear on one thing, that a divorced or remarried person, I would never give them any responsibility in a church to be an elder. Completely out of the question. If he was divorced and remarried before he became a believer, I would take each case individually and I would, certainly for the sake of the children that there are in this remarried situation, if a person I see is really repented and converted and born again, I would allow him to be a part of the church and break bread.

But I would not give him any position of leadership. Is it right for a husband and wife, or wife, to help their parents financially without telling their spouse? It's a very big problem in India. And my advice is don't let your left hand know what your right hand does.

Do good and don't let anybody know about it. You're following Jesus' teaching. Because we have an obligation to help needy parents.

And a partner may not understand that because his or her parents are not needy. So, there's nothing wrong in doing good secretly, let me tell you that. Okay.

Being that you travel many places and are such an awesome speaker. Awesome means feared. I'm sure you have a lot of admirers.

How do you make them see Christ and not be just focused on you? Well, I can only do my part. I can't do the other person's part. I try my best to shake people off if I find that they're too dependent on me.

But it's only natural that like I respect my parents and my children respect me as their father. I don't think that's a sin. My children write to me at my birthday and say, Dad, you're a hero.

If we can bring up our children the way you brought us up, we wouldn't want anything more. I don't despise those letters and say I don't care for that. I appreciate.

I think that would be a false humility. I mean, I recognize that people, my children were blessed through my labor with them for many years and they're only expressing their appreciation and I accept it. Of course, secretly I give the glory to God and I say, Lord, it's not me.

It's you who did it. And so also when my spiritual children and I have many of them express their appreciation, I don't shake it off as if I don't care for it. I say I appreciate the fact that you have been helped and it's between me and God that I secretly give the glory to Him.

But I would accept it but I would make sure that they don't depend on me too much. Just like my own children, I want them to, they're all married and I want them to learn to stand on their own feet and in the same way spiritually, I want people to be connected to the head directly. I've often used the example of I'm like an extension cord and you can't reach the socket yourself.

You need an extension cord and that's what I am. There's no power in the extension cord but my hope is one day that your cord will become long enough to connect to the socket directly and I want to work towards that. Okay, that's a question already answered.

What advice would you give a guy who's going to get married soon, for a successful marriage? Make Christ the sender. Love your wife, second to Christ. Love your husband, second to Christ.

When God made Adam and Eve, He didn't make them together as two lumps of clay and breathe into them simultaneously. There was a reason. He made Adam alone so that when he'd open his eyes, he'd

see not Eve but God and then afterwards he brought Eve and then when he made Eve, he made her separately somewhere with Adam fast asleep and when she opened her eyes, she didn't see Adam, she saw God and then she saw Adam.

Teaching them both a lesson that in your life, you must see me first always and see your husband or your wife second. That is the secret of a really strong marriage. Christ is always the sender.

He's number one in your life. You love Him more than you love your wife or husband. You love Him more than you love your job, house, anything and I believe it's because Christ is not Lord, absolute Lord, in your life, in a person's life, that they have unhappy marriages.

If your job or money or house or something else means more to you than Christ, I can tell you right now, you'll have an unhappy life and an unhappy marriage. The best possible life you can ever live, the best possible marriage you can ever have is if you put Jesus Christ first in everything, everything. It's because Adam put his wife first that all the problems came in that home.

He knew what God had said, but he knew that if he stood for God, there'd be problems at home. So for the sake of peace at home, he ate the fruit. That was foolish.

That's the main thing. The second thing I would say is be quick to ask forgiveness. Be quick to forgive.

Don't ever go to bed without having forgiven one another, coming to a good relationship with your partner. Very important. I gave that advice once.

I give it in almost all the weddings I conduct in India. And I remember a brother coming to me after 20 years after I'd conducted his wedding and said, Brother Zach, do you remember the advice you gave us at our wedding? I said, what was that? To never go to bed without resolving everything with your wife. I want to say today I've done that every day for 20 years.

