

The Gifts

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala's sermon emphasizes the vital role of the Holy Spirit and the distribution of spiritual gifts for the strength and service of the church community.

Duration: 44:20

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4

Topics: "Gifts"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his experience of feeling unprepared and lacking a message to deliver at a church service. He describes how he prayed and sought God's guidance, hoping for inspiration or a verse to speak on. Despite feeling inadequate, he recounts a moment when he sensed God telling him that Pastor Dave Hannon from Plainfield, New Jersey would call and invite him to speak at a midweek service. The speaker reflects on the importance of being led by the Spirit and surrendering control, emphasizing that God will provide and take care of those who trust in Him.

Transcript

If you study church history, you'll find out that the church was born in the Book of Acts, in power, with the miraculous, in one way or another. There were things that couldn't be explained happening. Just the fact that God would use fishermen to preach so powerfully made no sense.

They were not trained. This, of course, was promised by Jesus Christ when he said, when I leave, the Holy Spirit's gonna come, and he's gonna give you power from on high. Now, the Holy Spirit, when he was given, he is the gift.

How much more, if you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them who ask him? So the Holy Spirit is the gift, and every believer in Christ has the Holy Spirit living inside of him. Otherwise, we're not Christians. A Christian is not someone who goes into church or has a doctrinal system in their head, but a Christian is someone who has been born again, and the Spirit of God is now living inside of them.

How many are with me thus far? Say amen. Amen. Now, it was God's intention from the very beginning, Christ's intention, that once the Holy Spirit would be given, that he would begin to then work among God's people by giving gifts, his own gifts.

Jesus gave his body on a cross. The Holy Spirit came to give gifts to God's people so that they would fulfill God's purpose for their lives. The church would be strengthened and made stronger.

It would then be stronger in bearing witness to the world. Let me say that again. Jesus came and gave his life for the sins of the world on the cross.

Holy Spirit was not called to do that, was not sent for that. He was sent for among other reasons, to be in the believers, live in them, and then to distribute gifts to every single member in the body of Christ so that those gifts could be used mainly not for ourselves, but for the building up of the church, because the church is the body. And if the body is weak, even though the head, Christ, is sending signals, the body can't carry it out because it's weak.

So, the gifts of the Holy Spirit were ordained by God to be God's way of making a church strong. There is no other way to make a church strong, because human talent, money, PowerPoint, and all those things can be used, and they're great. But since the church is a spiritual organism, it can only be grown and made strong by spiritual gifting.

The church is not a corporation. The church is not the movie business. The church is a spiritual organism.

So, Paul, more than anyone else, talks in his letters about the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Now, the singular in the Greek is charisma, where we get the word charismatic. Charisma, and the plural, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, is charismata.

So, the charismata are the gifts of the Holy Spirit. So, people who believe that the Holy Spirit still does supernatural things, they have been labeled in the last 50 years as being, those are charismatic churches. What does that mean? They believe that God still today, by the Spirit, moves, is alive, and distributes gifts to His children, to His people.

The best teaching of this, although it is not totally inclusive, there are other gifts that are mentioned in other places, but the main place is 1 Corinthians 12. So, let's read it and look at it, and pick up some teaching here about the Holy Spirit. Now, concerning what you wrote about the gifts from the Holy Spirit, I want you to know the truth about them, my friends.

You know that while you were still heathen, you were led astray in many ways to the worship of lifeless idols. Paul's writing to the church in Corinth, they're mostly Gentiles, some Jewish believers, mostly Gentiles, that means they were heathen worshipers of idols, and he's saying, now I want you to know the truth about the charismata, the gifts that come from the Holy Spirit, not the Holy Spirit Himself, He is the gift, the gift that Christ sent, but now these are the gifts from the Holy Spirit. You know that while you were still heathen, you were led astray in many ways to the worship of lifeless idols, and now he starts to talk about the fact that when the idols were controlling the lives of those unbelievers, they led them to do certain things.

