

The Gift of Tongues

by Gary Kukis

Revised and updated November 13, 2006¹

This doctrine is going to be quite lengthy, covering several passages of Scripture in great detail.² Since this study is so lengthy, you may get the high lights by going directly to the **summary**. Also below, you will find quick links to the relevant passages of Scripture as well as other sub-topics covered:

Primary Topics

Preface	Acknowledgments	Introductory Points	Historical Perspective of Signs and Miracles
The Charismatic <i>Big God</i>			
Apostleship	History of Tongues and the Charismatic Movement	Why was There no Pentecostal Movement Until the 1900's?	Descriptions of Charismatic Meetings
How Pentecostals See Themselves	The Pentecostal Articles of Faith	Arguments in Favor of Speaking in Tongues	
Advantages Claimed by Charismatics	Problems with the Charismatic Movement	Museum of the Weird	Distortions of the Charismatic Movement
Exegetical Approach to the Gift of Tongues	Our Lord Outlines the Book of Acts	The Sign Gifts	The Baptism of the Holy Spirit
God's Word and Experience (Read This!)	The Dying out of the Gifts of Prophecy, Knowledge and Tongues	The Witness of the Church Fathers	The Gift of Healing
	Regulations Versus Reality	Over 20 Reasons Why Tongues Have Ceased	Why Do I Feel I am Lacking as a Christian?
What Tongues Are and What Tongues Aren't	Separation from Charismatics	Problems with the Charismatic Experience	Summary

Exegeted Scriptures

John 20:22–23	Acts 2:1	Acts 2:2–23	Acts 2:32ff
Hebrews 2:2–4	Acts 6–8	Acts 10:44–46a	Acts 11:13–17
Acts 19	1Cor. 12:1–2, 4–11	Matthew 3:11–12	1Corinthians 12:12–13
1Corinthians 12:27–31	1Corinthians 13:1–3	1Corinthians 13:8–10	1Corinthians 13:11–13
1Corinthians 14:1–21	Isaiah 28:9–12	1Corinthians 14:22–28	Matthew 6:7
1Corinthians 14:34ff	Romans 8:26–27	Isaiah 8:19	2Peter 1:17–21

Charts

¹ I have finally been able to add the comments and information from John Sherrill's book, *They Speak with Other Tongues*, which is a classic in the realm of charismatic literature. I also have included the comments of a friend of mine who is charismatic.

² In all actuality, I will be covering these passages in much less detail than I would if I were exegeting the books themselves.

<p>Time Line of Signs, Miracles and Wonders</p> <p>Is the Gift of Knowledge a Separate Gift?</p>	<p>God’s Fourfold Purpose of Miracles³</p> <p>The Greek and the Passing Away of Gifts⁴</p>	<p>Basic Rules to Follow for Studying God’s Word</p> <p>What Does Téleios Really Mean?</p>	<p>The Feast Days</p> <p>Tongues in the Bible Versus Today’s Tongues</p>
--	--	--	--

<p>Listen, members of the family of God: I do not want you to be ignorant concerning the spiritual gifts (1Cor. 12:1).</p>
<p>And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words (Matt. 6:7)</p>
<p>Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good (1Thess. 5:21)</p>
<p>I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him Who called you in the sphere of the grace of Christ, for a different gospel, which is really not another [of the same kind]. Only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should proclaim to you a gospel which oversteps the boundaries of that which we have proclaimed to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is proclaiming to you a gospel which oversteps the boundaries of that which you have received, let him be accursed (Gal. 1:6–9).</p>
<p>But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times, some will fall way from the faith, listening instead to deceitful spirits and to the doctrines of demons (1Tim. 4:1)</p>
<p>“Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?” (Mark 12:24).</p>
<p>And when they say to you, “Consult with mediums and the spiritists who whisper and mutter,” should not a people consult their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living? To the Law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this Word, it is because they have no light (Isa. 8:19–20).</p>
<p>Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but analyze the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world (1John 1:4).</p>
<p>For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work, only He Who now restrains until He is taken out of the way, and then the lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming. [This lawless one is] the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan with all power and signs and false wonders and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth in order that they might be delivered. And for this reason, God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe the lie, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure [instead] in unrighteousness (2Thess. 2:7–12).</p>
<p>And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore, it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works (2Cor. 11:14–15).</p>
<p>“Not every one who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father Who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.” (Matt. 21–23).</p>

Preface: I became interested in the gift of tongues early on in my Christian life. When I became a believer, my two younger brothers were charismatics, my best friend was a charismatic and my wife’s best friend was

³ Taken from Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 138.

⁴ Modified from Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 113.

a charismatic. At the time of my salvation, I was reading everything Christian and quasi-Christian that I could get my hands on. I read Jehovah Witnesses' literature, Children of God literature (a *Christian* cult back in the seventies), and just about every inexpensive pamphlet and booklet that I could find. Before I made any theological decisions, I did a lot of reading, pro and con. I learned early on as a believer that the final authority was the Word of God. This did not negate the other reading which I did. I just had to be careful to weigh the various arguments from Scripture. I also learned early on that the context of a verse, both literary and historical, as well as the correct understanding of the original languages, was the only way to evaluate *proof* texts. Let me give you a completely unrelated example of this. As you know, there are some Christian (and I use this term as the world uses it) cults that observe the Sabbath—that is, they believe that the Sabbath is Saturday (which is correct) and that all believers (or cult members) ought to observe the Sabbath as their holy day. And I recall seeing an extremely persuasive speaker, Gardner Ted Armstrong—one of the most dynamic and convincing of the cult leaders—tell me to just open up my own Bible and read it with my own eyes: Hebrews 4:9: **There remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.** This, along with his other arguments, appeared to be pretty darned convincing to me, a relatively new believer. I later found out that there are several passages in the book of Hebrews that, if read outside their context, or apart from careful exegesis, that they meant something entirely different than what the writer of Hebrews was saying. The passage I used in my illustration does not mean that believers ought to observe the Sabbath as a special day of rest and worship, but to young believers, that's what it appears to mean. So, we will, therefore, stop periodically in this doctrine, and look at some extended passages of Scripture in context and exegete them properly.

Keeping that in mind, do not expect this study to be like most of the tripe that you have been fed in church or on the web. I am not going to give you my point of view, quote a few Scriptures, and let it go at that. This study will take some time. God's Word takes time. It is not instantaneous. Don't think that you will begin reading this examination today and finish it in the next five minutes. Probably not the next five hours. Some of what you will read here, you have read before. However, there are a number of things covered here which you have never heard before. There is at least one passage that you have never heard correctly exegeted, and, as I examined it, I was amazed that no one has ever gotten it correct before (at least, not to my knowledge; and I include Thieme and McGee, two of the greatest Bible teachers of the 20th century, in those who didn't quite get it right). But this study will require your time. You must either choose to properly examine this gift, examining all the pertinent Scripture in context, from the standpoint of the original languages, lines upon line, precept upon precept; or you can allow what you have experienced to determine for you what is truth. It's up to you. Salvation was instantaneous, although there may have been a long road getting you to that point. Spiritual growth is not instantaneous. Do not think that you progress from a spiritual baby to a spiritual adult in a year or two. And don't ever think that your growing process comes to a halt. Therefore, anything of a controversial nature will require time to examine it. What I will guarantee you that, once we get through the history, the background, the pertinent portions of the book of Acts, and finally start with 1Corinthians, you will begin to see every hole plugged up, every single controversial stand clearly explained, and based upon exegeted Scripture. You must examine the background, which is why it is there. However, once we get into Paul's writings, and we begin to tear some verses apart, word by word, examining the morphology and the context, you will find that there is no room for *well, you see it this way, and I see it that way*. There are some topics where there is only one clear view, and this is one of them. Prior to reading this, due to your sloppy spiritual upbringing, you may have a dozen different wrong ideas about the gift of tongues. If you stay with this study, then when you are finished, then the only way you will have any wrong ideas about the gift of tongues is you will consciously choose your experience over Scripture.

If I was allowed to approach this topic from my predisposition, then my personal preference here is to be able to say that I, a noncharismatic, should learn to co-exist and to work cooperatively with charismatics, accepting that most of them have the gift of tongues and that I do not. I don't look up to them or down on them because they have a gift which I do not. I may or may not like everything which occurs inside their church, and they may or may not like everything which occurs inside my church, but those are non-issues. I would love to completely agree with David Shibley, the author of *A Charismatic Truce*, and say that my church could use a little more life and spontaneity, whereas the charismatic churches which I have attended could stand to focus more often on Bible teaching—however, we are all one in the body of Christ and family of God for eternity, and we should work together, capitalizing on each other's strengths. You see, I have many friends who are charismatics. I don't say that to sound condescending—it is the truth. However, I must take my theological stand with the Bible; and this issue is far more than just a slight, doctrinal difference. Tongues are either a part of today's church or they are not; an

additional experience with the Holy Spirit is either a part of today's church or it is not. These are not two minor theological issues on which we can simply disagree, yet still enjoy Christian fellowship with one another. The basis of our salvation, our spirituality and fellowship are all called into question, depending upon where we stand with regards to speaking in tongues.

For you, there are two things that you need to check before you go any further: are you a believer in Christ Jesus? Have you placed your complete trust in Him so that your eternity is taken care of? If you have not done that, then you need to read what I have written on salvation first; or, you need to simply place your faith in Jesus Christ, Who paid for your sins, shortcomings, and mistakes on the cross. There is one Person Who stands between you and eternal fellowship with God, and that is Christ Jesus; you must go through Him in order to have a relationship with God the Father. Now, why anyone would read this (or begin to read this) apart from being a believer is beyond me.

If you are a believer, then you need to approach this study while in fellowship with God. This can be accomplished simply and quickly. You quietly, in your mind, name your sins to God. He will then forgive you those sins and cleanse you from all unrighteousness (1John 1:9). That way you will walk in the light as opposed to walking in darkness.

Now, after awhile, you are going to wonder what ax I have to grind here—you might be a charismatic and more than willing to tolerate me as a fellow heir to the kingdom; so, why don't I tolerate you? In fact, why do I not embrace your Christian fellowship? Have I had bad experiences with charismatics? Well, two, that I can think of immediately; but I have had more bad experiences with non-charismatic Christians (simply because there are more non-charismatic Christians out there). I've known a huge number of charismatics, some that I like a great deal and respect for some of their personal qualities; and others which I don't like so much—just like anyone else. There are even several charismatics who are friends of mine that I would almost rather they didn't read this because I don't want them to be upset with me. The problem is drawing a line between that which is true and that which is false. Paul had to sweat Peter's shadow into the wall when Peter was wrong (Gal. 2:11). So, no matter what, we must take a stand for the truth and a stand against error.

Not only will I make it abundantly clear, from Scripture, what is true and what is false; I will also tell you why I would not tolerate a charismatic practicing speaking in tongues in my own church (if I had one). Similarly, I know many Catholics, some that I like and some I don't. The Catholic church has some saved people and some unsaved people. But their essential doctrine, at the core, is false. Therefore, I cannot condone what they teach. On the other hand, the essential doctrines of many Baptist, Presbyterian, or Lutheran churches is fundamentally the same and I therefore don't have any real problems with those denominations. So, I have no personal ax to grind here; there are not a few charismatics out there who totally pissed me off and now I'm going to write some scathing criticism of what they believe. Furthermore, I am not jealous of what charismatics have or do, nor am I opposed to enthusiasm or excitement in worship services. I tend to be laid back, but I have attended churches where the congregation was much more vocal than I was and I have no problem with that. The problem is that the core and the thrust of their beliefs are anti-Biblical, and I therefore oppose their teachings for that reason.

I will spend a great deal of time on this topic—for most of you, much more time than you think is warranted. I will eventually begin exegeting verses of Scripture and spending much more time on them than you might think is warranted (it is actually less time than I would if I were specifically exegeting the passage). If you are a charismatic, you may think I just need to be slain; I simply need to get the baptism, and that would end all discussion. Not so—when it comes to the truth, sometimes it requires a great deal of time and effort. You won't be able to sit back and read this in one or two sessions on the web. There is nothing more important than God's Word, and it deserves the time and effort required in order to examine it. Because so many cults and charismatic groups have taken various Scriptures and have quoted them out of context, intending them to mean one thing when they mean something totally other—it will take time to carefully examine these Scriptures and to put them in their proper context and give them their proper interpretation.

You're going to get several pages into this treatise and either think that I haven't even begun to convince you, or, wonder when am I going to actually start talking about tongues. I plan to take my time with this doctrine and cover it thoroughly. What you will notice, however, is that, unlike other approaches to this subject, I will not be quoting

from too many charismatic spokespersons. Although arguing against something because it is mis-used or misapplied has some merit, that is really not a sufficient argument against anything. I will mention some of the things spoken by charismatics and relate some of the stories of what occurs in these meetings often because I feel, you just have to hear this. However, in dealing with their doctrinal misinformation, that will be handled by God's Word.

I am also going to make several assumptions here: first, I will assume that if you read over two or three pages of this, you are probably a believer in Jesus Christ. Although I will spend some time with the gospel, this information in this document is applicable only to believers and will have little meaning for the unbeliever. Secondly, I believe that the final word of authority is God's Word, the Bible. I believe that the Bible is God's complete and inerrant Word. Finally, as I will refer to him now and again, I do believe in a literal Satan. I paraphrase from the film, *The Usual Suspects*: "The greatest feat of Satan today is to convince people that he does not exist."

A reasonable question is: *Do I think that I might convince some of you who speak in tongues that you are wrong?* Actually, in all honesty, no, I doubt that any person who speaks in tongues will change his mind after reading this. For those who read this, I suspect that most won't get very far or give this a careful read (people who speak in tongues generally have a limited interest in Scripture). And I have spoken to many people who are charismatics without ever having one leave the charismatic movement. One person even told me that it didn't matter what I showed her in Scripture, because she *knows* what is real because she experienced it for herself. In fact, I would think that it is safe to say that the charismatics gain many more *converts* from the non-charismatic body of believers than we ever get back. John exhorted us to *test the spirits* in 1John 1:4. Obviously, this would not be based upon whether they just feel right or whether they are really good, persuasive teachers, but testing the spirits depends upon their doctrine. John provides us a rule of thumb: if they confess that Jesus is from God, they are from God; and if they do not, then they operate in the spirit of the antichrist. Now, please understand that this is a basic test, which, at the time that John wrote, was sufficient. However, Satan has become more sophisticated since then. Whereas, in the first century, Satan eschewed all that had to do with Christ, he has since become a part of mainstream Christianity, attacking us more often from within than from without. Catholics, charismatics, Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, and the old Armstrong cult all confess that Jesus is come in the flesh and that He is from God. When a believer gives the gospel correctly, in that way, he is of the Spirit of God. However, some believers, influenced by the spirit of Satan, seek to derail you after salvation. Always bear in mind that Satan comes as an angel of light (2Cor. 11:14), and is able to confuse the very elect, if possible (Matt. 24:24). And always bear in mind that he can work signs and lying wonders (Matt. 24:24 2Thess. 2:9).

So, I don't expect to change the mind of many charismatics. The experiences which they tout as spiritual act upon them the same way drugs act upon a drug addict. Some drugs, such as marijuana, may begin subtly, and not appear to cause to many changes in the user. However, the user requires it more and more and cannot give it up. A second common affect of a drug upon the drug addict is that, when first used, the drug causes an intense euphoria that, several weeks or months later, cannot be fully recaptured. The addict continues to take the drug in pursuit of these early intensively-pleasant experiences. He never quite hits those early high marks of euphoria, but is still spurred on to continue with the taking of the drug, even though the experience becomes less intense and less euphoric. In fact, at some point, for some addicts, the drug is taken just *to get even* or *just to feel even*. The charismatic is the same way. Let me give you the quote of a friend of mine who will go unnamed about his or her spiritual experience:⁵ *So anyway, I went home that night and prayed all by myself in my bedroom. I told God that I wasn't sure what this experience was, and I was a little scared, but I wanted to receive everything He had for me. Right after that I had an experience that convinced me God was actually touching me and letting me know how much He loved me. I felt the sensation of hot oil being poured over my head and felt that I was loved, totally loved, beyond anything I had ever experienced. I also started speaking in tongues. It's not that I was TAKEN OVER or anything strange like that. I could start and stop as I wished. It's just as if I suddenly could speak a new language,*

⁵ This was from an e-mail which I received on October 10, 2000. If he or she reads this, recognizes it, and wants to be credited, I certainly will. This particular person is a very logical and intelligent, and, when we have discussed this subject, very persuasive—in fact, much more so than most of the charismatic literature that I have read. I don't say any of this to be patronizing, by the way. Also, apart from letting me know his or her theological persuasion, I would have had no idea that they were charismatic.

even though I didn't know what the words meant. But I did know that it was sort of like a love language between me and God and I was telling Him how much I loved Him. **I never again felt anything like that first experience,**⁶ although I sometimes feel a milder sensation, almost like a breeze blowing over me when I'm singing in worship, or praying. (I pray mostly in English, of course!) I had never heard of any experience like that, although since then I've heard a few people describe similar sensations. It seems like it's different for each person. What I do know is that it has been an entirely benign experience. It strengthened me somehow, but I can't tell you the logic of why it would. The charismatic needs to have this charge, this experience, this boost in what he believes to be his spiritual life. Periodically, he must get the drug. It won't do for him what it did at first, but it provides a boost or a jolt or, who knows, maybe it just gets him onto an even kilter. Just as I have been unable to convince an addict to give up his drugs, I don't expect to convince charismatics to give up their experiences and this seemingly necessary jolt to their spiritual lives. What I do hope is that those of you who are on the fence, who are uncertain which way to go, that this will provide you with an over-abundance of reasons to pursue God and His Word as opposed to some false, quasi-spiritual experience.

Now, I will quote some charismatics occasionally, and you may think to yourself (if you are a charismatic), *that isn't what I believe*. I may list some common doctrines shared by those in the charismatic movement, and you may think, *that isn't what my church teachers*. I fully understand. While there are a lot of similarities in charismatic groups, they certainly have their differences. Most charismatics believe that they can lose their salvation; many are moving toward that *oneness of God* doctrine, which is actually a relatively recent doctrine in charismatic thought; and many believe that most people can and should have an *experience* with the Holy Spirit after salvation which usually results in the speaking of tongues. Obviously, there will be a few who would disagree with some of those points. All charismatics, of course, believe that they have had an additional experience with the Holy Spirit that I have not had; and all believe that the various sign gifts of the Apostles can still be found today.

The experience of tongues is a result of very, very sloppy exegesis—in particular, the exegesis of 1Cor. 13:1–3. I have **never** once heard or read, even in the church I attended, this passage properly exegeted. In all of the reading I have done, I have seen, at best, a half-assed exegesis of 1Cor. 13—obviously, Paul's point is that love is more important and enduring than the gifts of tongues, prophecy and knowledge. However, that really is not exactly the point (most, but not all, exegetes miss that) and I have never once seen anyone correctly explain Paul's reasoning, which belies great Greek debater's technique that is apparently lost on most believers.⁷ In this treatise on tongues, you will see the passage more or less properly exegeted (I normally would go into more detail concerning that passage here; however, this study primarily deals with the gift of tongues). However, I want you to know right up front, right here in the preface of this examination, that the **only** Scriptural support for speaking in tongues to be some unknown, holy angelic language is in this passage. Personally, I would feel on shaky ground if one of the most fundamental elements of my faith—praying, speaking, singing or telling jokes in a holy angelic language—in a language unknown to man—depended upon one and only one passage of Scripture.

I have read quite a number of books on the tongues movement and I have spent innumerable hours studying it and far too many hours discussing it with charismatics whom I know. The primary difference between what I will do here and the works which I have read, is that much of my emphasis will be upon the classic passages taken to support tongues. These passages will be carefully exegeted with regards to their historic, linguistic and literary context. I will **not** state a controversial point, cite two Scriptural passages, and then move on. That is the lamest, most sorry way to ever deal with any difficult doctrine of Scripture. In all cases, I will exegete the passages in question phrase by phrase, and sometimes word by word. I guarantee you that there will be a great deal in this book which you have never heard about or thought about before. I just need to warn you that it will take awhile before we get to the proper exegesis of the passages at hand, and, that when we get there, they will be painstakingly examined.

⁶ Emphasis mine.

⁷ However, near the end of my study, I came across MacArthur's short exegetical study on 1Cor. 13:1, and it was awfully close to being exactly correct—John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 226.

Furthermore, in this study I will correctly explain, from Scripture, what the gift of tongues was about and what it was not. I will also tell you what the so-called gift of tongues is today.

One final note: When I began this study, I attempted to remain focused upon the gift of tongues. However, it is impossible to approach the gift of tongues in a vacuum. Contained herein is one of the better historical surveys of tongues throughout the Church Age, which required me to deal directly with the Pentecostal/charismatic movement; the post-salvation, baptism of the spirit experience; and the gift of healing. In other words, I strayed now and again from the intended topic, the gift of tongues. Herein is likely the most thorough approach to the gift of tongues that you will ever read. With regards to the other related topics, this study is adequate, but not nearly as detailed. However, in today's day and time, when *fantastic encounters with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are reported as commonplace. Personal messages from God are supposedly routine. Healings of all kinds are claimed. It is not unusual to hear striking testimonies about how God, in response to faith, has corrected spinal injuries, lengthened legs, and removed cancerous tissue...some of the miracles seem almost bizarre: one-dollar bills turn into twenties, washing machines and other appliances are "healed," empty fuel tanks fill up supernaturally, and demons are exorcized from vending machines.*⁸ When dealing with the issue of tongues, the personal experiences demand that we take a few side trips.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

Acknowledgments: Although there were be certain thoughts and approaches in this book which, insofar as I know, are original with me, including a more careful exegesis of the pertinent Scriptures than I have found in any of the writings on this topic, the major portion of this examination is not original, and I have included material and relatively long quotations from those of both sides of the theological fence. I do not see this work as simply mine, but more as a compilation of information from several dozen different authors who wrote on the topic of tongues.

For the definitions of the Greek words, although I occasionally used Baur, Arndt and Gingrich's *A Greek-English Lexicon*; the University of Chicago Press; ©1957; as well as Balz and Schneider's *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*; Eerdmans Publishing Company; ©1978–1980; I depended first and foremost upon Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament*; AMG Publishers; ©1992. I often quoted or paraphrased his definitions without giving him credit; however, his work in the Greek was invaluable to me. Furthermore, invaluable to this study was *The NKJV Greek English Interlinear New Testament*; Thomas Nelson Publishers; ©1994. I owe a tremendous debt to R.B. Thieme Jr. for guiding me though my spiritual childhood, as well as the excellent teaching of J. Vernon McGee. In fact, Thieme probably had the greatest influence over my spiritual growth, and I will probably quote from him the least, as God's Word, as taught from his pulpit, was inculcated into my soul. After getting about 80 or so pages into this study, I re-discovered Donald Burdick's outstanding book *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*. At about 170 pages, I reread John MacArthur's tremendous book, *Charismatic Chaos*. Let me tell you, I was tempted to quote almost every page of these two authors verbatim (I must admit that I quote from MacArthur and Burdick extensively). For those whose appetite is whetted by this study, theirs would be the first books which I would suggest locating and reading. One of the last books that I read was Joseph Dillow's *Speaking in Tongues*. By that point, I was pretty worn out and thought that I had examined the charismatic movement from every standpoint. However, his book added a great deal of information and you will see that I quoted liberally from him as well. In fact, at the end of his book, he had perhaps one of the most important set of chapters of any of these books stating what I scattered throughout these pages: he lists all of the reasons that the gift of tongues ceased in the first century. I have listed these reasons throughout this examination, and never thought to organize them into one section until I read Dillow's book again.

You will also note that there are areas where I quoted extensively from John Nichol's *The Pentecostals*. He presents a very well-researched, fair and even-handed history of the modern Pentecostal movement (he is a Pentecostal himself). Along with these principal reference works, I used approximately another 30 or so books and pamphlets in putting this little study together, along with another 30 or so Bible reference books (various translations

⁸ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 18.

and language helps). Few believers have any clue as to how many shoulders it is that they stand upon in order to grow. Barnard Ramm wrote: *It is often asserted by devout people that they can know the Bible completely without helps. They preface their interpretations with a remark like this: "Dear friends, I have read no man's book. I have consulted no man-made commentaries. I have gone right to the Bible to see what it had to say for itself."*⁹ I am just the opposite. I wrote about 50 or 60 pages of this on pure steam, consulting only various Bibles and language textbooks; however, the bulk of this material came directly from other sources. I fully recognize that without the thousands of theological shoulders upon which I stand, that I would have very little more to offer.

Obviously in this study, I examined both charismatic and anti-charismatic literature. In general, the former quoted very little Scripture and when they quoted Scripture, it was often taken out of context. The books which were anti-charismatic¹⁰ concentrated on two things: they took the Scripture often quoted by charismatics and looked at it from its historical context as well as from the standpoint of the original languages; and they often examined where the charismatic movement has gone experientially. One might object to the latter approach; however, the validation most often given for the charismatic experience is the charismatic experience. Therefore, examining real and alleged experiences which have been recorded is legitimate in the examination of the charismatic movement.

Let me add something: do not think that after *hours* of study and after being a Christian for two or three years that you know what's what. And don't think that you can study carefully a topic such as this in a few hours. This particular book took me nearly three months to write, writing 2–4 hours each and every day. And as I wrote, I learned a great deal from the sources that I used. If you actually want to know about this topic, keep in mind it took me about 300 hours to compile this material. I am thinking that it might take you over an hour or so to peruse it.

I mentioned J. Vernon McGee; he prefaces his second book on the gift of tongues with: *We recognize that the subject of this message is controversial, and we appreciate the fact that many good and sincere people disagree with us. Our thought is not to continue to controversy, but to present the Scriptural teaching on the subject of tongues. It is being given a prominence today that it never had in the apostolic church. Only one epistle discusses it, and that is to control and discourage the practice of it. If the Corinthians had not gone to excess in this practice, would there be anything in the epistles on the subject?*¹¹

<Return to Page One>

1. One of the most devastating influxes into Christianity over the past century has been the second-blessing crowd, those who speak with the so-called tongues of angels, those who manifest the so-called charismatic gifts. In general, they are known as charismatics, which comes from the Greek word *charisma* (χάρισμα) [pronounced *KHAHR-ees-mah*], which means *gift*, and it is found primarily in the book of Romans and 1 and 2 Corinthians. Strong's #5486. When I use the term *charismatic*, I will be referring to a group of people who believe that the gift of tongues is for today and, in most cases, they have that gift. These charismatics tend to emphasize the need for the *second-blessing* as well as a manifestation of same, which is usually the speaking in an unknown tongue, thought to be *tongues of Angels*. As of recent, some of the fringe and not so fringe elements have incorporating *slaying in the Spirit* into their repertoire.
2. Throughout this study, I will tend to use the terms *charismatic* and *Pentecostal* almost interchangeably, even though they are not. *Pentecostal*, properly, refers to several denominations—however, some who belong to denominations without the word *Pentecostal* in it refer to themselves as *Pentecostal*. There is even a group or movement calling themselves the *Third Wave*, who specifically do not want to be called *Pentecostal* or *charismatic*; however, the distinction appears to be little more than semantic. You would know that someone from California would call something the *Third Wave*, as in surf mythology, waves always come in three's, the third way being the strongest and the highest wave. C. Peter Wagner, a professor of church growth at Fuller Theological Seminary School of World Mission, and a leader in the *Third Wave*, coined the term (it has

⁹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 89; taken from Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*; Grand Rapids, MI; Barker Books, 1970, p. 17.

¹⁰ And I do not mean *against charismatics* themselves, but opposed to the direction and tenor of the charismatic movement.

¹¹ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part II*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 1.

- been used before for other things). He identifies the Pentecostal movement of the early 1900's as the first wave; the charismatic movement of the 1960's as the second (when charismatics began cropping up in mainline denominations), and this *Third Wave* began in the 1980's.¹² This is not a term which I have heard very often and will probably deal little with them specifically. Their doctrinal emphasis upon a post-salvation experience with the Holy Spirit, a belief in the contemporary gift of tongues and other sign gifts of the Spirit, places them in the same grouping as Pentecostals and charismatics. Although, the thrust of this study is the **Doctrine of Tongues**; one cannot fully separate this gift from the baptism of the Holy Spirit or from the gift of healing or from other gifts which supposedly accompany the post-salvation experience of the Holy Spirit.
3. I've been told by various charismatics that I would just have to experience it before I should make a judgment.¹³ Charismatics of note have made the same sort of statements: Baptist charismatic, Howard Ervin wrote: *The attempt to interpret the Charismatic manifestations of the Holy Spirit without a Charismatic experience is as fatuous as the application of the "Christian ethic" apart from a regenerate dynamic...Understanding of spiritual truth is predicated on spiritual experience. The Holy Spirit does not reveal spiritual secrets to the uncommitted, and quite frankly, the Pentecostal experience is one of total commitment.*¹⁴ J. Rodman Williams: *Against the background of sharing in the Holy Spirit and the consequent gifts of the Holy Spirit, information, instruction, and teaching concerning them becomes relevant. A fundamental thesis may here be set forth: Any vital information concerning the gifts of the Spirit, the pneumatic charismata, presupposes a participation in them. Without such a participation, whatever is said about the gifts may only result in confusion and error.*¹⁵ I've also been told by others that no matter what they read, they cannot deny what they know to be true inside their own souls. **Now, I want you to know that if every experience in your life and the lives of every person you know tells you that X is true, and the Bible tells you that X is false, then X is false.** It is as simple as that. Now, if you are a charismatic and you do not believe that, then we have no basis whatsoever for argument. And why you would even bother to read one more paragraph into this book, I do not know. You really ought to go back to your little experiences, because I am going to cover this from the Biblical standpoint. When we get to the verses in the Bible which charismatics stand upon, we will evaluate those verses bit by bit, word by word, so that there is no confusion as to what they mean.
 4. That previous point being made, I have since come to find that there are several Bibles which lean toward the charismatic point of view—James Moffatt's translation (more or less) along with the NAB, NEB, NJB, NRSV, REB, and the TEV (the Good News Bible). One of the key passages is 1Sam. 10:10. In the Hebrew, Saul simply prophesies with the four prophets that he meets. All of these translations have him going into this state of ecstasy (which is not found in the Hebrew or the Greek). Some mistranslations are more pronounced than others. The NRSV, which I had thought was a reasonably literal translation, says that Saul *fell into a prophetic frenzy*. If we were to accept that, then every time that Jeremiah or Isaiah went to prophesy before kings, they would therefore fall into a prophetic frenzy before these kings. In the TEV, Saul does not prophesy, but he joins in *their ecstatic dancing and shouting*. When a charismatic reads a translation like this, looks at the behavior of those in his church who also fall into these ecstatic states, how is he going to think any different?
 5. John urges us: **Do not believe every spirit, but analyze the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world** (1John 4:1). Now, how do we analyze the spirits? Do we have a really good feeling about them? Do they change and impact our lives, and therefore they are from God? Do they makes us feel really holy and spiritual? We analyze the spirits based upon the Word of God. Frederick Dale Bruner: *The test of anything calling itself Christian is not its significance or its success or its power, though these make the test more imperative. The test is truth.*¹⁶ In the next 250+ pages, we will cover each and every Scripture which deals with the so-called gift of tongues, and we will also spend a great deal of time examining a post-salvation experience with the Spirit of God. In this study, regardless of what side of

¹² See Peter Wagner, *The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit*; Ann Arbor, MI; Vine, 1988, p. 13. I've actually only heard of them through John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 128ff.

¹³ People who take drugs have made the same argument to me.

¹⁴ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 18, taken from Howard M. Ervin, *These Are Not Drunken, As Ye Suppose*; Plainfield, NJ; Logos, 1968, pp. 3–4..

¹⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 19, taken from J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology*; Grand Rapids, MI; Zondervan, 1990, p. 326.

¹⁶ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 19, taken from Frederick Dale Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit*; Grand Rapids, MI; Eerdmans, 1970, p. 33..

- the fence you are on, you will be exposed to things that you have never heard before and have never thought of before.
6. Thirdly, when it comes to interpretation of Scripture, you must be absolutely careful when it comes to taking a meaning based upon inference. That is, there are a few incidents in the book of Acts which suggest one thing to some people and suggests another to others. It is obvious that when the actions of a person are looked at, or the history of something is examined, that two people can take it to mean different things, or for these incidents to have different inferences. I will grant that. However, you never ever base an important doctrine upon inference—**NEVER!** Furthermore, if you have taken the inference of one passage to mean one thing, but the direct, incontrovertible Word of God contradicts this later, by doctrine, then you must accept the Word of God and drop the inferred meaning which you got from that other passage. You can go to the book of Acts and tell me what this incident means to you—however, if Paul directly states something which contradicts your inference, then Paul is right and your inference, no matter how well thought out, is wrong. When Paul states a doctrine which you do not care for, he is right, and you, no matter how nice a person you are, are wrong.
 7. Frank Stagg, in introducing his portion of the book *Glossolalia*, writes: “*Speaking in tongues*” is the popular phrase for what scholars term *glossolalia*. This phenomenon, appearing from time to time in the Christian world, is unmistakably reflected in the New Testament. To some it is a sign of church renewal and is to be cultivated. To others it offers only dubious rewards to some individuals, cell groups, and sectarians but leaves disillusionment and disunity in its wake. To some it is the gift of the Holy Spirit, offering a new dimension in Christian fulfillment. To others it is an egocentric escape from the heavier demands of the Christian calling and is more damaging than helpful to the body of Christ and to its witness and work in the world. Some point to the “good” it does; others point to the “harm” it does.¹⁷
 8. Vocabulary is extremely important, and it is upon vocabulary that doctrines are built. I have recently been to web sites where they first falsely defined *baptism* and *repentance*, and then built their theology upon those incorrectly defined terms. One great difference between the Protestant and Catholic church is the difference between their respective definitions of the simple word *grace*.¹⁸ Even the *tenor* of a definition can be misleading. Conrad Murrell, almost at the beginning of his book, *To Profit Withal*, defines a *spiritual gift* as the *ability to do something that cannot be accounted for in the realm of the flesh...Its success is not enhanced by training, practice or any skill developed through human resources*.¹⁹ Now, whereas Murrell is not completely wrong in this definition, it lends itself to the wrong idea that a gift just is and anyone who has it can immediately use it. The gift of pastor-teacher, for instance, requires many years of study and preparation. Obviously, this must be done while filled with the Spirit of God, learning through the grace of God (which are not human resources); but the person who thinks he ought to preach should never go from that thought directly into a pulpit.
 9. We have three basic positions concerning the sign gifts found in the book of Acts:
 - a. These gifts have always been with the church (apparently some Catholics hold to this).
 - b. These sign gifts died out due to man’s unbelief, but have, in the past century or so, have been revived through the faith and perseverance of the Pentecostal movement. These gifts are the *latter rain* of God’s plan. A study of church history would bear out that these did disappear for about 18 centuries.
 - c. These sign gifts had specific purposes: (1) to verify the authority of those who had them (Matt. 11:1–6 Isa. 35:5–6 61:1 Rom. 15:18–19 2Cor. 12:11 Heb. 2:3–4); and, (2) to speak to the nation Israel (Isa. 28:11–12 Acts 2:1–12 1Cor. 14:21–22). When God set Israel aside for a time, when the authority of the Apostles was clearly established, and when the completed canon of Scripture came into being, then these gifts were no longer necessary, and God withdrew them (1Cor. 13:8–10 1Tim. 5:23 2Tim. 4:15).

¹⁷ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, pp. 20–21.