I said, that's a greater miracle than raising the dead. That's to keep it up till Jesus comes. And they're a very happy couple.

And the result is they've got God-fearing children. You reap what you sow. Do we need to be baptized to take part in the Lord's Supper? Well, it depends on why you're not baptized.

You don't have to be baptized in order to be born again. For the new birth, repentance and faith are sufficient. But baptism is like a birth certificate.

You don't need a birth certificate to have a baby. And you can't have a baby by having a birth certificate. But it's good to have a birth certificate when you have a baby.

So if you look at baptism like that, you'll find it's a proper place in the Christian life. Is baptism necessary to go to heaven? No. Is baptism necessary to be an obedient child of God? Yes.

So it's not to go to heaven. It's to obey God. But I would say that if you're born again, you should be baptized.

You shouldn't delay on that. So in our church, we encourage people to be baptized before we allow them to break bread. But I wouldn't say, but if someone's coming from outside and hasn't got a conviction on baptism yet and we know he's really born again, we let him break bread.

But if he wants to join our church, I'd say, why can't you be baptized? Is there a reason? Sometimes, you know, we have Hindu people from Hindu families that parents create a lot of problems. But I know the person's really born again and they may have to wait for a little while before they can leave their parents' home and get baptized. I would allow them to break bread in such cases.

Here's a question from a little boy. If you ask the Lord to come into your heart by prayer and don't get baptized, will you still go to heaven? Sure. Do I need to be baptized in water before I can be filled with the Holy Spirit? Phileas was filled with the Holy Spirit before he was baptized.

And you can be filled with the Holy Spirit without being baptized unless you're deliberately disobeying God's Word. I mean, if you know clearly that the Lord wants you to be baptized in water and you're not baptized, that's different from another case where a person doesn't have light on it yet or is in a situation where they're not ready to be baptized. Do carnal Christians go to heaven? You know, it's like someone asked me, if you're a backslider, will you go to heaven? I said, I don't want to find out.

I don't plan to be a backslider. So, you know, it's an attitude. Christians can have two attitudes.

What is the minimum I have to do to please God? It's like telling your husband, how many other men can I fool around with before you chuck me out of the house? Three, four, five? What type of relationship is that? You know, to have a relationship with Christ, we say, Lord, how far can I go and become worldly before you throw me out of heaven? I don't want to know. I don't want to answer that question. It's like if my little children ask me, Dad, how close can I go to the edge of the cliff before falling over? What's the answer to that? Well, I mean, mathematically, one centimeter perhaps, one-tenth of an inch from the edge of the cliff, you won't fall over.

But that's not the point. I say, stay away from that cliff as far as possible. So, I don't want to know whether carnal Christians go to heaven or not.

I believe we must have a bridal relationship with Jesus Christ, and that's what we preach. And Jesus said, Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations. So, my calling is to make disciples.

How does a person receive the Holy Spirit? See, the operation of the Holy Spirit in a person's life is very difficult to make into a theology. I find it very difficult. And to tell you honestly, I'm sort of halfway between the Baptists and the Pentecostals in this area.

Like, I'm halfway between the Calvinists and the Armenians. There was an earlier question on... You know what? I don't know whether all of you know what Calvinists and Armenians are. Calvinists are people who believe that God is sovereign, controls everything, and He decides what's to be said.

Armenians emphasize the free will of man, man chooses. So, very often, my reply to that is, when I preach, I'm an Armenian. When I pray, I'm a Calvinist.

That means when I preach, I say, it all depends on you, brother. If you don't turn, you're finished. You're doomed.

But when I pray, I say, Lord, it all depends on you. Otherwise, how could I pray, Lord, save that man's soul? I mean, if it all depends on him, how in the world can I ask God to save his soul? So, I find that healthy balance is good. How does a person receive the Holy Spirit? I mean, the Holy Spirit, we cannot be saved without the operation of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit works in us, brings us to repentance, and brings us to faith. According to my present understanding, you know, the wind blows where it lists, Jesus said. So is everyone born of the Spirit.