This is all important because now he's going to contrast it to the Holy Spirit. So, the Holy Spirit is not coercive, He leads, He guides, He suggests, so that means receptivity, that means openness, and he said when you were a heathen, you were very much open and led by those demonic idols that you were involved in. I want you to know that no one who is led by God's Spirit can say a curse on Jesus, and no one can confess Jesus is Lord without being guided by the Holy Spirit.

There you see it again, no one who is led by God's Spirit. What does the Spirit do? What does He do? He leads, He guides. No one can say Jesus is Lord without being guided by the Holy Spirit.

Now, we learned something else about the Holy Spirit in this passage. The Holy Spirit has everything to do with Jesus. He was sent to glorify Jesus, He's not sent to glorify Himself.

There's no Holy Spirit gospel, there's only the Jesus gospel. Notice what He says, no one who says Jesus is a curse is being led by the Holy Spirit. Why doesn't He say anyone who says the Holy Spirit is cursed? No, because the Holy Spirit was not sent to draw attention to Himself.

He always directs the attention to Jesus. Jesus said, when He comes, He will glorify Me. So one of the tests of when the Holy Spirit is really working is Jesus being glorified.

If the pastor is being glorified, if the speaker is getting the attention, the Holy Spirit is not strong in the meeting, not strong. I don't care if they're jumping and running the aisles. Did you know that I was once, I grew up in a church where they ran the aisles and knocked over chairs and did all kinds of crazy things when I was real little, before I went to my father-in-law's church.

But did you know, I went back to that denomination that I was in as a kid, I was, this is the truth. If you think I'm making this up, I'm telling the truth. I went back up to, they invited me to go to a major conference, their annual convention.

It was in Kansas City, Missouri, a lot, a lot of years ago. And now they had like 8,000 people there because they came from all over the country in this denomination. So when the pastor got worked up and the organ went on, and you know how that all goes, right? So the people who run, not everybody runs.

How many know that? Not everybody is a runner. There are certain people are designated runners in these meetings. So this is the truth.

What happened was, let's say you got 8,000 people and now one out of a hundred started to run. Well, that's a lot of people running. Well, what they were having is they were having, because there were aisles and this thing was a vast conference center.

It was huge. So they were running and they were being accidents. They were having head-ons.

So they actually put people at the crossroads. Like if this was an aisle and that was an aisle, there were ushers in charge who would hold these people from running and would say, come through. That's the truth.

I saw this with my own eyes. And they would go like this. No, you hold, you come through.

And everybody like this. But what was so funny was the people who were being held, and it made a pile because they didn't want to have crashes. The people who were being held didn't just stop, they idled in place and they just went.

And then they would say, okay, now you hold, now you come through. Anything that draws attention away from Jesus is a sign the Holy Spirit's not working. How many are with me? Say amen.

If the church's name is in bold print, if the minister's personality is his oratorical skills, Holy Spirit's not working. He was not sent to glorify anybody but Jesus. Notice the test.

Nobody can really say Jesus is Lord and believe it unless the Holy Spirit has worked in him. And no one can say a bad thing about Jesus and say the Holy Spirit's working in me. So that's the acid test of the Holy Spirit.

We need teaching like this, don't we? Because the charismatic movement has sometimes gone off into like the Holy Spirit is the center. He is never the center. He is always pushing away and pointing at Jesus.

May it be that way for all of us. Amen? So now there are different kinds of charismata. There are different kinds of spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit gives, but it's the same Spirit that gives them.

There's only one Spirit equal with the Father and the Son, but there are many different kinds of gifts. So what that means is not everyone is used by God the same way. So if you have a favorite thing that you like that God does in someone, you're going to miss the picture here.

It's like someone says, oh, I just love my right hand, and they have no use for their knees and their feet and other parts of the body. They're not going to get very far, are they? So that's a sign of immaturity that we don't appreciate that the Spirit, the one Spirit, is giving different gifts. Not everyone has the same gift.