¹⁸ Those who have any background here, which is a very small crowd, understand that the original Protestants believe in *imputed grace* whereas the Catholics believe in *infused grace*. This is off the subject, but, so that you know the difference, a believer saved by grace in the Catholic sense will *manifest* this grace in their own lives—in other words, they will act like Christians *should* act.

¹⁹ Conrad Murrell, *To Profit Withal*; ©1969, p. 12.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

10. An historical perspective on signs and miracles is sometimes helpful to clear the air. Most people think of the Bible as being filled with miracles and wonders and healings, when in fact, in the Old Testament, there are perhaps a half dozen men who performed signs or miracles; and the relative amount of time in history during which these occurred is absolutely minuscule.
- a. We think of the mighty miracles of Moses when in Egypt; however, most of these occurred during perhaps a two month time period. For well over four hundred years prior to this time, there were no miracles or signs—in fact, there appears to be no direct contact with God. For the first forty years of the life of Moses, there was very little by way of signs or miracles. Here is probably the greatest spiritual leader of the Old Testament and in forty years, he sees a burning bush and luckily escapes two life or death situations in Egypt. Don't misunderstand me—I am not minimizing the burning bush, thereby his direct contact with God—however, I am putting that into perspective that over 400 years in Israel's history had passed, as well as forty years of Moses' life, and nada by way of signs and miracles. For a brief period of time, when God was to take Israel out of Egypt, there were a handful of signs and wonders. When Moses and the sons of Israel walked the desert, there were a few miracles—however, given the fact that they were out in the desert for forty years, it was damn few. In fact, at one point in the desert, Moses wrote just about the most mournful psalm you'll ever read, one which he did not even include in his own personal writings, as it was so downbeat. So, if Moses viewed his time in the desert as slow and lacking in signs—a man who had seen more miracles than any other man to that point in time—then should we expect a lot more by way of signs, wonders and healings? Now, I chose a man from the Bible who would be naturally associated with signs and wonders. For every Moses, I can point out 40 or 50 named believers from the Old Testament who observed no signs or wonders. As I write this, I think of this woman who fancies herself an evangelist, who, in what she said to me, implied that I had a *small god* because my God didn't heal or perform miracles like hers did. She simply believed in a *Big God*. God is very capable of performing miracles which would rock us to our very foundations—however, if the Old Testament record is to be believed, then He performed damned few miracles in the Old Testament. Does that mean that He was not a *Big God* in the Old Testament? Now, Moses, through these great signs and miracles which God allowed him to perform, established his authority, first before Pharaoh and then before his people (Acts 7:35–36). It was this established authority, along with the visible power of God (Ex. 20:18–20), which allowed Moses to bring the Word of God to the people (Acts 7:36–38, where Stephen calls them the Oracles of God).
 - b. After the time of Moses, we do not have some uninterrupted series of miracles. Miracles during his time were rare, most of them occurring during a couple years of their leaving Egypt and then that year prior to entering the land. It is noteworthy that not only did not the Egyptians or the Pharaoh believe, but that the generation of Israel who witnessed these great miracles, although they believed, went down in infamy as one of the most degenerate generations of Israelites (Heb. 3:7–11). Many psalms and several prophets look back on this period of time, glorifying God for the miracles which He gave; and almost an equal number excoriates that generation of Israelites. God killed off that entire generation in the desert! Two points: (1) they witnessed great miracles and signs, and yet had the hardest of hearts. Secondly, (2) had miracles continued uninterrupted throughout Scripture, there would be no reason for several psalms to glorify God for what He did in Egypt—the writers of Scripture would be too busy recording the myriads of miracles which were still occurring. However, in truth, there were not myriads of miracles to follow the time of Moses and Joshua.
 - c. The second time in the Bible where we find several consecutive miracles in during the ministries of Elijah and Elisha. Although there are some miracles which occur prior to their time and some after; for the most part, those are isolated incidents. You may wonder why did God work miracles through them? God was establishing the authority of the office of prophet (Heb. 1:1). The prophet would record God's Word to Israel, and this was confirmed by signs and miracles.
 - d. It would be important to note that following the confrontation between Elijah and the prophets of Baal, when God clearly set Elijah apart from them by a miracle (1Kings 18), by the next chapter, Elijah is fleeing for his life.

- e. The most concentrated time period of miracles was in the 1st century at the hand of our Lord. Now, what is quite fascinating to note is that after three concentrated years of healing the sick, the blind, the lame, those indwelt by demons, and speaking to crowds of 4000–5000, but there were very few converts. Do you recall that some of the cities where our Lord did most of His miracles remained unrepentant? Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum—read Matt. 11:20–24. There are incidents where a large number of people followed our Lord because of His healings and signs (John 6:2), but withdrew from Him because of what He taught (John 6:66). Perhaps our Lord's greatest miracle, the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Lazarus had been dead for four days and his body was beginning to putrefy (John 11:39) and Jesus called to him from outside the tomb: **“Lazarus, here, outside!”** There were some who believed in Him as a result (John 11:45), but there were many who did not and went to the pharisees, who then began to plot His death (John 11:46–53). **But, though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they continued not to believe in Him** (John 12:37). Perhaps you are so focused on miracles that you never read what the historical records say. We only have a small cluster of dedicated disciples after our Lord's death and resurrection (120 by Acts 1:15). This is fewer than the number of people who Christ appeared to after his crucifixion. Now, for those who read Scripture, they fully understand that **Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ** (Rom. 10:17). Some think that the power is in miracles—even these puny, unverified and anemic *healings* performed by so-called divine healers; but the real power of God is in His Word, under the convincing ministry of the Holy Spirit.
11. It may also be good to have an historical perspective on the sign gifts in the days of the Apostles:
- These sign gifts gave evidence that Jesus was the Messiah (Isa. 35:5 Matt. 11:2–5 Luke 7:18–35 John 10:25, 38). This does not mean that people would accept the evidence.
 - When Jesus sent to Apostles out to proclaim the good news and to perform signs and wonders, they were told **not** to go to the Gentiles, but only to the lost sheep of Israel (Matt. 10:5–8 Mark 6:7).
 - These sign gifts continued beyond the cross into the beginning of the Church Age (Acts 14:3–11 19:11–12). These sign gifts were employed to convince the heathen gentiles (Rom. 15:18–19); to vindicate the ministry of the Apostles (2Cor. 12:12); and to confirm the message of salvation (Heb. 2:3–4).²⁰
 - Just because the Apostles performed great miracles, this does not mean that all those who witnessed these acts believed. In Acts 3:1–10, Peter cures a man who had been lame since birth—he went from completely atrophied leg muscles, which did not function since birth, to walking and leaping—no physical therapy. God did not heal him slowly, curing first his lameness and then allowing him to increase the strength of his leg muscles—God healed him all at once. Nor was this some completely unknown man—he spent all day, every day in front of the temple begging for money after being carried there and dropped off. Everyone in the temple knew who he was. Peter preached a sermon (Acts 3:11–26) and then he and John were arrested (Acts 4:1–3). Even though many believed in Christ Jesus (Acts 4:4)²¹ and even though the priests and the Sadducees could not deny this particular miracle took place (Acts 4:16), these same priests and Sadducees, who had day in and day out seen this lame man in front of the temple begging alms, still ordered Peter and John not to proclaim Christ (Acts 4:18).
 - As Paul turned toward the gentiles, we have fewer and fewer records of signs and wonders. From the book of Acts chapter 20 (which would be about 58 A.D.), we hear little or nothing about signs and wonders in the book of Acts nor do we hear anything of these things in any of the epistles written after this point.
 - After that point, in the epistles, we have four mentions of illnesses which were not cured by someone with the gift of healing (and some of them were not cured at all). These case histories will be covered in more detail later.
 - The Apostles performed many miracles until around the late 50's A.D., and, suddenly, there is little or no mention of signs, miracles and wonders—not in the final few chapters of Acts nor in any of the epistles written from that time forward. I mention this, so that you who think that you should walk into a church a view a half dozen miracles are totally without historical perspective. These miracles and signs not only disappear from the Biblical record at the point, but also from extra-Biblical sources as well. So, as you go to church expecting to be jazzed by such things, realize you pretty much expect to see on any given

²⁰ Quoted and paraphrased from *The “Baptism of the Holy Spirit” and “Speaking with Tongues”*, by Wayne Webb of Greystone Bible Church, p. 15.

²¹ In fact, 5000 believed; recall when Jesus told His disciples, **“And greater works will you do”**? This is a fulfillment of that.

Sunday morning, as much by way of wondrous events as any 1000 Old Testament saints combined. However, what the signs and miracles did was establish the authority of the Apostles, and through them came the final words of God to man (Heb. 2:3–4 Rev. 22:18–19).

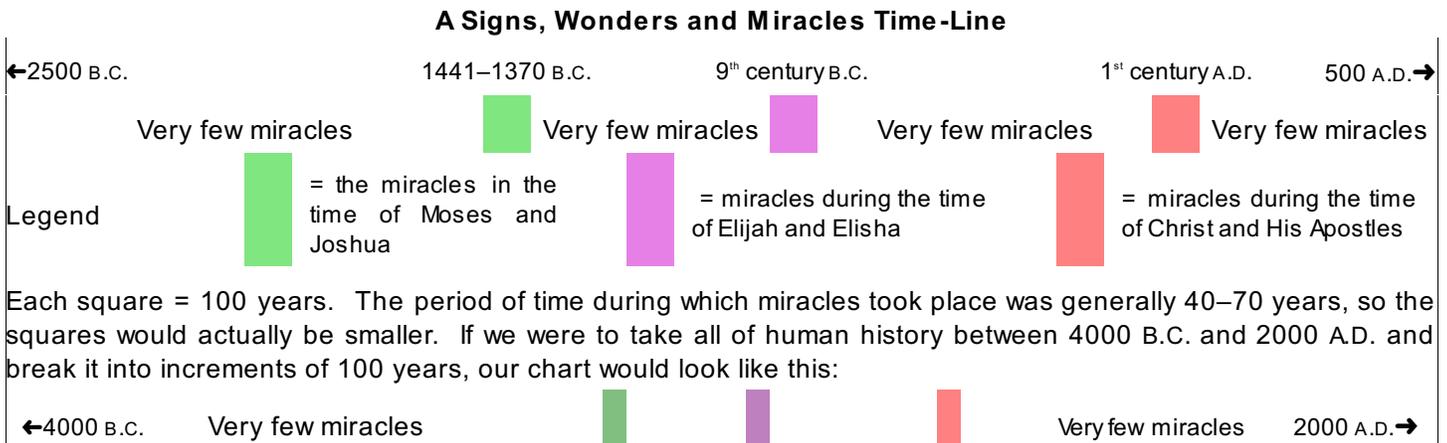
- h. When the spiritual gifts are named prior to 58 A.D., we have several sign gifts listed (1Cor. 12:9–10); when they are enumerated in a later epistle, no sign gifts are mentioned (Eph. 4:11).
 - i. We have a corresponding time period in the book of Acts—from Acts 1–19, we have miracles, tongues, healings, miraculous prison breaks, etc. This takes us to about 58 A.D. From Acts 20 on, we have no tongues, no baptism of the Spirit, no miracles or healings apart from Acts 28 when Luke and Paul are stranded on Malta.
 - j. Not only does Paul tell us that prophecy and tongues would cease (1Cor. 13:8–10), but that several things in the plan of God ceased when they were fulfilled. The ceremonial aspect of the Law ceased when our Lord was incarnated, thus fulfilling the shadows speaking of His coming. The pillar of cloud and of fire which led Israel in the desert wilderness was withdrawn when it fulfilled its purpose as well.
 - k. You see, things have a definite purpose; this purpose is stated in Scripture; and when this purpose has been fulfilled, then there is no longer any need for these things. The sign gifts had specific purposes, as did prophecy. Once those purposes were fulfilled; or once a gift was fulfilled by something else which came to pass, then there is no longer any necessity for the gift. Again—simplest and easiest to understand: animal sacrifices continued until they were fulfilled in Christ. The Old Testament writers of Scripture continued until there was no longer any reason for them to record Scripture. Then we had 400 years of silence from God.
 - l. For the first fifty years of the post-Apostolic church, we have practically no mention of signs or miracles. In the next 50 years, we have slight and unimportant mentions. We see an increase in the 3rd century and a steady increase for the next several centuries, according to the ancient literature.²² Dillow: *However, Warfield then goes on to devote the rest of his book to the thesis that this “evidence” really is evidence of counterfeit miracles and has no connection with the divine attestations of the first century. A. J. Maclean has reached the same conclusion: Moreover, most of the ecclesiastical miracles are mere prodigies, and can in no sense be called signs. In many cases they are demonstrably the invention of later biographers, and contemporary writers show no knowledge of them.*²³ What this means is that those who wrote during the time that these miracles allegedly took place do not record the miracles as occurring. It is those who lived sometime after the miracles occurred who record the miracles. It is like knowing someone who knows someone who got healed of an organic disease fifty years ago. This is not a dependable witness.
 - m. Certainly, most charismatics believe that the gifts of healing and miracles are in existence today, because we live during a time of great apostasy and unbelief, but, seriously, now—charismatic churches do very little, if anything, to convict the unbeliever, apart from their occasional use of God’s Word. We do not have unbelievers who flock to charismatic churches and are completely blown away by the signs and wonders. It is a sad commentary that many believers are less discerning than smart unbelievers. Our Lord told His disciples to be “...as wise as serpents, and as harmless as doves” (Matt. 10:16). Unfortunately, there are an awful lot of believers who have very little doctrine who are bamboozed by all of this. Now, there are some bona fide conversions of unbelievers in charismatic churches—fewer than you would think—but they were not convicted by the signs and wonders, but by God’s Word when it is spoken. Very few believers, charismatic or otherwise, have any idea as to how powerful the Word of God really is.
12. Summary points on signs, wonders and miracles:
- a. Signs, wonders and miracles were both valid and vital during the time periods in which they occurred. They often signified a great change in the plan of God; and with that change, God would mete out authority (Moses, the prophets, the disciples). God also used them to verify the uniqueness of His Son.
 - b. If we are to take today’s *signs and wonders* as a fulfillment of what was spoken by Joel, then we must accept a *watered-down* fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. Not only do we accept essentially lame *signs and wonders* as a fulfillment of God’s power but we then accept a *kind of imperfect fulfillment*

²² Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972 (from a series of lectures delivered at the Columbia Theological Seminary 1917–1918); p. 10.

²³ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 155; he quoted from *Hastings Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*, ed. James Hastings (Edinburgh; T & T Clark, 1918, Vol. 2, p. 42).

instead of a full, literal, and glorious fulfillment which the plain reading of the ancient prophecies demands.²⁴

- c. The Bible is not filled from cover to cover with signs, miracles and wonders. We have three relatively short periods of time where God performed many signs, miracles and wonders. God performed signs, wonders and miracles for relatively short periods of time (less than a generation), and then there would be long periods of time when few if any miracles were performed. Perhaps a chart might help here:



[<Return to Page One>](#)

- d. As you can see from the chart, the time period recorded in Scripture when there were signs, miracles and wonders is relatively brief. This is certainly not to say that God did nothing miraculous during those middle periods of time; however, the frequency of miracles was reduced considerably.
- e. If miracles were the norm throughout history, then just how important were the signs and miracles of Moses? Of our Lord?
- f. There was more to the miracles than the evidence of the divine power backing them. The miracles that we find in Scripture often teach a great truth or truths to those who witness them.
 - i. When God brought the various plagues upon Egypt, each one was an attack on a specific god of Egypt. We covered this in detail when we went through the book of Exodus.
 - ii. The miracles of Elijah showed the superiority of the God of Israel over Baal (1Kings 18:20–40).
 - iii. The miracles of Jesus often illustrated the power and reality of salvation; and they presented Him as the Messiah. People possessed by demons were cleansed of the demons, just as we are controlled by our old sin natures and are given temporary power over them in this life, and are separated from them in eternity. The cleansing of the lepers illustrates how we look to God before and after salvation, which is not based upon anything that we do, but is based upon His work.
- g. Let me tell you one of the things that makes me grind my teeth. I heard it on the radio the other day, and had heard it from an acquaintance of mine: they used the term *Big God*. What they meant was, a person like myself, who does not believe that miracles (as we would so recognize miracles) are a commonplace activity on this earth in the plan of God, believes in a *little God*; that is, an impotent God who cannot, in our own estimation, perform miracles. Because of our lack of belief, God allows this prophecy to be fulfilled in my life and I therefore observe no miracles. It's because I believe in a *little God* (they actually have not used this terminology, insofar as I know). However, they are big on using the term *Big God*. They believe in a *Big God*; their God not only can perform miracles but does so at the drop of a hat—at their churches, God is constantly performing this miracle or that, because He is a *Big God*, capable of performing such miracles. How do I express my thoughts here? *That is the biggest load of crap the charismatic movement has tried to pawn off since tongues*. I believe in the God of the Bible, the God revealed to us by His Word. This God has chosen, by His Own Divine Plan, to, historically, perform miracles on a very limited basis (in fact, it is very likely that many of the events which we classify as

²⁴ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 106.

miraculous were actions of great power which conformed to the laws of this universe). He has also chosen to communicate with man on a very limited basis as well. During the 400 years that Israel was in captivity in Egypt, we have no evidence of God speaking to man. During the 400 years between the testaments, even though we have very sincerely religious men, we have no evidence of God speaking to man (and, of course, no recorded miracles during either period of time). I have chosen to believe in God as He has revealed Himself in Scripture. Just because the God of Scripture does not routinely perform miracles like some divine magician, this does not mean that He is a *little god*. That is simply how He has chosen to fulfill His plan on this earth.

- h. The result was not always that men were convicted and believed. In fact, there were innumerable instances where undeniable miracles were observed, and the hearts of the observers did not change.
 - i. Although the people of Israel believed Moses, the Pharaoh of Egypt and some of the people of Egypt did not (Ex. 7:14 8:15 11:9–10 14:9).
 - ii. Despite the miracles of Elijah, Ahab and Jezebel did not believe that he was a man to be feared as a prophet from God and pursued him, intending to take his life (1Kings 19:1–3). Although Elijah was not the only one faithful to God who remained, there was still widespread negative volition (1Kings 19:14, 18).
 - iii. Despite the ministry of our Lord, there were only a handful of believers at the cross (just one Apostle) and about 120 of them faithfully gathered in prayer after His resurrection and ascension (Acts 1:15).
 - iv. Despite the miracles of the Apostles, many of them were imprisoned and all died martyr's deaths, except for John. Paul faced several riots whose overriding emotion was negative volition.
- i. Signs, wonders and miracles were used to authenticate God's power and His message. Once His Word and His messengers have been affirmed, God does not have to re-authenticate them. His Word stands and those who wrote it were clearly establish as genuine. God does not have to reaffirm His Word.
 - i. Even though there were some spectacular miracles in the book of Exodus and a few in Numbers and Joshua, once Israel was established, God did not reaffirm Israel with continued signs and wonders (there are very few miracles in the book of Judges, Ruth or 1Samuel—and none which are designed to confirm that Israel has been taken out of Egypt and none which are designed to prove that the Law of Moses is from God).
 - ii. The office of prophet is clearly authenticated in Elijah and in Elisha, but not every prophet then confirmed His message with miracles. The fact that what he said **always** came to pass was proof enough.
 - iii. As we will study in depth, the signs and miracles wrought by the Apostles came to an end—not just after their deaths, but actually during their lives. Whereas the first two-thirds of the book of Acts is filled with signs, wonders, and miracles, the final one-third barely mentions such things. Paul's epistles written prior to 58 A.D. often mention various miracles and signs; his epistles written after that, if they refer at all to such things, do so in the aorist tense (which is similar but not equivalent to our past tense). If you will examine two preachers from charismatic groups who meet on friendly terms and discuss what is going on (on, say, some religious talk show), you will note a stark contrast between their conversations and Paul's letters to Timothy and to Titus. Not only does it appear as though we are looking in on a different religion, it appears as though these faiths are from different planets.
- j. Signs and miracles never preceded the coming of the messenger. John the Baptizer, the herald of our Lord, worked no miracles. Only after the messenger arrived were miracles done. Jesus was 30 before he performed any miracles. Moses was 80. Miracle-workers do not precede the coming of our Lord; it is the mystery of lawlessness which precedes the coming of the lawless one (2Thess. 2:1–10). God will send false signs and wonders. **And for this reason, God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe the lie, in order that they all might be judged who did not believe the truth [God's Word, the Bible], but took pleasure in unrighteousness** (2Thess. 2:11–12). Although this study will examine in some detail the validity of the signs and wonders being done today, the thrust of this study will be what does the Bible say about tongues in this time period?
- k. We have both internal and external evidence that the miracles performed by the Apostles came to an end.
- l. There is a clear distinction between the quality of the miracles found in the Bible and those performed by charismatics today. Magicians perform more impressive miracles than do the so-called faith healers of today (we will cover that in much greater detail). The fact that signs and miracles in this time period are

far less impressive than they were during the days of our Lord’s first advent only serves to cheapen what He did. Don’t you understand that when a wide-eyed believer points at some TV evangelist sign-worker and says “There’s the power of Jesus” that the discerning unbeliever can see right through this sham? The unbeliever is not convicted of his standing before God; furthermore, he clearly recognizes a huckster when he sees one and thinks less of you because you don’t.

- m. MacArthur: [Thus]...*The underlying assumption that drives the whole Third Wave [the newest charismatic movement] is wrong. Miracles, signs, and wonders are impotent to produce either faith or genuine revival. Furthermore, power-encounter ministry misses the whole point of our witness. We are not commissioned to confront satanic power with miracle power. We are commissioned to confront satanic lies with divine truth.*²⁵
- 13. I want to make this next point with great care: the great signs and wonders of the Bible always introduced a new message, new messengers and a change of God’s program. Is this what we have today in the charismatic movement? In this case, I would have to answer in the affirmative. We do have a new message, a different Jesus, a changed gospel, and new messengers. However, just as most of their signs and miracles are faked, so is their message one of false hope, lacking in power and authority. We really have a message of works instead of grace—it’s not a new message, it is just in somewhat different packaging. Do not forget the pattern for our age: **We walk by faith and not by sight** (2Cor. 5:7).
- 14. No Apostle ever urges believers to seek after or to seek for signs and wonders and miracles. Paul urges pastors to study (2Tim. 2:15), for believers to let the Word of Christ indwell them (Col. 3:16) and to walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:25) and John urges believers to walk in the light (1John 1:7), but none of the writers of Scripture ever suggest that believers look to signs and miracles for their truth. MacArthur: *The book of Revelation is full of visions, wonders, and signs. It would be a perfect place for the writer to urge believers to seek such miraculous manifestations, but what did he say? “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it” (Rev. 1:3).*²⁶
- 15. Dillow has a chart in his book *Speaking in Tongues* which I will replicate here, with some modifications:²⁷

God’s Fourfold Purpose of Miracles			
Purposes of God	Moses and Joshua 1441–1390 B.C.	Elijah and Elisha 870–785 B.C.	Christ and His Apostles A.D. 28–95
To introduce a new era:	God formed the nation Israel (Ex. 6:6–7 19:8 33:13 Deut. 4:4–6). <i>“Has a god tried to go to take for himself a nation from within another nation by trials, by signs and wonders and by war and by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm and by great terrors, as Jehovah your God did for you in Egypt before you eyes?”</i> (Deut. 4:34).	God established the office of prophet and established that He would now speak to Israel through the prophet (1Kings 17:1)	God offers His kingdom to Israel (Matt. 4:23 15:23 10:7–8 Luke 4:18–19) God establishes His church (Acts 15:12)
To authenticate His messengers:	Moses (Ex. 4:1–9, 29–31 14:31); Joshua (Joshua 3:7)	Elijah (1Kings 17:1, 24 18:36 2Kings 1:10) Elisha (2Kings 5:8)	Christ (Matt. 11:4–5 Mark 2:7 John 10:25 14:11 20:30–31 Acts 2:22) The Apostles (2Cor. 12:12 Heb. 2:4)

²⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 135.

²⁶ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 120.

²⁷ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 139.

God's Fourfold Purpose of Miracles			
Purposes of God	Moses and Joshua 1441–1390 B.C.	Elijah and Elisha 870–785 B.C.	Christ and His Apostles A.D. 28–95
To authenticate their message:	To pharaoh (Ex. 7:17 8:19) To the people of Egypt (Ex. 8:21–27) To Israel (Ex. 6:6–7 14:31)	Forsake the idols and return to Jehovah (1Kings 17:24 18:36)	The offer of His kingdom (Matt. 12:28 John 10:37–38) The re-offer of His kingdom and its establishment to the Church (Acts 3:1–8 4:16 8 : 5 – 7 1 4 : 3 Rom. 15:18–19)
To instruct the observers:	Israel (Ex. 10:12 14:13–14 16:2) Pharaoh (Ex. 8:10, 22 9:14) Egypt (Ex. 9: 20 11:7 14:4) The nations (Ex. 9:16 Joshua 2:9–11)	Prophets of Baal The people of Israel (1Kings 18:39 2Kings 5:15)	To the leaders and the people of Israel (Matt. 8:26 Mark 6:50 John 6:5–6 Acts 5:1–11)

[<Return to Page One>](#)

16. Part of the problem is that some do not actually realize what an Apostle is. Apostleship is a specific gift given to very few believers. In the New Testament, fewer than 15 are called Apostles, and a case could be made for the proper use of that office as versus the authority which was passed along to one who was called an Apostle, even though he really did not have the true office of Apostleship. However, that is a whole other topic. What is clear is that an Apostle had authority over more than one church, which authority Paul felt himself obligated to defend in 2Corinthians 12. **The signs of a true Apostle were produced among you with all perseverance, by signs and powers and miracles** (2Cor. 12:12). In fact, the only sign gift which is historically documented as being used by one who is not called an Apostle is the gift of tongues.²⁸ The only other ones who ever demonstrated such gifts were those commissioned directly by the Apostles (Stephen and Philip in Acts 6). MacArthur: *...from the day the church was born at Pentecost, no miracle ever occurred in the entire New Testament record except in the presence of an apostle or one directly commissioned by an apostle.*²⁹
17. As a corollary to the above point, let me give you several reasons why we no longer have the gift of Apostleship today:
- All New Testament Scripture was composed by either an Apostle or someone closely associated with an Apostle (Mark or Luke). The New Testament canon was closed (Rev. 22:18–19); along with several prominent bodies of believers throughout history. Once the canon of Scripture is closed, we no longer need authoritative pronouncements from an Apostle.
 - The Apostles proper were all chosen personally by Christ Jesus (Matt. 10:1–4 Luke 6:12–16 Gal. 1:1 1Tim. 1:1 2Tim. 1:1). I say *Apostles proper*, as there were a couple of others called Apostles to the Church (e.g., 2Cor. 8:23), which some take as the nontechnical use of the word *Apostle*. In case you are hesitant here, there is also the technical term *Church* (for the *Church universal*) and the nontechnical use, where it stands for a local church.
 - The Apostles (as well as others) were all eyewitnesses to the resurrected Christ. **Am I not an Apostle? Have I not see Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?** (1Cor. 9:1b; see also 1Cor. 15:7–8). there are charismatics who claim to speak with Jesus regularly: one has washed dishes while Jesus put his arm around his shoulder; another was watching *Laverne & Shirley* when our Lord dropped by to sit on his couch (the same person also got into a splash fight with Jesus in the River of Life in heaven); and still another was cruising down the road, and Jesus appeared on the passenger side and visited with

²⁸ This is apart from the unnamed person casting out demons who is mentioned in Luke 9:49.

²⁹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 121.

him.³⁰ Interestingly enough, our Lord only appeared to groups after His resurrection; and, after His ascension, He only appeared to Paul (who was with other people—Acts 9:1–9 18:9 23:11) and to Saint Stephen, who was also with others, who apparently did not see Him (Acts 7:54–60). Isn't it odd that to charismatics, He only appears to one of them at a time?

- d. The Church, for which Christ is the cornerstone, is founded upon the Apostles (New Testament) and the prophets (Old Testament) (Eph. 2:20).³¹
- e. In his epistles to Timothy and to Titus, Paul speaks of the leadership of a local church, and he never mentions the *Apostles* as a part of that leadership structure.
- f. Only Apostles and those commissioned by the Apostles (who might be considered the *nontechnical Apostles*) performed signs, wonders **and** miracles.
- g. Whereas, those in the early church with the gift of prophecy were subject to careful scrutinization (1Cor. 14:29–33), the Apostles had absolute authority (Jude 17).
- h. In the New Jerusalem, there will be twelve foundation stones, upon which are written the names of the **twelve** Apostles of the Lamb (Rev. 21:14).
- i. MacArthur: *The apostles were unquestionably a special breed; they had no successors...their office is unique, their ministry is unique; the miracles they did are unique...The age of the apostles and what they did is forever in the past...the apostolic age was unique and it ended. History says it, Jesus says it, theology says it, and the New Testament itself repeated attests to it.*³² Let me add that we have no historical records of Apostles after the first century (this is Romanism aside, which began several centuries later).

[<Return to Page One>](#)

18. Pentecostals have two basic choices: (1) either the gift of tongues died out and was revived at the turn of this past century; or, (2) the gift of tongues has always been a part of the Christian church. Those who take the latter view will be quite interested in the next point:
19. The History of tongues and the charismatic movement:
 - a. Introductory points:
 - i. It is my understanding the John Sherrill's book, *They Speak with Other Tongues*, documents the occurrence of tongues over the past 2000 years. I thought that I had a copy of this book, but I do not. Dillow: *The citations in Sherrill's list are scanty and cover 2,000 years of history. There are often gaps of 500 years or more between the appearance of tongues outbursts. This can hardly be said to argue in favor of the gift remaining in the church. It may argue that God occasionally enables men to speak in tongues, assuming that the cited instances were indeed legitimate manifestations of the New Testament gift. But it no more proves that the gift of tongues is in the church today than does Jesus' raising of Lazarus prove that god's norm in the first century was to raise the dead. As alluded to above, it should be noted that some of the outbreaks of tongues speaking mentioned by Sherrill occurred in connection with known heretical movements.*³³ What I will provide herein is more instances of the gift of tongues with probably more detail than Sherrill provides.
 - ii. Nichol: [Despite differing opinions as to exactly when the modern Pentecostal movement began] *...all Pentecostals appear to agree on one fact: that the Pentecostal experience is not a religious innovation, and that in on form or another it has manifested itself throughout the history of the Christian Church.*³⁴ With that in mind, we will spend some time with the actual history of the charismatic movement itself. As you read these various occurrences of tongues in history, note that, no matter where you choose to see the beginning of the tongues movement, from that point on, there

³⁰ I will mentioned all of these people again, and document who they are and when they made these claims.

³¹ For those who know a little Greek, the Granville Sharp rule does not apply to plural nouns. For those who do not have a clue as to what I just said, you may ignore this footnote.

³² John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 125. I paraphrased these points also from MacArthur, pp. 123–125

³³ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 156.

³⁴ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 19.

was always a certain amount of evolution which took place. That is, it starts out as one thing, but later becomes something else.

- iii. There are some charismatics who believe that there are evidences for the gift of tongues throughout church history. Donald Gee writes: *It is a commonplace of Church History that the special phenomena now associated with the Pentecostal Movement have occurred again and again during periods of spiritual revival and enthusiasm. A long list of such happenings could be cited, but it will be sufficient to quote such an acknowledged authority as the Encyclopedia Britannica...that the Glossolalia "recurs in Christian revivals in every age; e.g., among the mendicant friars of the thirteenth century, among the Jansenists and early Quakers, the converts of Wesley and Whitefield, the persecuted Protestants of the Cévennes, and the Irvingites."*³⁵ Nichol, who is rather level-headed about this, disagrees with Gee and the *Encyclopedia Britannica*; however, I will provide this long list. That is what is to follow. The most well-documented use of the gift of tongues in past times (apart from the Apostolic era) is by the Irvingites—we will spend a **lot** of time with them. Once we have finished, some Pentecostals will not want to be associated with their *historical brethren*.
- b. There appears to be a Hellenistic gift of tongues—that is, those who belonged to some of the Greek religions spoke with ecstatic utterances during their religious services.³⁶
- c. Historically, we do have a dying out of tongues and the sign gifts. Origen writes that he believed them to be still in existence. He lived in the late second and early third centuries.
- d. There have been outbreaks of this movement or similar movements in previous times. There were the Montanists of Phrygia during the second century A.D. The Bishop of Hierapolis, Apollinaris, circa 170 A.D., described Montanus, the founder, saying: *[Montanus]...became beside himself, and being suddenly in a sort of frenzy and ecstasy, he raved, and began to babble and utter strange things, prophesying in a manner **contrary** to the constant custom of the Church.* The two associates of this sect's founder were, surprisingly enough, female (Prisca and Maximilla) who claimed *to be organs of the Divine Comforter promised of Christ.*³⁷ E. Glenn Hinson further writes: *Apollinaris reported further, he enlisted two women whom he filled with "the false spirit," "so that they talked wildly and unreasonably and strangely," like Montanus himself.*³⁸ The emphasis of this small group appears to be upon prophecy rather than upon tongues. Their prophetic statements tended to be very brief, but understandable. And note the emphasis, which was mine—the observer states that what Montanus did was **contrary** to the custom of the church—this was not a continuation of Pentecost but an aberration of same. This sounds more like the leader of a Pentecostal church rather than a representative of the early church. Bear in mind that if the use of tongues were as some have given, to bolster one's faith and to make a person more at one with the Spirit by first surrendering their tongue, then our earliest historical records, even apart from the epistles, should be brimming with information about *this* particular use of the gift of tongues. However, what we have is this quote, which sounds modern, but is contrary to the custom of the early church. Hmm...if you are a charismatic, doesn't that pose some problems for you? And, as a charismatic, you cannot distance yourself too much from this early group. Larry Christenson (a charismatic author) accurately identified them as forerunners of the charismatic movement.³⁹
- e. Irenæus, the Bishop of Lyons, mentions glossolalia three times. On the first occasion, it refers back to the day of Pentecost. On the second occasion, he apparently is explaining the word *perfect* in 1Cor. 2:16

³⁵ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, pp. 10–11; he quoted Donald Gee, *The Pentecostal Movement*; London; Elim Publishing House, Ltd., 1949, p. 9.

³⁶ Joseph Dillow mentions this several times in *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 15, 19. He cites Robert H. Gundry, "Ecstatic Utterances (N.E.B.)?" *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. 17, 1966, pp. 299–307.

³⁷ *History of the Christian Church*; by Henry C. Sheldon; Hendrickson Publishers, printed 1999 (reprinted from 1895 edition); Vol. 1, p. 268. Nichol attribute this to Eusebius as the one who recorded this.

³⁸ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 47. I also got the other Apollinaris quote from this book. He got them from Eusebius, *Church History*, Vol. 16; *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, second series, I, p. 231.

³⁹ Larry Christenson, "Pentecostalism's Forgotten Forerunner," in Vinson Synan, ed., *Aspects of Pentecostal—Charismatic Origins*; Plainfield, NJ; Logos, 1975, pp. 32–34. John MacArthur has a couple more pages on this group in his book, *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 73–75.