Different people's experience of the Holy Spirit is different. That's what Jesus said, the wind blows where it lists. But, have you ever thought about this? When you ask Jesus to come into your heart, by the way, that expression is never found in the Bible, ask Jesus to come into your heart.

We receive Christ. In the New Testament, they were told to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Which also means receive.

As many as received him, to them he gave the power to be the children of God. But when I receive Christ into my heart, Jesus Christ is actually in heaven, in a body. Who am I receiving? The Spirit of Christ is the one who's in the world.

And Romans 8 and 9 says, if I don't have the Spirit of Christ, I don't belong to him. So, my understanding is that when I receive Christ, in some way, the Holy Spirit comes into me. But I may not be filled with the Holy Spirit because I may not have surrendered every area of my life to him.

If my heart is like a house with ten rooms and I've invited Christ and his Spirit to come in and it's occupied one room, is he in my heart? Yes. Has he filled my heart? No. Not until I yield every area of my life to him.

So, there is a difference between having the Holy Spirit and being filled with the Holy Spirit where I allow him to control every area of my life. Now, that's not everything. And I can't explain, for example, where the anointing comes in and fullness comes in.

It's very difficult in the New Testament to find the right theology on the baptism and the fullness of the Holy Spirit. We are absolutely honest. But one thing we know, there is such a thing as being anointed with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit all through those 30 years. Then he was anointed and he received supernatural gifts. And I know when, for example, when I was anointed with the Holy Spirit, I had the ability to minister God's Word in a way I couldn't before.

I suddenly became aware of demons and I had the authority to cast out demons which I didn't have before. So, there is something like that which is more than being born again. So, I don't try to analyze it.

But I see the important thing is to experience the reality of being filled, anointed with the Holy Spirit and being open to all the supernatural gifts God gives us, to have every area of my life controlled with the Spirit. So, I've never been so keen on working out a theology on this, an explanation, but experiencing more than explaining. You know, even if I can't explain my digestive system, if it works, that's fine.

It's something like that. The important thing is experiencing the reality of the Holy Spirit controlling every area of our life and giving us the supernatural gifts that He wants to give to all His children so that we can serve Him. God does not expect you to serve Him without the supernatural ability He gives you.

But He won't give it to you unless you eagerly seek for it. The Bible says, Pursue after love and earnestly desire the gifts of the Holy Spirit. So, if there's an earnest desire and say, Lord, I believe that you'll give me the mighty power of the Holy Spirit to live for you, He will give it to you.

Will everybody go to hell, especially those who never heard and accepted Jesus or who heard and rejected Jesus? See, I thank God that I don't have to judge the world because I wouldn't be able to do it. But I know that God is an absolutely fair judge. And the only passage in Scripture that I can find that deals with those who have never heard the Gospel is in Romans chapter 2 where it speaks about those, verse 13 to 16, about the time when God will judge for those who haven't heard.

And there also, there's no full answer there. But I know that God will not punish a person for rejecting a Christ He never heard about or rejecting a false Christ that was presented to Him by hypocritical Christians. So, I leave that with God to decide.

But one thing I do know, salvation is only by faith in Christ. I am the way. No one comes to the Father except by me.

So, think of a baby who dies and all the multitudes, hundreds of thousands of abortions that are committed, all living souls that have been killed. They've all gone to heaven because they have never consciously sinned. They never consciously accepted Christ, those babies.

But they were justified. Justified means the righteousness of Christ was imputed to them, put to their account. God is a just God.

And just like you can put a million dollars into a baby's account and the baby doesn't know anything about it, the righteousness of Christ is put to the account of these innocent babies that are died or killed. And I believe they're all in heaven. So, God will deal fairly with all those heathen who have never heard the gospel.

Do we have any chance to hear the gospel? If we don't hear it on earth after we're dead? No. There's no possibility. What is the role of Israel in the final days? If it does have a part in the last days, what are some good scripture portions to share with those who do not think Israel has a part? There are different views on Israel among God's people.

