LET'S TALK ABOUT IT



Part 1 • November 1, 2026 | Pastor Jason Smotherman

SPEAKING IN TONGUES

Every Christian denomination can trace its spiritual heritage back to the same place: an upper room in Jerusalem, where the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost. Before there were Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, or Assemblies of God, there was Pentecost.

Before there were denominational distinctions, theological traditions, or statements of faith, there was a group of believers gathered together, waiting for the promise of the Father. The entire Church has Pentecostal origins. Some have simply forgotten where they came from.

Pentecost wasn't the birth of a denomination. ***It was the birth of the Spirit-empowered Church.*** And the Holy Spirit wasn't given to establish a movement within Christianity. He was poured out to empower the Church to fulfill the mission of Jesus Christ.

> ***I CORINTHIANS 14:39-40 (NIV)***
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> *[39]Therefore, my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. [40]But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.*

God isn't less loving toward one person than another. He isn't less willing to draw near. But some people are open, receptive, and welcoming to His presence, while others are guarded, hesitant, or even fearful.

The difference isn't in God's willingness to draw near. It's in our willingness to welcome Him. Likewise, spiritual hesitancy can come from fear, unfamiliarity, or past experiences rather than rebellion. **If God, your Heavenly Father, has a gift for you, would you want it?**

> ***JOHN 14:16-17 (AMP)***
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> *[16]And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengthener, Standby), to be with you forever [17]the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive [and take to its heart] because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He (the Holy Spirit) remains with you continually and will be in you.*

ACTS 1:5 (AMP)

For John baptized with water, but you will be baptized and empowered and united with the Holy Spirit, not long from now.

ACTS 2:1-4 (AMP)

[1]When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place, [2]and suddenly a sound came from heaven like a rushing violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. [3]There appeared to them tongues resembling fire, which were being distributed [among them], and they rested on each one of them [as each person received the Holy Spirit]. [4]And they were all filled [that is, diffused throughout their being] with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues (different languages), as the Spirit was giving them the ability to speak out [clearly and appropriately].

THE NINE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(1 Corinthians 12:8–11)

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul lists manifestations of the Spirit given for the edification of the church:

Revelatory Gifts *(Insight and knowledge)*:

- Word of Wisdom: Divine perspective or direction for a specific situation.
- Word of Knowledge: Supernatural revelation of facts or circumstances.
- Discerning of Spirits: The ability to recognize whether a spiritual influence is divine, human, or demonic.

Power Gifts *(Supernatural action)*:

- Gift of Faith: An extraordinary surge of trust and confidence in God's power.
- Gifts of Healings: Bringing physical, emotional, or spiritual restoration.
- Working of Miracles: Interventions that override natural laws.

Speech/Vocal Gifts *(Declaration)*:

- Prophecy: A message from God meant to encourage, comfort, or edify.
- Different (Various) Kinds of Tongues: Speaking in an unlearned or heavenly language.
- Interpretation of Tongues: Explaining the meaning of a message spoken in tongues.

But the greatest gift of the Holy Spirit isn't what He produces in our lives. ***The greatest gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit Himself.***

What if we've become so focused on what He can do for us that we've neglected the joy of simply knowing Him? We weren't just given the Holy Spirit so we could experience His power. We were given the Holy Spirit so we could experience His presence.

The Gift of the Holy Spirit, is the Holy Spirit.

Why understanding tongues is important: It makes familiar the unfamiliar.

THE TWO PUBLIC TYPES

1. Tongues as a Sign to Unbelievers

Scriptures: Acts 2:4–11; 1 Corinthians 14:22

A supernatural ability to speak an earthly language the speaker has never learned.

Example: On the Day of Pentecost, people from different nations heard the disciples declaring God's wonderful works in their own languages.

> ***1 CORINTHIANS 14:22 (NIV)***
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> *[22]Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is not for unbelievers but for believers*

Purpose: To demonstrate God's supernatural power to unbelievers.

2. Tongues for Interpretation

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 12:10; 14:5, 13, 27–28

A supernatural message given in tongues during a public gathering. Requires the gift of interpretation so the congregation can understand and be edified.

This is the public ministry gift Paul discusses when asking, "Do all speak with tongues?" (1 Corinthians 12:30).

Purpose: To communicate a Spirit-inspired message that strengthens the church.

> ***1 CORINTHIANS 12:10 (NIV)***
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> *to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.*

THE TWO PRIVATE TYPES

3. Tongues for Personal Prayer

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 14:2, 4, 14–15; Jude 20

A personal prayer language directed toward God rather than people. The believer's spirit prays, even when the mind does not understand the words. Builds up the believer spiritually and deepens intimacy with God.

Purpose: Personal spiritual edification and communion with God.

> ***1 CORINTHIANS 14:2 (NIV)***
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> *For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit.*

4. Tongues for Intercession

Scripture: Romans 8:26–27

The Holy Spirit helps believers pray when they do not know what or how to pray.

This can involve praying for situations or people whose needs are unknown to the person praying.

Purpose: To intercede according to God's perfect knowledge and will.

> ***ROMAN'S 8:26-27 (NIV)***
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> *[26]In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. [27]And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.*

God has given us a gift. The gift isn't tongues, wisdom, or even supernatural faith. Those are the outcomes of the gift. The gift is the Holy Spirit.

Seek the Holy Spirit and the outcomes will flow naturally.

The final point to consider:

The question before you is not whether you have all of the Holy Spirit, the question to consider is whether or not the Holy Spirit has all of you.