(obviously, it was not the same word to him). He wrote: ["perfect" refers to those]...*who have received the Spirit of God, and who through the Spirit of God do speak in all languages, as he (Paul) used Himself also to speak. In like manner, we do also hear many brethren in the church, who possess prophetic gifts, and who through the Spirit speak all kinds of languages, and bring to light for the general benefit the hidden things of men, and declare the mysteries of God.*⁴⁰ His third reference is to Marcus, possibly an early Gnostic, who would seduce women with the promise of some manifestation of the Holy Spirit. His encouragement to them, not too unlike the encouragement given by charismatics to those who have not yet spoken in tongues, resulted in: *She then, vainly puffed up and elated by these words, and greatly excited in soul by the expectation that it is herself who is to prophesy, her heart beating violently, reaches the requisite pitch of audacity, and idly as well as impudently utters some nonsense as it happens to occur to her, such as might be expected from one heated by an empty spirit...Henceforth, she reckons herself a prophetess, and expresses her thanks to Marcus for heaving imparted to her of his own Charis.*⁴¹

- f. Tertullian, the African theologian, converted to the cult of the Montanists in 206. He blasts Marcion for his doctrine of the two gods (the God of Wrath in the Old Testament and the God of Love in the New), and then challenged him to produce prophecy in his group as Tertullian observed in his own group, which were Montanists. An extended quote from Tertullian, which may be found in *Glossolia*, indicates that Montanists experienced ecstasy, rapture, and prophetic sayings. That they spoke in mysterious tongues is not stated directly, but might be inferred. The pagan philosopher, Celsus, made these comments, apparently about the Montanists: [They speak]...*strange, fanatical, and quite unintelligible words, of which no rational person can find the meaning; for so dark are they, as to have no meaning at all; but they give occasion to every fool or impostor to apply them to suit his own purposes.*⁴²
- g. We have two church fathers, Augustine and Chrysostom, who clearly state that tongues died out by their era (the 4th century A.D.). I will quote these early church fathers in when we get to 1Cor. 13:10. However, let me give you a quote from Nichol: *Except for a somewhat ambiguous reference in Irenæus (ca. A.D. 130) and Tertullian (ca A.D.160) little more remains in patristic literature concerning Pentecostal gifts in the second century.*⁴³ So that you don't think that the early church fathers didn't write much, it was determined by Sir David Dalrymple that, if all 24,000+ Greek manuscripts of the New Testament had been lost, that he could piece together all but 11 verses of the New Testament from the writings of the church fathers of the second and third centuries.⁴⁴ If tongues are what charismatics say they are, and if their use was never terminated, and if their early church fathers were so prolific as to, in their writings, include the entire New Testament, save eleven verses, then don't you think there would be some mention of this gift of tongues? If it is that important to bolster the faith and that important as a giving over of the will to the Holy Spirit, and if the early church fathers were so concerned with God's Word that they wrote so much, why do we not find innumerable references to this gift? Pick up a book by *any* Pentecostal who deals with what he believes and count the number of times that we find the word *tongues* in his writings—now compare that to the early church fathers—do you see a problem with the modern charismatic movement? Do you see how incongruous their claims are with the historical record? Charismatics cannot point back to a contiguous use of the gift of tongues—particularly not as they present this gift for today. You should not be embarrassed that Satan has fooled you—he is more intelligent than all of us put together. Our only weapons against his lying deceptions are the filling of God the Holy Spirit along with a thorough knowledge of God's Word. Some holy experience is not a reliable weapon against the confusion wrought by Satan.
- h. The Gnostics, who were opposed to Christianity, also had prayers and incantations which were akin to the use of tongues. These gifts, not necessarily valid ones, died out with the Gnostic and Montanist movements before the beginning of the fifth century A.D.

⁴⁰ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 48. He took it from *Against Heresies*, V. 6. 1; *Ante-Nicene Fathers*; I. p. 531.

⁴¹ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 49, who took it from *Against Heresies*, I. 13. 3. *Ante-Nicene Fathers*; I, p. 334.

⁴² Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 51, who takes it from Origen's *Against Celsus*, VII. 9; *Ante-Nicene Fathers*; IV, p. 614..

⁴³ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, pp. 20–21.

⁴⁴ Josh McDowell, *A Ready Defense*; Here's Life Publishers; ©1990; p. 47.

- i. At this point in time, we have few if any references to the gift of tongues. J. J. Görres wrote *Die christliche Mystik*, where he names at least seven different Catholic saints who were able to speak in foreign languages that they had not learned. At face value, this would seem to be a validation of tongues for all of Christianity; however, one of those named wrote several letters indicating the difficulties that he had encountered in communicating with different tribes. *He had tried numerous approaches—translating some of the main church formulas into the language after he had learned enough of the language to do this, getting help from others to patch together some doctrinal statements to be memorized, employing interpreters, missing various dialects, or even using signs.*⁴⁵ His alleged gift of tongues was not mentioned until a century after his death. Just as everything that you read on the web is not necessarily true; not every historical document from the ancient world is accurate.
- j. Apparently, there has been no similar systematic search of the East during medieval times, but it is theorized that they were probably more prevalent there than in the west (where they were almost nonexistent) due to their more *mystical, individualistic, otherworldly, introverted piety.*⁴⁶
- k. There are the Ranters of England (I believe) between the years of 1648–1660. They were involved with various types of speech and they possibly believed that, because they were indwelt by God and Christ that they lay claim to being God and Christ, or so said one detractor. Excellent moniker, by the way.
- l. The Quakers probably had some involvement with the gift of tongues. *Fox and his followers often reported visions, groanings, quaking or trembling, weeping, outburst of prophecy, foaming at the mouth, faintings, and the like as a result of their meetings. Quakers got their name, of course, from the jerking spasms which they experienced when under strong religious emotion...[they] minimized glossolalia. They placed their primary emphasis on intelligible prophecy.*⁴⁷
- m. We also have the Camisards of France in the 1700's. This was a strange group. During the heavy oppression of the Catholic church during that time, wherein public and private worship apart from Romanism was forbidden. This would have been the late 1600's. France did have a significant Protestant population, who resisted these laws. One group of resisters were some peasants in the Cévennes Mountains of the Languedoc province *Under the most distressing conditions of poverty and terror a sort of religious hysteria seized some of them. One of their own was a young girl named Isabeau Vincent, a woodcutter's daughter, who was said to have prophesied for hours in perfectly cultivated French. Subsequently, as the fervor of persecution heightened, reports of spiritual inspiration increased, touching all ages and both sexes. Various physical phenomena accompanied it—convulsions, foaming at the mouth, sobbing, and glossolalia. One of the most surprising things was its incidence among small children, even infants.*⁴⁸ These peasants raised up an army in 1702, known as the Camisards, who were so successful in their resistance that the French authorities granted them considerable concessions in 1704. Their resistance died out around 1710, as apparently did their movement.
- n. There was a group in England called the "French Prophets" who seem to have some relationship to the Camisards of France, although it was not clear what that relationship was, whether simply by being of a similar ilk or some of the Camisards who fled to England for religious freedom. They prophesied, worked miracles and spoke with tongues. There was a Mr. Dalton who spoke *with great readiness and freedom complete discourses in Hebrew, for near a quarter of an hour together and sometimes much longer* even though he *did not know one Hebrew letter from another.* Even giving him the benefit of the doubt, if you have ever attended a Catholic mass spoken in Latin, then you pretty much have the idea of what it would have been like listening to Dalton expound in Hebrew. There was also a Mr. Lacy who could speak Latin, Greek and French, although French was apparently the only one of the languages that he actually knew. These prophets made the mistake of making predictions which were just too specific. They claimed that Dr. Emes, who had died on Dec. 22, 1707, would rise again March 25, 1708. Needless to say, the late Dr. Emes passed on this opportunity to wake up from his dirt nap, and Lacy had to back-peddle somewhat on his position, writing and publishing a paper on why Dr. Emes did not rise from the

⁴⁵ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 57.

⁴⁶ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 57.

⁴⁷ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, pp. 63–64.

⁴⁸ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 60 (the several quotes are from this page). He suggests examining Henry N. Baird, *the Huguenots and The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes*; London, 1895, pp. 182ff.

dead. They had also prophesied that great and terrible judgments would fall upon England in three weeks. When it didn't happen, they decided that these must be three *prophetic* weeks. They explained, as do some charismatics today, that the Lord was returning during their time, and that this was the pouring out of the Holy Ghost in the last times.⁴⁹

- o. The Roman Catholics have had at least one old encounter with the gift of tongues in 1731. The Jansenists of France had a tongues experience, which the church attempted to quench, making it more intense. The French state authorities apparently put an end to this behavior.⁵⁰
- p. In the early -mid 1800's, we have the Irvingites in England, a group that I will spend some time with, as there are many common characteristics between these people and the modern-day tongues movement, both as to their experiences and personal testimonies and as to the testimonies of their detractors. The leader of this movement was Scottish Edward Irving (1792–1834), who, by nature, was a mystic and a charismatic. He led a Presbyterian church in London. Irving apparently did not speak in tongues himself. He had heard of a young farm girl in Scotland, Mary Campbell, who claimed to speak with prophetic inspiration after being delivered from *death's door*. Well, she had friends who had gifts of tongues and healing. On April 30, 1831, the gift of tongues was made manifest in his own church when a Mrs. Cardale spoke in tongues and prophesied (there are implications that an instance like this may have slightly predated this incident and there are three or four different women who are also named as a part of this beginning). A second-hand description of their speaking in tongues sounds decidedly modern: *To some, the ecstatic exclamations, with their rolling syllables and mighty voice, were imposing and awful; to others it was merely gibberish shouted from stentorian lungs; to others an uneasy wonder, which it was a relief to find passing into English, even though the height and strain of sound were undiminished.*⁵¹ These tongues appeared to give away to short bursts of English in the end. At first, these bursts into tongues were presented as real languages. Mary Campbell claimed to be speaking the language of the Pelew Islanders. Erskine, in his tract, *On the Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, 1830, wrote *For the languages are distinct, well-inflected, well-compacted languages; they are not random collections of sounds, they are composed of words of various lengths, with the natural variety, and yet possessing that commonness of character which marks them to be one distinct language. I have heard many people speak gibberish, but this is not gibberish, it is decidedly well compacted language.*⁵² Cardale, an observer, wrote: *The tongues spoken by all the several persons who have received the gift are perfectly distinct in themselves, and from each other. J. Macdonald speaks two tongues, both easily discernible from each other. I easily perceived when he was speaking in the one, and when in the other tongue. J. Macdonald exercises his gift more frequently than any of the others; and I have heard him speak for twenty minutes together, with all the energy of action and voice of an orator addressing his audience. The language which he then, and indeed generally, uttered is very full and harmonious, containing many Greek and Latin radicals, and with inflections also noticed that he employed the same radical with different inflections; but I do not remember to have noticed his employing two words together, both of which as to root and inflection, I could pronounce to belong to any language with which I am acquainted.*⁵³ Mary Campbell's written-tongue was later submitted to a George Staunton and Samuel Lee, who concluded that it was not any real language at all.⁵⁴ Soon thereafter, they began to regard their tongues as heavenly languages. Irving described the heavenly language of one as follows: *The whole utterance from the beginning to the ending of it, is with a power, and strength, and fullness and sometimes rapidity of voice, altogether different from that of the person's ordinary utterance in any mood; and I would say, both in its form and in its effects upon a single mind,*

⁴⁹ Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972 (from a series of lectures delivered at the Columbia Theological Seminary 1917–1918); pp. 129–130.

⁵⁰ From Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 66.

⁵¹ A quote from Mrs. Oliphant, *The Life of Edward Irving*, p. 430, quoted from *History of the Christian Church*; by Henry C. Sheldon; Hendrickson Publishers, printed 1999 (reprinted from 1895 edition); Vol. 5, p. 196.

⁵² Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972 (from a series of lectures delivered at the Columbia Theological Seminary 1917–1918); p. 295; he quoted from Hanna, *Chalmers*, vol. III, p. 253; Erskine, p. 392..

⁵³ Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972 (from a series of lectures delivered at the Columbia Theological Seminary 1917–1918); pp. 295–296., taken from *The Edinburgh Review*; June, 1831, p. 2751.

⁵⁴ Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972, p. 296, taken from Hanna, *Chalmers*, vol. III, p. 266..

quite supernatural. There is a power in the voice which I have never felt. Carlyle, another observer, gave a slightly different view: *It was in a neighboring room... There burst forth a shrieky hysterical 'Lah lall lall!' (Little or nothing else but I's and a's) continued for several minutes... 'Why was there not a bucket of water to fling on that lah-lalling, hysterical madwoman' thought we or said to one another.*⁵⁵ In writing all of this, I had decided that I have really spent too much time on the Irvingites, and then I read what appeared two more observations of a typical church service there. The first observer, Henry Vizetelly, in *Glances Back Through the Years* (1893), wrote: *What chiefly attracted me to the chapel in Newman-street was the expectation, generally realised, of the spirit moving some hysterical shrieking sister or frantic Boanerges brother (posted in the raised recess behind Irving's pulpit), to burst forth suddenly with one of those wild rapid utterances which, spite of their unintelligibility, sent a strange thrill through all who heard them for the first time... He has grown gray and haggard-looking, and this, with his long, straggling hair and restless look, emphasized by the cast in his eye, gave him a singularly wild and picturesque appearance. His voice, too, was piercingly loud, and his gestures were as vehement as those of any street ranter of the day.*⁵⁶ The second observer wrote, speaking of a prayer meeting which occurred before dawn, at six in the morning on a cold winter's day: *The church appeared to me to be pitch dark; only the lights from the gas lamps shining into the windows enabled us to grope our way forward. It seemed to be entirely full, but my friend accosted a verger, who led us to an excellent seat, nearly opposite the reading desk. After the people were seated the most solemn stillness prevailed. The sleet beating upon the windows was the only sound that could be heard. The clouded sky and the driving snow increased the obscurity, and it was not for some time that we could perceive our nearest neighbors, and assure ourselves that the place was full from one end to the other. I quite believe in the exquisite simplicity and entire sincerity of Mr. Irving's whole character. I believe him to have been incapable of deliberately planning the scene which followed. Had he, however, been the most consummate actor that ever lived, had he studied the art of scenic portraiture and display from his youth up, he could not have produced a finer effect than on this occasion. Just as the clocks outside struck six, the vestry door opened and he entered the church with a small but very bright reading lamp in his hand. He walked with solemn step to the reading desk, and placing the lamp upon it, immediately before him, he stood up facing the audience. Remember, this was the only light in the place. It shone upon his face and figure as if to illuminate him alone. He had on a voluminous dark blue cloak, with a large cape, with a gilt clasp at the throat, which he loosened at once, so that the cloak formed a kind of a background to his figure. Tall, erect, and graceful, he stood for a few moments in silence, his pale face in the white light, his long dark locks falling down upon his collar, his eyes solemn and earnest, peering into the darkness of the building... After a few musical, earnest words of prayer, he opened the Bible before him, and began to read the twenty-second chapter of Revelation. If I were to live a hundred years I should never forget the reading of that chapter. I believe it exceeded in effect the finest speech and most eloquent sermon ever uttered. The exquisite musical intonation and modulation of voice, the deep and intense pathos of delivery, as if the speaker felt every word entering into his own soul, and that he was pouring it out to create a sympathy with his own feelings in others—all this was very wonderful, and totally absorbing every thought of the audience. But when he came to that verse, 'I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and Morning Star,' the effect of the last five words was electrical. The people could not cheer nor applaud, nor in any way relieve their feelings. There was a kind of hard breathing, a sound of suppressed emotion, more striking than the loudest plaudits could have been. The reader himself stopped for a moment as if to allow his unwonted emotion to subside. Before he could resume there came from a woman who was two or three seats behind me, a sound so loud that I am sure it might have been heard on the opposite side of the square. I have been trying to find a word by which to describe it, and the only word I can think of is the word 'yell.' It was not a scream nor a shriek; it was a yell so loud and so prolonged that it filled the church entirely, and as I have said, must have been heard far beyond it. It was at first one single sound, but it seemed in a short time to resolve itself into many separate sounds—not into articulate words by any means. They were far more like the sounds uttered by a deaf and dumb child modulating its tones, but wholly innocent of speech. This was the beginning and the ending of the so-called 'unknown tongues' in Regent Square, by which I mean they*

⁵⁵ Both quotes are from Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972, p. 148–149, taken, respectively from Mrs. Oliphant, *Life*; p. 430 and Carlyle, *Reminiscences*; p. 431.

⁵⁶ Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972, p. 149.

never varied from nor improved upon this type. How any one could be so deluded as to fancy in them any words or syllables, to say nothing of any language, I could never understand. There was no articulation, and no attempt at it. Had there been now and then something like a word, it was mixed up in such a jargon of sound, it was uttered with such rapidity, and in such a long continued and prolonged yell that, led up to it as I had been by the adjuncts of the scene, by the weirdness and obscurity of the building, I was never deceived by it for one moment. After a few minutes' utterance of these 'unknown tongues,' the excited woman began to speak in articulate English words. It was still in the same loud yell, slightly subdued by the necessity of speech. The utterances were chiefly texts of Scripture of an exhortative kind—the first word being uttered three times over, each one louder than the last, the last calling forth the woman's powers to the utmost, her breast heaving and straining with exertion. On this occasion the English began oddly enough, with the word, 'Kiss! Kiss!! Kiss!!! the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way.' This morning there was only one manifestation. Generally there were two; on several occasions I heard three, and once four. They proceeded, however, from the same woman, for while the second was speaking the first recovered her strength, and as her companion's voice died away in subdued murmurs, she burst out anew, as if a dozen spirits were contending in her. When I look back on that first morning, I feel moved with the deepest pity and regret for poor Edward Irving. He was greatly excited and overcome. In his honest heart, he believed that God had honored him and favored him above all the ministers in London. I can see him now before me, as I saw him then, meekly and humbly saying, "I will now finish reading the chapter in which I was interrupted by the Holy Spirit, speaking by this young woman." Yes I heard him say this with my own ears. Already the charm of the service was gone. He seemed glad to conclude it, as if he were afraid his own gentle words could detract from and injure the holy impression that had been produced.⁵⁷ Into this church came a Robert Baxter, who, when under the spirit, would prophesy. He once ordered Irving to go to the Court of Chancery to deliver a message, which, apparently, would just come to him when he arrived there. He should then expect to be put into jail. Irving did go, no message came to him, and he was not cast into prison.⁵⁸ Irving was later deposed from this ministry, in part due to his heretical view of our Lord (that, although Jesus was sinless, he nonetheless possessed an old sin nature), and he returned to his church as a deacon. He died two years later. It is possible that some members of that church continued to speak in tongues after his demotion and death. These appear to be scattered cults which possessed some decidedly non-Christian doctrine. However, for the most part, they seemed to have died out in the first century or two (at the longest). Near the end of her life, Mary Campbell recanted what she had presented herself as, which was, for all intents and purposes, the original push which got the Irvington movement started. She wrote, *It is no light thing to use the holy name irreverently, as I have been made to feel.* Robert Story sent Irving her note to Irving and also commented: *[It was] disappointing a career hers had turned out, especially as she was considered the most remarkable and conclusive evidence of the Holy Ghost being again with power in the midst of the church.* Story, in his note, expressed great remorse that he had not exposed Mary Campbell earlier. Apparently, Story's note was delivered after Irving had died. Irving did write him on January 27, 1841, saying: *Oh, Story, thou has grievously sinned in standing afar off from the work of the Lord, scanning it like a skeptic instead of proving it like a spirited man! Ah! brother, repent, and the Lord will forgive thee!...Mrs. Caird [Mary Campbell's married name] is a saint of God, and hath the gift of prophecy.*⁵⁹ Thomas Bayne wrote, concerning Robert Story: *In 1830 his parishioner, Mary Campbell, professed to have received the 'gift of tongues,' and though Story exposed her imposture, she found disciples in London, and was credited by Edward Irving, then in the maelstrom of his impassioned fanaticism. On the basis of her predictions arose the 'Holy Catholic Apostolic Church.'*⁶⁰ In other words,

⁵⁷ Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972 (from a series of lectures delivered at the Columbia Theological Seminary 1917–1918); pp. 150–152, taken from *Reminiscences*, p. 252.

⁵⁸ Paraphrased from Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972 (from a series of lectures delivered at the Columbia Theological Seminary 1917–1918); p. 142.

⁵⁹ Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972 (from a series of lectures delivered at the Columbia Theological Seminary 1917–1918); p. 146–147, 294. He quoted from Henry Henderson, *The Religious controversies of Scotland*, 1950, p. 126 who quoted from *Life Story of Rosneath*, by his son, p. 231.

⁶⁰ Thomas Bayne, *Dictionary of National Biography*; Vol. LIV, p. 430, taken from Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972, p. 295.

here we have one of the most well-documented original tongues groups, and it is based upon a lie to begin with. You may think that this is an example of Satan counterfeiting God's work, which, obviously it is. However, during that time period there was no other tongues group to counterfeit—that is, this is not an apostate tongues group which led some of the godly tongues people away—this was the only known group like this from that time period. When Satan counterfeits God's works, it is to lead some astray. Satan was not leading people from other tongues groups astray; Satan was leading believers astray with the Irvingites.

- q. Nichol: *On October 19, 1832, the Exhibition Hall off Oxford Street was acquired and made into a church. Needless to say, "Pentecostal" manifestations occurred at the opening meeting and continued thereafter. As a matter of fact, the "Gifted Prophets" and the new order of "Apostles," among whom Irving was not numbered, took over the church, subjecting their minister to their prophetic utterances and rulings, and even interrupting his sermons and the administration of the ordinances with their charismatic outbursts.*⁶¹
- r. Nichol points out four similarities between the Irvingites and contemporary Pentecostals:
- i. Speaking in tongues was considered evidentiary of spirit baptism.
 - ii. Speaking in tongues and receiving the spirit post salvation was initially necessary in order to receive one of the charismatic gifts of the Spirit.
 - iii. The gifts manifested by the Apostles at Pentecost and soon after are gifts which have belonged to the church throughout its history, which had been withheld as the church had been unfaithful.
 - iv. The Presbyterians expelled Irving and his charismatic following, forcing them to begin a new denomination, the Catholic Apostolic Church.
- s. The early Methodist groups, particularly those in Northern England and Wales, *had some experience with extraordinary spiritual phenomena*. When Dr. Conyers Middleton claimed that the gift of tongues and miracles had died out with the Apostles, John Wesley countered with the example of the Cévenols. Wesley gave an account in both his *Journal* and in *A Short History of the People Called Methodists* of a meeting in Huntingdonshire in May of 1779, during which both the adults and children *fell under the power of the Spirit. They shrieked, swooned, fell to the floor as if dead, babbled senselessly, cried out in praise of God, and so on...The Great Awakening and subsequent revivals produced some unusual by-products...the demand for a tangible display of the receiving of the Spirit...[created] astounding physical demonstrations. Barking, violent jerking, shrieking and shouting, wild dancing, fainting, and the like were common.*⁶² I have seen short arguments that Wesley did approve and others which said he did not approve of this behavior. David Shibley claims that John Wesley was really the precursor to the charismatic movement in the 1700's.⁶³ In my five volume set, *History of the Christian Church*, it makes mention of Wesley having an interest, if not a leaning, toward mysticism early on during his days at Oxford, but that he later appeared to repudiate this viewpoint.⁶⁴ Given that the Methodist Church does not have any stated doctrinal leanings towards mysticism, speaking in tongues or a second experience with the Holy Spirit, to me that would indicate that this was not a part of his doctrine.⁶⁵ In any case, such a point is moot—that these things did occur has his testimony. I had personally thought, until this study, that the phrase *slain in the Spirit* was a relatively new one. John McGee, an evangelist of that group, recounts the following incident from the summer of 1799: *William (John's brother) felt such a power come over him that he quit his seat and sat down on the floor of the pulpit, I suppose not knowing what he did. A power which caused me to tremble was upon me. There was a solemn weeping all over the house. At length I rose up and exhorted them to let the Lord God Omnipotent reign in their hearts, and their soul should live. Many broke the silence. The woman in the east end of the house shouted tremendously.*

⁶¹ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 23.

⁶² Quoted and paraphrased from Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 64.

⁶³ David Shibley, *A Charismatic Truce*; Thomas Nelson inc., Publishers, ©1978, p. 26.

⁶⁴ *History of the Christian Church*; by Henry C. Sheldon; Hendrickson Publishers, printed 1999 (reprinted from 1895 edition); Vol. II, pp. 41–42.

⁶⁵ David Shibley did quote from Wesley's journal of 1759, which questions whether unusual manifestations of the Spirit are possible and whether we should be giving them more credence than we do. David Shibley, *A Charismatic Truce*; Thomas Nelson inc., Publishers, ©1978, p. 35.

*I left the pulpit and went through the audience shouting and exhorting with all possible ecstasy and energy, and the floor was soon covered with the slain.*⁶⁶

- t. The Shakers were founded by visionary Mother Ann Lee, who considered herself to be the female equivalent of Jesus Christ. *She claimed to be able to speak in seventy-two languages. The Shakers believed sexual intercourse was sinful, even within marriage. They spoke in tongues while dancing and singing in a trancelike state.*⁶⁷ They moved from England to the United States in 1774, first settling in New York and then branching out from there. *According to their "Summary View of the Millennial Church," published in 1848, they regarded tongues, dancing, and various ecstatic states as the highest expressions of worship.*⁶⁸
- u. The Mormons, who are considered by the majority of Christendom to be a cult (they have additional *Books of Truth* besides the Bible), also had an involvement with these gifts of the Spirit. Joseph Smith, their founder, mentions the gift of tongues and the gift of interpretation of tongues several times in the Book of Mormon, giving his tacit approval. Mormon 9:7–9: And again I speak unto you who deny the revelations of God, and say that they are done away, that there are no revelations, nor prophecies, nor gifts, nor healing, nor speaking with tongues, and the interpretation of tongues; Behold I say unto you, he that denieth these things knoweth not the gospel of Christ; yea, he has not read the scriptures; if so, he does not understand them. For do we not read that God is the "same yesterday, today, and forever, and in him there is no variableness neither shadow of changing"? Joseph Smith, by the way, translated this book from a set of gold plates written in reform Egyptian⁶⁹ hieroglyphics, and, surprisingly enough, even though this was translated in the mid-1800's, it read as if old King James of England of almost three centuries previous had commissioned this work. He was able to read these reform Egyptian hieroglyphics by means of "*Urim and Thummim*," a type of miraculous spectacles, which the angel Moroni had the foresight to provide for the budding seer.⁷⁰ In more recent times, the Mormons have downplayed tongues, although they have not forbidden its use.
- v. A separate experience with the Holy Spirit was reportedly espoused by Charles Finney in the mid-1800's (again, according to Shibley). From him came several smaller denominations: the Church of the Nazarene, the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Church of God, which Shibley classified as non-charismatic holiness churches, whatever the hell that means.⁷¹ Although I could not find evidence of Finney's charismatic leanings in either the *History of the Christian Church* or in the World Book Encyclopedia, both mentioned that he believed in human perfection on earth, which is a sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit (he only thought that perfection on earth was possible and did not claim to reach it himself). He was apparently an outstanding evangelist who probably should have stuck with the gospel and left theology to those with the gift of pastor-teacher.
- w. Wesley had some trouble explaining sanctification, and his church split into a holiness faction and an anti-holiness faction. This took place during the last two decades of the 19th century. My sources were unclear at this point, but I would assume that the holiness faction purported that a man could reach spiritual perfection here on earth. That faction eventually split from the Methodist Church entirely. I do not have any information concerning their views toward the gifts of the Spirit, but theologically, they don't appear to be too far afield from some Pentecostal groups.

⁶⁶ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 65. He took it from E. T. Clark's *The Small Sects in America*; Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1949, p. 91.

⁶⁷ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 234.

⁶⁸ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 66.

⁶⁹ A real language only to the Mormons.

⁷⁰ Walter Martin, *The Kingdom of the Cults*; Bethany House Publishers, ©1997, p. 187.

⁷¹ Okay, I'll give you the quoted explanation: Donald Dayton explains: *I would suggest that the term "holiness" be used to describe conservative, revivalistic Wesleyanism and "pentecostal" be used to describe those groups that see the baptism of the Holy Spirit accompanied by the experience of "speaking in tongues." This would make perfect sense out of the name Pentecostal Holiness Church, the group with which Oral Roberts was formerly associated. This group does merge a holiness view of sanctification with a pentecostal view of glossolalia, but not all Pentecostal groups are Wesleyan or holiness in understanding. The Assemblies of God, for example, are more "baptistic."* Donald Dayton, *The American Holiness Movement: A Bibliographic Introduction*; B.L. Fisher Library, ©1970, p. 25.

- x. Interestingly enough, only one of my sources, Nichol, mentioned the Church of God. In 1896, several years before the beginning of the modern tongues movement, 100 people in Shearer, North Carolina, received the post-salvation baptism, as well as the gift of tongues, while worshiping at a local schoolhouse. Their organization was called the *Christian Union*, which they later changed, in 1902, to the *Holiness Church*, which gave way to the name the *Church of God* in 1907. I don't know if this group is generally ignored because there is less historical record⁷² or because they were so small (by 1907, there were only 200 members of this group spread between five churches in three southern states). Their movement was also damaged when A. J. Tomlinson, the one who, throughout most of their early history, was their leader and responsible for their finances, was removed for financial impropriety in 1923. However, this group has grown considerably since then, establishing several Bible colleges and junior colleges, its membership at over 200,000 as of 1960. They are one of the few churches which practice foot washing ceremonies.
- y. Donald Burdick and John Sherrill mark the beginning on New Year's Eve, 1900, at Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas. Charles Fox Parham, a former lay preacher in the Congregational Church, who had moved then to the Methodists, and then to the Holiness movement, founded Bethel Bible College in October of 1900. While he seemed to have more in common with the Holiness movement than with his previous two associations, he felt as though there was something lacking. In his own study of Acts 2, he said: *If God had ever equipped His ministers in that way [then] He could do it today...Anybody today ought to be able to preach in any language of the world if they had horse sense enough to let God use their tongue and throat.*⁷³ Obviously, he did not take note of the fact that Peter preached the sermon in koine Greek, which Peter spoke and the crowd fully understood. In December of 1900, Parham had to go to Kansas City, so, upon his departure, he instructed his students to study their Bibles, examining the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts. Upon his return, his students told him that the baptism of the Spirit was usually accompanied in the book of Acts with speaking in tongues. At that point, they began to pray for the same manifestations of the Holy Spirit. On New Year's Eve, there were 40 students and 70 other gathered when a student named Agnes Ozman asked for the director of the school to lay his hands on her head and pray that she might receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. When he did so, immediately Miss Ozman spoke fluently in syllables which no one understood. This occurrence was the beginning of the modern Pentecostal movement.⁷⁴ Parham described it in this way: *I had scarcely repeated three dozen sentences when a glory fell upon her, a halo seemed to surround her head and face, and she began speaking in the Chinese language,⁷⁵ and was unable to speak English for three days. Seeing this marvelous manifestation of the restoration of Pentecostal power...we decided as a school to wait upon God. We felt that God was no respecter of persons and what He had so graciously poured out upon one, He would upon all.*⁷⁶ Then Nichol makes a phenomenal statement: *This event was significant not because Miss Ozman had spoken in tongues, for there had been sporadic outbursts of glossolalia throughout the history of the church...The importance of these events in Topeka is that for the first time the concept of being baptized (or filled) with the Holy Spirit was linked to an outward sign—speaking in tongues Henceforth, for the Pentecostals the evidence that one has been filled with the Holy Spirit is that he will have spoken in other tongues...This decision to seek for a Holy Spirit baptism with the expectation of speaking in tongues, says J. Roswell Flower, was a momentous one. "It...made the Pentecostal Movement of the Twentieth Century."*⁷⁷

⁷² According to Nichol, the definitive work on this group is by Charles Conn's *Like a Mighty Army*; Cleveland, TN, Church of God Publishing House, 1955.

⁷³ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 27; he quotes Charles Fox Parham, "The Latter Rain"; *The Apostolic Faith*, XXVIII, April 1951, p. 3.

⁷⁴ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 7 and John Sherrill, *They Speak with Other Tongues*; p. 38. E. Glenn Hinson places this event on New Year's Day, 1901.

⁷⁵ Why not?

⁷⁶ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 28; he quotes Charles Fox Parham, "The Latter Rain"; *The Apostolic Faith*, XXVIII, April 1951, p. 4

⁷⁷ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 28. Flower was the General Secretary of the Assemblies of God for decades. Nichol, in a footnote, refers the reader to Flowers' article "Birth of the Pentecostal Movement" in the *Pentecostal Evangel*, 38, Nov. 26, 1950, p. 3.

- z. This group under Parham was struck with a tremendous sense of urgency. They had just experienced the gift of tongues, which they associated with the latter rain of the book of Joel. They decided that the events and time period of the book of Joel (the latter days) must be their time period. Therefore, Parham and company suspended all classes and those at the school prayed for each one of them to get this second blessing. Parham and his wife and Agnes Ozman and others began an evangelical tour. Obviously, if they were blessed by the Holy Spirit in this special way, then their evangelism would also be dramatic. Recall that the Apostles had 3000 converts in one day on the Day of Pentecost—so how could they expect less? The evangelical tour was unsuccessful and the school itself had to be closed and moved. It was not until 1903 that their movement began to gain some momentum. Two *cures* caught the attention of the outside world; then there were more. Mary A. Arthur of Galena, Kansas, had dyspepsia for fourteen years. She also suffered from prolapsus, hemorrhoids, paralysis of the bowels, her right eye was virtually blind from birth, and her left eye suffered from inflammation and nerve strain. Mrs. Arthur had tried oculists, allopathy, homeopathy, osteopathy,⁷⁸ Christian Science and her own pastor. She went to a meeting of Parham's where he was teaching divine healing, and returned to Galena healed. A friend of hers was soon thereafter healed of a cancerous tumor. Suddenly, Parham's ministry took off. He was holding meetings at Mrs. Arthur's house which then had to be moved to a tent outside, and then, due to the weather, moved to the Grand Leader building on Main Street. His fame quickly spread, and Nichol quotes a story from the Cincinnati Inquirer from January 27, 1904: *Almost three months have elapsed since this man [Parham] came to Galena and during that time he has healed over a thousand people and converted more than 800...During the services there have been as many as 50 people at the altar at one time seeking to be restored in soul and body. Here people who have not walked for years without the aid of crutches have risen from the altar with their limbs so straightened that they were enabled to lay aside their crutches, to the astonishment of the audience. These cures, they claim, are effected solely through prayer and faith. Nothing else is done, though Mr. Parham often lays his hands upon the afflicted one while the devotions are going on...Here women who have formerly lived for society and gaiety kneel beside some fallen sister and endeavor to point her heaven war, and here the "followers" receive what they term "the Pentecost," and are enabled to speak in foreign tongues, in languages with which they are, when free from this power, utterly unfamiliar. This alone is considered one of the most remarkable things of the meetings.*⁷⁹ By 1905, Parham had lit a fire which resulted in over a half dozen cities which had their own *full gospel* meetings and, in Texas alone, there were now 60 full gospel preachers and 25,000 full gospel converts.
- aa. Burdick records that this spread from Topeka to Azusa⁸⁰ Mission in Los Angeles by way of Houston, Texas. According to McGee, the modern Pentecostal movement broke out right down the street from his famous Church of the Open Door in a Methodist Church on Azuza Street in the heart of Los Angeles, April of 1906. Black minister W. J. Seymour, who had been schooled as a holiness minister in Houston at another school founded by Parham, was called to pastor a church in Los Angeles. For his first sermon, he preached that those who received the baptism of the Spirit would speak in tongues, as the Apostles had on the day of Pentecost. This severely offended Julia Hutchins, who believed herself to have received this baptism of the Spirit subsequent to salvation (as did many holiness types), and in Seymour's sermon, he was telling her that she didn't get it all. The congregation as a whole was apparently offended that, despite the fact that they had, for the most part, been baptized by the spirit, that Seymour told them that they did not get the fullness, so, when Seymour returned for the afternoon service, he found the church door bolted. A Richard and Ruth Asberry invited Seymour to conduct worship services which met at their home at 214 North Bonnie Brae Street in Los Angeles. On April 9, 1906 (another account gives the date as the 12th), seven were apparently seized by a spirit and they spoke in tongues. Nichol says that they

⁷⁸ An oculist [pronounced *AWK-u-lisť*] is a doctor who specializes in eyes; allopathy [pronounced *al-LOP-a-thee*] is treating a symptom with agents which produce result different from the disease; homeopathy [pronounced *HOE-mee-OP-a-thee*] is treatment with drugs which produce the effects of the disease which one is attempting to cure; and osteopathy [pronounced *OS-tee-OP-a-thee*], which restores health by manipulation of the skeleton.