And when you're young, you just have a little hobby horse where you like, oh, I love that guy who preaches or that woman who can pray or that person who can do that. And the older you get, you realize, oh, there's so many gifts that are needed in the church. There are people who have the gift of, I believe, faith and prayer, intercessory prayer.

They're never seen but, oh, what they accomplish. So there are different ways of serving. Not everybody serves God the same way, but the same Lord is being served.

So there's different kinds of charismata. There's different gifts. There's different ways of serving.

But everyone in the body listening to me, here's the question for all of you so that application is made. How are you serving? Not going to church. It's not about going to church now.

How are you serving? There's one Lord, but there's many different ways of serving Him. Going to church is not serving the Lord. That's just being built up and having good fellowship and growing.

Amen? Now, serving the Lord is doing something for Him. Different gifts, different ways of serving the Lord. There are different abilities to perform service depending on what He's called you to do.

The Spirit gives different abilities, but it's the same God giving those abilities to all for their particular service. So what have we learned? There's different gifts. There's different ways of serving the Lord.

And the Lord has this unique way of giving different abilities to different people so they can carry out what God wants them to do so the church can be edified. Next verse, very important one. The Spirit's presence, or as NIV has it, the manifestation of the Spirit.

Here we have in the Good News Bible, the Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all. The Spirit's presence is shown or made manifest in Bethsaida in a different way than it is in me, different way than you in the balcony. The Spirit works and shows Himself and wants to if we're alive now, this is not automatic, discover your gift kind of teaching.

That is not found in the Scripture. You have to develop your gift, but you first got to get the gift before you can develop it. What this is saying here is that the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good, for the good of all.

So now here's what stops a lot of people from learning more about the gifts of the Spirit. It's not to feel good. It's not to show off.

It's not to brag. It's not to say, I live in heavenly places. It's to live on planet Earth and help somebody with the gift that God has given you.

Let's say amen to that, all of us. What is so necessary to remember here is this is why a lot of charismatic or the older term Pentecostal churches have gone to seed and gone nowhere is because they circle the wagons and they want to have good meetings where the Holy Ghost is. Well, that's great.

Let's call on God and ask Him to come like we're going to ask Him to come now. But por que? Why? Why, God, we want you to come and we want you to gift us so that we can serve other people in the body of Christ. It's not to be feeling good and go home and say, oh, I feel this.

That's good. Feel the spirit all over you. But remember, it has to be given the manifestation of the spirit.

Very practical. God is very practical. People need help.

I was saying to the prayer group this morning, this today, 12 to 1, Jesus calls his church a little flock, my flock. And he tells Peter, feed my sheep. Do you really love me? Feed my sheep.

You know why? Because a lot of people are barely making it. They're going through all kinds of stuff. And if we're all into ourselves and how spiritual we feel, how are we going to help them? The spirit has come that he can use us through some manifestation so that we can build that person up, increase their faith, lift them up out of their doldrums, pray a prayer of deliverance over them from whatever might be oppressing them, right? This is all important.

The manifestation of the spirit or the presence of the spirit shows himself through each person for the common good. That's why if you're conducting a prayer meeting at home or you are called by God into the ministry, my brother, so what you got to remember is how you judge everything in a service is this blessing all the people. Whatever the manifestation is, whatever what draws attention of all the people, the question is, is this blessing the whole group? If it's not, stop it.

But the sister's getting blessed. Let her go home and get blessed. She can get blessed at home.

But in a public meeting, everything must be done to bless everybody in the building, right? That's why if someone speaks in an unknown tongue and draws attention to themselves, it must be interpreted. Why? Because the unknown tongue doesn't help anyone. We don't know what anyone's saying when they do that.

But when it's put into English, we're encouraged and we're strengthened. Come on, let's say amen to that. That's the purpose of the gifts.

