

By this time Dennis was smiling: "That's your tongue!" he said.

The little lady was startled: "Oh no," she said, shaking her head firmly, "that's just a play language!"

After several more minutes of discussion, Dennis said to her: "Would you be willing to speak this little "play language" as you call it, to God? Talk to God in it?"

It took a little more persuasion, but finally she bowed her head and began to talk quietly in a beautiful language. In not more than thirty seconds, she was in joyful tears: "That's it! That's it!" she said.

A young couple from England who were touring the United States stopped at St. Luke's some seven years ago. They were curious to find out more about the baptism in the Holy Spirit. As they talked, we tried to explain to them what speaking in tongues meant. A half-amused, half-puzzled smile came on the face of the young man:

"Could this be something I've been doing in my prayers ever since I was three years old?" he asked. His wife also smiled: "Me, too!" she said. Unknown to one another, they had both been speaking in tongues from time to time in their prayers ever since they were very young children.

The Psalmist said, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it!" (Ps. 81:10) and, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord!" (Ps. 81:1).

A joyful noise may not yet be speaking in tongues, but even this is pleasing to the Lord. It won't be long before it will be your Holy Spirit language, as God will honor your simple faith.

Several things may happen at this point: you may not succeed in beginning to speak, due to self-consciousness and inhibition. That's all right -- you haven't "flunked" the test! You simply have to keep on until you do decide to make that first sound. It is like the parachutist jumping out of the airplane for the first time. If he wants to be a parachute jumper, he's got to jump! There's no other way! Don't back off at this point as some do, and say:

"I guess God doesn't want me to have it!" It's you who are holding back!

You may begin to speak, but only get out a few halting sounds. That's wonderful! You've broken the "sound barrier"! Keep on with those sounds. Offer them to God. Tell Jesus you love Him in those "joyful noises"! As you do, they will develop and grow into a fully developed language. It may take days, or even weeks -- not because of God, but again, because of you. In a very real sense, any sound you make, offering your tongue to God in simple faith, may be the beginning of speaking in tongues. We have seen lives visibly changed by the release of the Spirit brought through one sound -- one little syllable! If you have ever uttered one such sound while trusting God the Holy Spirit to guide