⁷⁹ From John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 31, who took it from Klaude Kendrick, *The Promise Fulfilled: A History of the Modern Pentecostal Movement*, Springfield, MO, Gospel Publishing House, 1961, p. 59.

⁸⁰ I am thinking that the other spelling is correct, as McGee taught close to Azuza Street for many decades.

shouted and praised God for three days and three nights, which would account for the date discrepancy.⁸¹ The following week, they moved to new digs on Azusa Street, renting out a building which, ironically enough, had been, at one time, the meeting place for a Methodist Church. The place was filled with building supplies; they put long boards on top of empty nail buckets for seats. The meetings ostensibly began 10:00 am on Sunday and continued until 3:00 am the next morning, with people *seeking salvation, sanctification, the Holy Spirit baptism, or healing*.⁸² When the press heard of this unusual revival, they gave them enough publicity which helped the church to increase considerably in size. Shibley also agrees with this as the proper beginnings of the Pentecostal Church, and from this came several unabashedly charismatic churches, e.g., the Assemblies of God, the Pentecostal Holiness Church, and the Church of God (in Cleveland and Tennessee).⁸³ So, either 1900 or 1906 seems to be the most likely date for the modern-day Pentecostal movement to begin. This is likely the first *notable* outbreak of the modern tongues movement, as my one set of church history books, completed in the late 1800's, do not even mention this gift in the modern era (from the reformationist's on).

- bb. Interestingly enough, Seymour invited his mentor, Charles Parham, out to the Azusa Street Mission so that Parham could put the reigns on some fanatical behavior. Apparently, he spoke once or twice, and then was denied direct access (it is unclear whether this access was denied by Seymour or by prominent members of the congregation). William H. Durham received the holy ghost at Apostolic Faith Mission on Azusa Street, and had apparently become an early teacher of note. When he returned to his old church to teach, he was locked out, as his teaching contradicted a theory of sanctification held by Seymour. Nichol reported that a woman only identified as Bridgett actually attacked him with her hatpin.
- cc. Coterminous with the Pentecostal revival in Los Angeles, but more difficult to trace its roots, was a similar sort of religious happening in Mukti, India. We do not have a record of anyone speaking in tongues, but there appears to be ample evidence of a spirit baptism. *...the baptism of fire...burned away such negative qualities in the believer's life as pride, anger, worldliness, selfishness, and immoral tendencies*.⁸⁴ *Some of the girls responded to this "baptism" by shaking, dancing, seeing visions, and dreaming dreams*.⁸⁵ An actual instance of speaking in tongues in India appears to have taken place almost coterminously with the events previously described on Azusa Street. A nine year old girl had been to a meeting and was convinced that she needed the baptism of the spirit. When she returned to her boarding school, she and four other girls began to pray for the spirit. One of them began to speak in a language that she did not understand. A Canon Haywood sought a linguist to listen to this little girl, and later reported that she had been pleading to God for salvation in Libya in an unknown tongue. It is unclear who the linguist was or how much of this was Haywood and how much was the linguist.
- dd. This movement has several synonyms: it is called the *full gospel* movement, the charismatic movement, the Pentecostal movement. Since it has only made true inroads into mainstream Christian thought in the past century, calling this the *full gospel* indicates that the Christian church has limped along for almost two centuries on the 80% gospel.⁸⁶ Somewhere during the 1950's and 1960's, this *full-gospel* movement filtered into other major denominations, notably Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Baptists.
- ee. Along with this early infiltration, there came a reaction from the churches that they infiltrated. Many churches excluded those who were charismatic; some denominational churches which has become charismatic were separated from their original denomination; and there was even some scattered violence. Nichol chronicles much of this in his book, *The Pentecostals*. I am hoping that it is obvious that a fundamentalist church has the right to disengage from charismatics and to remove them from their congregation. I hope that it is also obvious that there is no excuse for violence or the destruction of property.

⁸¹ Nichol cites "How Pentecost Came to Los Angeles," *Pentecost Evangel*, I. (Oct. 7, 1962), p. 8f.

⁸² John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 33. For those with an interest, I recommend Nichol's book, which contains a lot of details which I have left out.

⁸³ From David Shibley, *A Charismatic Truce*; Thomas Nelson inc., Publishers, ©1978, p. 27.

⁸⁴ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 47, who was quoting from Minnie Abrams, "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit at Mukti," *The Missionary Review of the World*, XXV, Aug. 1906, p. 619f..

⁸⁵ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 47.

⁸⁶ Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles*; ©1973 by The Banner of Truth Trust, p. 11.

- ff. Neo-Pentecostalism: the charismatic movement has gone full circle in its approach. It began in various denominations, and those who experienced the spirit were often urged to remain in the denomination wherein they were found. Many were forced out and they had to reorganize. Until about 1959, the charismatic movement was primarily confined to specific denominations. This more recent charismatic thrust has invaded Catholic, Episcopalian, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Lutheran groups. Most of these churches then experience a split into charismatics and noncharismatics.
- gg. Obviously, there is a great deal of history still to be covered, but the purpose of this study is not the historical background of the Pentecostal Church or of the holiness, full-gospel movement. For those who would like to continue this, may I recommend *The Pentecostals* by John Thomas Nichol or *Glossolalia* by Stagg, Hinson and Oates.
20. Now, in this portion of the study, you will note that I have given you one of the most comprehensive lists of the use of tongues throughout the history of the church, and you will note that it has never been associated with any significant Christian movement or believer, apart from Wesley, and, as has been discussed, that is debatable. In the past, the tongues movement has always been viewed as an heretical movement or as a fringe element, when it existed. Harris Kaasa writes: *In summary we may say that there is considerable evidence for the recurrence of this phenomenon. At the same time, no one can fail to be struck by its relative infrequency and by the fact that it occurs mostly among members of (in context) radical sects. Its exceptional presence should not blind us to its general absence in the main stream of church history.*⁸⁷ Hinson writes: *If it is indeed to be seen as an evidence of the Holy Spirit's work, why did it have such an inconsistent and intermittent history? If it were as significant as Pentecostals maintain, would it not have occurred regularly and without letup throughout the many centuries of Christian history?*⁸⁸ The fact that we do not ever find this gift or movement associated historically with hundreds of great men of church history cannot be overemphasized. Only recently has the charismatic movement made great inroads into the church of God. We may have a large number of Christians and Bibles in this day and age, as well as a plethora of Christian radio stations, but we have very few believers who really know the Word of God and damn few pastor teachers who bother to teach it.
21. Charismatics essentially have two choices: tongues have either been with the church for the past 2000 years or it has not.
- This puts the charismatic in a bad spot. If the charismatic chooses to believe that the Christian church has always had tongues, then they are faced with their history, most of which is cultic in nature. If the charismatic believes that tongues are a revival for the last times, then he is faced with two problems: (1) where in Scripture can this be justified? And, (2) why do the tongues groups of the past century have much more in common with the cult groups of the past than they do with the gift of tongues used on the day of Pentecost?
 - The other option is that tongues returned to Christianity at the turn of the century, because we just happen to have men in this century who are deeper and more devoted to God than in the previous 18 centuries. This means that Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Knox, Bullinger, Augustine, Whitefield, etc. just did not have what it takes as believers. However, those in the present-day charismatic movement are at a spiritual plateau superior to these men, and thus more deserving of the gift of the Holy Spirit.
22. Charismatics often have a way of quoting a Scripture here or there, taken generally out of its context, to justify anything, and they often do so with Joel 2:28 and connect it with Joel 2:23. Peter quotes Joel 2:28 at Pentecost: **“And it will come to pass after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind, and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams and your young men will see visions.”** Then, the charismatic who has really studied, points to Joel 2:23, which mentions the early rain (which he interprets as Pentecost) and the latter rain (which he interprets as tongues in the 20th century). However, the context of this passage speaks of Jesus Christ, the God of Israel, reuniting with Israel, as Israel returns to God (Joel 2:12–17). This will all take place in the tribulation, once the Church has been removed from this world. Israel will be back in the land and surrounded by armies—the northern army is in view in Joel 2:19 and the armies of the nations around Israel are in view in Joel 3:1–3. We cannot even interpret this as the early rain refers to Israel under God's great blessing, under David and Solomon and the latter rain is the great blessing and protection from

⁸⁷ Taken from Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 34, who quoted Harris Kaasa, “An Historical Evaluation” in “A Symposium on Speaking in Tongues,” *Dialog, II*, (Spring, 1963), 157.

⁸⁸ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 74.

God in the end times (*rain*, in an agricultural society, is often a term for blessing from above). For an agricultural society, both rains are required. The early rains are fall rains and the late rains are those in the spring. Together, they refer to blessing—not to blessings at different times. Vv. 21–27 speak of the blessing that God gives to Israel in the last times. As a part of this, God will pour out His Spirit upon Israel, which is vv. 28–29. However, what will also be a part of the last days are great signs in the heavens, as are mentioned in vv. 30–31. As you see, there is nothing contextual whatsoever to refer to the gift of tongues; and certainly not convincing proof that men will speak in tongues during the times of the Apostles and during today's time. Now, why did Peter quote this? What happened at Pentecost 30 A.D. got a lot of attention. Those who were there had never seen anything like it before. What Peter does is point to the Old Testament Scriptures which indicate that there are great works of the Spirit to come; and that Pentecost was simply one of them. Pentecost is not a fulfillment of Joel 2:28 by any means; it is a similar situation. We cover this in more detail when we get to that point in Peter's Pentecost speech.

23. Furthermore, we also have the speaking in tongues among Hindus, Mormons and other pagans.⁸⁹ Actually, the list of those nonchristian cults and groups who speak in tongues is just about as long as the entire history of speaking in tongues in Christian cults.⁹⁰ Dillow: *Tongues speaking as manifested today is a purely heathen concept. Never since the Fall has God employed such a method to enable man to communicate with Him. It is entirely unnecessary. Pagan tribes all over the world have been speaking in tongues for centuries. The similarities between their practice and that of the tongues movement are striking. At its root the movement is simply a merger of Christianity with paganism.*⁹¹ Now, just how on earth do you determine which is true and which is false? Any charismatic will tell you that they just *know* that it is from God, and if I was to experience what they experienced, then I would know as well. I'm certain that any religious person who experiences tongues will attribute it to God and that is how they will sincerely feel. There is **nothing** in the Bible that indicates that we can discern between what is true and what is false by what feels right. I've been in several holy roller churches early on in my Christian life and let me tell you, they did not *feel* right nor did they *feel* holy to me. However, that in itself, was not good enough to write them off as unspiritual and unscriptural. In a couple of points, I will explain fairly thoroughly that charismatics deviate from the faith with regards to salvation and spirituality. Just because they continually shout out the name of *Jesus*, this does not make them believers. **“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Fathers who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’”** (Matt. 7:21–23; Psalm 6:8).
24. Union by the spirit? Although there is an initial bond between people of different denominations who have received the holy ghost experience, there has also been some very serious internal dissension throughout the history of the century old charismatic movement. I already mentioned the schism between Parham and Seymour's congregation, despite the fact that Seymour was mentored by Parham. Nichol records a great deal of this early internal dissension, attributing some to the original denominational affiliations and some simply to human failings.
- a. One of the points of contention concerned sanctification. One branch, the holiness contingent, felt that, subsequent to salvation, there is this experience which a believer goes through which makes him *dead to sin*. His soul becomes free of sinful inclination. Once we had purified ourselves to a certain point, then the holy ghost would come and indwell us, as He obviously would not indwell an unclean vessel. Durham claimed that there was no need for this second work of grace, because salvation changed a man's heart and his nature. Durham backed up his argument by the conversion of those who were also filled with the Spirit, although they had not gone through some cleansing period first (Nichol did not indicate that Scripture was a basis for arguments on either side).
 - b. There was also a serious schism in the Pentecostal faith in England, although I did not really understand the issues that they were disputing. It appeared to be more of debate over the extent of the practice of the gifts of the spirit.

⁸⁹ As admitted by David Shibley, *A Charismatic Truce*; Thomas Nelson inc., Publishers, ©1978, p. 74

⁹⁰ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 172–173. Dillow gives a shopping list of these various groups, as do others.

⁹¹ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 189.

- c. The Pentecostal movement in Germany and Sweden butted heads as well. The Germans apparently leaned more toward visions, prophetic announcements and personal revelations than did the Swedes. The Scandinavians in particular objected to matters of dispute being settled by some prophetic statement. Interestingly enough, according to Nichol, these kinds of prophetic pronouncements were never given near as much credence in the United States when it came to matters of doctrine and organization. Personally, I see this as a problem for the charismatic—someone either is a prophet or he is not. In the Old Testament, God ordered false prophets to be executed. If any Pentecostal group has determined that Charlie Brown doesn't always give prophetic utterances which deserve credence, then Charlie Brown should be, at the very least, disfellowshipped. You don't get to have it both ways—you don't get to flaunt all the gifts of the Spirit, but then denigrate one when you don't like it.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

25. Additional miscellaneous descriptions of charismatic meetings:

- a. Robert Richardson: *Concurrently with the speaking in tongues, dancing is going on...An elderly matron arises and holding her arms out horizontally, pirouettes majestically to and fro in front of the altar. A sturdy, bearded, son of the soil jumps up and down, rising each time an astonishing distance in the air. On the platform the pastor, while likewise leaping up and down, whirls around and around like a dancing dervish. A female saint takes i into her head to dance up one aisle and down the other, and proceeds to do this, keeping time to the music provided by a burly negro who follow her with a banjo...All the saints proceed to stand on tip toe and groan and shriek at the top of their voices for several minutes.*⁹²
- b. Soon after becoming a believer, I attended several churches, looking for one which taught the Bible. One such church was called the *Open Bible Church*. Nothing really occurred for the first 45 minutes or so. The pastor's sermon was a complete waste for 45 minutes as he had an electric guitar strapped on his person and he was complaining about the more recent gospel music and how we should return to the older gospel tunes; and, periodically, he would play what I guess was an old standard. At the end of the service, there was a prayer, and then dozens of people began speaking all at once in various tongues, one powerful woman's voice was above all the others. That's when I bolted for the door.
- c. At another charismatic church that I attended, it was a small group and they tended to meander about the church in a pack in order to heal those who were sick. I recall the pack of a dozen people, led pretty much by the pastor and his wife (if memory serves) would go from person to person needing healing or prayer, place their hands on them (most everyone in the group would do this) and they would pray. I don't recall whether praying in tongues was a part of this. One thing which I recall clearly, however, is, as they were about to leave one person and move on to the next, a young lady in the transient group suggested that they remain praying for this man until he was completely healed. The pastor flashed her what I can only imagine was a dirty look; they stayed another few minutes with this person, and then moved on (I don't believe he got *fully healed*, however).
- d. Tomlinson: *Yesterday was a wonderful day in the camp [meeting]. In the beginning of the service in the morning, one or two messages were given in tongues, and I gave the interpretation. Afterwards I was seized with two or three spells of weeping and finally fell on my back under the overwhelming power of God. After screaming for a while as though my heart would break, I became a little more quiet...The meeting that followed during the day is indescribable. Men, women and children screaming, shouting, praying, leaping, dancing, and falling prostrate under god's overwhelming power. Wonderful!*⁹³
- e. This is not to say that each and every charismatic group have meetings which degenerate into carnivals. In the middle of a sermon, Pastor Frank Lindquist was interrupted by a woman who began to sing in the spirit. He asked her to be silent and she explained that she was moved by the spirit. Lindquist countered that he had been impelled by the spirit to deliver this sermon, so she would have to be quiet, as the spirit would not contradict himself.

⁹² John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 75, taken from Robert Richardson, "Pentecostal Prophets," *Open Court*, XLII, 1928, pp. 678ff..

⁹³ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 228, who quoted A. J. Tomlinson, *Answering the Call of God*; Cleveland, TN; White Wing Publishing House, n.d., pp. 14–15.

- f. Also, on the more conservative side, we have Dingman: *It has been well said that the Holy Spirit is a gentleman—He does not disturb meetings. There is a proper time and place for manifestations of the Holy Spirit and it is not a time when it will inject a harsh note into the meeting and disturb either speaker, singer, or audience. May God grant that we may never quench the Spirit, but may He also grant that we do quench emotional outbreaks that are not of His leading.*⁹⁴
- g. I have mentioned the movement, the *Third Wave*; although they have attempted to distance themselves somewhat from Pentecostals and charismatics, and their excesses, that does not appear to be the case. MacArthur writes: *Some men from our church staff recently visited Wimber's Vineyard in Anaheim. The evening they were there, they witnessed virtual pandemonium. Wimber tried to get everyone speaking in tongues at once. Women were convulsing on the floor; one man lay on his back in a catatonic state; and all around, hundreds of people were dancing, running, shouting, and standing on chairs.*⁹⁵ **If anyone speaks in a foreign language, two or at the most, three, and each in turn, and let one translate....let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner** (1Cor. 14:27, 40).
- h. I include these various happenings inside the charismatic church so that the reader does not need to experience it first-hand. Although such excesses do not show the charismatic movement in a favorable light, these actions are not in themselves the problem; they are the result of the problem, which is the teaching of anti-Biblical doctrines.
- i. There are even television shows of various churches where the minister of the church, in front of the church, speaks in tongues; his wife following suit, as do the members of the congregation.
- j. I need to add that not all charismatic churches are like this, which actually was a surprise to me. I have two personal friends of mine who attend *The Home Church* of San Jose, California,⁹⁶ which is a church which believes in the second work of the Spirit after salvation, as well as in the gifts, which would include the gift of tongues. However, *no one* speaks in tongues during the service, and, apparently, *no one* gets the baptism while in church (or, there is no manifestation of it as is found in many other churches). What the church does is teach two classes, from time to time, on the gifts of the Spirit and Spirit baptism; and then, a third class is given, sort of as an option, to those who want to receive this filling or baptism of the Spirit. Whereas, this appears to be more civilized, we do have a problem here. If this *second work* of the Spirit is so important, to which all Pentecostals and charismatics would agree, then, isn't there a problem where this is presented as an option in the Christian life? Salvation by faith in Christ is no option; you are either a believer or you are not. You have either chosen to spend eternity with God or you have chosen, each and every second of your life, to spend a life apart from God. If there is a second work of the Spirit, a baptism which occurs apart from salvation, and, because we can do nothing apart from the Holy Spirit, how can a church present this as an enhancement to or an option of the Christian life. Such a position denigrates the power of the Holy Spirit. Secondly, is there any Scriptural support for a person choosing that, at some point in time, they will receive the so-called *spirit baptism*, and then they do? That is, do I, by choice, have the option of living my life apart from the Holy Spirit for a month, two months, or ten years; and then, with some fervent prayer and assistance of others, can I suddenly call upon the Spirit to baptize me? It would seem to me that the first order of business of a charismatic church for the new believer would be to get that person baptized in the spirit. Now, I fully realize that I have placed the charismatic in the position of *damned if they do* and *damned if they don't*. However, where would the proper balance be between the excesses found in most charismatic churches and a church where the ministry of the Holy Spirit is an option?
26. Leadings of the spirit: it is difficult to determine when someone is speaking from the Holy Spirit and when they are speaking from their own spirit. Pentecostals have certainly discovered that. Nichol mentioned that some people were sent out to the mission field on the basis of the prophetic utterings of another—people who were wholly unsuited for that ministry. Others have been married, resulting in horrendous mismatches, having been first urged by prophetic utterance.⁹⁷ When a person claims to speak from the spirit, and it is a matter outside the realm of doctrine, how do you determine whether it is true or false?

⁹⁴ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 229, taken from Briggs Dingman, "Unction of Emotion?" *Pentecostal Evangel*, XXXIII (Dec. 1, 1945, p. 3.

⁹⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 130.

⁹⁶ Actually, one of them no longer attends the church.

⁹⁷ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 76.

27. Animosity between charismatics and noncharismatics. There has been fault on both sides here, but the animosity between the two groups does not go hand-in-hand with the unity of the Spirit.
- a. Nichol records incidents early in the charismatic movement of persecution by noncharismatics which were utterly deplorable acts. There was a group of Pentecostals in Cherokee County, North Carolina, who had moved into a log cabin to worship. That log cabin was subsequently burned; and when a rain doused the fire, their opposition used dynamite. A leader of theirs was shot with buckshot, various homes were broken into and things were stolen, water sources were polluted and individual homes were burned.⁹⁸ Although we do not have a plethora of such incidents, even just one is a black eye and a terrible embarrassment for noncharismatic believers. These methods of opposition are reprehensible.
 - b. Their doctrine of a post-salvation experience was declared heretical by many bodies of believers and charismatics were often disfellowshipped. For reasons which I have discussed, there is nothing wrong with a church excluding those who (1) do not adhere to their beliefs, and, (2) subvert the authority of the pastor or the denomination.
 - c. Charismatic leaders have also expressed some rather unkind thoughts toward their critics. Benny Hinn, in 1990, on television, said: *Somebody's attacking me because of something I'm teachings. Let me tell you something, brother: You watch it!...You know, I've looked for one verse in the Bible, I just can't seem to find it. One verse that said, 'If you don't like them, kill them.' I really wish I could find it!...Sometimes I wish God will give me a Holy Ghost machine gun; I'll blow your head off!*⁹⁹
 - d. Paul Couch's public response to those who criticized him based on the basis of Scripture: *"I think they're [his critics] damned and on their way to hell and I don't think there's any redemption for them...I say, To hell with you! Get out of my life! Get out of my way!...And I want to say to all you scribes, Pharisees, heresy hunters—all of you that are going around picking little bits of doctrinal error out of everybody's eyes...Get out of God's way; quick blocking God's bridges, or God's going to shoot you if I don't...Get out of my life! I don't want to even talk to you or hear you! I don't want to see your ugly face! Get out of my face in Jesus' name."*¹⁰⁰
 - e. One woman wrote to John MacArthur because of his stance on the charismatic movement, and said: *You resort to Greek translations and fancy words to explain away what the Holy Spirit is doing in the church today. Let me give you a piece of advice that might just save you from the wrath of almighty God: **put away your Bible and your books and stop studying.** Ask the Holy Ghost to come upon you and give you the gift of tongues. You have no right to question something you have never experienced.*¹⁰¹
 - f. So there is no mistake: any body of believers can exclude those who do not adhere to their doctrinal teachings (I am hoping that it is obvious if a church removed all of those who had sinful transgressions which are against church teaching, then there would be no one left, including the pastor). Any group of religious types can go off and organize or not organize. Whereas, it is proper and correct for us to espouse what we believe to be true, even in opposition to other groups of believers; it is not our business to infringe on their rights to worship in whatever manner they deem proper.¹⁰² If we have animosity, it should be confessed as a sin to God. And there is no excuse on either side making threats or vague threats to the other—particularly by so-called spiritual leaders.
 - g. There is a more subtle disunity which is caused by those who have *the baptism*. MacArthur explains: *If you are a Christian who has not experienced some supernatural charismatic phenomenon, perhaps you are feeling left out. You may be wondering whether God views you as a second-class Christian. If he honestly cares about you, why haven't you had a special miracle or manifested some spectacular gift? Why haven't you ascended to a higher level of spiritual bless? Why haven't you heard Jesus speak to you in an audible voice? Why hasn't he appeared physically to you? Do our charismatic friends really have a closer walk with God, a deeper sense of the Holy Spirit's power, a fuller experience of praise, a*

⁹⁸ Paraphrased from John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 73.

⁹⁹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 14, who quoted Benny Hinn from "Praise-a-thon", which was broadcast on the Trinity Broadcasting Network, Nov. 8, 1990.

¹⁰⁰ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 14, who quoted Paul Couch on the "Praise the Lord" broadcast on the Trinity Broadcasting Network, April 2, 1991..

¹⁰¹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 23.

¹⁰² Obviously, there are additional legal issues when snake-handlers expose adolescents and pre-adolescents to dangerous snakes.

*stronger motivation to witness, and a greater devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ? Could it be that we non-charismatics just do not measure up?*¹⁰³ it should be obvious that if just half of what the charismatics say is true, than we who have not had these experiences are truly second-class Christians.

28. Schizophrenic unity:

- a. However, what we do not have is one, all-encompassing denomination called the Charismatic Union which has a set list of doctrines to which they all adhere. We have covered the history of the charismatic movement. We have superficially examined the infighting and the doctrinal disputations. Dozens of charismatic-based denominations cropped up, not just one. Whenever I mention an historic viewpoint, and you, if you are a charismatic, thought, *well, that's from way back then*; or if you heard a more contemporary charismatic viewpoint, and you thought, *well, that's just goofy*, then you illustrate my point. There is no true doctrinal unity within the charismatic movement. Most agree that there is some big experience after salvation which adds something vital to the believer's life, but after that, charismatics splinter—even, as has been documented, on the gift of tongues (some groups believing tongues to always be the result of the baptism of the spirit and some which believe that is often, but not always, the result).
- b. On the one hand, the charismatic experience gives a superficial unity to those of different backgrounds. Catholics embrace Lutherans who embrace Pentecostals who embrace Baptists—as long as they have all had a similar experience. There are even some who hope for a united ecumenical coalition between many churches and church groups under the leadership of the Pope.¹⁰⁴ Thomas Edgar: *Is it not inconsistent that a movement which claims to be in direct contact with the Holy Spirit, to have all the gifts such as prophecy, apostleship, and the word of knowledge, to communicate directly with god by tongues-speaking and other means, can at the same time include Roman Catholics, conservative and liberal Protestants, amillennialists, premillennialists, Calvinists, Arminians, those who deny the verbal inspiration of the Bible, and those who reject Christ's vicarious atonement on the cross? Apparently the Holy Spirit is not concerned with communicating any information to correct all these differences, many of which are crucial and some of which are incorrect. All this direct communication with the Spirit has apparently done nothing to correct even basic errors. It has not produced unity among charismatics regarding the nature and purpose of many of the gifts. This movement has solved no theological issue, produced no advance in biblical knowledge, and has not produced more spiritual Christians. Would such an effusion of the genuine Spirit of God produce so little?*¹⁰⁵
- c. Gordon Clark: *Several things immediately strike any reader who is not asleep. First, the tongues experience is tremendously important. If it is not true to say that nothing else matters, it nonetheless seems true to say that nothing else matters very much. Speaking in tongues is the chief mark of a dedicated Christian. The clear implication is that the worship of the virgin Mary is unobjectionable, if one speaks in tongues. There is little point in justification by faith alone, one can accept merit from the treasury of the Saints, transubstantiation can be acknowledged; if only one speaks in tongues. Still more fundamental, one can place tradition on a level with Scripture and even assert new revelations from God, if only one speaks in tongues. The Pentecostalist minister [mentioned in the article in question], note well, say, "There has been no attempt [by the Protestant Charismatics] to proselyte [Roman catholic Charismatics]." In other words, Romanism is acceptable, if only one speaks in tongues.*¹⁰⁶
- d. There are apparently charismatic cults cropping up in Asia which combine Christianity with Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism.

29. Charismatic claim that the giving of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues is the *latter rain* given to the church because it had fallen into such a state of decay. Friend, the church has always been in a state of decay and one could take pretty much any century and find hundreds of things wrong with the church in general. There have always been great men who have stood their ground, standing on the firm Word of God, and there has always been a wayward church. Is our church filled with lame believers today? Absolutely. Was it this way

¹⁰³ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 20.

¹⁰⁴ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 293.

¹⁰⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 293–294, taken from Thomas R. Edgar, "The Cessation of the Sign Gifts," *Bibliotheca Sacra*; October–December 1988, p. 385.

¹⁰⁶ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 294; taken from Gordon H. Clark, *First Corinthians: A Contemporary Commentary*; Nutley, NJ; Presbyterians & Reformed, 1975, p 225.

a century ago or two centuries ago? Absolutely. From the Apostles to this day, the local church has always been in a deplorable state. There is no reason that God would suddenly restore something that believers have always had (the Holy Spirit); and no reason for Him to suddenly thrust upon the church gifts of healing, which are pretty unconvincing; and gifts of tongues, which do not bear any resemblance to their historic counterpart. Now, would Satan set up a program to lead believers and unbelievers astray with such a movement? The Bible continually points to that as the most reasonable explanation. **For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will continue to do so until He is taken out of the way. And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be delivered. And for this reason, God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe the lie in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in unrighteousness** (2Thess. 2:7–11). If you speak in tongues and you have decided already, *no matter what you say and no matter how carefully you exegete the Word of God, I know what I have experienced is of God and I am sticking with that*. You, friend, have not received the love of the truth. God's Word is greater and more important than any experience that we may have. It supercedes our upbringing and our prejudices. We either go with the Word of God or we don't; but God promised, through Paul, to send **you** a deluding influence because **you** have not received the love of the truth.

30. I should point out one of the conclusions of Hinson, that one cannot stereotype the charismatic. They come from all roads of life, various economic levels, and they have a variety of personality types. Hinson is more specific in his portion of *Glossolalia* and gives specific instances from the historical examples in his book.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

31. After examining the history, there are very few charismatics who would see their movement as one which has gone throughout all of history. Some very cultic groups practiced the gift of tongues and we have no historical mention anywhere of a group fundamental in doctrine which practiced these spiritual gifts until the turn of the century. Why now?
- a. This is the *latter rain*; what the apostles practiced was the early rain and this is the latter rain. You cannot argue anything from analogy—this is not logic and it does not prove anything. Analogies are properly used to illustrate, but they do not prove anything.
 - b. We are in a period of spiritual decay. We have always been in a period of spiritual decay. Whereas, there are a number of very bright spots in Christian history, historically, in general, we are an embarrassment to Jesus Christ.
 - c. We are in a period of great revival because the reformation put the Bible in the hands of the common man. There are two problems with this explanation:
 - i. With the reformation, the Bible was in the hands of common man for several hundred years prior to the outbreak of charismata.
 - ii. Our reformation fathers, who put the Bible into our hands, were not charismatics nor did they teach any charismatic doctrine. The great Bible teaching over those past centuries did not bring out anything to do with charismatic doctrine. Strong, careful doctrinal teaching is not generally associated with charismatic groups as much as emotional displays, experiences and appeals are.
 - d. We are in a great period of revival. Throughout Christian history, we have many revivals which have broken out. In this past century we have the first time the those who spoke in tongues as a part of a giant movement. That we are in a time of great reform and revival is debatable.
 - e. *These are the last days, and God is pouring out His Holy Spirit upon the church in these last days*. Of all the arguments, this is perhaps the most compelling, particularly because Peter quoted this Scripture on the day of Pentecost. However, you need to stop for a moment and realize that when Peter spoke, he was not thinking about 1900 years in the future. He was speaking of his day and time, during which all of the Apostles thought that Christ was returning for them during their lifetimes. Now, this is the tricky part, but we will cover it in more detail. Peter lived during a time in which revelation was progressive. That is, God did not reveal His plan to anyone in its entirety until John penned those last words on the Isle of Patmos in 100 A.D. Whether Peter thought that he was living in the last days is one thing; however,

this is not what he says in the books of Acts when he launches into his sermon. We will cover that when we move into the exegesis of that chapter.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

32. How do Pentecostals view themselves? It is obvious that I, as a person who does not believe in the validity of a necessary post-salvation experience with the Holy Spirit, and, as a person who does not believe that speaking in tongues, might be the last person to write this point. I will try to stick with what I have read and with people I know.
- a. John Thomas Nichol: *Pentecostals...are sometimes crassly emotional, too often exhibiting holier-than-thou attitudes, often suspicious of change, anti-intellectual; but, on the other hand, [they are] genuinely sincere, vitally enthusiastic, and utterly evangelistic.*¹⁰⁷
 - b. They trace their spiritual roots to Acts 2 where the Apostles tarried for the Holy Spirit.
 - c. Although I and others classify them with cultic movements, they do not see themselves that way. They see themselves as the third great force of Christianity, along with the Catholics and Protestants. They are likely to be part of mainline Catholic and Protestant churches and do not necessarily view themselves as being outside whatever institution they are a part of, even if there are significant areas where their doctrine clashes with that which is that church or denomination's. Nichol: *Pentecostals subscribe to the Reformation principles that salvation is a free gift of divine grace apart from deeds and efforts or ecclesiastical sanction; that all Christian believers are priests by virtue of their association in the Church, the Body of Christ, and as such minister to each other in matters of faith; and that the Word of God must be the norm for faith and practice, and that it is each Christian's right and duty to interpret it for himself.*¹⁰⁸
I should mention that of every charismatic which I have personally interviewed—several of whom are either evangelists or closely related to evangelists—they all had repentance from sin as a necessary ingredient of salvation. Despite the subtlety here, that is still works being added to faith. Secondly, the Catholics believe in salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ—however, they interpret grace as being *infused* rather than *imputed* (I am now referring to Catholic theologians who actually know something about their faith). The charismatic often has a concept of grace which is more akin to the Catholic's concept of grace—i.e., after salvation, we sort of act like we are saved. And, I need to add one additional fact, which we will cover in great detail in the future: here, this Pentecostal says that we are all in the Body of Christ. 1Cor. 12:13 tells us that the Holy Spirit baptizes us into the Body of Christ. If this is the case, then why do charismatic feel that it is necessary for most Christians to be baptized by the Holy Spirit some time after salvation?
 - d. Although I personally would associate them more with the snake-handlers and the poison-consumers, the Assemblies of God in 1928 formally denounced that sort of activity in their 23rd Annual Assembly.¹⁰⁹
 - e. They view the push of Pentecostalism as being a *back-to-the-Bible* movement and that their experiences can be firmly backed with Scripture. Conn: *There is absolutely no evidence during any period of the Pentecostal revival that the people ever considered themselves other than simply, orthodox Christian believers.* The British Pentecostal Fellowship concurs that they would *heartily subscribe to the Apostle's Creed.*¹¹⁰
 - f. Many Pentecostals and charismatics see their movement as one of the most powerful and one of the greatest movements in the history of the church. In terms of numbers, we do see a tremendous increase in the number of people who claim to have charismatic affiliations. However, bear in mind that many of these were confused believers who have already been evangelized and they were sucked into this movement; and realize that a great following is not validation of any ministry (II Peter 2:2).

¹⁰⁷ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. xiii.

¹⁰⁸ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 3.

¹⁰⁹ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 2.

¹¹⁰ These both came from John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 2, who first quoted Charles W. Conn, *Pillars of Pentecost*; Cleveland, Tenn.; The Pathway Press, 1956, p. 23 and the British Pentecostal Fellowship, *What Is This Pentecostal Movement?*; (London: Evangel Press, n.d., p. 10.

