

Sam Storms: Why God's Gift of Speaking in Tongues Is So Divisive

Spirit-filled Pastor Sam Storms says the enemy devises many tactics to divide the church when it comes to the gift of tongues, including one argument from the charismatic camp that is a lie from the pit of hell.

Storms says speaking in tongues "is a powerful instrument that God has given us by which we can praise Him and express our gratitude and our prayers as well as it being a weapon," Storms, the pastor of Bridgeway Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of "Greenelines" on the Charisma Podcast Network. "But a lack of familiarity has a lot to do with the division.

"I think maybe a whole lot of reaction to this is because, over the years, some who are part of the charismatic Pentecostal renewal have suggested that if you don't speak in tongues, you are not saved. That is rather offensive. Some have said that if you don't speak in tongues, God doesn't love you as much as He loves me. It obviously puts people off, and they think you're saying that you're holier than they are or you're more beloved of God than they are. Of course, nothing can be further from the truth."

Storms was raised in a Southern Baptist home, but he says no one ever talked about spiritual gifts and the mindset was one of cessationism, where the spiritual gifts weren't valid in today's church.

"Speaking in tongues, and others, are gifts of grace," Storms says. "They are not badges of merit. They aren't rewards for good works. They are the freely given blessings of God to His children because He loves them. This gift has been such a

blessing in my life. It has enhanced my prayer life, and it has brought me closer to the Lord in terms of intimacy."