Some are fanatically for it and some are sort of neutral and some think there's no part of Israel in the last days. My belief is if I go to scripture, I believe God keeps his promises. And if you read the Old Testament, and I'll tell you something, it's very difficult for most of us to read the Bible without a bias and a prejudice because we've already got some traditions in our head from what we've heard from childhood.

But if you could read the Bible with a completely open mind, imagine if you were a Hindu or a Muslim who's never heard read the Bible or know nothing about Christianity. If you could train your mind to be like that and come and read the Bible and say, Holy Spirit of God, help me to be completely open to know the truth without the bias I've inherited from different Christian traditions. I believe that's a very healthy way to read the Bible to be able to remove all the cobwebs we've got of traditions in many, many areas.

I've tried to read the Bible like that and that's how I've learned a lot of things because I refuse to believe what I've just heard without a Biblical basis. So, if you read all the promises to God made to Israel in the Old Testament, there's not a single promise of anything heavenly. It's always earthly.

He never promised heaven to any one of Abraham's physical children. And so, the multitude of Israelites in hell. And then you read all these New Testament passages where it says, with God, there is no Jew or Gentile.

There is no barbarian or Scythian or black or white or educated or uneducated or Jew or Gentile, it says in Galatians. So, I believe that in the New Covenant. It doesn't make a difference whether you're Jew or non-Jew.

But the promises God made to the seed of Abraham, the physical seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the 12 tribes of Israel, are valid because He told them that He would give them a land which is the land of Canaan and He would bless them with earthly things and He did. And He said that you'll be uprooted from there and then I'll bring you back. And in 1948, He brought them back.

There's nothing heavenly about it, remember. Nothing spiritual. It's entirely earthly.

He kept His promise and brought them back. And in 1967, He gave them the city of Jerusalem as well. Now, the significance for us Christians is that these things are an indication that the end is near.

Jesus said, the fig tree, when you see the fig tree put out its leaves, that's in Matthew 24. When you see the fig tree put forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So, even so, when you see these things happen, you know that He's at the door.

Matthew 24, verse 32 and 33. Now, the fig tree is very interesting. Jesus once saw a fig tree and cursed it.

That was a parable. Because the fig tree symbolizes two things. First of all, from Genesis 3, it symbolizes human righteousness.

You know, Adam trying to cover himself with fig leaves. There's a picture of human righteousness trying to cover up their sin. Before God.

And Jesus cursed human righteousness. The fig tree in the Old Testament is also a picture of Israel. Just like the vine is a picture of the church.

Christ and the church. So, the fig tree is a picture of Israel. And when Jesus came to the fig tree, it was like His coming to Israel looking for fruit.

Spiritual values, no fruit. But He found plenty of religion, plenty of leaves. And He cursed it.

And Israel was cursed. And a little later, the next day, withered away. So, Israel withered away about 40 years after the crucifixion and was scattered all over.

Then Jesus said, One day, you will see the fig tree again putting forth its leaves. Not producing fruit, nothing spiritual, but putting forth its leaves, coming back as a nation. And when you see that happen, and that happened in 1948, it never happened for 2,000 years.

Right from Jesus' time to 1948, other nations ruled the land of Israel. We see it as an indication of the soon coming of Christ. The other place in Scripture which is mentioned in the New Testament is Iraq.

There are only two places mentioned in the New Testament in relation to the last days. One is Jerusalem, where Jesus said in Luke 21, when you see Jerusalem ruled by foreign nations, until the time of the Gentiles is over, Luke 21, 24, and we see Jerusalem very much in the news in the last days. People hardly spoke about Jerusalem 100 years ago.

For 2,000 years, nobody bothered about it. There is so much talk about it now, all the time. And the other is in Revelation chapter 9, where it speaks about the great river Euphrates in Revelation 9 and verse 14, and again in chapter 16 and verse 12.