Notice how charismatic is love. Someone has said love and action. So notice what love is always doing, going out to others to bless them, right? Never to be super spiritual aloof.

Oh, he doesn't have any friends and he didn't talk to anyone. Well, why? Oh, he's a man of God. That's crazy.

That's not a man of God. Jesus wasn't like that. Was he like that? No.

So let's look. Now the spirit gives one person a message full of wisdom, while to another person, the same spirit gives a message full of knowledge. So we have word of wisdom, word of knowledge or message of wisdom, message of knowledge.

What does that speak of? I don't want to go into detail on all of them. Time won't permit. But what that basically means, these are the harder ones to define.

A message of wisdom is not coming from someone who's wise. It's a momentary gift from the Holy Spirit, having nothing to do with your IQ and nothing to do with your spiritual level. Because if it does, it's not a gift.

The spirit gives gift. The first two things you have to understand about the gifts of the spirit is it has nothing to do with being earned. No one earns the gifts.

Isn't that good news for all of us today? God's not waiting to see you get spiritual enough. And now you're spiritual enough. So I'm going to give you a gift.

That's not how God gives gifts. And sometimes God gives some odd people gifts and they have gifts and they're immature in another area. And other people say, no, that can't be God.

Yes, it can be because God gives gifts. So it has nothing to do with earning. It's a gift.

It has to do with, look, reception. You receive a gift. You don't earn a gift.

That's called a salary. If you have to earn it, it's owed to you. God's not giving anything to anyone in this room because he owes it to us.

He gives it out of grace, out of love, and out of his purpose to build up his people. Now, notice also that this has nothing to do with natural ability, has nothing to do with college degree, high school. If you've studied church history, it started out simple and people depending on the Holy Spirit.

And then great stress came on doctrine and dogma and education. And then they formed a priesthood, the Roman Catholic system, which is not found in the New Testament. Nobody was called father or priest.

We're all priests called by God to offer up spiritual sacrifices, Hebrews tells us. So you'll see that when the simplicity left and dependence on God, there was less and less manifestations of these gifts. But if you study it carefully, even in the years 200, 250, 300, some of the church fathers they're called or church leaders, they are writing about the fact that people were speaking in tongues and it was interpreted or someone had the gift of faith.

They're referencing it, but it becomes less and less as less. In other words, as the organization developed and the simplicity went down, then that childlike faith disappeared and we're going to organize ourself. And it became like AT&T and that childlike fishermen like, Oh God, I need you use me.

So a word of wisdom is that ability at a given circumstance to receive something supernatural. Listen, if you don't believe in the miraculous, don't listen to anything I'm saying tonight because the gifts of the Holy Spirit by definition mean miraculous, miraculous. How many believe still in miracles that God can do? I'm talking about little miracles, big miracles, small miracles, medium miracles.

I'm talking about things you can't explain. God can do it many different ways. So the word of wisdom is that in a certain situation, it's happened in my office.

I believe it's happened through some of the pastors who serve here with me, that someone will have a situation and someone will just say something. And it's an insight into that situation. And you just know, wow, it has nothing to do with a PhD or anything else.

That was God giving insight and analysis and a word of direction. It's just a word of wisdom. But remember, not you are smart.

It's like God is wise. When it's a word of wisdom, it's like, Oh God, we praise you. When it's somebody just clever, it's like, that's a smart dude.

No, it's not like that. Same thing with word of knowledge that is generally understood as the spirit imparting, not just the word of wisdom. And remember, this doesn't come like Holy Spirit knocking and saying, I am now sending a word of wisdom.

These things are happening within the flow of the consciousness of the person. It's only after it comes out that you recognize like that didn't come from his brain. That came from God first to his heart, then through his brain.

It started heart first, then through the brain. Word of knowledge is where God divinely imparts some of his omniscience that he knows everything to a human being who couldn't know through their senses that that was true. It's like Jesus with the woman at the well.