- g. One of the items suggested by Nichol is this: *...the Christian can attain full holiness (sanctification) only when he abandons all efforts and allows the Holy Spirit to live within him the life of Christ.*” *When the Spirit makes His abode within, it will be manifested by the believer’s experiencing a definite emotinoal reaction. This is his baptism in the Spirit—his “second blessing.”*¹¹¹ in a footnote on the same page, Nichol adds: *Sanctification, or the “second blessing,” is an experience subsequent to and distinct from justification or conversion, among holiness people. Its effect is the eradication of natural depravity or inbred sin.* Now, I will certainly admit, that if I thought for even a second that this post-salvation experience would deliver me from my natural depravity or my inbred sin, I would be first in line to get it. Unfortunately, I have known too many people who have gotten *the baptism* and their lives are no better than mine.
- h. They see themselves not only as a vibrant force which is interdenominational, but as a unifying factor, as the Spirit unifies those that are His. *Thus Arminians and Calvinists, Holiness folk who believed in a “second work of grace” and Baptists who adhered to the theory of “the finished work at Calvary,” Methodists, Brethren, and Anglicans—all of whom represented variant forms of church doctrine and polity—all met around the same altar to pray and to expect the impartation of the Holy Spirit and his charismatic gifts...[they think] of themselves as a movement within the Christian Church, used of God to revitalize it.*¹¹² There are certainly divisions within the charismatic movement. Certainly, many charismatics stand ready to embrace their *brothers* from other denominations, including Catholics who have gotten *the baptism*, but there are disagreements as to the outward manifestations of getting this baptism. Nichol admits to this, saying that one faction expects, at the most, *the experience might be attended by boisterous praying, great bodily exercise, or vociferous and constant shouting.* However, there is the other group who expects that the experience *would be certified by some supernatural sign—a vision, dream, speaking in tongues.*¹¹³
- i. The Pentecostal’s view of tongues:
- i. Charles W. Conn: *When the disciples first spoke in tongues, it was in clear, precise, understandable languages. Those gathered in Jerusalem heard the gospel proclaimed in their own tongues. They speaking was not in unintelligible gibberish...God has not yet stooped to repetitious and meaningless banality. Gibberish is not the language of the Spirit!...The unknown tongue is not the stammering of excited vocal organs, but rather the clear utterances of spiritual ecstasy. When the Spirit speaks through you, it will be exalted praise and convicting exhortation.*¹¹⁴
- ii. A Pentecostal Brit, Harold Horton, explains that tongues are *a supernatural utterance of the Spirit of God employing human speech organs. When man is speaking with tongues, his mind, intellect, understanding are quiescent. It is the faculty of God that is active. Man’s will, certainly, is active, and his spirit, and his speech organs, but the mind that is operating is the mind of God through the Holy Spirit.*¹¹⁵
- j. How Pentecostals view their own speaking in tongues:
- i. Cutten: *In this way a wonderful language arose in sounds that I had never spoken before. I had the impression according to the tones, that it might be Chinese. Then came an entirely different language with an entirely different position of the mouth and wonderful sounds...I do not know how long I spoke thus—surely some minutes. Then I had to break out in German in praise and worship of my God. I was sitting during all this; nevertheless my body was shaken by a great power, though in no wise unpleasant or painful.*¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 5–6; the quotation comes from H. Shelton Smith and others, *American Christianity*; New York, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1963), II, p. 313.

¹¹² John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 55.

¹¹³ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 6. The quotes are taken from Timothy L. Smith, *Called Unto Holiness*; Kansas City, Mo.; Nazarene Publishing House, 1962, p. 316

¹¹⁴ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 11, who quotes Charles W. Conn, *Pillars of Pentecost*; Cleveland, Tenn.; The Pathway Press, 1956, p. 57..

¹¹⁵ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, pp. 11–12, who took it from Carl Brumbeck, *What Meaneth This?*; Springfield, Mo., Gospel Publishing House, 1947, p. 129..

¹¹⁶ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, pp. 13–14, who took it from George B. Cutten, *Speaking with Tongues*; New Haven, Yale University Press, 1927, p. 127..

- ii. Reverend Bill L. Williams of San Jose: *It involve you with someone you're deeply in love with and devoted to...We don't understand the verbiage, but we know we're in communication. [That awareness is] beyond emotion, beyond intellect...It transcends human understanding. It is the heart of man speaking to the heart of God. It is deep, inner heart understanding. It comes as supernatural utterances, brining intimacy with God.*¹¹⁷
- iii. James R. Brown: *As I meditated and prayed the Holy Ghost came upon me. Deep within, I began to magnify the Lord. Soon there came from my lips a language I had never known or uttered. A warm fragrant oil, it seemed, was poured over me. I found a place of rest in God that I had never experienced until that time.*¹¹⁸
- iv. T. B. Barratt: *I was filled with light and such power that I began to shout as loud as I could in a foreign language. I must have spoken seven or eight languages, to judge from the various sounds and forms of speech used. I stood erect at [the] time, preaching in one foreign tongue after another, and I know from the strength of my voice that 10,000 might easily have heard all I said. The most wonderful moment was when I burst into a beautiful baritone solo, using one of the most pure and delightful languages I have ever heard. The tune and words were entirely new to me and the rhythm and cadence of the various choruses seemed to be perfect...Oh, what praises to God arose from my soul for His mercy! I felt as strong as a lion.*¹¹⁹
- k. Pentecostal testimonies concerning the baptism of the spirit:
 - i. A. J. Tomlinson: *On Sunday morning, January 12, [1908] while he [Cashwell] was preaching, a peculiar sensation took hold of me, and almost unconsciously I slipped off my chair in a heap on the rostrum of Brother Cashwell's feet. I did not know what such an experience meant. My mind was clear, but a peculiar power so enveloped and thrilled my whole being that I concluded to yield myself up and await results. I was soon lost to my surroundings as I lay there on the floor, occupied only with God and eternal things.*¹²⁰
 - l. A charismatic testimony: *When I started praying in tongues I felt, and people told me I looked, twenty years younger...I am built up, am given joy, courage, peace, the sense of God's presence; and I happen to be a weak personality who needs this.*¹²¹
 - m. And the Pentecostal's rationale behind speaking in tongues can seem quite eloquent, humble and holy: *As we humble our proud spirits and allow the Holy Spirit to speak through us in a language unfamiliar to our rational minds, we are making a step of consecration toward god. We are allowing Him to have His way with us rather than having our own way...The relinquishing of our tongue to God is, then, the first step toward the Spirit-directed life.*¹²² Now, what is wrong with some very holy, sincere statement like this? The problem is that none of the meaning given to the experience gift of tongues comes out of Scripture. If this was an important and necessary step for some, you would think that Paul, who spoke in tongues more than all of the Corinthians, would be pushing this experience as an important step in one's spiritual growth. Instead, Paul, in 1Corinthians, will seek to severely limit its use. If this is what the gift of tongues is all about, why don't we hear that in Scripture? Yes, I am fully aware of all of the statements found in 1Cor. 14—if you stay with this study, you will be fully aware of each verse of that chapter as well.
- 33. Here is one Pentecostal's way of helping a person to speak in tongues. Charles Hunter: *When you pray with your spirit, you do not think of the sounds of the language. Just trust God, but make the sounds when I tell you to. In just a moment when I tell you to, begin loving and praising God by speaking forth a lot of different*

¹¹⁷ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 221–222, taken from “Speaking in Tongues—Believers Relish the Experience,” *Los Angeles Times* (Sept. 19, 1987) B2.

¹¹⁸ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 14, who quoted a pamphlet by Henry H. Ness, *The baptism with the Holy Spirit*; Hayward, California, Evangelism Crusaders, Inc., n.d., p. .26.

¹¹⁹ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, pp. 41–42, taken from Donald Gee, *The Pentecostal Movement*; London, Elim Publishing House, Ltd., 1949, p. 14.

¹²⁰ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 37, taken from Charles Conn, *Like a Mighty Army*; Cleveland, Tenn, Church of God Publishing House, 1955, p. 85.

¹²¹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 238, taken from John Sherrill, *They Speak with Other Tongues*; Old Tappan, NJ; Spire, 1964, p. 83.

¹²² John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 14, who quotes from *Why Tongues?*; Van Nuys, Calif., The Blessed Trinity Society, n.d., p. 8..

syllable sounds. At first make the sounds rapidly so you won't try to think as you do in speaking your natural language...Make the sounds loudly at first so you can easily hear what you are saying.¹²³ Now, Charles and Frances Hunter hold what are known as the "Healing Explosion" meetings where up to 1000 people attend. Although the way a person is encouraged to speak in tongues is not any sort of a constant, the encouragement is similar, and has no foundation whatsoever in the Bible.

<Return to Page One>

34. The eight articles of faith subscribed to by Pentecostals (this was adopted and approved by 15 major Pentecostal groups in 1948):
- a. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible authoritative Word of God.
 - b. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
 - c. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning sacrifice through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and His personal return in power and glory.
 - d. We believe that for the salvation of the lost and sinful men regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.
 - e. We believe that the full gospel include holiness of heart and life, healing for the body and the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.
 - f. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
 - g. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
 - h. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.¹²⁴
35. It is obvious that these articles of faith are, for the most part, what any believer could subscribe to. In fact, all but the fifth article came from the Statement of Faith *drawn up in 1943 by the National Association of Evangelicals*.¹²⁵ Because of this, many fundamentalists would hold that we should enjoy fellowship with our Pentecostal brethren. We have the following problems:
- a. Even though there is verbal ascension given to the Word of God, I have been told on several occasions that it did not matter what the Bible seemed to say, they knew that what they experienced (the post-salvation baptism of the Spirit and speaking in tongues) is from God.
 - b. Article 5 is obviously the crux of our differences—where a post-salvation experience is deemed necessary.
 - c. And, finally, even though charismatics and noncharismatics hold to article 6—we believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life—we have the problem of millions upon millions of believers who have not gotten the post-salvation baptism of the Spirit—does this mean that there is no ministry of God the Holy Spirit in their lives? Since **God does not give the Spirit by measure** (John 8:34), that means that God does not give a small amount of the Spirit to the noncharismatic and a big helping of the Spirit to the charismatic. What this means is that we have a handful of believers who have gotten the Holy Spirit and we have a huge number of believers who have never received the Holy Spirit in any way, shape or form. Does this make sense?
36. There are two reasons that we have experienced a recent outbreak in the speaking of tongues. It is not that we are entering into some great revivalistic period of time, but that careful Bible study is almost nonexistent, which means that believers have an incredible hunger for something, although most of them do not know what this is. If there is a void in your life because you lack God's Word in your soul, then you will fill it with whatever you can. Thieme explains: *There has not existed a bona fide gift of tongues since A.D. 70—more than two thousand years! Why do people who are born again accept this reversionistic doctrine? Why do they fall prey*

¹²³ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 221; taken from Charles Hunter, "Receiving the Baptism with the Holy Spirit," *Charisma* (July 1989), p. 54.

¹²⁴ Taken from John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 4, who took it from a brochure published by the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America, which describes its origin, progress, doctrines, and membership.

¹²⁵ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 5.

to its apparent attraction? When a believer fails to learn Bible doctrine on a daily basis, he inevitably reverts to the human viewpoint systems of rationalism, ritualism or emotionalism. These are as satanic as any system of modernism. Emotionalism has great appeal today, possibly because it is a reaction to the ritualism of the past generations and appears to be spiritual power.¹²⁶

37. The problems experienced in Corinth were similar, but not the same as we find in the charismatic community today, the chief difference being that the gift of tongues is not a valid gift for today. The Corinthians had the greatest Bible teaching of their time—Paul and his traveling seminary taught in Corinth. But they rejected the truth and 2Corinthians 6:11–12 tells us why: **O you Corinthians, our mouth is open to you [we are teaching you doctrine], our heart [mind] is enlarged. You [all] are not limited by us, but you are limited in your own bowels [which refers to their emotional patterns].**¹²⁷ You must place God’s Word above how you feel.

<Return to Page One>

38. Arguments in favor of the gift of tongues:

- a. If I ask God for the gift of tongues and receive it, then it must be valid. Then they quote Luke 11:12, which is Jesus speaking, telling the disciples that they should ask for the Holy Spirit and he concludes by saying, **“Or, if he [a father] is asked for an egg, he will not give him [his son] a scorpion, will he?”** Actually, this is not bad for a charismatic argument, because it is almost contextually accurate. However, Jesus is speaking to His disciples, who do not have the help of the Holy Spirit, as this was prior to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Even though the charismatic may appear to have the purest of motives, he is telling God in prayer that God has just not given him enough, even though God has given this person the Holy Spirit and a spiritual gift already. **And for this reason, God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe the what is false** (2Thess. 2:11). Near the end of this study, I will show that most people who speak in tongues do this as learned behavior
- b. Let me give you an example of another passage taken out of context and misapplied. Charismatics have been known to quote 1John 4:2–3: **By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.** Then someone will speak in tongues, then someone will interpret this as *Jesus has come in the flesh*; and that is their proof positive that they are from God. Not so fast. First of all, we have the problem with the interpretation of these tongues, to which we have already spoken. But also, there are millions of people who believe that Jesus was a real historical person who came in the flesh. In fact, most unbelievers believe that Jesus was a real person who came in the flesh, and if quizzed on that, they would confess to it. This does not make them believers nor is God the Holy Spirit speaking through them. The historical context of that passage is that the Gnostics were teaching that Jesus was not completely human—that he was an angel, or the Son of God, but certainly not human. The reason they would take that tact is that there were still too many eyewitnesses to His miracles to deny His deity, so they instead denied His humanity (it is just the opposite today). This is the historical context of John’s letter. For this set of false prophets, if they did not teach that Jesus was fully human, then they were not of God.¹²⁸
- c. Charismatics claim that Paul spoke with the tongues of angels, quoting 1Cor. 13:1: **If I speak with the tongues of men and the tongues of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.** We will cover this passage in great detail when we exegete that passage.
- d. Paul spoke in tongues more than any of the Corinthians and specifically said, “Do not forbid to speak in tongues.” (1Cor. 14:18, 39). This will be covered in the exegesis of that passage.
- e. Whenever someone received the baptism of the Spirit in Acts, all of them always spoke in tongues. We will cover each and every instance of this when we cover those passages as well.
- f. The gift of tongues has been with the church since the first century. It never died out.

¹²⁶ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 53.

¹²⁷ Paraphrased from R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 54.

¹²⁸ This reasoning is from Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 51–53.

- g. The gift of tongues in the 20th century is a part of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit as the latter rain spoken of in Joel 2.
- h. Whereas, there are certainly abuses of the gift of tongues in many churches, there are many people that speak in tongues who:
 - i. Do not push tongues on other people.
 - ii. Lead a very dedicated Christian life.
 - iii. They walk by faith and not by sight and not by feelings.
 - iv. They do not feel that everyone must speak in tongues.
 - v. They grant that others without having had this great experience may still have the Holy Spirit.
 - vi. They only use tongues in private to edify themselves.
 - vii. They do not pro-actively discuss the gift of tongues with anyone.
- i. I personally know some people who speak in tongues, who, at least from what I know about them, tend to fit into that last description. Does this mean that the gift of tongues is for this time? If you haven't been out in the world, you may not realize it, but there are many genuinely nice and respectable unbelievers out in this world. This does not justify their rejection of Christ as savior. Just because a very nice and respectable believer holds to a doctrine also does not validate the doctrine—what determines what is true or false is God's Word.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

39. There are advantages cited by believers in the charismatic movement; they include:¹²⁹
- a. The charismatic claims to have an increased devotion. Where their life was once dry and their Christianity perfunctory, it is now vibrant and alive. They are more enthusiastic in their commitment to the Lord and more desirous to know His will and to perform His will.
 - b. Their prayer life might be improved. Burdick cites one person who once had difficulty praying for ten minutes. Now, after having experienced tongues, he can pray for two hours at a stretch.
 - c. Their relationship with God and with Jesus Christ are now personal and experiential. Prior to this, it was intellectual and theological. *This is felt to be communion with God in the most personal sense.*¹³⁰
 - d. Renewed emphasis upon the person and the work of the Holy Spirit, as well as upon the gifts given by the Spirit.
 - e. The previous Christian experience did not satisfy the emotional needs; since allying with a charismatic church, their relationship with God is alive and vibrant. They feel a part of the church and a part of God's plan. There is a resultant feeling of love, joy and peace, which transcends all understanding. The Christian experience is real in their heart.
 - f. The use of the gift of tongues tends to, at least temporarily, reduce conflict and tension in the believer's life.
 - g. They have a new feeling of power, which is sometimes described as electricity.
 - h. Tongues and the baptism of the Holy Spirit have been associated with *improved morality, in the cessation of alcoholism, in the integration of disturbed personalities, in the curing of various psychological or even physiological disorders, in the restoration of marital harmony, and in the revitalization of Christian fellowship within the churches. In brief, people and churches have "found" themselves through the experience.*¹³¹ E. Glenn Hinson adds that, although these results may not be typical, they would have an obvious appeal to men and women from any sort of church who seek solutions to these problems.
 - i. Rector Morton Kelsey concludes that the gift of tongues *can make a contribution to the individual and to the Christian community, if exercised discreetly and with humility within the community. "It is," he notes in conclusion, "one entrance into the spiritual realm; by giving access to the unconscious, it is one contract with non-physical reality which allows God to speak directly to man."*¹³²

¹²⁹ These points come from Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 80–83.

¹³⁰ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 81.

¹³¹ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 16.

¹³² Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 19, quoting from Rector Morton Kelsey's *Tongues Speaking*; Doubleday & Co., 1964, p. 231.

- j. Chantry sums this up: *The [charismatic] movement claims to hold the secret to godliness, spiritual power and revival. Every true servant of God has a longing to be more useful in our Master's kingdom on earth. Many churches desire revival. Individual Christian humility produces grief for impurity, worldliness and weakness. Love of Christ issues in mourning over the absence of success in one's own service or in the church at large.*¹³³ Obviously, a movement which promises all that the Charismatic movement has must have some great good within it. Chantry goes on: *Agents of 'charismatic revival' tell Christians, 'Your religion is fine as far as it goes. You have been converted and have the hope of everlasting life. But you need a second experience, something beyond conversion. You must be baptized in the Spirit. This needful experience is the key to entering the door of joy, victory over sin, and effectiveness in bringing men to Christ. It will draw you nearer to the Lord and place you on a generally higher spiritual plane.'*¹³⁴

[<Return to Page One>](#)

40. You may wonder, *what is the harm in this? The charismatics are decidedly more enthusiastic, evangelical; can't we at least live side-by-side and write this off as a non-essential doctrine?* After listing several personal testimonies on how tongues affects them, MacArthur asks: *And what could possibly be wrong with such an experience? If it makes a person feel good, closer to God, spiritually stronger, or even delirious with joy, can it in any way be dangerous or deceptive?*¹³⁵ After all, the only thing the charismatics are trying to do is put the Holy Spirit back into the church; the only real problem that fundamentalists have with the charismatics is a fear of the unknown. An eight member committee of the Lutheran Church, after a two year study, published a report in December of 1963 which agreed that the gift of tongues was one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and that they would not forbid the private exercise of the gift of tongues *for the individual's personal edification.*¹³⁶ The charismatics are filled with sincere enthusiasm: *Can it be that God produced the Reformation to return the church to New Testament doctrine and He is now producing the charismatic movement to return the church to New Testament power? God is calling His church to more than just renewal. He is calling the church to restoration—a restoration of the dynamic and "cutting-edge" influence of the early church. In my opinion, the charismatic movement is helping to bring this about, more than any other group.*¹³⁷ Listen, it is true that many charismatics are believers, and the vast majority of them are very sincere in their beliefs. But their beliefs are firstly experienced-based, which are then loosely justified by Scripture. Therefore, let me give you a list of reasons why there is great harm in what they teach:
- a. So that there is no misunderstanding—the problem with the charismatic movement is not their excesses but their doctrine—to be quite frank with you, I don't care too much for most churches, because God's Word is not being taught carefully in most of them. However, the problem with the charismatic church is what they are teaching is anti-Biblical and anti-God.
 - b. The greatest problem of all is that charismatic doctrine introduces a false system of spirituality—that is, they teach false mechanics for being filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit **is** our spiritual life. Without the Holy Spirit, we do not function as spiritual beings. I don't care how religious you are, how often you go to church, how often you read your Bible, how sincere you are, how moral you are—if you are not filled with God the Holy Spirit, then you are only marking time on this earth. Nothing, and I mean, absolutely nothing that you do will have any true spiritual impact, whether you give, pray, or do whatever works you deem as good—these things will have zero impact insofar as eternity is concerned. You must be filled with the Holy Spirit in order to properly function as a believer. Now are charismatics ever filled with the Spirit? Certainly, on occasion, and generally by accident. And they could never, if their life depended upon it, tell you how it happened. Furthermore, most of the time, they are unaware of it. Therefore, before we go any further, you should know the correct mechanics of being filled with the Holy Spirit: you name

¹³³ Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles*; ©1973 by The Banner of Truth Trust, p. 43.

¹³⁴ Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles*; ©1973 by The Banner of Truth Trust, p. 42.

¹³⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 222.

¹³⁶ Paraphrased from Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, pp. 18–19, where a portion of the report was obviously quoted.

¹³⁷ David Shibley, *A Charismatic Truce*; Thomas Nelson inc., Publishers, ©1978, pp. 38–39.

your sins to God; when you sin, you acknowledge that sin to God. Jesus Christ paid for that sin, it is instantly forgiven, and your temporal fellowship with God is restored. Obviously, when you sin, you break fellowship with God. Obviously, because you have an old sin nature, you will sin. For the believer, getting out of fellowship is inevitable. Getting back in is an act of free will—you name your sin(s) to God and God instantly forgives you. In the New Testament as well as the Old, there are several references to these mechanics, as well as innumerable references to the doctrine of fellowship. At the end of 1Cor. 11, Paul is dealing with the problem of believers being out of fellowship, and therefore, being judged by God. **But, if we judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judges, we are disciplined by the Lord in order that we may not be condemned along with the world** (1Cor. 11:31–32). In 1John, John deals with the fellowship of **believers** (he is not speaking of or to unbelievers in this letter); he writes: **If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin [sin, as a singular noun, generally refers to the old sin nature in Scripture], we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess [or, name, acknowledge] our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us** (1John 1:6–10). This doctrine of *spirituality* is a whole other doctrine, which I have only briefly alluded to here. The primary reason that I refer to it here is (1) so that you can see what the truth is when it comes to being filled with the Spirit; and, (2) so that you can be filled with the Spirit—otherwise, this study will not benefit you in the least. If these mechanics—the naming of one’s sins to God—are not carefully taught and stressed in a body of believers, and if they do not know how they get out of fellowship or how they get back in, then you have a congregation of neutralized Christians. You may have hundreds or even thousands of believers whose combined total divine good would not even fill up a thimble. Whenever a church does not know how to be filled with the Holy Spirit, then they are a completely neutralized congregation. Now, Satan may not be able to keep some people from believing in Christ (in fact, he really can’t keep anyone from believing in Christ); however, he can and does neutralize whole congregations.

- c. Charismatics offer a different means by which to be spiritual, which is fairly hard to nail down in terms of mechanics. Most would agree that the results are the same—when you are baptized in, filled by, or slain in the Spirit, you will know it; and often this is accompanied by speaking in tongues—but the exact road to get there in terms of mechanics is nebulous. What it tends to generally be is praying for the Spirit while being amongst a group of believers. There might be some *yieldedness* involved and enthusiastic praying and a group pressure to manifest something—and, get this, it might not happen the first or the second time. It could happen while one is alone as well, although the results tend to be while in a group of believers who know what to expect and desire this experience for you. The end result, where you just *know* that you have gotten the Holy Ghost, is generally accepted as proof, even though the road there is curiously indistinct (at least, for the first-time people). Now, those who speak in tongues at will afterwards tend to be able to bring it on at will, some requiring more fervent prayer and others can just do it. In any case, the result to the charismatic is key—not the means. This is a truly dangerous approach to spirituality. No matter how marvelous and spiritual and empowered you feel, you cannot make that the criterion for your spiritual walk. Scripture is the source and the evidence of our salvation—Scripture must also be the source and evidence of our having been filled with the Spirit.
- d. The second problem, which is a problem throughout all Christianity, is the introduction of false methods of salvation. Although this is not unique, by any means, to charismatics, it is prevalent in charismatic evangelism. Salvation comes by believing in Jesus Christ—by placing your faith on Him—by believing that He alone is 100% the source and basis of your salvation and that your entire contribution is 0%. *Believing* is a non-meritorious system of perception, which is in contrast to empiricism or rationalism, which are meritorious systems of perception. Note what is not included in the mechanics of salvation: asking Jesus into your heart or into your life (there is no Scriptural basis for this, apart from a complete misinterpretation of Rev. 3:20, a passage which is written to believers, not to unbelievers); nor does salvation include: baptism, repentance (and here I mean *regret*, which is not what *repentance* actually means) from sin, feeling badly because you have sinned, promising God that you will not sin, promising God that you will lead a better and more moral life, determining that you will change all of your bad habits and sins, etc. These things are works, and if you think that you are contributing even 0.001% towards your salvation, either through your feeling badly, your determination to do better, your desire to do better,

etc. etc., you are not saved. Your salvation depends completely on Jesus Christ and not even a little bit upon what you have done with your life or **what you plan to do with your life** (most charismatics understand the former, but do not grasp the latter). Can you be a murderer, a rapist, a child molester, a drug dealer¹³⁸ and be instantly saved by believing in Jesus Christ, and then immediately go back to being a murderer, a rapist, a child molester and a drug dealer? If you can quickly and easily answer that question with an unequivocal yes, then you grasp the power of what Jesus did for us on the cross. If you are the least bit hesitant, then you do not understand salvation, which possibly even means that you are not saved. In case you have never gotten this straight before: Jesus Christ died for each and every sin that you have ever committed and for every sin that you will commit in the future. Every single wrong deed and thought that you have done or will do was taken care of on the cross. If you place your faith in Jesus Christ for your salvation, you are instantly and eternally saved. No one, including yourself, can ever cancel the work of Jesus on the cross on your behalf.

- e. Now, I want you to know that every time I have come in contact with a charismatic, I have asked them, *how does one become saved?* Only two of those answers was close. The daughter of a missionary-evangelist (whose job it is to give the gospel day in and day out) and an author (whom I did not meet, but read) were the closest. They both said that in order for a person to be saved, they needed to repent and then believe in Jesus Christ. The author, David Shibley, wrote (this was a book which attempted to get charismatics and non-charismatics to call a truce): *[we should] agree on two points: (1) The final authority on any doctrinal issue is the Bible, and (2) a person becomes a Christian by repenting and placing personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.*¹³⁹ By repentance, they mean to realize that you have sinned and to turn away from your sins—this is an integral part of salvation. Now, certainly, *repentance* is named several times in the Bible along with salvation. And, what I will agree to is that, *repentance* is definitely a part of salvation—as long as you understand what *repentance* means; however, they do not (nor do most charismatics; few believers know what *repentance* actually means). There are two Greek words and their component parts that we need to examine. One of them is *metamélomai* (μεταμέλομαι) [pronounced *meh-tah-MEH-loh-my*]. This is made up of two Greek words: *metá* (μετά) [pronounced *meh-TAH*], which means (among other things) *to change*. Strong's #3326. The other half of the word is *mélō* (μέλω) [pronounced *MEH-loh*], which means *to have concern, to regret*. Strong's #3199. Together, they mean *to change one's mind or purpose after having done something regrettable*. If you are a believer who is confused about salvation, then right now, you are thinking to yourself *what'd I say?* *Metamélomai* is often translated *to feel remorse, to regret*. We do not find it in conjunction with passages dealing with salvation,¹⁴⁰ but we do find Judas regretting his betrayal of our Lord (Matt. 27:3), recognizing that he had betrayed innocent blood. He was so upset over this, he committed suicide (Matt. 27:5); furthermore, Judas was not saved (John 13:11–12). Strong's #3338. The word generally rendered *repent* (and distorted by most fundamentalists) is *metanoéō* (μετανοέω) [pronounced *meh-tah-noh-EH-oh*] and it comes from the Greek words *metá* (*to change*) and *noéō* (νοέω) [pronounced *noh-EH-oh*], which means *to think, to understand, to perceive*. Strong's #3539. Its noun cognate is *noús* (νοῦς) [pronounced *noose*], which means *mind*. Strong's #3563. *Metanoéō* means *to change one's thinking, to change one's mind*. This is the word that we find repeatedly as a part of salvation. The key is whatever it is that we are to change our minds about, which is generally found in context. However, when we do not have an obvious target, then it means to either *change one's mind about Jesus Christ* (we all had preconceived ideas as to Who He was; and we are to change those to recognizing Him as our Savior) or we are to change our minds about our dead works—that is, the things that we have accumulated in order to get us into heaven (Heb. 6:1; spoken of, in that context, as being one of the fundamentals of the faith). Do we find this word associated with sin? Not really; in the gospels, it usually stands alone. One says, *what about Luke 15:7, 10?*, but only the kind of person who does not understand the difference between the subject of the verb and the object of the verb.¹⁴¹ Strong's #3340. So if you tell someone that they must *repent* and believe, make certain that you explain that they are either changing their minds about Jesus Christ or they are changing their minds about the good works that they have been performing

¹³⁸ I tried to pick sins which you would find shocking; if I missed the sins which shock you, then just add them in.

¹³⁹ David Shibley, *A Charismatic Truce*; Thomas Nelson inc., Publishers, ©1978, p. 25.

¹⁴⁰ One could argue that for Matt. 21:32.

¹⁴¹ In those passages, it speaks of a *sinner who repents*. This does **not** mean that they are repenting of their sins.

in hopes of salvation. When you throw in *regret* because you sin, with the idea that, in order to be saved you must *turn from your sins, to must repent of your sins, you must vow not to sin* (or, at least to cut back substantially), then you are adding works to faith. When evangelicals get the gospel wrong, this is not a small matter.

- f. Why do most charismatics have a distorted understanding of grace and salvation? That is simple—charismatics have been taught that when a person is not healed, then it is that person's fault for not displaying enough faith. When a person has not received the holy ghost, then he has not cleansed his life enough to be baptized in the spirit. In other words, the charismatic is taught that you must earn what you get from God. Therefore, salvation is not any different. They will expect, in some way, that salvation must be earned.
- g. What is particularly embarrassing to the Christian movement is the charismatics who get weirder and weirder. One of the recent allegations of some charismatics is that God has turned their fillings into gold. First off, God, if He were to fix a tooth, he would fix the tooth and make it whole. God does not mess with fillings. Secondly, those who have been investigated who have made these allegations have turned out to have dentists who have come forward who have claimed to do the work. When people make claims like this, the unbeliever looks upon them as the goofs they are, and associates them with Christianity. When it is shown that they are perpetrating a hoax or a fraud, they make Christ seem dishonest and goofy by association. Now, who do you think is involved in this kind of evangelism—the Holy Spirit or demons?
- h. Dillow on charismatic evangelism: *Middle-class America and even most of the youth culture is offended by the emotional excesses of the charismatic movement. In the minds of the average non-Christian, Pentecostalism is identified with the most fanatical form of religious ignorance. In their mind the movement tends to associate Christ with all kinds of violent jerking, convulsions, ecstatic gibberish, and other emotional excesses.*¹⁴²
- i. Thieme gives an example of one group of charismatics and their views on salvation: *Wherever tongues flourish, confusion reigns. A group of people in southern California, who claimed that they spoke in tongues, were questioned recently regarding their knowledge of salvation. Each one insisted that not one but five or six steps were necessary for salvation. All had erroneous beliefs concerning the issue of the Gospel and the mechanics of spirituality. This is not surprising, for confusion is a part of the pattern in the tongues spectrum. The devastation which the modern tongues movement leaves in its wake is prodigious. Not only does this apostate activity mislead the unbeliever, but it inhibits the believer from getting into doctrine. Changes are that such an individual becomes more intrigued with the promise of ecstatic experiences than with the prospect of learning the Word, a task that requires consistent self-discipline, positive volition and subjection to the pastor's authority!*¹⁴³
- j. In the previous few points, I have actually been very generous to the charismatic movement, assuming that the gospel is presented. Let's take the Third Wave's primary textbook on evangelism, *Power Evangelism* by John Wimber. MacArthur: [This book]...*omits any reference to the cross of Christ or the doctrine of atonement. Under fire for that deficiency, Wimber has published a new book that devotes thirteen (our of more than two hundred) pages to the cross, Christ's death, justification, regeneration, and related issues. Still, soteriology (the doctrine of salvation) and an accurate gospel message can hardly be considered major thrusts of the movement, despite all its heavy emphasis on how to evangelize properly.*¹⁴⁴ MacArthur suggests reading Wimber's witnessing to a man and a woman on a plane. Wimber apparently read the word *adultery* on the man's forehead and therefore boldly confronted him about that particular sin (I don't know that I would want to be sitting next to Wimber on a plane). Both the husband and wife were converted, although there is apparently no mention of the gospel in this account. In case there is any confusion, recognizing that you have sinned does not mean that you have been reborn. Feeling badly about what you have done wrong does not mean you have been reborn. Confessing this sin to God and repenting of that sin does not mean you are reborn.
- k. Mark Thompson recorded his observations of an evangelistic meeting held by Third Wave in Sydney, Australia: *The team affirmed their concern for evangelism. John Wimber was especially at pains to deny he wanted to distract people from this task. And after all, hadn't they planned a "Healing and Evangelistic*

¹⁴² Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 189.

¹⁴³ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 52.

¹⁴⁴ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 136.

Rally” at Sydney Showground for the Thursday night? Yet two things undercut their stated concern. Firstly, the cross of Jesus got only one brief mention in all the General meetings and workshops I attended during the conference...Secondly, and even more seriously, there was no gospel in the so-called evangelistic meeting. The cross of Jesus was not central; the atonement not explained; and mankind’s need and the provision of redemption not even cursorily treated. Believing himself to be following the example of Jesus and the apostles, John Wimber called out for those who needed to be healed—bad backs got a mention, short legs, neck pain and a whole host of diseases. People were asked to stand and team members dispatched to pray for them while on the stage John Wimber demanded that the Spirit come. After a few minutes of silence several screams were heard and people sobbing. A little later, Mr. Wimber declared that people had been healed and that God had given it as a token, a sign to those who did not believe. In short, they were asked to base their decision on what they had seen, or rather on Mr. Wimber’s interpretation of what they had seen. The sacrifice of Christ for the sin of the world didn’t get a guernsey. I was left wondering what faith people would have been converted to that night. It did not resemble New Testament Christianity except in name.¹⁴⁵

- i. MacArthur gave another rather humorous example. Wagner was quite impressed with the results of Argentine evangelist Omar Cabrera, and commented, “People often will be saved and healed in Cabrera’s meetings before he starts preaching.”¹⁴⁶ How on earth is anyone saved prior to hearing the gospel? **Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). How then will they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? (Rom. 10:14).**
- m. In sort, the gospel is either lost in charismatic evangelism, overshadowed by the signs and miracles that they purport to deliver; or, the gospel is distorted.
- n. A serious problem with the charismatic movement is the threadbare appeal to Scripture. McGee writes: *I have examined their literature and find that there is almost a total blackout of the Bible. This is not a movement which is based on the Word of God, neither does it promote searching the Scripture to see if these things are true. They present a few threadbare “proof texts”, but beyond that, there is no study of the Scriptures...I have examined a suitcase full of their literature and I find that there is practically no Bible study or Bible teaching whatsoever.*¹⁴⁷ There have been many books written about the tongues movement from both sides. Of all which I have read, those which were pro-charismatic made few references to Scripture, every one of which will be exegeted in detail in this study. Let me give you one of the classic examples: Conrad Murrell: *There are three basic positions in relation to the [gift of] tongues...The first position is that there is no scriptural gift of the tongues in operation today. Therefore any seeming manifestation of such a gift is of the devil and to be rejected...Position number one hardly justifies much discourse since it is so completely without scriptural support. If it were not for people who had lived for years as Christians, ignoring certain prominent passages of scripture and failing to come in contact with a demonstration of this gift being accompanied by the power of God, no such position would exist.*¹⁴⁸ Murrell then spends less than a paragraph disputing this position, and making references to three passages of Scripture. Those books which were critical of the charismatic movement appealed primarily to Scripture, although they certainly dealt with the experiences of charismatic movement. The book that you are now reading will deal with the passages of Scripture in much more detail than you are probably used to, although in less detail than I am used going (since my subject matter is limited). If you

¹⁴⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 136–137, taken from Mark Thompson, “Spiritual Warfare: What Happens When I Contradict Myself,” *The Briefing*; April 24, 1990, p. 12.