9, 14, and 6, 12. It speaks about releasing some demons who are bound up in the river Euphrates who would create a situation for war. And Euphrates is a river that runs right through Iraq.

So, those are the only two places mentioned in relation to the last days. War around Jerusalem, war around Iraq. We never heard about war around Iraq until about 7 or 8 years ago.

And now we saw it every day in the news. So, I see these things as indications of the soon return of Christ. It's time to be ready for His return to make sure we don't waste our life on things that are going to pass away.

What is the role of tongues in this age? Paul said, I thank God, 1 Corinthians 14, I'll just read a few verses. 1 Corinthians 14, 18, I thank God I speak in tongues more than all of you. That's my testimony.

I thank God I speak in tongues. Verse 19, But in the church I'd rather speak five words with my mind than ten thousand in an unknown tongue. That's also my testimony.

I never use tongues in public. And verse 4, One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself. I use it in private, only in private.

Purpose, self edification. Sometimes our heart is full pressure due to gratitude or due to, you know, sorrow. And, when I want to express myself, all this full tank in my heart has to go through a very narrow pipe in my mind called the English language.

And then come out of my mouth. So, it's a very slow flow. So, God gives me a bypass valve that goes straight from my heart to the mouth bypassing this narrow pipe of the English language.

And then it can just gush out of my mouth and the pressure in the heart is relieved. Whether it's the pressure of gratitude or pressure due to sorrow or anything. That is how I have found the gift useful.

One of the results in my life, I used to get frequently discouraged. I never get discouraged now. Whenever I'm tempted, I just pray in tongues until the temptation gets over.

So, I find a practical value in it. I never use it in public. I don't understand everything about it.

Sometimes we have the gift of tongues in our church. It always has been an interpretation. I remember once when I came to a meeting very tired one Wednesday evening.

I was kneeling down, we were all praying and I didn't know what was the word of the Lord that I was to speak on that evening. I didn't know Of course, you can always get up and give a Bible study but I wanted to know what the Lord wanted to say that particular evening. Somebody spoke in a tongue and there was an interpretation and I got the lead.

I knew what I had to start on. It was like the first step into the River Jordan and it parted, you could walk across. Something like that.

So, I found some use for it but I also realized that God doesn't give it to everybody for some very good reason. Not all speak in tongues. So, I never tell people to seek for it.

I say, seek for the power of the Holy Spirit but don't be against this because if you have a prejudice against anything you'll never have it and it may have a function in your life. So, that is the position I take but it's much more important to seek to have a word in a known language to bless people. Some of these other questions are more related to verses and things like that.

Not so important. Did Abraham really trust God because he didn't wait to see the Lord fulfill his purpose through Sarah? He tried to have a son through Hagar. Yeah, one of the wonderful things about the Bible is it tells us the mistakes that great men of God made.

David, Abraham, Moses and that's a great encouragement to us. I'll tell you, the biographies in the Bible have been a hundred times more encouraging than all the other biographies I've read written by other Christians about others because they all picture saints who never made a mistake. Most of the biographies you read these guys were such saints they cover up their mistakes.

I suppose it's natural and if I were to write the biography of some man of God I admired I wouldn't like to expose his mistakes so I don't blame them. But Abraham made mistakes but God overlooked it and that's what encourages me that even when we make mistakes God can still use us. It's very easy to think that because I messed up my life somewhere God can't use me anymore.

But I'm tremendously encouraged by these examples in Scripture of Abraham and David and Moses and others that even in their faith they stumbled a bit but they still fulfilled God's purpose in their life. Peter denied the Lord but he became the leader on the day of Pentecost. An apostle in a church I attended taught us to believe this power and preach the gospel as power and he supplied the Holy Spirit and Spirit of Christ to the church and he comments what I would say the important thing is to demonstrate the power of God, not talk about it.