Go call your husband. I don't have a husband. You're right.

You have six. You've had six. And the one you're living with now is not your, how would he know that? How would Peter know that Ananias and Sapphira were lying to him? A word of knowledge.

He knew things you can't know. Oh, that still can happen today. And notice who can happen to any member of the body of Christ.

Here's the other bad teaching. The gifts of the spirit are for the ministers who sit on the platform that is nowhere even close to being found in the Bible. It's given to every member of the body.

Let's just look at a few more so that we can open up to God and pray about these things. One and the same spirit gives faith to one person. That's special faith.

That's not the faith to get saved. That's the ability that God gives you where you just get faith like for a mountain to be moved. Just faith.

It's not your faith. It doesn't have anything to do with you. It's from the spirit.

It's the gift of faith. While to another person, he gives the power to heal. That is in the plural.

And it's the gifts really to another person. He gives powers to heal. It's actually called healing.

So this again is not a healer. The Bible has no healers in it. Jesus is the only healer.

All gifting to pray for someone and seeing them heal is momentary. It's just for that moment. You can't make an appointment with the person and say, I'm going to see four days from now.

I got a problem. Take care of it. They don't know about four days from now.

They just know right now the spirit has imparted a gift of healing to pray for someone. Now, brothers and sisters, you mean that God doesn't want some of you to have these things? All right, don't say amen. I still love you.

But I mean, I thought that was true. Doesn't God want us to have these things? Are you with me or not here? You believe in the supernatural. You believe in the miraculous.

Well, I'm reading to your Bible. This is not for ministers. This is for every member in the body.

He's writing to a church. The manifestation, the presence of the spirit makes himself shown for the common good. So now the spirit gives one person the power to work miracles to another, the gift of speaking God's message, prophecy, and to yet another, the ability to tell the difference between gifts that come from the spirit and those that do not, or what's called discerning of spirits.

Let's just talk about that for a second. The gift of miracles, the gift of faith, the gift of a prophetic unction. That's not just telling the future, but that's speaking God's heart for the present right now, where you just say something to someone and it's based on God's word, but it, boom, goes right in.

It's like, wow, that came from God. Your mouth might've said it, but that was God. Didn't anybody ever tell you something in your life that you knew it didn't come from them? Come on.

How many have ever had that experience? I've had that happen to me. But notice discerning of spirits. There's three spirits that have to be discerned among.

There's God, there's the devil, and then there's the human. Usually to be able to, this is a gift from the Holy Spirit, and I think it's, yes, it's the ability to discern and see where the devil is coming as a wolf in sheep's clothing, right? That's a gift from the Holy Spirit. You can't get it by training, can't go to a school to learn how to discern different spirits, seven ways to discern spirits.

That's not true. This is a gift from the Holy Spirit. But the hardest discernment is to discern between God and the human, because there are things that come from the human spirit that sometimes purport to be God, but they're not God.

They're not born and inspired by God. They're coming from a human being who means well. In Argentina, a lot of years ago, a guy got up and tried to say that he was prophesying to the group, and he went on and on, and he went to the founder of the movement afterwards, who I knew at the end of his life, and he went, Brother Sorensen, I know I got up there and I was nervous.

Was that God or was that the devil? He said, it wasn't God, but it wasn't the devil. It was just you. See the third alternative? I used to be in a church when I was a kid where there was a very depressed lady who used to prophesy in the meetings.

I don't think it was of the Lord, because when she got through, everybody was depressed with her after she got through speaking her message. This is the truth. Why? Did she mean well? Did she say anything unbiblical? No.

But the coloring of what she said came from the vessel. It came from her own sadness and depression and negativity. It never lifted anyone.

And my goodness, we need encouragement in our services, don't we? People don't need bad news. They have enough reading the newspaper. They need good news.

They need encouragement. So it's not just God and the devil. Try the spirits to see whether they be of God.