¹⁴⁶ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 137, taken from Peter Wagner, *The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit*; Ann Arbor, MI; Vine, 1988, p. 99.

¹⁴⁷ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part I*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 6. McGee admits, later on, that there is a profound lack of Bible study even in seminaries, including the one that he went to. Personally, I see this as the biggest problem facing the Christian church today. On p. 8, McGee writes: *I challenge you to drop in next Wednesday to the average denominational church and listen to the service that takes place there—if the church is open and has a mid-week service. I do not think you will hear a Bible study. The man in the pew is ignorant of the Word of God because the man in the pulpit is ignorant of the Word of God.*

¹⁴⁸ Conrad Murrell, *To Profit Withal*; Saber Publications; Pineville, LA; ©1969, p 68. When we get to the exegesis of 1Cor. 13:8, I will give you his argument.

are a charismatic has this great interest in things spiritual, then it should be easy for the charismatic to plow through these extended passages. It will be quite a change from citing a doctrine and then citing a passage to back that doctrine up.¹⁴⁹

- o. One of the greatest problems of the charismatic movement is that they place God's Word second to their experience. Walter Chantry observed: *A survey of 'charismatic' meetings reveals a very low esteem for God's Word. Those who attended are more elated over the words of the twentieth-century prophets than over the inscripturated words of Christ and his apostles...As the 'gifts' increase, exposition of God's Word decreases. Meetings are filled with 'sharing experiences' but with only an occasional reference to the holy Word of God...They live on visible, emotional experiences and not upon truth. Even some who spend hours perusing the Bibles do so not for the purpose of grasping truth but in the hope of inducing a new thrill in their truth-parched souls...Some would deny that their new messages add anything to the existing canon of Scripture. They only receive direction as to what portion of Gods Word should be called to the attention of the church at the moment. Or they only receive warnings of providential calamity. Or they only receive specific guidance in personal or church affairs. Nevertheless, it is a fresh message from heaven, which provides the desired guidance, not the Scriptures...Neo-Pentecostal enthusiasts are implying that the Bible is not able to make a man 'thoroughly furnished unto all good works' [2 Timothy 3:17].¹⁵⁰ Rarely does a charismatic leader ever publically berates the Bible; they are generally much more subtle than that. They denigrate Scripture in more subtle ways. First, they make the Bible subservient to their experience. What they have experienced is from God and it is truth. Whatever we find in the Bible must agree with that (which is the typical approach for almost any new believer). You don't need to take my word for this—listen to Gordon Fee, who is a Pentecostal: *...their attitude toward Scripture regularly has included a general disregard for scientific exegesis and carefully thought-out hermeneutics. In fact, hermeneutics has simply not been a Pentecostal thing. Scripture is the Word of God and is to be obeyed. In place of scientific hermeneutics there developed a kind of pragmatic hermeneutics—obey what should be taken literally; spiritualize, allegorize, or devotionalize the rest...Secondly, it is probably fair—and important—to note that in general the Pentecostals' experience has preceded their hermeneutics. In a sense, the Pentecostal tends to exegete his experience.*¹⁵¹*
- p. Secondly, charismatics often look to their pastor for additional divine guidance and truth apart from the Bible. That is, they believe that their pastor or leader will periodically spout prophecy or theology apart from the Bible which is more contemporary and exciting than the Bible. Of course, it is possible that there are a few charismatics that believe in the gift of tongues, but not in the gift of prophecy, but most of them believe that it comes in one complete package: if the gift of tongues is for our time, so is the gift of knowledge, prophecy, healing and miracles. What this belief in prophecy—or inspired speaking of information which comes directly from God—does is undercuts the authority and the sufficiency of the Word of God. We have the same position in Catholicism: the pope makes pronouncements which spoken ex cathedra. That is, the pope makes a ruling, a judgment, a decision regarding truth and doctrine which is to apply to the entire Catholic church, and this comes at the direct inspiration of God, not from correct interpretation of Scripture. Almost all of the historical evils of Romanism—which many associate with Christianity—can be traced to authoritative papal pronouncements outside of the Word of God. If you understand nothing else, realize that this is a vicious attack on Scripture (too subtle for some; quite obvious to others). Chantry: *...the most fundamental element of the Reformation was the cry of 'Sola Scriptura' from the students of the Bible. The 'charismatic movement' does not carry on the Reformation, but rather strikes a damaging blow to its very roots. They would destroy the Protestant foundation of confiding in Scripture alone.*¹⁵² Even though the Apostle John tells us that the canon of Scripture is closed (Rev. 22:18–19), the charismatic tells us that there are just a few more tidbits of information which God left out, or that God did not have the foresight to inform us of in the Bible, or that the Bible is okay, but it

¹⁴⁹ Whereas, there is nothing inherently wrong with the approach of making a point and then citing a few *proof* passages, just keep in mind that **every** cult employs this method as its chief approach to the study of God's Word.

¹⁵⁰ Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles*; ©1973 by The Banner of Truth Trust, pp. 28–30.

¹⁵¹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 85, taken from Gordon Fee, "Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent—a Major Problem in Pentecostal Hermeneutics," in Russell Spittler, ed., *Perspectives on the New Pentecostalism*; Grand Rapids, MI; Baker Books, 1976, pp. 119–122..

¹⁵² Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles*; ©1973 by The Banner of Truth Trust, p. 33.

just does not have everything that we need for today. When Moses completed the Law, he said that nothing was to be added to the Law (Deut. 4:2). God continued to add Scripture, but the Law itself was never changed until Christ fulfilled the Law. What the Jews did is they developed the Talmud and the Mishna, which, was both a commentary and a clarification of the Law of Moses. Much of it is a long list of the traditions of the Jews when it comes to obeying the Law—for instance, it goes into great detail about keeping the Sabbath and exactly what you can and cannot do on the Sabbath. Let me give you an example: if you are wearing your Sunday best (on Saturday of course), and a horse trots by and splashes your cloak with mud, you may not take the cloak to be cleaned and you may not clean it yourself. You may wait until the mud to dry and then squeeze that area once with your hands and then let go. The Jew studies the Mishna with the same fervency as he studies the Law of Moses, although he will certainly claim that the Law of Moses is inspired, or more inspired (whatever that means). In any case, it completely undermined the authority of Scripture. When a religion allows for additional written authority (Mormonism, Judaism, Catholicism) or additional spoken words from God (Catholicism and Pentecostalism), then that religion attacks the power and the primacy of the Word of God. At what point does the charismatic draw the line between experience and Bible doctrine when they are in conflict with one another? Is it never? Do we reject the experiences of random believers who give their testimony, but not those of recognized Christian public figures? Listen to me very carefully: **Every single source which I studied that did not teach that the gift of tongues was for today continually stressed the importance of Scripture over experience.** Even if these writers were all wrong, how does it make sense that they see God's Word as superior to the experiences of man and those writers who believed speaking in tongues was a gift for today depended more upon experience for that validation than they did upon God's Word?

- q. McGee discusses the problem with the charismatic movement as follows: *This movement has not promoted Bible study. By contrast, the Reformation did. And not only did the Reformation, but the Moody revival promoted Bible study. In fact, the Bible Institute movement came out of the Moody meetings. Bible Institutes were built because the converts wanted to know the Word of God. We do not see that today. All is experience. I have had, I suppose, a dozen letters this weeks from folk who have attempted to tell me about their experience with tongues. May I ask, what does the Book say? Are you as eager to study and share God's Word as you are to tell about some little experience you have had?*¹⁵³ Throughout the gospels, the Holy Spirit is often referred to as the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17 15:26 16:13) Wh would guide us into all truth. It was He who moved men to write holy Scripture (I Peter 1:21). The Holy Spirit will not inspire men of God to subordinate His Word for the sake of a common ecstatic experience.
- r. Now, I said, rarely does a charismatic speak against Scripture. Jack Deere, an assistant to John Wimber at The Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Anaheim, was a former professor of the Old Testament in a prominent seminary, and had personally told MacArthur that he believes in and affirmed the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture. However, he distributed some printed notes at the 1990 Spiritual Warfare Conference in Sydney, and had a section entitled "A Demonic Doctrine Illustrated," which referred to the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture. It read, in part: *In order to fulfill God's highest purposes for our lives we must be able to hear His voice both in the written word and in the Word freshly spoken from heaven...Satan understands the strategic importance of Christians hearing God's voice so he has launched various attacks against us in this area...Ultimately this doctrine [the sufficiency of Scripture] is demonic even [though] Christian theologians have been used to perfect it.*¹⁵⁴
- s. With speaking in tongues often comes the *gift of prophecy*. That is, there are those who think that they speak with authority which is on par with Scripture without resting upon the authority of Scripture. Their revelations can be trivial, they can be accurate, and the can even contradict what Scripture says. MacArthur gives us one of the most incredible examples from Kenneth Copeland. While Copeland was involved in a three day Victory Campaign in Dalla, Jesus gave him the following message: *It's time for these things to happen, saith the Lord. It's time for spiritual activity to increase. Oh, yes, demonic*

¹⁵³ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part II*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 17.

¹⁵⁴ Quoted and paraphrased from John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 140; quote cited from Mark Thompson, "Spiritual Warfare: What Happens When I Contradict Myself," *The Briefing*; April 24, 1990, p. 12.

activity will increase along at the same time. But don't let that disturb you. Don't be disturbed when people accuse you of thinking you're God. Don't be disturbed when people accuse you of a fanatical way of life. Don't be disturbed when people put you down and speak harshly and roughly of you. They spoke that way of Me, should they not speak that way of you? The more you get to be like Me, the more they're going to think that way of you. They crucified me for claiming that I was God. But I didn't claim I was God; I just claimed I walked with Him and that He was in Me. Hallelujah.¹⁵⁵ This is a blatant attack upon Scripture and upon Jesus Christ; but Kenneth Copeland is a person of note in the charismatic world and he spoke those words by *prophetic gift*. Larry Lea relates a pastor who had a vision of Larry wearing big Mickey Mouse ears, the meaning being, of course, that Larry had improved his spiritual ears.¹⁵⁶ It should be easy to grasp that we have people who contradict God's Word, and others who make a complete mockery of the gift of prophecy and visions with such nonsense as Mickey Mouse ears. This moves the believer's focus away from God's perfect Word to the word of man (at best). And, if believers get to a point where they believe that these things are words from God, then it simultaneously trivializes Scripture.

- t. Walter Chantry gives us an analogy. When Philip asked Jesus to see the Father, as that would be sufficient for them (the Apostles), our Lord answered: **"Have I been with you this long and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, 'Show us the Father'?"** (John 14:9b). *Philip's search for something more was an insult to the Son of God...A similar insult is given by the modern desire for further revelations. It is an indication that seekers of 'charisma' are failing to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Though the infallible words of Jesus Christ have been so long time with them, they look for something more in order to know the living God...Some blinded eyes read the very sayings of the Son of God and look away to more exciting prospects.*¹⁵⁷ Do not think that we are overstating or misstating the case. Charismatics give great lip service to the Bible; they just believe that there is something a little bit more out there. Do not forget that almost the final words of Scripture, the very words of Jesus Christ, are, **"If anyone adds to these words, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book."** (Rev. 22:18b). Of these final words of the book of Revelation, Matthew Henry wrote: *This sanction is like a flaming sword to guard the canon of the Scripture from profane hands.*¹⁵⁸
- u. Now, I want to sum up, before I move on: charismatics attack Christianity in the three most fundamental foundations of our faith: salvation, spirituality and the sufficiency of Scripture. If they can't keep you from entering into the kingdom of heaven by confusing the means of salvation, then they will derail you after salvation. It's not like this is some brand new strategy of Satan. You've heard of the Catholic church, have you not? Satan attacked Christianity from the Catholic church primarily in three ways (1) by distorting the means of salvation; (2) by confusing the mechanics of spirituality; and (3) by subtly (and not so subtly) devaluing God's Word. When it comes to the problems inherent in the charismatic movement, these are the primary ones. This is obviously how Satan will attack any church. There are other problems, of course.
41. The charismatic movement and evangelism. One of the things stressed by the charismatic movement is their powerful evangelistic push and the tremendous results of their evangelistic programs. This is a problem in the charismatic movement (that they obviously do not see as a problem) which deserves consideration all by itself.
- a. Some charismatics lay claim to great evangelical movements. We have several problems here:
- i. No charismatic evangelical comes even close to, say, Billy Graham or Billy Sunday in the realm of evangelical work.
 - ii. Although they lay claim to great enthusiasm, the fervency of the Jehovah's Witnesses is just as great, if not greater. However, both groups prey heavily upon men and women who are already believers.
 - iii. Their enthusiasm aside, it must be pointed out that if you are not giving the correct gospel message, as has been discussed, then how worthwhile is the evangelism?

¹⁵⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 56–57, taken from Kenneth Copeland, "Take Time to Pray," *Voice of Victory*, February 1987, p. 9.

¹⁵⁶ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 57.

¹⁵⁷ Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles*; ©1973 by The Banner of Truth Trust, pp. 36–37.

¹⁵⁸ Take from Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles*; ©1973 by The Banner of Truth Trust, p. 40.

- b. Let's define *power evangelism*, which, although it specifically belongs to the *Third Wave*, is common in theology to the charismatic movement in general (bear in mind that the distinction between the *Third Wave* and the Pentecostal or charismatic movements are substantially semantic): it is defined as ...*a presentation of the gospel that is rational but that also transcends the rational. The explanation of the gospel comes with a demonstration of god's power through signs and wonders. Power evangelism is a spontaneous, Spirit-inspired, empowered presentation of the gospel. Power evangelism is evangelism that is preceded and undergirded by supernatural demonstrations of God's presence. Through these supernatural encounters people experience the presence and power of God.*¹⁵⁹ The following few points explain why this is a fallacious approach.
- c. Putting your faith in miracles which you have observed or think you have observed is not saving faith. Putting your faith in the people who have seemingly performed those miracles is also not saving faith. We have only one object of faith, and that is Christ Jesus.
- d. Next, often the so-called signs and wonders and miracles are hokey. They are not things which an intelligent unbeliever can observe and not be skeptical.
- e. Charismatic evangelism isn't. The power is in the Word of God, not in the signs and wonders which have accompanied it in the past. Our Lord, in evangelism, did not push signs and wonders. The signs and wonders which our Lord did testified to Who He was and Who He represented. Sometimes these signs and wonders would convince someone to believe in Him, but often they did not. Sometimes people requested the signs and miracles for pure titillation or just to test Him, as these signs would not caused these ones to believe. We have instances of that in Matt. 12:38–39 16:1–4 Mark 8:11–12 Luke 11:16, 29 23:8–9 John 4:48. The Bible must be taken as a whole; you don't get to just look at your favorite verses taken out of context. Many in Jesus' generation will stand before the judgement seat of Christ with no excuse because He performed signs and miracles in their sight and they did not believe.
- f. Not only are signs and wonders not a part of evangelism today, they were not always necessary when our Lord taught. There were several recorded instances when Jesus taught without doing miracles (Matt. 13:1–52 18:1–35 John 7:14–44). And just because His miracles attracted attention; this did not mean that was the response of positive volition. He performed signs and wonders in Galilee in Mark 1:29–34; however, when the Apostles told him the next day that everyone was looking for him (obviously because of these signs and wonders), Jesus told them that they were moving on. I don't know if you can grasp this, but there were certainly some who saw what our Lord did as we might view street theater today. It was interesting and entertaining, but there was nothing beyond that to which they responded.
- g. One of the things which has come out of the charismatic movement is what is called *pragmatic evangelism*. What it means is that *if it works, then it is the working of the Holy Spirit*. That is, if an evangelist is successful or if a church is successful, then the ends justifies the means. The noncharismatic does not define truth in terms of what is successful and what is not. As has been mentioned, our Lord, the Son of God, evangelized for three years, performing incredible signs and wonders and miracles, and then, after His death, he appeared to over 500 different people—so, at Pentecost, all we have are 120 of His disciples gathered. The very people who witnessed some of His greatest miracles were the ones who were instrumental in His being railroaded through the legal systems of the ancient world, as well as His sentence of death. Obviously, our Lord had not heard of *pragmatic evangelism*, as His methods did not work as well as they should have. It does not matter how fast a church grows or how large a church gets. Either people are accurately evangelized or they are not. They are either taught doctrine correctly or they are not. Whether people respond in great numbers or not is not the issue; whether people respond in great numbers or not is a reflection upon the people, not upon God's Word.
- h. The first and foremost problem is that charismatics evangelize primarily noncharismatics. Many of these meetings are attended by born again believers whose life is in the crapper. They were promised all kinds of things when they heard the message of salvation, and responded by believing in Christ, and now their life is not full of whatever it is they expected it to be full of (and, most often, the problem is that they do not have a stitch of doctrine in their souls).

¹⁵⁹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 138, taken from John Wimber, *Power Evangelism*; San Francisco, CA; Harper & Row, 1986, p. 35.

42. Charismatics take a stand against knowledge and learning, substituting for it experience and feeling:
- a. What the charismatic offers is the secret experience which leads to the great, victorious Christian life. Paul also claimed to have an incredible experience; one which would pretty much relegate any charismatic experience to the dumpster. In 2Cor. 12, Paul tells how he was caught up to the third heaven—it was so incredible that he does not have any idea whether he remained in his body or whether this was imply a vision. In any case, he was permitted to see Paradise, a sight if even a vision is beyond our comprehension and far outside the realm of any believer's experience. However, what followed this experience in time was Paul's struggles with the flesh (2Cor. 12:7–12). What God gave Paul, to accompany this phenomenal experience was a demon from Satan who would continually slug Paul—from this, Paul received the rather inglorious *thorn in the flesh*. Now, although there are a lot of theories as to what this was, most agree that this was painful and that it stayed with Paul his entire life. Paul also testifies as to the continual struggles with the flesh in Rom. 7:14–22 (which would have occurred after the tremendous vision alluded to in 2Cor. 12). Chantry: *Far from transporting Paul to a plane of victory and grand sanctification, extraordinary revelation signaled the start of a more desperate struggle against sin and the flesh.*¹⁶⁰ It is amazing how the Pentecostal offers you an experience which leads to the greater, fuller, more victorious life; and yet Paul offers up his own experience, much greater than any of us could imagine, and the result is not an easy, spiritual coast down ecstasy mountain, but a continued struggle with the flesh and with a painful physical ailment which plagues him for the rest of his life. It is not as though you have a choice between the Pentecostal experience or the Pauline experience—I simply offer Paul's experience to offer a Scriptural balance to what the charismatic claims offer.
 - b. In fact, let's continue to use Paul as an illustration. The charismatic experience offers you great victory and power—so, what was Paul like? When he first came to Corinth (and this was after his glorious experience, which occurred 14 years prior to writing 2Corinthians), he came in fear and trembling, lacking both eloquence and confidence (1Cor. 2:1–4). This is the greatest Apostle of the twelve, and this was his approach to Corinth. Paul was not a tremendous public speaker nor did he have any sort of imposing presence (2Cor. 10:10). However, this is how he preferred it. **And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I would rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore, I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong** (2Cor. 12:9–10). Does this sound like the promise of the charismatic experience? Chantry: *Super-sanctified Christians would be lacking in a major qualification which God requires of his servants, namely, a deep sense of personal unworthiness and uncleanness.*¹⁶¹ When Peter first met Jesus and witnessed a miracle, he fell down before Jesus, saying, **"Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."** (Luke 5:8b).
 - c. One of the greatest problems of the charismatic movement is that it is experienced-based. Dr. Frederick Bruner: *It is important to notice that it is not the doctrine, it is the experience of the Holy Spirit which Pentecostals repeatedly assert that they wish to stress.*¹⁶² McGee: *And they [Pentecostals] always reason from experience to doctrine or to truth. Always reasoning from experience to truth. Personally I believe this is a dangerous procedure. We are to reason from truth to experience—always.*¹⁶³ John Wimber: *Some truths in Scripture cannot be understood until we have had certain experiences...God uses our experiences to show us more fully what he teaches in Scripture, many times toppling or altering elements of our theology and worldview.*¹⁶⁴ I have been told on several occasions by charismatics you just have to experience it; or, I know what I experienced is real and from God; or, you don't know what you are missing until you have experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I have personally heard similar statements from people who use drugs. Listen carefully: you do not have to *experience* something in order to determine whether it is true or false, good or evil, right or wrong. The only judge of truth that we

¹⁶⁰ Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles*; ©1973 by The Banner of Truth Trust, p. 49.

¹⁶¹ Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles*; ©1973 by The Banner of Truth Trust, p. 54.

¹⁶² Dr. Frederick Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit*; p. 21.

¹⁶³ J. Vernon McGee; "Gifts of the Spirit"; Thru the Bible Books, ©1972, p. 7.

¹⁶⁴ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 142, taken from John Wimber, *Power Evangelism*; San Francisco, CA; Harper & Row, 1986, pp. 88–89.

have is the Word of God. It either lines up with God's Word or it does not. If the baptism of the Holy Spirit apart from salvation and the subsequent bestowal of spiritual gifts is an absolute necessity to the spiritual life, then throughout Scripture we would have more than an occasional mention of these things—we would be commanded to go out and get these things. However, as you will see when we get into a careful, verse-by-verse study, that there is no imperative associated with the baptism of the Holy Spirit (as misunderstood by the charismatics). There is no imperative associated with the use of the gift of tongues (although there are several associated with the abuse of that same gift). In no epistle does Paul ever tell the church is there problem is that they need to seek a spiritual awakening via God the Holy Spirit, by getting the second blessing or by being slain in the spirit. When Jesus addressed the lukewarm church in Laodicea (Rev. 3), He did not tell them, "Your problem is obvious—you all need to go out and get baptized by the Holy Spirit and snap out of it."

- d. Because charismatics base what is right and wrong more upon experience than upon Scripture, they will often disparage the use of reason and logic. Kenneth Hagin explains how to distinguish between true and false spiritual gifts: *When God moves, everybody will be blessed. If something is of the flesh, everybody will have a sick feeling. And if something is of the devil, it seems like the hair will stand up on your neck. That's a simple way everyone can judge, whether they've got any spiritual discernment or not.*¹⁶⁵
- e. I finally obtained a copy of John Sherrill's book, *They Speak with Other Tongues*, which is, by my impression, the *handbook* or even the *bible*, if you will, of those who are charismatic. Already on p. 2, of his book, Sherrill quotes from a sermon which would have an impact on his life: "*But, you see,*" said the seminarian, "*as long as Nicodemus was trying to come to an understanding of Christ through his **logic**, he could never succeed. It isn't **logic**, but an experience, that lets us know who Christ is. Christ, Himself, told Nicodemus this: 'In very truth I tell you, unless a man has been born over again he cannot see the kingdom of God.'*"¹⁶⁶
- f. David Shibley, who writes a most even-handed book, given that he is a charismatic and that most of what he said is wrong, concludes with: *It may seem like a simple answer, but the fact is, you will know when you are filled with the Holy Spirit. You won't need anyone to verify it for you or to decide for you whether or not you have been filled. You will just know, and that knowledge comes from faith in God's Word.*¹⁶⁷ You will note carefully, although Shibley pays careful lip service to the Word of God, the basis of *knowing* whether you are filled with the Holy Spirit is not really God's Word, but you will just *know it*. It doesn't get any more experienced-based than this.
- g. Just about every charismatic that I have talked to, when they quote their threadbare Scripture verses to substantiate their position, and I explain what the passage means in context, will then fall back on how the experience feels and the *ends justify the means*. In other words, if it feels right and holy to them, it is right and holy—as if Satan is not smarter than they are; as if Satan is not in the business of counterfeiting. If the result of the gifts of the gifts of the Spirit make them feel or act spiritual, then these were valid gifts.
- h. Kenneth Copeland: *Believers are not supposed to be led by logic. We are not even to be led by good sense...The ministry of Jesus was never governed by logic or reason.*¹⁶⁸ I read things like this and I wonder, *how can anyone take Kenneth Copeland seriously as a spiritual leader?* Apparently, Mr. Copeland never read any portion of the gospels when Jesus taught? I could fill pages with examples here, but let's start with Jesus and his disciples on the Sabbath picking and eating from a grainfield on the Sabbath. When the Pharisees questioned him on the legality of their actions, Jesus first appealed to Scripture and later illustrated with a healing on the Sabbath, giving a logical rebuttal to the pharisaic position (Matt. 12:1–13). His disciples recorded lengthy discourses of His teaching, e.g., Matt. 5–7, 10–11 24–25. The Pharisees and Sadducees continually approached our Lord on the basis of the Scriptures and logic, and Jesus continually responded on the basis of Scripture and logic (see, for instance,

¹⁶⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 160, taken from Kenneth Hagin, "Learning to Flow with the Spirit of God" Tulsa, OK; Faith Library, 1986, p. 23.

¹⁶⁶ John Sherrill, *They Speak with Other Tongues*; Chosen Books; Grand Rapids, Michigan; ©1985, p. 2.

¹⁶⁷ David Shibley, *A Charismatic Truce*; Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers, ©1978, p. 107.

¹⁶⁸ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 161; taken from Kenneth Copeland, "The Force of Faith"; Ft. Worth, TX; Kenneth Copeland Ministries, n.d., p. 10.

Matt. 22:15–46). What I don't recall ever being an issue is the feelings of the Pharisees and Sadducees or the feelings of the followers of our Lord.

- i. Finally, when it comes to logic, no one depends more upon logic than does the Apostle Paul. His letters, particular Romans, I and I1Corinthians, and Galatians, are fueled by logic. If you were to remove Paul's arguments from logic from these books, they would literally be reduced by half. Paul never points toward experience as being the deciding factor nor does he depend upon experience as his reason for taking this position or that—the basis of Paul's arguments for any point is generally Old Testament Scripture, explained and fleshed out with ample logical arguments. Paul never once suggests that the readers of his epistles just set aside those dusty old Scriptures and simply *lean into the spirit* for guidance, experience, support and strength. Quite obviously, our strength and our spiritual essence is completely dependent upon God the Holy Spirit; however, nowhere does Paul approach this as if logic, Scripture and the Holy Spirit are mutually exclusive. They are all mutually supportive.¹⁶⁹
43. Testimonies of former charismatics:
- a. Wayne Robertson, once the editor-in-chief of Oral Roberts Evangelistic Association Publications, wrote: *In the past few years, I have become more and more convinced that the test, not only of tongues but of any religious experience, cannot be limited to the logic and truthfulness supporting it. There is also the essential question, "What does it do in one's life?" More specifically, does it turn a person inward to self-concern and selfish interests, or does it open him up to others and to their needs? I know people who testify that speaking in tongues has been the great liberating experience of their lives. But juxtaposed with them are a great many others for whom speaking in tongues has been an excuse to withdraw from confronting the realities of a suffering and divided world. For some, tongues has been the greatest thing ever to happen; others have seen it disrupt churches, destroy careers, and rupture personal relationships.*¹⁷⁰
 - b. Ben Byrd, another former charismatic, writes: *To say that speaking in tongues is a harmless practice and is all right for those who want to IS AN UNWISE position when information to the contrary is evident...Speaking in tongues is addictive. The misunderstanding of the issue of tongues and the habit plus the psychic high it brings plus the stimulation of the flesh equals a practice hard to let go of...[But to] equate much speaking in tongues with advanced spirituality is to reveal one's misunderstanding of Bible Truth and to reveal one's willingness to be satisfied with a deceptive and dangerous counterfeit.*¹⁷¹
 - c. Let me give you the testimony of George Gardiner, who was a pastor and a former charismatic in the Pentecostal movement: *The enemy of the soul is ever ready to take an advantage of an "out of control" situation and thousands of Christians can testify with regret to the end results. Such experiences not only give Satan an opening he is quick to exploit, they can be psychologically damaging to the individual. Charismatic writers are constantly warning tongues-speakers that they will suffer a letdown. This is ascribed to the devil and the reader is urged to get refilled as soon as possible...So the seeker for the experience goes back through the ritual again and again, but begins to discover something; ecstatic experience, like drug-addiction, requires larger and larger doses to satisfy. Sometimes the bizarre is introduced. I have seen people run around a room until they were exhausted, climb tent poles, laugh hysterically, go into trances for days and do other weird things as the "high" sought became more elusive. Eventually there is a crisis and a decision is made; he will sit on the back seats and be a spectator, "take it," or go on in the hope that everything will eventually be as it was. The most tragic decision is to quit and in the quitting abandon all things spiritual as fraudulent. The spectators are frustrated, the fakers suffer guilt, the hoping are pitiable and the quitters are a tragedy. No, such movements are not harmless.*¹⁷²
44. Additional problems with the charismatic movement:

¹⁶⁹ Now, there is a stress upon academics and learning about the devil's world which Paul eschews—however, that is not what we are talking about here.

¹⁷⁰ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 223, taken from Wayne Robinson, *I Once Spoke in Tongues*; Atlanta, GA; Brentwood, 1988, pp. 9–10.

¹⁷¹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 223, taken from Ben Gyr, *The Truth About Speaking in Tongues*; Columbus, GA; Brentwood, 1988, p. 49.

¹⁷² John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 222, taken from George E. Gardiner, *The Corinthian Catastrophe*; Grand Rapids, MI; Kregel, 1974, p. 55.

- a. One of the false impressions given by charismatics is that a church is either going to be jumping, or it's going to be dead (lukewarm or worse). Shibley states: *Although it is bad when an outsider comes in and says we are crazy, it is worse when a visitor comes in and says we are dead!*¹⁷³ Churches become staid because (1) they lack the power of the Spirit (which is usually a matter of simple mechanics) and because (2) they lack the power of the Word of God (few believers have even a clue as to the power resident in God's Word). Such churches are always ripe for cultic attacks from any group, whether they be charismatics or Jehovah's Witnesses. Churches do become lukewarm, but this has nothing to do with their lacking the *so-called second blessing*. I've been in non-charismatic churches where there was excitement and fervor, and I've been in dynamic churches which were quiet and laid back. A lack of jumping up and down and random yelling does not indicate that a church is dead.
- b. Now, what you often see is this great enthusiasm of these charismatics. They are jumping up and down for God; they are excited and happy and plugged in. They are dedicated, prayerful, etc. etc. etc. My friend, do not confuse enthusiasm with spirituality. You are probably reading this on the Internet where I have this posted. Through one service on the Internet, *Inside the Web*, I have come to know of dozens of very enthusiastic *believers* who have put up their own web sites, have their own letters pages, etc. Although I have visited many of these homemade pages, I have never found even one which teaches salvation correctly, although they all purport to (these are not charismatics to whom I am referring; just enthusiastic Christian cultists). All of them have a mixture of faith and works as a basis for salvation (and anytime that you add works to faith, you are not saved). And, on their *discussion* pages, they will either not post any opposing views; or, if they do, and then find out that they are unable to come up with a good argument, then they simply erase the letter. Now these people have gone to a lot of trouble to set up these web pages and to post their drivel, which no doubt is the result of great enthusiasm. However, what they spout is the devil's own lie—that you must, in part, earn your salvation or do something in order to maintain your salvation. So that you might even better understand this, when a kid begins to use drugs, he becomes often very evangelistic in his use, as well as enthusiastic. This does not mean that what he is enthused about is an activity in which we should all partake. The Bible never sets forth enthusiasm as the mark of a growing believer, or as the aspect of a person's life which most clearly represents his spiritual growth. Please realize that some people are enthusiastic and some are not. Many times, it is a matter of personality. When it is a matter of personality change (which occurs in some cases of these charismatics who are *reborn a second time*), then this enthusiasm borders on mild psychosis. In any case, *enthusiasm* is not a good argument for anything.
- c. Here is a problem which I have not seen stated elsewhere. If the gift of tongues is no longer a gift for today, and born-again believers are engaging in this *learned* behavior of speaking in tongues (more about that at the end of this study), then they do not exercise their own spiritual gift. That is, God gave them a gift to exercise for the benefit of others and they are off *edifying* themselves speaking in gibberish.
- d. Another serious problem is that most charismatics do not believe in eternal security. This is the *once saved, always saved* doctrine. This is a study in itself, which I have covered in part in *Salvation*. However, the principle is simple: if you think that you must *believe in Jesus Christ and lead at least a mediocre or better Christian life in order to be saved*, then you are not saved. Again, your salvation depends 100% upon what Christ did on the cross; it depends 0% upon you and what you do or intend to do. Let's say, you are an unbeliever and you are reading this and you suddenly get the idea, *can I believe in Jesus, and then just go out and do whatever evil and hurtful things that I want to do?* Absolutely, unequivocally **yes**.¹⁷⁴ You may think that we shouldn't teach this. Or, even if it is true, maybe we should back peddle on this doctrine somewhat—de-emphasize this aspect of salvation. What you don't grasp, is there are a whole lot of unbelievers out there hungry for the gospel, but they don't want to be the self-righteous ass that you are. They need to know that salvation is 100% free to them—salvation is not free, mind you—our Lord paid for it—but it is free to all who believe in Jesus Christ. Now, I know you are totally concerned about their sinful behavior after salvation. Do you want to know something? What they do after salvation is none of your damn business. Now, don't misunderstand this simple point. I am not saying that sin is not wrong or that believers should be encouraged to sin after salvation. However, a person's life after salvation is a separate matter from the mechanics of salvation. Properly understanding

¹⁷³ David Shibley, *A Charismatic Truce*; Thomas Nelson inc., Publishers, ©1978, p. 37.

¹⁷⁴ I hope you realize that I say these things just to piss some of you off. Don't forget to confess that, by the way.

this is a part of correctly dividing the Word of Truth. And every evangelist should be able to separate this clearly in their message. Unbelievers should never be sent a mixed message of grace and works. Once a person is saved and decides to do wrong (**everybody decides to do wrong after salvation**), do not panic; God's discipline is real and God can take care of His Own after salvation. He doesn't need your help and He does not need your interference. If you are so damned concerned with someone's salvation and what they might do after salvation, then it is permissible, when you give them the gospel, to also sternly warn them that, in salvation, God becomes their Father, and that they will probably receive discipline after salvation for sins that they commit prior to salvation with impunity. You see, God is not everyone's Father, as Jesus pointed out to the pharisees ("**You are of your father, the devil.**"). Therefore, God does not spend His time disciplining unbelievers as He would His children. Does He deal with the sins of unbelievers? Certainly: (1) God placed the punishment for those sins upon Jesus Christ on the cross; (2) God often nudges the unbeliever with what may appear to us to be discipline; and, (3) God may discipline the unbeliever who is harassing the believer. However, I have gotten off course here. The primary point that I am making is that charismatics generally believe that you can lose your salvation; and this logically means that your salvation is a combination of what Christ did for you and on the cross and what you do in your spiritual life. When that is taught, then you derail people from salvation.