You know, what is the difference between the healing ministry today and the healing ministry of Christ and the apostles? I'll put it in a nutshell. Jesus never preached one single sermon on healing. Search the gospels.

He never preached one. He actually healed thousands. The apostles never preached one single sermon on healing.

In the Acts of the Apostles or in the Epistles. The only verse on healing in the Epistles is James 5 where it says the elders of the church should go and pray. No other verse on healing.

But they healed lots of people. Today we have thousands of sermons and books on healing but actual healings we've got to look around, we've got to get doctor certificates and this, that and the other and some guy whose ear could hear only 75% now he hears 85%. This type of thing doesn't impress me.

So I say that's the difference between healings today and the healings those days. So, I remember one brother came and said brother we must have more healing in the church. I said go right ahead.

I won't stop you. I mean there's a sister there who's been walking on crutches for 15 years. Please go and heal her.

I'd be the first person to be excited if you do that. And we have a blind brother in our church who's been blind for the last 40 years. Please go and open his eyes.

I wouldn't stop you. I assure you I won't stop you. But don't talk about it.

Do it. And if I don't do it it's because I don't have the gift. I admit it honestly.

Here's a question. Do you have elders in your church who have the gift of healing? I say no. Do you believe in the laying on of hands in your church to serve the sick? I say yes.

If anyone who's sick I follow James 5. If he calls me to pray, I anoint him with oil a symbol of the Holy Spirit and I pray for him. But I can pray only according to the measure of my faith. There's a lovely verse in Romans chapter 12 which says have a sober estimate of yourself according to the, Romans 12 3, according to the measure of faith God has given you.

Faith is like money. I can only pray according to the measure of my faith. I remember I was once called to a house where they asked me to come and pray for a 15 year old girl who was curled up mentally physically retarded from birth.

Couldn't do a thing in all her life. Everything had to be done for her. I said I don't have faith to pray that she'd get up and walk.

I'll tell you honestly if Jesus were here, he would have healed her because his faith was more than mine. And different sicknesses, some people have more faith and God says God is a lord to each a measure of faith. I said it's something like this.

If somebody who's got \$50,000 in his bank account writes a check for \$50,000 I say that's great, that's pretty impressive. And I who have only \$50 in my bank account I write a check for \$50,000 nothing's going to happen. I have to humble myself and say listen brother, I've got only \$50 in my bank account I can write you a check for that.

Faith is like that. Some may have more. But the proof of it is their check will be cashed.

It won't bounce and come back to you. A lot of people today who've got \$50 in their bank account are writing checks for \$50,000. It's crazy.

It's stupid. Nothing happens. So I said let's have a sober estimate of our faith and maybe somebody's got a little sickness where somebody else prays and he's healed.

And I pray he's not healed. It just shows he's got more faith in his bank account than I have. I can only pray according to the level of my faith.

But the thing is, my calling may be something else. My calling may be to teach the Word, which is my gift. So I say if you want to find out what gift you have, exercise it and see, and you'll find out.

I mean if you pray for 25 people and nobody's healed, you know pretty quickly that you don't have the gift of healing. You don't need to pray and fast about it. And if I teach 25 people and 25 people all get light on God's Word, then I know that I've got the gift of teaching.

It's very simple. And here's an evangelist who's got a tremendous burden, like some people have, to go out into the streets and always preach the Gospel. And people are converted off their streets and become part of your church.

I say boy, that guy's an evangelist. First of all, I may not have the burden to do it and I can't seem to bring people off the streets into the church. Then I say, but if you preach and preach and preach and nobody gets converted and nobody joins your church, then you may have a burden to reach, but you don't have the gift of evangelism.

It's like they say, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. If you have a gift, there'll be evidence of it by fruit in that area. So I've tried many things.

I've prayed for the sick and I've done evangelism and I've done teaching and I've found fruit in the teaching. That's how I know that's my gift. So we believe, for me it was by trial and error.

So you try it out and see and you'll know what your gift is. Okay. I think our time is up and most important questions are over.

Thank you.

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