See, that implies the ability to discern. But sometimes it's the human. I fight that all the time.

God, is this you speaking, this prompting, or has this come from Jim Simba's head? Jim Simba's got a lot of Bible verses in his head. If he read a lot of verses during the week and he loves the people. So over there, I'm praying constantly, God, is this you, or is this just me? I don't want to do it if it's just me.

I want to do it if it's just you. I want to do it if it's you, God. I want to get up there and just talk.

I want to only do something different and change the course of the meeting. My goodness, I have this microphone thing on. I can change the course of a service.

I want to do it because it's my idea. I want to do it because it's you, what you want. You know what the people need.

I don't know what the people need to hear. So discerning of spirits is very important. And then finally, to one person, he gives the ability to speak in strange tongues, and to another, he gives the ability to explain what is said.

But it is one and the same spirit who does all this as he wishes. He gives a different gift to each person. This was written to a church.

He gives a different gift to each person. So now here's the tension of the teaching of the Bible. I don't have this other verse up, but trust me, it's in there in the same First Corinthians.

Listen. So to each one, the spirit, he has his own will, he has his own mind, his own plan. He gives as he wishes to each one.

What an encouragement. And what a shameful indictment of the Christian church. How many Christians do you think going to church this Sunday across America are saying, oh God, use me in the gift that you've planned for me? They're not thinking, they're just thinking, I'm going to church today, and that's a sign I'm a believer, right? And we're suffering because we don't have enough of the Holy Spirit working.

How many want more Holy Spirit in our church and in our lives? My goodness. Here's the other verse. Pursue spiritual gifts.

Desire to prophesy. Seek after the gifts. But it's God who's going to give you, the Spirit's going to give you as he will.

So here's the tension. You can't sit back and just say, well, whatever the Spirit's going to do, he's going to do. No, no.

It's covet earnestly, desire earnestly spiritual gifts, especially that you can prophesy. Why? Because that really builds up the people. But then at the same time, God's going to use different people in different ways.

Never try to emulate anyone. Never try to copy anyone. What a waste of time.

God made you unique. Everyone's an original. Amen? That includes you.

I'm not talking about pastors only. I'm talking about you in the balcony. God wants to use you in some supernatural, miraculous way.

If that's not true, what are we reading these verses for? He wants to use you in some, how, where? I don't know that. That's the Spirit. But you got to make yourself available.

So how do we close this? We close this by saying God wants us, first of all, to believe his word. How many believe what I read is from the word of God? Lift your hand and say aloud, amen. All right.

That's how it starts. You got to have faith. Well, no, when I went to a church that said that can't happen anymore today, the gifts stopped.

Just say to anybody who tells you that, show me the verse in the Bible that says that it stops. And then I'll believe that it stops. I'm reasonable.

There is no verse that says that. That's just church tradition, anti-supernatural. Today in America, there is in the churches, strong anti-supernatural movement.

Anything that speaks of experience, the Spirit, no, no, no, no, no. Program the meeting, program the meeting, and just give this, and let's copy the way the world's techniques are and business techniques. And that's a really slick church.

But we're going south using those techniques. We need a return to the Holy Spirit. But to return to the Holy Spirit, you have to believe in him.

And then you have to ask. And then you have to be receptive. My own experience in these things, which has varied over the years as I think God has used me in different ways, is you have to learn to understand the prompting of the Holy Spirit, because it's different than your mind.

You have to be sensitive to it, and you have to then follow it. And I've had times in my life, God knows what I'm speaking about, where as a college student or just out of college, God, the Spirit would come upon me, let's say in a service, and I would say to God, don't do this. He knows if I'm telling you the truth.

Don't do this. I'm not worthy. I'm not where I should be with you.

Don't. But boy, that thing was just beating inside of me. Because you see, it's a gift.

You can't be a legalist. God doesn't use you because of who you are. He uses us despite who we are.