- e. Another problem with the charismatic movement is its emphasis. It points toward the Holy Spirit, which contradicts what our Lord taught, predicting the coming of the Holy Spirit: "**But when He, the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak, and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and He will disclose it to you.**" (John 16:13–14). The emphasis of the Holy Spirit will be upon Christ Jesus and not upon His own power and glory.
- f. If you have a moment, go back and reread all of those advantages which have been cited by charismatics. You will notice two persistent, common threads: (1) their previous Christian experience used to be unsatisfying; and, (2) their present experience in the Holy Spirit is emotionally much more satisfying. These common threads often blind others to what is going on. A considerable majority of those in the charismatic movement have been culled out of other churches.¹⁷⁵ This is how most cults operate—they find and capture believers and take them out of their home church. Secondly, the resultant feelings of this post-salvation experience are taken as a justification for the experience. They can point to a few passages which, when not carefully analyzed, could lead to their position; but the chief reasons cited are personal emotional fulfillment. No matter how good something makes us feel, that cannot be our justification for what we believe in. I know an alcoholic and also a drug addict who began going to AA and improved their lives considerably. They are living happier, more stable lives. In one of those cases, AA seemed to lead this person away from Christianity. I know of another person who lacked self-esteem, and became a Scientologist and his self esteem improved, as did his life. I knew another guy who was somewhat of a sponge and a border-line alcoholic who became a Mormon and his life improved considerably. We cannot confuse results with truth. Let me explain what happened in each of these lives; they began leading lives where they sinned less. When you sin less, as a believer or an unbeliever, your life, in general, is going to get better. If you used to do drugs and alcohol, and then you stop; your life will be better; if you used to feel sorry for yourself and thought about how lousy your life is, and then you refocus on something other than yourself, you are going to feel better; if you start paying your own way and stop sponging off others, you are going to have more self-esteem. However, making these changes in your life does not mean that you have believed in Jesus Christ.
- g. Although the charismatic movement gives lip service to evangelization and separation to God, etc., the selling point of the second blessing is often *personal satisfaction, joy, thrills, excitement...spine-tinging encounters*. Chantry warns: *Any religious experiences which bring immediate rejoicing and uninterrupted cheerfulness are not to be trusted...He is not the 'Jolly spirit' but the Holy Spirit.*¹⁷⁶
- h. Charismatics are embracing believers and unbelievers of all Christian and semi-Christian faiths, in the name of Christian unity, but the real reason is that they agree upon this additional experience after salvation. *Full gospel societies embrace nuns and priests who continue to believe unbiblical doctrines. Some pentecostal Catholics have been so bold as to confess that their experiences of speaking in*

¹⁷⁵ Obviously, not all; and I know some charismatics who have known nothing other than charismatic teaching.

¹⁷⁶ Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles*; ©1973 by The Banner of Truth Trust, pp. 72–73.

tongues have given them a deeper appreciation for the spiritual blessings of the mass, or have given them new dimensions of adoration for the 'blessed mother of our Lord'. The spirit of truth will never move lips to utter such blasphemy and heresy. Neither will the Spirit of Christ silence his servants in the name of love and unity while soul-destroying doctrine is being taught.¹⁷⁷ As Chantry then points out, the greatest revival since the first two centuries was the Reformation, when God's Word became available to all men and the central topic of the Reformation was the false doctrine promulgated by the Catholic Church. It is from this period of time that all the great names of history, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Zwingli, began to struggle with the great doctrines of justification, Biblical authority, Christology, Soteriology, free will vs. predestination, the nature and authority of the Christian church, imputed grace vs. infused grace, etc. This took place based upon the concern for correctly understanding God revealed Word and not through some post-salvation experience.

- i. Some charismatics actually believe in healing through relics of the saints, a Catholic doctrine. John Wimber called that a *point of faith*; that is, a point at which a sick person could place their faith.¹⁷⁸
- j. Furthermore, despite the unity that this movement professes, tongues is one of the most divisive coalitions in Christianity. Now, I would not walk into a church where they speak in tongues and try to convince them not to. In fact, I will not walk into a church where they speak in tongues at all anymore. However, a person who speaks in tongues has no problem walking into a non-charismatic church and spreading their doctrine, often splitting the church in half. The psalmist wrote: **Observe how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity** (Psalm 133:1). Does this sound like a church where charismatics have infiltrated? What Paul wrote to Timothy sounds more like charismatic-infiltrated churches. **They hold to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; and avoid such men as these. For you see, among them are those who enter into households (or, churches) and seduce weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth** (2Tim. 3:5–7). Those who belong to the full gospel businessmen's association are encouraged to remain in the churches where they are and to make converts out of the other members (they certainly don't put it like that, but that is the end result).
- k. McGee points out that the fruit of the spirit is meekness and humility (humility, in Scripture, is grace orientation). Then he writes: *I have never met the lady that seems to be the promoter of this movement, but I was flabbergasted to read a statement of hers. Let me insert an observation before I give you her statement. There never has been a movement of tongues that the woman was not in it. And I wish they would follow the Scripture Paul said in 1Corinthians 14:34, "Let your women keep silence in the churches." That refers to speaking in tongues. We have used that Scripture incorrectly by maintaining that a woman ought not stand behind a pulpit and pray or say anything. People have even said to me that a woman missionary from the field should not come here and speak. Why not? Paul is speaking only about women keeping silence in the matter of tongues. You take women out of the tongues movement and it will die in Los Angeles over night. Now let me give you her statement. She quotes one who was "originally a skeptic" but has been convinced and thinks the current tongues movement is the greatest movement since the Reformation. That is bad enough, but she adds, "We think it is greater than that!" I do not know this lady, but I am not yet prepared to put her down by Martin Luther and John Calvin and John Knox. Humbleness would not make such a statement.*¹⁷⁹
- l. Along the same lines, James writes of tongue of fire: **So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. Observe how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed, and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison** (James 3:5–8). If a charismatic does not bridle his own tongue when it comes to speaking gibberish, we would expect them not to do so with regards to other things as well. McGee tells of those from the charismatic movement who have written to him: *These folk who say they have something superior are not only trying to divide, but they say the harshest things to those who differ with them. They write the ugliest things to me that possibly*

¹⁷⁷ Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles*; ©1973 by The Banner of Truth Trust, pp. 79–80.

¹⁷⁸ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 142.

¹⁷⁹ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part II*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 18.

can be written! May I say to you, beloved, we are to keep the unity of the Spirit. This movement today is dividing churches. Can that be of God? Can division be the work of the Holy Spirit?¹⁸⁰

- m. McGee puts together some reasoning which is well worth carefully examining: *Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:31). When he makes the tremendous statement, "No man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed," what does he mean? In the Epistle to the Galatians, Paul said, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8). Now what had prompted him to say that to the Galatian believers? The Judaizers had come into the Galatian country after Paul had been there with the Gospel. Although the Judaizers did not deny the death and resurrection of Christ, they said something like this, "Paul didn't tell you everything. You not only should trust Jesus, but you should get under the Mosaic Law. The death and resurrection of Jesus didn't give you everything." Paul declares, "You say Jesus is accursed when you say a thing like that." Now today, when you come to me and say, as I read in these letters I have before me, "McGee, your trouble is you've never had the experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit," you are implying that when I came to Jesus Christ and trust Him as Savior, I didn't get everything, and that now the Holy Spirit has something else to give to me. My friend, when you say that to me, you are saying that Jesus is accursed—because when I came to Christ, I got everything from Him...Everything I have was given to me when I came to Christ, and trusted Him as my Savior. Now I may not appropriate all of it, but I've been blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies; they've all been made over to me. Everything was given to me when I came to the Lord Jesus Christ. And, my friend, you are saying a dangerous thing when you suggest that I must now go to the Holy Spirit, come around, maybe to the back door, and He'll slip me something that Jesus did not give me. You are saying my Lord is accursed when you do that.*¹⁸¹
- n. McGee mentions a former Southern Baptist preacher who had become prominent in the tongue movement, who wrote an article with the title "The Glory of the God of Israel Has Returned." McGee points out that this is another clear misunderstanding of Scripture. The text from the book of Ezekiel which he quotes actually speaks of the shekinah glory which was in the tabernacle as well as in Solomon's temple. This same glory returned to heaven, but is to return to the Millennial temple. *It has nothing in the world to do with the church. And yet this preacher has it coming back today—and it is down in Texas, according to him. Now, I would be the first to admit that there are a lot of great things in Texas, but the shekinah glory is not one of them.* McGee heard this man over the radio in Dallas, urging people, "We are having a banquet down here in a hotel in Dallas. And I want you to come down and buy a ticket. I want you to hear me. I am going to tell you how I got my great power." McGee asks if we could imagine Paul arriving in Corinth and telling them to meet him in the temple for a meal so he can tell them how he got his great power. *Paul did not do it that way, my beloved. He just did not do it that way.*¹⁸²
- o. Originally, I was going to insert many quotes from the books of charismatics. However, as I pour through them, I find a few generalizations, and very little worth quoting.
- i. The charismatic movement is growing by leaps and bounds and the denominational church is dying out. Richard Wilke, for instance, writes: *Authentic vitality seems to pulsate where a congregation is most in harmony with the apostolic witness.*¹⁸³ Translated¹⁸⁴ this means, where people are speaking in tongues.
 - ii. They tend to use (and I have no idea why) a ton of analogies. I make this only as an observation, as I am not opposed to analogies.
 - iii. When they quote Scripture to make any point, even when it has nothing to do with supporting their position on tongues, it is taken out of context a significant number of times.

¹⁸⁰ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part II*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 23.

¹⁸¹ J. Vernon McGee; "Gifts of the Spirit"; *Thru the Bible Books*, ©1972, pp. 10–11. McGee also have a fine exegesis of 1Cor. 12:3 in that booklet as well.

¹⁸² Quoted and paraphrased from J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part II*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; pp. 18–19.

¹⁸³ Richard Wilke, *Signs and Wonders*; Abingdon Press, ©1973, p. 19.

¹⁸⁴ I do have the gift of interpretation of tongues.

- p. Were you aware, by the way, that there is much more in Scripture concerning the abuse of the tongue than the abuse of alcohol? James warns us not to speak with an unbridled tongue. Does this accurately describe believers who speak with tongues? What we say is of great importance in our walk as believers. Does babbling really glorify God?
45. Hand-in-hand with the post-salvation baptism of the spirit and the gift of tongues is the gift of healing.
- a. Now, it is certainly true that some people are healed in charismatic churches. There are several reasons for that: post-hypnotic suggestion, the placebo effect, mind over matter and the removal of demonic attack upon the body. However, most of the healings are either bogus, trivial and unspectacular, or exaggerated. What would cause great attention would be for there to be verifiable miraculous healings. There is an Argentine faith healer named Carlos Annacondia. The Spirit works through him to fill teeth (or so it is alleged). Apart from the fact that this is a pretty goofy kind of cure and apart from the question, *why doesn't God simply heal the tooth*, this would be easily verifiable. However, what we do not have is third part confirmation of this kind of healing. MacArthur observed: *The most dramatic miracles come with sketchy details and are nearly always anonymous. Rarely do they even involve people who are known personally to those who report the miracles. Corroborating eyewitness accounts are sometimes cited but never documented. Most UFO sightings come with more convincing evidence. A group of five Christian medical doctors attended a recent conference led by John Wimber in Sydney, Australia [John Wimber is a Third Waver]. These men were hoping to establish the truth of Wimber's claims that miraculous healings were taking place in his meetings. One of them, Dr. Philip Selden, reports, "The fact that John Wimber knew we were present and observing may have served to "tone down" the claims which we understand were made at previous conferences...Mr. Wimber himself referred to bad backs and indicated that people could expect pain relief, but no change which could be documented by a doctor. He admitted that he had never seen a degenerated vertebra restored to normal shape...As I suspected, most of the conditions which were prayed over were in the psychosomatic, trivial, or medically difficult-to-document categories: problems with the left great toe, nervous disorders, breathing problems, barrenness, unequal leg lengths (my favourite—I can't measure legs accurately), bad backs and neck, etc.*¹⁸⁵
- b. In John Wimber's book, *Power Healing*, he first gives a list of reasons why people are not healed (they do not have faith in God for healing; there are unconfessed sins in their lives; there is widespread sin and unbelief in the believers in that periphery or in the person's family; they do not really know what to pray for; and, my favorite, since God may not heal instantly, they just stop praying before a healing has been effected. Furthermore, John Wimber later writes: *I never blame the sick person for lack of faith if healing does not come.*¹⁸⁶ Wimber admits: *I have a continually expanding group of disgruntled people who have come for healing and don't get it.*¹⁸⁷ Anyone who has even a precursory understanding of any of the gospels cannot help but compare and contrast his healing ministry to that of our Lord's; or even to that of the Apostles in the first portion of the book of Acts. The healings were instant, complete, successful, clearly miraculous and observed by many who knew the patient. We do not hear a plethora of excuses why the healing didn't take and we certainly do not find God healing someone eventually over time after long and fervent prayer.¹⁸⁸
46. Another reason that the charismatic movement is fundamentally wrong is that they have developed unusual, and at times, bizarre doctrines throughout the years which are legalistic at best and contrary to the faith at worst. When you lack careful Scriptural study, this is the inevitable result. Let me give you a few examples:
- a. We've already covered salvation as a combination of works and faith.
- b. We've already covered spirituality by doing something other than naming your sins to God.
- c. We've already covered their rejection of eternal security.

¹⁸⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 133, who took the quote from Dr. Philip Selden, "Spiritual Warfare: Medical Reflections," *the Briefing*; April 24, 1990, p. 19..

¹⁸⁶ Points and quote from John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 134, who took it from John Wimber, *Power Healing*; San Francisco, CA; Harper & Row, 1987, pp. 152, 174.

¹⁸⁷ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 134, who took it from the CT Institute symposium, "The Holy Spirit: God at Work," *Christianity Today* (supplement March 19, 1990, p. 33.

¹⁸⁸ By the way, I am not speaking disparagingly of those who pray for healing over a long period of time. However, keep in mind that Paul should be our model here—he prayed three times for the removal of a lifelong ailment, and God did not remove it.

- d. Historically, the Pentecostals have entertained such heresies as the necessity of being baptized in the name of Jesus (rather than *in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*), which caused many of them to be re-baptized.
- e. Early on in the charismatic movement, there was the *Jesus only* heresy, which denied the Trinity, allowing that only Jesus was God and that there was no other member of the Trinity.
- f. In the early days of the Pentecostal movement, the southern Pentecostals frowned upon the wearing of colorful dresses by women or ties by men; some groups did not allow their women to wear jewelry or wedding rings. Many forbid the ownership of a television (which actually makes more sense today than it did then). The United Pentecostal Church organization put out a 16 page booklet giving 15 reasons why women should not cut their hair.
- g. Many groups were involved in ceremonial foot washing.
- h. Many early Pentecostals were against the use of medicine and they did not believe in going to the doctor. I mention these early misguided doctrines because we are dealing with people who have a special relationship with God—they are receiving almost daily communications directly from God—yet their doctrine is all screwed up. That doesn't make any sense.
- i. Rather than having a body of believers which was immediately unified, early Pentecostal groups differed with regards to *the eating of pork, the use of tobacco, the drinking of coffee and soda pop, participation in the military, labor unions, etc.*¹⁸⁹ I hope that it is clear that most of these are practically non-issues, apart from serving in the military; therefore, to be split on such inconsequentials is nonsensical.
- j. One writer, Conrad Murrell, proposed that the gift of Apostleship is still with us, spending a very short time upon this revelatory insight, saying that the gift of Apostleship would be removed only after *...we all come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ* (Eph. 4:3). *We haven't gotten there yet and so we can expect to find the apostles still among us. God has not abandoned his Church. He is still perfecting her. And the apostles will be with us until the work is done.*¹⁹⁰ The Catholic church has believed something akin to this since its inception, maintaining that the authority of Peter over the Church was perpetuated in the office of Pope. This opens up a whole new can of worms that I don't believe I'm ready to launch into yet. Murrell is almost a study in himself. He maintains, of course, that not only do we have Apostles today, but we also have prophets, their jobs being to tear down structures (Jer. 1:10) and to then lay foundations for new structures (Rom. 15:20 Eph. 2:20). Therefore, they often work consecutively and sometimes are one and the same person. The evangelist does an incomplete job if they only give the gospel. It is also their job to raise those whom they've evangelized. Conrad does not quote Scripture here, but prove that point by analogy: *To accept a man into a household and never introduce him to his family, to fail to instruct him in its order and blessings, to rob him of the knowledge of his rich inheritance, the unlimited power and love of the Father is a poor evangelism indeed.*¹⁹¹ Murrell also has *pastors* administrating and coordinating and *teachers* teaching and lists them as separate gifts (obviously ignorant of the Granville Sharp rule in Greek which tells us that these men are one and the same). Now, I realize that most charismatics do not believe all these things, but once we lay a poor foundation with a faulty vocabulary and misinterpretation of Scripture, then we can go off in all kinds of weird directions. If you allow God's Word to be taken out of context a few times to set up your most fundamental doctrines, then you can do almost anywhere, doctrinally speaking.
- k. On the fringes of Pentecostalism, there are the snake handlers. The founder of this movement is generally ascribed to George Went Hensley, who began handling snakes in 1909, and, for about ten years, there was only one incident of a snake bite. Until then, *the faithful "carried their Bibles and their snakes to meeting, chanted, spoke in tongues, prayed, and suffered ecstatic seizures.*¹⁹² Apart from the snakes, this bare-bones description is not much different from mainstream Pentecostals.
- l. MacArthur mentions several other not-so-fringe elements: Robert Tilton, a charismatic evangelist, would mail out a *miracle-coin* to those who sent in an offering to his program, "Success-N-Life," and promises

¹⁸⁹ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 93.

¹⁹⁰ Conrad Murrell, *To Profit Withal*, ©1969, p. 23.

¹⁹¹ Conrad Murrell, *To Profit Withal*, ©1969, p. 26.

¹⁹² John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 151, who took it from Weston LaBarre, *They Shall Take Up Serpents*; Minneapolis, MN; University of Minnesota Press, 1962, p. 12..

that with that coin a financial miracle. The Dallas Times Herald called his program *The fastest growing empire in Christian television*.¹⁹³

- m. MacArthur: *A close associate of mine attended a charismatic businessmen's meeting in Chicago where a Catholic priest testified that Mary had given him the gift of tongue while he was saying the rosary. Then the charismatic pastor leading the meeting got up and said, "What an amazing testimony! Aren't you glad God isn't bound by our ideas of what's doctrinally acceptable? Some people would try to dismiss this brother's testimony just because it doesn't jibe with their doctrinal system. But how you get filled with the Holy Ghost doesn't matter, as long as you know you've got the baptism!" The audience, numbering in the hundreds, broke into wild, sustained applause. No one seemed to question whether that man's testimony, so obviously in conflict with biblical truth, might be spurious.*¹⁹⁴ The key to these people is *not does it line up with Scripture*, but, *have they experienced something similar to what I have experienced?*
- n. Many churches have *slain in the spirit* as being a church activity, an act which bears barely a casual resemblance to anything found in the New Testament. Benny Hinn, who is the charismatic pastor of the Orlando Christian Center, is one of the many who either touches his followers on the forehead or waves his hands, and they are knocked out as if he were a spirit-filled Mohammed Ali. MacArthur: *The charismatic practice of slaying people in the Spirit has become so commonplace that many charismatics may be surprised to learn that Scripture is utterly silent about such a gift.*¹⁹⁵
- o. Another doctrine recently being perpetrated by the charismatic movement is the *oneness* of God is now being applied to His person, as opposed to just His essence (they are as confused about Deut. 6:4 as the Jew is).
- p. And, finally, some of the stuff that they have come up with is just downright goofy: *telling jokes in tongues* and then *laughing in tongues* has to be on the top ten list of lame things to do in church. How these people think they have any sort of testimony before unbelievers is beyond me. What is happening is that they are not converting unbelievers, but they are converting believers whose understanding of the Word is weak. Which logically leads me to the next point:
- q. You may wonder why I am not spending a great deal of time refuting these doctrines. At a later date, I might. However, the primary focus of this study is the gift of tongues and whether or not what we see today is a continuation of what occurred at Pentecost two millennia ago.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

47. We should also visit the museum of the weird: experiences which Pentecostals have had:

- a. Dr. Percy Collett, who is a charismatic medical missionary, put together an *extensive series of detailed messages on heaven*, based upon his being transported into heaven for 5½ days in 1982. During that time, he saw Jesus, who was supervising the building of the mansions there, and Dr. Collett was also able to speak face to face with the Holy Spirit. Some excerpts: *Everything God created upon the earth is in heaven—horses, cats, dogs. Everything that He created upon earth is in heaven—in the way of animals, only these are perfect. For example, the dogs do not bark,...You don't need plumbing. You can go to the Banqueting House and eat all you want and no plumbing is needed...[the Record Room is] an immense area where all the 'idle' words spoken by Christians are being retained until after Christians give an account of them, or are judged, at which time these will be emptied into the Sea of Forgetfulness.*¹⁹⁶
- b. Dillow relates an acquaintance of his who was a charismatic Christian: *When I was a new Christian, I met a man I'll call Bill. Bill was given to seeing visions and regularly claimed he received direct revelation from God. He saw the Lord working in every conceivably circumstance of life. Every inner impression was examined as to the Lord's leading. One night he called me at midnight because he had a message from*

¹⁹³ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 16, taken from the "The Prophet of Prosperity"; *Dallas times Herald*; June 24, 1990; A1.

¹⁹⁴ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 16–17.

¹⁹⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 152.

¹⁹⁶ Quoted and paraphrased from John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 25, who took it from Mary Stewart Relfe, "Interview with Dr. Percy Collett," *Relfe's Review*, Report #55, August 1984, pp. 1–8.

the Lord that he had to share with me. Bill was in his forties and lived alone about an hour's drive from my house, but he still wanted to come and deliver the message in person. I was touched by his concern by told him it would be all right with me if it waited till tomorrow. He insisted, so I invited him over. When he arrived, he was visibly shaken. At the time I had just decided to go to seminary. Bill was very upset about this ("The letter kills," he said, "but the spirit gives life"), and now he had a message from the Lord warning me not to take this step. He had been reading in Isaiah and the Lord gave him a special revelation that said, "If you go to seminary, your wife will be eaten by lions and you will lose your eternal salvation!" It was rather frightening but I didn't buy it. He lived in a world of superstition which his theology of tongues had fostered. The centrality of the Word had been lost in his life. The last I heard of bill he was in jail because the "Lord had told him" that he was to disobey constituted authority and not comply with a zoning ordinance!¹⁹⁷ Dillow dedicated this book that I quoted from to his wife, so I assume that the lions never got to her.

- c. Marvin Ford has also been to heaven. His tie, at least for awhile, smelled like heaven, so he kept it and smelled it periodically. He reported this on the *700 Club* during the summer of 1976.¹⁹⁸
- d. Roberts Liardon, at age eight, was given an extensive tour of heaven—his guide was none other than our Lord. Roberts gives us something that we do not have anywhere—a physical description of Jesus. Our Lord is 5'11" to 6', with sandy brown hair, not too long and not too short, and he just looks like the perfect man. When wading in the River of Life, Jesus engaged in some horseplay with Roberts, dunking him and splashing him. Roberts describes the laughter of Jesus: *...when He laughs, it's the most hilarious thing you'll ever see and hear. He leans back and roars with laughter. You'd think He was going to collapse from laughing. He gets into it so much! That's one reason He's so strong. He laughs so hard. You see, the joy of the Lord is His strength!* Liardon has actually met with the Lord three times, the first being his trip to heaven, which occurred in 1973, that he made public eight years later. The second time was to sacred to talk about, but the third time went as follows: *The third time I saw Jesus was when I was about 11 years old. Jesus walked in through the front door of my home while I was watching "Laverne & Shirley" on television. He came over and sat down beside me on the couch, kind of glanced at the TV, and everything in this natural world clicked off. I couldn't hear the telephone or the television set—all I heard was Jesus and all I saw was His glory. He looked at me and said, "Roberts, I want you to study the lives of my generals in my great army throughout time. Know them like the back of your hand. Know why they were a success. Know why they failed. And you'll want nothing in that area." He got up, walked back out through the door, the TV clicked back on, and I resumed watching "Laverne & Shirley."*¹⁹⁹
- e. John MacArthur listened to one man on the radio give his testimony as to how, out of nowhere, sitting next to him in his car, was Jesus. Another unnamed but prominent preacher said that Jesus came into the bathroom and placed his arm around him while he was shaving. Peter wrote: **And though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible, having received glory** (I Peter 1:8). So most of the believers in the first century, so close to the time of our Lord, so close to a time when it is not in dispute that many miracles occurred—and Peter writes to them and indicates that Jesus doesn't suddenly appear next to them on a camel; Jesus doesn't suddenly wander into their bathroom while they are shaving. In fact, Peter's reaction to meeting our Lord is: **Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.**" (Luke 5:8).
- f. In a 1977 issue of *The National Courier*, a charismatic newspaper, we have the following advertisement: *A genuine photograph of our Lord. Yes, I believe I have one recorded on film. In mid-summer I awoke at 3:30 A.M. to a strong voice-thought impression, "Go and photograph my sunrise." Beside the river I set up my camera and waited for the sun. In that predawn, I felt so very close to God, perfect peace. On one negative is the perfect shape of a figure, arms raised in blessing as reflected in the water exactly opposite to every other shadow. I believe God gave me an image of Himself to share.* This photograph was available as an 8x10 glossy for \$9.95 from Dudley Danielson, who photographed it. MacArthur: *It does not seem to bother Dudley that the Bible says, "No man has seen God at any time" (John 1:18). Nor does it appear to matter to him that the Bible says, "God is spirit" (John 4:24) and "no man can see*

¹⁹⁷ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 190.

¹⁹⁸ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 27–28.

¹⁹⁹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 28–29, who took it from Robert Liardon, "I Saw Heaven," Tulsa, OK; Harrison House, 1983, pp. 6, 16–20, 26.

Me and live!" (Ex. 33:20). Evidently what Scripture says is not as weighty an issue to him as "a voice-thought impression" and a feeling of peace and closeness to God.²⁰⁰

- g. Kenneth Hagin passes along this little tidbit of Pentecostal history: *Sister Maria Woodworth-Etter was an evangelist during the early days of the Pentecostal movement in this country. I read the newspaper account concerning what happened in St. Louis, sometime before 1920. She was in her 70's, preaching in a tent which was full, when right in the middle of her sermon, with her hand uplifted to illustrate a pint and her mouth open, the power of God came upon her. She froze in that position and stood like a statue for three days and three nights. Think about that: All her body had to be under the control of the Spirit of God. She had not bodily functions the three days and nights she stood there. According to the newspaper account, it was estimated that more than 150,000 people came by to see her in that three-day period. The third night, the Spirit of God released her. She thought it was the same night, and the same sermon, and she went right on preaching at the same place in her sermon.*²⁰¹ That is so way nutty; and how anyone ties this to Christianity and the Holy Spirit is totally beyond me. First of all, we're talking a true story which probably got embellished several times over. There was a Mrs. Woodworth-Etter who did go into a trance during a service, who would freeze in position for an hour or so. The service would go on, and suddenly, she would come back to earth. But, listen, now, this is theater, not the Holy Spirit. I have seen Black street theater dudes in San Francisco hold a position for a long time and by there feet would be a cap where you could put your money. That's called theater, not the Holy Spirit.
- h. MacArthur also gives an extended quotation from Hagin who observed a 16-year-old girl who froze in position for eight hours and forty minutes. Hagin said that she went into a spirit of intercession. How threadbare and lame is that? Hagin relates another story of a woman who levitated and danced in the spirit in the air during a service. MacArthur: *Levitation, altered states, feet nailed to the floor—those are the apparatus of the occult, not genuine spiritual gifts. Masters and Whitcomb: If Christians believe the unsubstantiated claims of present-day charismatic leaders they will believe anything! If they believe the ludicrous and extravagant yards of extrovert, spiritually-deluded showmen, how will they stand against the lying wonders to be unleashed by the devil during the final apostasy?*²⁰²
- i. Also on the fringes, we have a woman who claimed her flat tire had been healed by God; another who taught her dog to bark in an unknown tongue.²⁰³ I realize that these are way goofy, but when your discernment is not based upon Scripture, but upon how the spirit moves in a person's life, then it is up for grabs with regards to what one believes. MacArthur gives the example of Jan Crouch, the wife of Paul Crouch, who told a live audience in Costa Rica, "God answered the prayers of two little twelve-year-old girls to raise our pet Chicken from the dead!" She repeated this on their TBN broadcast, which is aired around the world.²⁰⁴
- j. One of the most famous revelations given to a charismatic was when god spoke to Oral Roberts and told him that he would be killed if he didn't raise \$8,000,000 for his creditors. My first thought was mafia connection; however, at the last minute, Roberts got a large check from a Florida dog-track owner. Roberts still closed down his *City of Faith*, a medical and faith-healing center in Tulsa, OK, two years later. Here is the actual conversation between god and Oral Roberts: *God said in my spirit, "I had you build the City of Faith large enough to capture the imagination of the entire world about the merging of My healing streams of prayer and medicine. I did not want this revelation localized in Tulsa, however. And the time has come when I want this concept of merging My healing streams to be known to all people and to go into all future generations." As clearly in my spirit as I've ever heard Him, the Lord gave me an*

²⁰⁰ Quoted and paraphrased from John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 27, who took it from *The National Courier*. The advertisement ran in several issues in 1977.

²⁰¹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 153–154; taken from Kenneth Hagin, "Why do People Fall Under the Power?"; Tulsa, OK; Faith Library, 1983, pp. 4–5.

²⁰² Both quotes are from John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 155; he took the latter quote from Peter Masters and John C. Whitcomb; *The Charismatic Phenomenon*; London; The Wakeman Trust, 1988, p. 68..

²⁰³ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 15.

²⁰⁴ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 16; Jan Crouch's statement came from "Costa Ricans Say 'Thank You for Sending Christian Television!'" "Praise the Lord" newsletter, Sept. 1991, p. 4.

impression. “You and your partners have merged prayer and medicine for the entire world, for the church world and for all generations,” He said, “It is done.” I then asked, “Is that why after eight years you’re having us close the hospital and after 11 years the medical school?” He said, “Yes, the mission has been accomplished in the same way that after the three years of public ministry My Son said on the cross, ‘Father, it is finished.’”²⁰⁵ Certainly, these words convinced me; however, how on earth does the God that Oral Roberts speaks to misunderstand the words of Jesus, “*It is finished*”? How on earth can Oral Roberts, supposedly an evangelist, misunderstand Jesus’ final words, “*It is finished*” to mean that was simply the completion of His three year ministry?

- k. John MacArthur lists several other very amusing stories, among which is a minister who, in the midst of his own sermon, was transported to the back of a car where he observed his girl friend commit adultery with another man. MacArthur’s book is well-worth reading if only for the entertaining revelations and experiences of the charismatics. However, don’t let me mislead you—his emphasis is upon what does the Bible say.
 - l. How does the charismatic wade through this and determine what is truth and what is fiction? So many of these goofy ideas fall outside the realm of Scripture, that it would be difficult to determine when do we accept a person’s word that he really has spend a week in heaven hanging out. Now, comparing Collett’s experience with Paul’s would give us reason to doubt Collett—but if experience is the criterion, then how can we doubt anything that a charismatic tells us?
48. Not every experience of the charismatic is as wild and crazy as the ones previously described. I have mentioned the friend of mine whose first experience with the spirit made her feel as though she had been touched by hot oil. John Sherrill’s experiences early on in his book, *They Speak with Other Tongues*, is also rather tame by the bar set in the previous set of sub-points. He was relatively new in the faith, laying in the hospital after open heart surgery with tubes running in and out of him, and he was in severe pain. One evening he passed from being asleep to being awake without any sort of a transition. He saw a light which seemed to be quite different from the other forms of light which he was used to seeing. He began to pray for his two sick roommates, and the light seemed to rest over them and their ailments apparently ceased. When Sherrill told this to two other people, a man and his wife, they had both experienced this one-on-one with Christ as well, although, of course, the experience was not exactly like his. And the wife was quick to point out that Sherrill might not ever again experience the presence of Christ, so he would have to walk by faith and not by sight.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

49. An interesting study is the similarities between the Roman Catholics and the contemporary charismatics. When I first looked at this group, I was exposed to a magazine from Australia called *Present Truth*. One of their articles dealt with certain questions that the reader was to answer. These questions expressed some of the fundamental differences between the reformationists and Romanism. Most charismatics would answer the same questions, siding with the Roman Catholics.²⁰⁶ John MacArthur also spends a few pages remarking on the similarities.²⁰⁷
50. **Distortions of the charismatic movement:** The charismatic movement has taken two doctrines from the New Testament and has distorted them tremendously: the gift of tongues and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. What I will list is not necessarily taught be each and every charismatic church, but by a significant number of them. The practices as well may not occur in every charismatic church, but in enough of them to warrant a few words.
- a. Charismatics teach that tongues are to be used in private and/or public prayers and often say that when they have a burden on their hearts to pray for something, they pray in tongues, as they don’t know what exactly it is they are supposed to pray about.

²⁰⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 47–48, taken from “Oral Roberts: Victory Out of Defeat,” *Charisma*, December 1989, p. 88.

²⁰⁶ This was a persistent theme of this magazine. One example is their special issue, *Justification By Faith and The Charismatic Movement* from 1972. It was distributed from Fallbrook, CA and Tweed Heads, N.S.W, Australia.

²⁰⁷ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 75–78.

- b. Charismatics teach that tongues are used to praise God in a public place.
 - c. Charismatic teach that tongues are to be used in private prayer.
 - d. Charismatics teach that the majority of tongues found today are the tongues of angels, or angelic languages.
 - e. Charismatics teach that most or all believers must have a spiritual experience **after** salvation with the Holy Spirit; this experience often results in the believer speaking in tongues as a sign of getting the Holy Spirit.
 - f. When *getting the ghost*, believers are taught to desire to speak in tongues.
 - g. Charismatic churches often fall into tongues worship where dozens of people are all speaking at the same time in tongues, ostensibly glorifying and worshiping God.
 - h. All the gifts of the early church are still with us today, including the gifts of healing, tongues, prophecy and miracles. God speaks directly through some charismatic leaders with new doctrines and information not found in Scripture.²⁰⁸
 - i. Charismatics assume that when someone's spiritual life is dry and lifeless, the problem is that they do not have the Holy Spirit experience.
 - j. All of the foregoing sub-points are either cultic practices or heretical doctrines and will be dealt with in the points and exegesis to come.
51. The third largest Pentecostal group are actually a nonchristian, unitarian cult call ed the United Pentecostal Church. This is the church which denies the Trinity and they claim that only the second person of the Trinity is God; therefore, they often refer to themselves as the *Jesus only* movement. Let me emphasize that these are Pentecostals who have received the *spirit of truth*, just as the other Pentecostals have.
52. There is another charismatic group which has become a fixture at some college campuses called the Way Biblical Research Society, whose head is V. P. Wierwill. They deny that Jesus is God and they deny that the Holy Spirit is a distinct member of the Godhead. What has happened is the emphasis upon experience has allowed for extremely nonorthodox doctrines to find fertile ground in which to take root.²⁰⁹
53. When it comes to receiving the Holy Spirit, there are several theological problems with the charismatic movement.²¹⁰
- a. One of the conditions of receiving the Holy Spirit is yieldedness to God; often sinlessness is required (i.e., there is to be no sin in the heart of the believer at the time of receiving the Holy Spirit). This is because, the charismatic reasons, the Holy Spirit will not enter into an unclean vessel. There are several problems here:
 - i. In the Bible, *sin* can refer to a state of being just as it can refer to a particular word, thought or deed. We are all sinners by nature; we are indwelt by our sin nature and we have Adam's imputed sin. Christ went to the cross on our behalf not because we were righteous but because we are unrighteous.
 - ii. When we believe in Christ, we are cleansed from all sin positionally. Temporally, until we sin again, we are cleansed of sin. We do not lose the old sin nature in this life.
 - iii. Such an approach puts the cart before the horse. If the Holy Spirit is instrumental in our fight against sin, which He is, then it makes little sense for us to *deserve* the Holy Spirit or to enter into some state of temporary sinlessness apart from His help. Does it make sense that we should deserve and earn through sinlessness the very One Who helps us with our sins? If we can live a yielded, sinless life without the Holy Spirit, then, quite frankly, why do we even need the Spirit?
 - iv. Even though it *sounds good* that the Holy Spirit would not indwell a corrupt vessel, this is not the teaching of Scripture. Have you never read of Paul's personal struggles in Rom. 7:14–22 or what he wrote in Rom. 6:12? Have you never read John's writings in 1John 1:7–10? The Holy Spirit indwells us because we have been positionally cleansed of sin. If you are a charismatic, do you really think your life is *that* sinless? Are you that self-deluded?