Do I get an amen from that? If he used us because of who we are, then we could walk around and boast. No, no, there's no boasting. With a gift, there's no boasting.

What do you have that wasn't given you, Paul says. Name one thing you have that wasn't given you. And if it was given to you free, how could you boast? You're a pauper.

You're a beggar. We're all beggars. And we just come to God, and he just keeps filling us with everything good thing that he has.

That's where he gets all the glory. Sensitivity. So early on in the ministry, I was in the ministry not even three months, long before I came to the Brooklyn Tabernacle.

And in the kitchen, in one morning, I've just been seeking the Lord, spending time with him. And I felt the Lord strangely speak to my heart and say, Pastor Dave Hannan from Plainfield, New Jersey, is going to call you today and ask you to come and speak in this midweek service tonight. So be ready.

I thought, that is the craziest thing I've ever heard. I wasn't in the ministry for three months. My sermons were just works of modern art or some kind of art, what they were.

And I said it to my wife. I said, I feel like the Spirit just showed me that this is going to happen today. It's like a word of knowledge.

As God is my witness, two hours later, phone rings. Hi, Jim. This is Dave Hannan.

It's funny. I was praying this morning, and I got a prompting. I just want to know, could you come and speak? I know it's short notice.

Can you come and speak? And I went, yeah, I'm coming. I'll be there. I'm coming.

And I felt so good because I knew if I ever was supposed to be in a place, it's there. So I got alone with my Bible, nothing. Well, what did I preach last Sunday? Nothing.

I know, God, you set this up. God, I know I'm supposed to go. Would you please give me something to say? Nothing.

Nothing. If you're a speaker, you have to have some warmth. You have to have something inside.

This is when I'm supposed to speak. Nothing. Nothing.

And I got panicky, and I started to cry to God and say, God, please, God, it's not going to be pretty. You set me up to come, and now I have nothing to say. What am I going to do? And it was just like God was saying, if I set it up, I'll take care of you.

But I didn't know back then. I wanted to know. I wanted to control.

If you're a control freak, you can't be led by the Spirit. If everything has to be the way you know how it's going to end up, say goodbye. It's over because you have to be led by somebody else.

So I got in the car, and I'm in the car. I'm turning on Christian radio. Maybe a song will give me a sermon, maybe something, and I'm just driving and praying.

God knows I'm just praying from Maplewood to Plainfield, New Jersey. I'm just saying, please, God, something. I get to the church.

There's nothing. I have nothing to say. I have nothing to say.

Ladies and gentlemen, did you hear what I just said? I have nothing to say. And I'm sitting in the front row of the church, and now the praise and worship is going on. So I'm listening to every word of the song, like maybe there's a live, a sermon, something, a verse, an angel.

I'll take anything at this point. And now he's up there, my friend, introducing me, and I have nothing. This is to encourage you, okay? And then I said to the Lord, Lord, if you want me to walk up there, I know I'm supposed to be here, and just stare at them.

I will do. That's a new gift that I never had read about in the Bible, the gift of staring. I don't care anymore.

You're going to lead me. I know I'm here. That's all important.

You have to rest, or you have nothing to rest on. You have to rest on God. And as the Lord is my witness, he's introduced me.

I'm walking up. God, you know exactly how this happened. And I'm walking up, and I'm coming up the steps, and I'm walking across.

I'm walking to take the microphone. Boom! Exactly what I should say. Right here to there, he handed me the microphone.

I took it. I said, the Bible says this in 1 Corinthians. And I began to preach.

They thought I had a manuscript, but it was somehow, wait, it was somehow given to me from there to there. And God taught me something. You never have to be afraid when I'm leading you.

Come on, let's say amen to that. Come on, let's praise him. We praise you, Lord.

Give you all the glory. Let's close our eyes. Aren't you hungry to be used by the Holy Spirit? Have you ever been thinking lately, or maybe you haven't? What are the gifts that he has for you? Maybe some of you need to ask for the gifts so they can be given.

Maybe some of you have a gift that's lying dormant. It was once given, but you're not nurturing it. You're not giving it air, and some sunshine, and some rain.

But all God looks for is someone who will say, Lord, use me. This whole idea, the slicker the better, totally erroneous. Totally, absolutely erroneous.

It's not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, sayeth the Lord. God's going to build his church through simple people, filled and used by the Holy Spirit. End of story.

I don't care what century. Look at any century. It'll always be the same.

God builds his church through people, simple, who trust him, and are filled with the spirit. Yes, filled with the word, and they learn, and they read, and they could have PhDs, or they could be third grade dropouts. It doesn't matter.

They have to be gifted by the Holy Spirit. Pastors, come on up and stand on the steps with me here. I'm going to ask everybody here, all the deacons, deaconesses, come and stand in front of us so we can pray for you.

Anybody on staff that's here, come so that we can pray for you. Everybody who was moved while I was speaking, and you felt, ah, Pastor Cimbala, I felt a little fire burning inside of me. I'm hungry to be used by God.

We're going to pray for our musicians. We're just going to lay hands on a bunch of people here tonight, but you're going to be prayerful. You're going to ask.

Remember, don't beg. Begging doesn't get it. Ask in faith, and make yourself available, and say, God, here I am.

Use me for your glory, and to build up my fellow Christians, and he will be faithful to his word. He will be faithful, not for myself, not to brag, not to show off. No, to be a blessing to others, and I don't care what gift you give me, and I don't care how I serve.

In the public, be out of the public's eye. God, I'm just hungry to be used by you, and I believe in the supernatural. I believe in the miraculous.

I believe that it is for today, and if you don't, according to your faith, so be it unto you. We believe your word tonight. Holy Spirit, we believe what you inspired and gave to brother Paul, and we are desirous of spiritual gifts that only you can give.

We accept your word that you give it as you see fit, and different people have different gifts, and different people serve in different ways, but the manifestation of your power is given so that we can build others up, and that's what we want to do. As we dismiss tonight, would you make us very sensitive in a new way to your promptings and your leadings? We used to be sensitive to the promptings of our flesh, the devil, money, friends, clubbing, but now we ask that you'd purify our hearts and make us sensitive to your leadings, and give us the courage to say, to talk, to pray, to call, to go, to stay, to intercede, to get out of bed. Make us sensitive.

We want to be spirit-led, spirit-empowered, spirit-gifted. I ask you to revive the Brooklyn Tabernacle, send the Holy Spirit in new waves, new streams, more of your power, more of your presence, the musicians, the pastors, the ushers, people who help clean, the deacons, deaconesses, pastors, all of us. Every member in the church, God, everyone who comes here now this Sunday and next Tuesday, we ask you to teach us more about this so we can seek you more, but I pray that you will send a quickening to everyone who steps in this building, that they're going to be, want to be filled with the Holy Spirit, used by the Holy Spirit, gifted by the Holy Spirit, that we won't live for the things of time, but we'll live for the things of eternity.

And Holy Spirit, in keeping with your mission, we will only glorify Christ. We want your gifts, but we will point everyone to Jesus, because this is good in your sight. This is why you were sent.

Get everyone home safely tonight, but God, maybe lead us on the bed. Speak to us in the night, on the subway. Tomorrow, as we open your word, give us revelation, word of wisdom, word of knowledge, the gift of faith, the gift of miracles, the gift of discerning of spirits, the gifts of healing, the gift of tongues, the gift of interpretation of tongues, prophetic utterances, the gift of encouragement, the gift of giving.

There's many other gifts that you listed in your word. Just keep us open and pliable, Lord. And now, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with all of God's people tonight, and give us a good night.

And should you give us another day, make it a great day in Jesus, we pray. And everyone said, turn around and hug a please. I love you.

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