²⁰⁸ If the information is already found in the Bible, then there is no reason to speak with the gift of prophecy. One would then speak as a result of careful and serious study.

²⁰⁹ Paraphrased from Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 184.

²¹⁰ This point was taken from Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 74–80.

- v. This complete yieldedness turns grace into law. A believer may yield to God as a result of grace. They recognize what God has done on their behalf and they may yield to Him at various points as a response to what God has done on their behalf. The charismatic teaching has this all turned around. Charismatics teach that we must yield completely to God in order to get something from Him. These two approaches are the very essence of grace versus law.
- b. Along with have some sort of state of sinlessness, those desiring the spirit are told to both empty themselves and yield themselves fully over to God. Ralph Riggs: *Body, soul, and spirit must be yielded. Our physical bodies must be pliable under His power...Utter and complete baptism in the Holy Spirit...is reaches only when there is a perfect yielding of the entire being to Him and one's tongue is surrendered to the control of the blessed Holy Spirit.*²¹¹
 - i. We have the exact same problem here as with the previous point. How on earth do you yield yourself completely to God apart from the Holy Spirit?
 - ii. Second problem is that Paul tells us: **I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind** (1Cor. 14:32). The emptying out of our conscious minds is something never encouraged by Scripture.
- c. Faith is also a requirement for the receiving of this spirit of which the charismatics speak. *As there is a faith toward Christ for salvation, so there is a faith toward the Spirit for power and consecration.*²¹² Furthermore, it is alleged that this faith must be complete and total. Thomas Ball Barratt: *As you were justified and regenerated by faith and sanctified by faith, so also you must receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire—the Comforter, by faith. I am supposing that you have yielded to God at every point...Are you willing to go all the way with Christ?*²¹³
 - i. There is nothing in the Bible which speaks of a second faith toward God the Holy Spirit. That is totally made up.
 - ii. Again, although this total devotion and total faith sounds very, very holy, *it's not what the New Testament calls faith...Instead of the believer depending on God in simple trust to effect a total dedication, he is asked to accomplish this dedication by himself before he is worth to receive God, i.e., the Holy Spirit.*²¹⁴
 - iii. If simple faith of Scripture is really absolute surrender, then how many of us are absolutely saved in the first place? Is there anyone who has absolutely surrendered to our Lord prior to salvation? Is there anyone who has gone even a week of their lives absolutely surrendered to the Lord?
- d. The person seeking the holy ghost experience is encouraged to yield everything and at every point.
 - i. Again, it is backwards. How on earth does anyone expect a yielded life apart from the Holy Spirit?
 - ii. This is the Law thinly disguised. In the Old Testament, complete and total obedience to the Law was required (which was only fulfilled by Christ).
 - iii. Furthermore, *this leads to all kinds of introspection and worry as to whether he has "really yielded everything" and so on. Since no believer could ever say yes to that without claiming sinlessness...guilt complexes and bondage and self-absorption inevitably result. The appeal to interior works of devotion is much more enslaving than an appeal to external works such as church attendance, not drinking, not playing cards or dancing, because it appears to be more "spiritual."*²¹⁵
- e. At the same time, the charismatic asserts that the gift of the Holy Spirit comes completely apart from works or merit. *Seekers...after the baptism in the Spirit should always remember that this experience is also called "The Gift of the Holy Ghost." Gifts are not earned or won by price or merit. Gifts cannot*

²¹¹ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 77, who quoted Ralph Riggs, *The Spirit Himself*; Springfield, MO; Gospel Publishing House, 1949, p. 67.

²¹² Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 78 and taken from Myer Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrine of the Bible*; Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1937, p. 316.

²¹³ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 79; taken from T. Barratt's *In the Days of the Latter Rain*; London, Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent; 1909, pp. 214–215.

²¹⁴ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 79.

²¹⁵ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 79–80.

be forced from the giver. *The Holy Spirit is a gracious...God-sent Gift, and we receive Him by faith and by faith alone.*²¹⁶

- i. We have just examined several conditions which various charismatic authors set down as conditions required to receive the spirit. You cannot have it both ways.
 - ii. If the gifts cannot be forced from the Giver, then why are people urged to search out the Holy Spirit? Why are there conditions set, conditions to be met, things to do, and group participation in this effort? If this is God's sovereign decision, then what exactly are we doing?
 - iii. And again, concerning *faith*: are we talking about simple trust or are we talking complete, an absolute faith? You will note, when things don't go as planned, the charismatic loves to blame your lack of faith—if you aren't healed, if you don't get the ghost, if you don't speak in tongues, then it is your lack of faith. Since that person obviously has received the spirit and has spoken in tongues, then his faith is obviously greater than yours; furthermore, you, like any other person, can honestly look inside yourself and find doubt and a lack of perfect faith. The charismatic cannot lose on this point. Where the charismatic loses is that his doctrine does not line up with Scripture.
54. After Paul had evangelized the Galatians and moved on, a group of legalists moved in and began to teach that in order to have a complete life in Christ, the Galatians needed to follow the Law. Paul wrote to the Galatians: *You foolish Galatians—who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed crucified? This is the only thing I want you to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?* (Gal. 1:1–3). First, it is clear that the Galatians had received the Spirit by the hearing of faith (and it does not appear as though some had and some had not; nor is there any word in the letter to the Galatians that the Spirit is received separately from salvation). Furthermore, notice Paul's last question: *Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?* The person who seeks the charismatic experience seeks to be perfected in the flesh in order to receive the spirit. *A gift either is received freely or earned by devout effort but not both...the thing that made them [the legalistic teachers who came to Galatia] so bewitching was that their message appealed to people's needs, seemed to be based on the Bible, and sounded spiritual.*²¹⁷
55. Revelation has been distorted by many charismatics. You must decide whether you would rather believe Scripture, which has stood the test of time, or the recent revelations of a charismatic.
- a. Kenneth Hagin claimed: *The Lord Himself taught me about prosperity. I never read about it in a book. I got it directly from heaven.*²¹⁸
 - b. Kenneth Hagin spends a great deal of time developing a doctrine which teaches that Jesus has no authority here on earth—that He delegated this authority to the church.²¹⁹ What appears to be the case is that Hagin plagiarized long quotations from a faith evangelist named E. W. Kenyon, whose roots are in the metaphysical cults. A third author, D. R. McConnell, in *A Different Gospel*, shows in parallel columns that Hagin copied roughly 3/4^{ths} of this book word-for-word from Kenyon. So much for direct divine revelation.²²⁰ Apparently McConnell's book is a good starting place for one who wants to examine the Word Faith movement with a critical eye. McConnell, by the way, is a charismatic author. Additional sources on this movement can be found on p. 291 of MacArthur's *Charismatic Chaos*.
 - c. Charles Capps: *In August of 1973, the Word of the Lord came unto me saying, "If men would believe me, long prayers are not necessary. Just speaking the Word will bring you what you desire. My creative*

²¹⁶ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 80, taken from Ralph Riggs, *The Spirit Himself*; Springfield, MO; Gospel Publishing House, 1949, pp. 105–106.

²¹⁷ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 81–82.

²¹⁸ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 268; taken from Kenneth Hagin, "How God Taught Me About Prosperity," Tulsa, OK; Faith Library, 1985, p. 1.

²¹⁹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 269, who references Kenneth Hagin, *The Authority of the Believer*; Tulsa, OK; Faith Library, 1979.

²²⁰ For more details, see John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 289.

power is given to man in Word form. I have ceased for a time from my work and have given man the book of MY CREATIVE POWER. That power is STILL IN MY WORD.”²²¹

- d. Norvel Hayes: You aren't supposed to talk to Jesus about it. You're suppose to talk directly to the mountain in Jesus' name—whatever the mountain is in your life...Don't say, "Oh, God, help me. Remove this sickness from me." Say, "Flu, I am not going to let you come into my body. God from me in the name of Jesus!"...Say, "Cancer, you can't kill me. I will never die of cancer in Jesus' name." Do you have a financial mountain in your life? Start talking to your money. Tell your checkbook to line up with god's Word. Talk to your business. Command customers to come into your business and spend their money there. Talk to the mountain!²²²
 - e. Kenneth Copeland: He imparted in you when you were born again—Peter said it just as plain, he said, "We are partakers of the divine nature." That nature is life eternal in absolute perfection. And that was imparted, injected into your spirit man, and you have that imparted into you by God just the same as you imparted into your child the nature of humanity. That child wasn't born a whale! [It was] born a human. Isn't that true? Well, now, you don't have a human, do you? You are one. You don't have a god in you. You are one.²²³ Kenneth Copeland and Paul Crouch had a conversation which confirmed this teaching on July 7, 1986, along with quotes from several other who affirm this heresy, which is recorded in MacArthur's book *Charismatic Chaos*, pp. 273–274.
 - f. MacArthur goes into great detail concerning Kenneth Copeland's blasphemous teaching about Jesus in the same book; pp. 274–280.
56. There is an additional distortion which accompanies some charismatic ministries and that has to do with wealth, prosperity and giving. Listen to the titles of some of the books and pamphlets put out by these charismatics: Kenneth Hagin: "How to Write Your Own Ticket with God," "Godliness Is Profitable," and *The Laws of Prosperity*. Oral Roberts: *God's Formula for Success and Prosperity*. Gordon Lindsay: *God's Master Key to Prosperity*. Jerry Savelle: *Living in Divine Prosperity*. MacArthur groups them under The Word Faith movement, which apparently has several synonyms and sub-groupings. These people often want your money and they often promise you in return financial prosperity and perfect health. Now, God does bless with financial prosperity and with health—and there are many believers who have received these things as blessings; similarly, many have been blessed with marvelous families, a wonderful husband or wife, etc. etc. God can and does bless. However, not every believer is promised wealth and good health. Not every believer is promised a successful and blessed marriage. Furthermore, God cannot be bribed. As Thieme used to put it, "You cannot bribe God with a measly 10% of your income." He was not implying that it would take 20%; but he was stating a principle. God is not in the business of accepting bribes. Giving is a result of obedience and maturity and, sometimes as a result, God provides you with more to give. And there are those who are tight-fisted when it comes to spiritual giving who are not blessed with great material benefits. But, we do not have the automatic "Give God \$10, and He will give you back \$100." There are times that you can only give a meager amount of money and there may be times that you barely have enough to get by on (I can recall many years like that). This did not mean I was outside the will of God nor does prosperity automatically mean that I am in the will of God. The main point is that giving to these ministries does not guarantee you great financial prosperity. If a ministry has taught that believing in Christ will bring you happiness and joy all of the time; then they may feel as though they need to up the ante if they want to put their hands into your pockets. Therefore, as you become more and more knowledgeable about their doctrines, giving to ministries like this could result in discipline, which may include negative financial repercussions. I should add as an addendum that this is not simply a problem with charismatics—many different ministries are confused and teach distortions when it comes to giving. Early on when I became a believer, I recall listening to a radio program where, for the greater part of the 15 minutes or so that I listened, the speaker begged for money to keep the show on the air—presumably so that he could come back the next day and beg for more money.

²²¹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 270, taken from Charles Capps, *The Tongue: A Creative Force*; Tulsa, OK; Harrison, 1976, p. 136.

²²² John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 271, taken from Norvel Hayes, "Prostitute Faith"; Tulsa, OK, Harrison, 1988, pp. 22–23.

²²³ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 271–272, taken from Kenneth Copeland, "The Force of Love"; Forth Worth, TX; Kenneth Copeland Ministries, n.d., cassette tape #02-028.

57. One of the classic signs of a cult is that they will perform as much *evangelism* within the church of God as they do outside of it. That is, they often recruit from and even infiltrate other churches.
- a. Donald Burdick, in describing the origin of modern-day Pentecostalism, adds, *Through the years Pentecostal congregations have experienced phenomenal growth, thriving especially on the failure of the old-line denominations to foster a vital, experiential Christianity...For the most part the Pentecostal viewpoint was confined to Pentecostal churches until the late 1950's and early 60's when, as John Sherrill puts it, "The walls came tumbling down." It began to be apparent that more and more people in the traditional churches were speaking in tongues. The event which focused national attention on this new invasion occurred on April 3, 1960, at the 2,600-member St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California. Father Dennis Bennett, the rector of this influential church, received the gift of tongues and upon announcing the fact was forced to resign.*²²⁴
 - b. The classic illustration of this cultic behavior are the Jehovah's Witnesses. They may be out in the world going door to door, *evangelizing*; however, their membership grows because they end up recruiting more people who attend church already than from those who are heathen. Similarly, charismatics often prey upon believers as well—those who are saved, but whose Christian life seems to be going nowhere. It is a believer without doctrine who is an easy mark for any cult. Furthermore, there are hundreds, if not thousands, of churches that charismatics have infiltrated and caused a split in the church.
 - c. According to Shibley, the full gospel businessman's position is that when a person has this additional experience of the spirit, that they are to remain in the denomination that they are in and *help others to have the same experience*. The charismatic does not seem to realize how underhanded and divisive that stance is. They may be proud of the various Baptist, Presbyterian or Catholic churches that they have infiltrated and turned into charismatic churches, but such infiltrations always led to great schisms and disagreements, and whenever any church goes from non-charismatic to charismatic, you can rest assured that a great exodus of people also occurred.
 - d. The early Pentecostal movement in England urged its members to remain within the church from which they were *converted* to Pentecostalism. *The dominant leaders in the earliest years of the Pentecostal Movement in the British Isle never encouraged the formation of the separate Pentecostal assemblies as such...The counsel usually given was to "receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, but remain in your church, whatever the denomination may be.*²²⁵
 - e. Nichol sums up what he calls the initial historic thrust of the Pentecostal church; however that thrust has not ever changed. *The thrust of the Pentecostal message during the early years of the revival was directed at the nominal Christian, the lethargic believer, rather than to the unconverted. The view was that the Holy Spirit baptism was considered to be an enrichment of power for more effective Christian service by those who were already followers of Jesus Christ. It was the culmination of a person's spiritual growth which had commenced with the experience of conversion. By adhering to this principle of "undenominationalism" the Pentecostals were able to infiltrate various segments of the Christian Church...apparently, it was not until the Pentecostals began to manifest certain eccentric tendencies, irritated their more quiescent brethren, or felt that their own spiritual growth was being stultified, that they decided (or were forced) to withdraw from having fellowship with some of the established churches...their views had appealed to many people within these communions, therefore, when the Pentecostals separated themselves and opened their own missions and store-front churches, virtually a host of people from various denominations followed them, thus forming the nucleus of hundreds of Pentecostal churches.*²²⁶ There are two sides to this: (1) the opinion of the charismatic is that they are not a separate entity, and therefore should not come out of their own church. On the other hand, it does not seem to occur to them that they are teaching subversive doctrines or doctrines which are contrary to what their church teachers. They lead astray the pastor's flock (and, if he hasn't taught them much, then it is easy for them to confuse and to take the unlearned). When a group intentionally or even inadvertently takes from the flock of another pastor, they are exhibiting cultic behavior.

²²⁴ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 8.

²²⁵ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 56, taken from Carl Brumback, *Suddenly from Heaven*; Springfield, MO, Gospel Publishing House, 1961, pp. 282–283..

²²⁶ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 56.

58. With respect to the charismatic movement and evangelism in general. Our evangelism has become somewhat slick and superficial. In not just charismatic circles, but many groups overemphasize the joy and happiness which accompanies becoming a believer. There is a joy and there is a happiness, but it comes with spiritual growth; and it doesn't make you laugh all the time; and sometimes, you're simply given the strength to endure that which is in your life without going postal. The essence of the gospel is that our lives are in direct opposition to God. We were created by God and we live in direct rebellion against Him. God has a design and plan for our lives and we are, by our natural spirit, against that. Much of our lives is spent in selfish pursuits which has resulted in pain for those who live around us. And there are many times when we realize what is right and what is wrong, and we choose to do that which is wrong. This is our nature, and it is against the God Who created us. Knowing nothing else, we have absolutely no relationship with a holy and just God. However, God took the form of a man and lived on this earth for 30 years, without sin; and then, being innocent, took upon Himself our sins—he took upon Himself the penalty for our sins and endured the equivalent of our punishment on the cross in His humanity. Jesus has become the only bridge between us and God. A relationship with God is possible, but only through Him. We gain that relationship by putting our faith in Jesus; trusting in His work on the cross on our behalf, that we might be made, positionally and, eventually, eternally, righteousness in Him. It means that we, in our fallen state, can enjoy fellowship with God. Now, salvation doesn't mean that we have miserable lives that will be transformed overnight into joyous lives of unbridled gaiety. For some, there is an initial joy; and for others, there is not—or, at least, this joy does not last and perpetuate itself. Unfortunately, many evangelists and individuals present salvation as our door to joy and happiness, ignoring the fact that salvation places us in Christ as sons to God, which can often result in discipline (God does not discipline us as unbelievers). When people become believers, they often expect that everything is going to be alright immediately after salvation. Since most churches do not provide a place for us to grow, we become discouraged and malcontent. When someone comes along and tells us that what we are missing is the Holy Spirit in our lives, and that will give us this dynamic relationship with God—well, unfortunately, having been evangelized with promises of joy and happiness which have gone unfulfilled, this promise of the charismatic looks good. We start to think that *here is our problem; we lack the Holy Spirit*. And we get sucked into this apostate movement.
59. When you read through various charismatic literature, or listen to their broadcasts, you run into a lot of supernatural and phenomenal experiences. However, when Paul has to defend his authority as an Apostle to the Corinthians in 2Cor. 11–12, he does not defend it primarily from the standpoint of his phenomenal experiences. He did have one phenomenal experience where he was caught up into the third heaven; however, as a result of that, God left him with a severe and painful ailment which He would not remove. We do not know the nature of the ailment and all we are told is that a demon of Satan was given permission to strike Paul. Paul concludes that God has given him sufficient strength in his weakness—in fact, that when Paul was weak, this gave God the opportunity to manifest strength through him (2Cor. 12:1–10). Paul also spends an equal amount of time telling of the pressure and pain that he had endured as an Apostle: **Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers upon the sea, dangers among false brothers. I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. Apart from this external pressure, there is a daily pressure upon me regarding all the churches. Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern? If I have to boast, I will boast of what pertains to my weakness** (2Cor. 11:23b–30). Several of the references which I read pointed out that Paul wouldn't have made it on any charismatic circuit—live in person or televised. Paul wouldn't have found a place in most noncharismatic arenas either.
60. On a related note, in these two chapters of 2 Corinthians, we do not find that Paul is miraculously delivered from a life of pain. In fact, in his life, because of his stand for the gospel of Christ Jesus, he had endured enormous amounts of suffering. Don't let anyone, charismatic or not, try to sell you on the idea that becoming a Christian or being a Christian suddenly puts you on this roller coaster of thrills, excitement and happiness. There are pains in this life which we endure as believers—in some cases, lifelong pains, as Paul experienced.
61. Let me also include some information about various charismatic groups:
- McGee: *May I give you a personal experience? Before we went to Honolulu last fall, I was sent a magazine put out by one of the tongues groups...on the front cover I was startled to see a picture of*

my very good friend, Dr.— and his wife. The article in the magazine went on to say that Dr.— and his wife were speaking in tongues and the church in Honolulu, of which he was pastor, was experiencing a great revival. Now I had been to that church several years before, and I never shall forget the last night I was there. We were having an evening service when one of their tropical storms moved in; the lights went out so they put up candles. The place was packed out and they were sitting along the sides. In the semi-darkness I could see their eager almond eyes, wonderful folk drinking in the Word. It was almost like revival. But when I went back this time, the crowd was not there, and instead of revival, division had come. We sat one night after the service, talking to Dr.— and his wife. He is one of the finest men I have ever met...He is a man whose heart is hungry. He was brought up in liberalism. He went to the University of Chicago, a student with a very sharp mind, and while he was there he was saved—saved as a liberal. He never had any Bible training whatsoever. He was hungry, hungry for fellowship, hungry for reality. He frankly told us, “I felt my ministry was bankrupt and I wanted something.” I do not intend to ridicule or even criticize this man, because he is a sincere, fine fellow. But I want to say this to you, he is not sure and his wife is not sure that this is of God. They are not sure that they have found the answer. Yet the magazine published over here would give you the impression that a great revival had broken out! May I say, there was no revival.²²⁷

- b. Tongues are often used entirely inappropriately. McGee, again: Dr.—, my friend in Honolulu, told me that he practiced tongues when he was alone. There is no Scripture for that! But the reason he gave was that he wanted to praise God and he could not find words. I rather had to smile at that—he, a brilliant fellow, could not find words to praise God! And I notice that this same thing is being said in this area also—they speak in tongues because they cannot find words to praise God. I would like to pass on something to you, if you cannot find words to praise God...[then] what is wrong with the book of Psalms? The Holy Spirit gave that. Is it not better to use the books of Psalms to praise God than some gibberish? I can think of nothing better than this: *O Give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so. Whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy (Psalm 107:1, 2).* God has provided us the book of Psalms which are filled with praise for God, yet people will speak in tongues, by themselves, thinking that this is superior praise. McGee also suggests Rev. 5:9–10: “*You are worthy to take the book, and to break its seals, for You were killed, and you purchased for God with Your blood, men from every tribe, and tongue and people and nation. And You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.*” Do you have a better song than that in any tongue? That is the new song that will be sung in heaven, and it will be sung so that you can understand it. My beloved, you cannot improve on the words the Holy Spirit has recorded for us!²²⁸
- c. MacArthur comments about charismatics on television: *The Christian television station in my area features a live talk and variety program every night of the week. The program is broadcast nationwide and features some of the biggest names in the charismatic movement. Turn it on almost any night of the week and you will see the same thing. The emphasis is almost totally on amusement and frivolity. There is a lot of laughing and breathless gushing. The time is normally filled with entertainment, buffoonery, silliness, and shallow talk. The expensive, lavish clothing, thick makeup, behavior, and talk of most of the women who appear clearly violate every possible interpretation of 1 Peter 3:3–6 and 1 Timothy 2:9–10. Frankly, I am embarrassed to know that many unbelievers get their idea of Christianity from people like that. And I am not talking about unknowns or fringe charismatics; these are people at the forefront of the movement’s visible leadership.*²²⁹
62. The stance taken by charismatics:
- a. Conrad Murrell dispenses with the idea that tongues are no longer a gift for this time in less than a page. *The...position...that there is no scriptural gift of the tongues in operation today...hardly justifies much discourse since it is so completely without scriptural support. If it were not for people who had lived for years as Christians, ignoring certain prominent passages of scripture and failing to come in contact with a demonstration of this gift being accompanied by the power of God, no such position would exist. Usually this tenet rests with the broader unsupported assertion that all supernatural works of the Spirit*

²²⁷ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part II*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; pp. 13–14.

²²⁸ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part II*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; pp. 15–16.

²²⁹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 254.

ceased when the “twelve apostles died.” Support is supposedly drawn from 1Cor. 13:8: “*whether there by tongues, they shall cease.*” The Greek word for cease in the sense of coming to an utter end is *katapauo*. He hath ceased from his own works. Hebrews 4:10. The Greek word for cease in the sense of an intermittent cessation or a pause is *pauomai*. *When He (Jesus) had ceased (praying) one of His disciples said- - . This is the word that is translated cease in 1Cor. 13:8. If the tongues have utterly ended, so did Jesus’ praying. If we are to say there are no more tongues, we must say Jesus intercedes no more. But the text indicates a pause. Tongues do not continue ceaselessly. Praise the Lord for that! Who could bear it? But love does not wax, wane, start and stop. It continues without pause. Love never fails.*²³⁰ Although the passage in 1Cor. 13 will be covered, the other passage to which Murrell refers is Luke 11:1. The short explanation is difference tenses, different contexts. The longer answer is to find the same word in Eph. 1:16 Col. 1:9 and tell me that it means *to pause* in those verses. Or go to Heb. 10:2 and tell me that the word means something other than *to cease* there. Admittedly, the purpose of Murrell’s book was not to justify the gift of tongues for today—however, if he is going to give one argument against the correct position, it should at least be his best argument and not this lame paragraph which leaves out the verses which would contradict his viewpoint. Now a charismatic may point out that Murrell doesn’t speak for all charismatics, and I fully realize that. For all I know, he is but a teeny tiny voice in the charismatic movement—however, he is a man who has been ostensibly baptized in the spirit, he knows that all these sign gifts are for today, and he is obviously one who has been given the gift of teaching (if you read his book at the passage on teaching, you know that’s how he sees himself)—so, how on earth can someone who speaks in the power of the Spirit not convey truth for the entire charismatic movement? Truth is that charismatic believers differ radically in practically every doctrine other than this post-salvation experience and the belief that the sign gifts to Israel belong in today’s church.

- b. David Shibley also makes a point, which, on the face of it, sounds good: *Even if it could be proved (which it cannot) that some of the gifts of the Spirit were withdrawn at the end of the apostolic era, we could not conclude that the Spirit is not able to bestow them again for such an hour as this. The traditional evangelical teacher certainly has no teaching from Scripture that proves that any spiritual gift would cease to function in this period of the church. So he must try to pick for himself which gifts are valid and which are not. We dare not try to bind God’s hands with a questionable theological theory. How dare we try to deny God the right to bestow gifts to His church!*²³¹ Let’s examine what he says. Shibley refers back to the Apostolic era—by such language, he has assumed that the gift of Apostleship has died out, which, according to his argument, probably has not. Secondly, the basis for our determining whether anything is true or false is the Word of God. Theology, based upon sound Bible truths, is the final determining factor, insofar as we are concerned.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

63. It’s about time that we began to actually deal directly with the subject at hand. Therefore, we are going to cover several passages of Scripture, some in great detail; and some we will skim through. First of all, we should look at the Greek word for *tongue*, which is *glōssa* (γλῶσσα) [pronounced *GLOHS-sah*], and it primarily is used in Scripture to refer to a person’s literal tongue in Mark 7:33, 35 Luke 1:64 16:24 Rom. 3:13 14:11 Philip. 2:11 James 1:26 3:5, 6, 8 1 Peter 3:10 Rev. 16:10. It is used clearly to refer to a human language in Acts 2:2–4, 11, 26 Rev. 5:9 7:9 11:9 13:7 14:6 17:15. It is used to refer to something which someone says in 1 John 3:18, completely apart from the concept of a foreign language. To try to make this word mean *ecstatic utterances, angelic languages*, etc., is to read your interpretation on top of the Greek. You supplant what we know about the Greek in order to substantiate your view. You are forcing the language to accommodate your theological views. Strong’s #1100 Arndt & Gingrich #161. The term *unknown tongue* occurs **nowhere** in Scripture. The word *unknown* was added by the King James translators; for those with a KJV, you will see that *unknown* is in italics, which means it was added by the translators and is not found

²³⁰ Conrad Murrell, *To Profit Withal*, ©1969, pp. 67–68.

²³¹ David Shibley, *A Charismatic Truce*; Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers, ©1978, p. 82.

in the original manuscripts.²³² The gift of tongues (glôssa) is found in the book of Acts (in three primary passages) and in 1Cor. 12–14. The only other occurrence in Scripture of this gift is at the end of the book of Mark and most of the last chapter of the book of Mark is not found in the better Greek manuscripts (this means that it was added by someone other than Mark). The book of Mark either ends abruptly at Mark 16:8, or the ending has been lost. This particular ending to the book of Mark is not found in any manuscript until the later half of the second century A.D.²³³ There are two other short endings, as well as several other endings, bringing into question the authenticity of all of these various additions. Now, the phrase *tongues of angels* (and virtually **everyone** who speaks in tongues, speaks in *angelic tongues*) occurs only one time in the Bible, and that is in 1Cor. 13:1, in one of the most misunderstood passages in the Bible—at least, when it comes to the charismatics. Most charismatics could tell you, in very general terms, what the 13th chapter of 1Corinthians is about—it's about *love* and how important love is (which, strictly speaking, is not really true, by the way). Furthermore, not one charismatic in a thousand could explain Paul's classical Greek debater's reasoning which he uses in the first two verses of that chapter,²³⁴ nor is one charismatic out of a thousand able to see much beyond the phrase of *tongues of angels*. Okay, let's just suppose for a moment that I am a charismatic. I get filled with the Holy Ghost and speak with angelic tongues periodically—every couple days or once or twice a week in church; in fact, it is often the energizing element of my Christian experience. I have encouraged others to get this baptism and speak in tongues (of angels, of course) to the point of having almost a missionary zeal. Now, I find out suddenly that Mark 16:17 does not belong in my Bible; I find out that there is no such phrase as *unknown tongues* anywhere in Scripture, and that the only mention of speaking with the *tongues of angels* is in 1Cor. 13:1; you know what? I now have two basic choices: either I had better make damn sure that 1Cor. 13:1 says just exactly what I think it says or I had better admit, at least to myself, that my many experiences of speaking in so-called unknown, angelic tongues is more important than the Word of God.

64. We also need to look at a second Greek word, *diálektos* (διάλεκτος) [pronounced *dee-AH-lek-tos*], which means *language*, or, more properly, *dialect* (it is obviously from whence we derive the term *dialect*). Strong's #1258 Arndt & Gingrich p. 184. It is, for all intents and purposes, a synonym for *glôssa* and often translated *tongue* in the KJV (Acts 2:8 21:40 22:2 26:14). In the last three passages, it refers to speaking in Hebrew dialect, which is, specifically, Aramaic²³⁵ by a person who knows Jewish Aramaic (Paul, in the first two verses, and Jesus in the third). *Glôssa* emphasizes the person speaking the language by focusing on his tongue, the member of speech; and *diálektos* emphasizes the linguistic nature or the language itself. In Acts 2, when the first incident of speaking in tongues occurred, the remarks of those who heard, Jews who

²³² Many of you who use the NIV, CEV, NLT, etc. do not realize that there is a difference between your translation and the translation of the KJV, NKJV, NASB, *Young's Literal Translation*, and *The Emphasized Bible*; these are all word-by-word (and occasionally, phrase-by-phrase translations from the original languages. Most other Bibles, although they are very good translations, are more of a *thought-by-thought* translation. One might even view them as a *running commentary*, so to speak. Speaking of the New King James Version, by the way—two of the great improvements of this version is there is no *Holy Ghost* in the NKJV (it is *Holy Spirit*), and the word *unknown* in the context of *unknown tongues*, was removed. For more information, see my study of the various English Translations. Now, just in case you are totally sold on Mark 16:9 and following as being a part of Scripture, John MacArthur covers the exegesis of this in *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 100–102. After reading through his careful exegesis (given the brevity of pages), you will not quote this passage in a superficial way again.

²³³ Since the KJV was published, we have discovered literally thousands of New Testament manuscripts which are older and more accurate than the manuscripts that the King James team had to work with. Scholars have determined that the longer, *Pentecostal* ending of Mark had to be written prior to 380 A.D., when Jerome composed the Latin translation of the gospels (which included the long ending). Since this passage is cited in Irenæus' *Against Heresies*, that would mean that it could have been written as early as 200 A.D., which is still long after the completion of the book of Mark.

²³⁴ I shouldn't pick on the charismatics here; probably not one believer in a thousand recognizes the debater's technique which Paul uses in these first two verses of 1Corinthians. In all of the books which I have read, not one person recognizes this very common technique of Paul's.

²³⁵ The Aramaic language is a sister language to the Hebrew, with many more similarities than differences. According to ZPEB, Rebekah (Isaac's wife) and Rachel and Leah (Jacob's wives) spoke Aramaic (*The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 1, p. 251). Several passages in the Testament are in Aramaic (including the entire book of Esther), and there are several short Aramaic quotations in the New Testament (primarily in the book of Mark, although there are maybe three or four other Aramaic phrases found in the book of Matthew and the letters of Paul).

had gathered from all over the world to celebrate Pentecost, was that the disciples, who were Galileans mostly, were speaking in their dialect. This was amazing to these Jews, as, in a world where most people were bi and tri-lingual, Galileans were known for being mono-lingual—so to hear a Galilean speak your language pretty well would knock your socks off. That was amazing and that would get the attention of any person who had previously looked down upon these disciples as intellectual chumps (which they were, by the way²³⁶).

65. Before we get in the exegesis of several passages, we need to get a quick understanding of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, maybe one-tenth of one percent of the believers actually had the Holy Spirit, and they could lose the Holy Spirit. After committing adultery and then having the husband of this woman killed, David was put under divine discipline and prayed, in Psalm 51:11, for God not to remove the Holy Spirit from him. Obviously, since this is in Scripture, this tells us that he could lose the Holy Spirit. Several of the men who worked on the tabernacle and the priest's clothing were filled with the Holy Spirit (Ex. 28:3 31:3). Furthermore, the trinity is taught in the Old Testament (e.g., Gen. 1:1–2, 26 Isa. 48:16), but, for the most part, there is really very little said about the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament (as compared to the New),²³⁷ because the average believer was not indwelt by the Spirit. When Jesus was on this earth, speaking to His disciples, he occasionally told them, “You know, you guys are really a bunch of knuckleheads, and this whole disciple-thing might make a lot more sense if you were to ask for the Holy Spirit.”²³⁸ Of course, because they were knuckleheads, the disciples never thought to ask for the Holy Spirit. Now, this was prior to the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord. **But this He spoke of the Spirit, Whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified** (John 7:39). So that you can differentiate all of this in your mind—the Holy Spirit was given to some believers, and Jesus encouraged His disciples to ask God the Father for the Holy Spirit. However, the Holy Spirit, prior to the death and resurrection of our Lord, was not given to all believers. After that, beginning with the day of Pentecost, the life of the average believer changed drastically. What we have after Pentecost is groups of believers who had believed in our Lord prior to Pentecost, and therefore, had not received the Holy Spirit.
66. The next thing that we need is a balanced historical perspective. There are three occasions in the book of Acts where we find the baptism of the Holy Spirit associated with speaking in other, human languages (this will be justified in later points). We have fourteen instances (actually, fifteen) historical incidences where we have salvation mentioned, but this is not accompanied by a manifestation of the sign gifts. First of all, there is no evidence that anyone other than the Apostles spoke in tongues on the day of Pentecost (and Peter gave the message in Greek). In other words, we have no historical mentioned of them being baptized by the Spirit or of them speaking in other languages. The fourteen similar instances are: Acts 3 5:14 6:1 8:12–13, 32–39 9:5–9, 32–35 13:43 14:8–10 16:29–33 17:1–4, 11–13, 34 18:8 19:18. No tongues, no manifestations of sensational gifts by those saved, no unusual experience of the baptism of the Spirit. So, even in a day when speaking in other human languages was bona fide, and even in a day when there were some instances of the baptism of the Spirit being either (1) a powerful experience or (2) an experience separated from salvation; the majority of case histories recorded have no such thing. The point is, even if things in our time were exactly the same as they were then, the charismatics would still be considered as going overboard.
67. We are about ready to launch into an exegetical study of the typical passages used by charismatics to justify their theology. We will carefully examine the Greek and the Hebrew, as well as the historical and contextual context of each passage. In most cases, we will examine every verse. However, in the case of 1Cor. 14, we will just hit a few verses. Even though this is the classic passage dealing with tongues, it deals with the abuse of tongues while it was a valid gift of the Spirit. If the Corinthians had not misused this gift, there would be not a single verse in the epistles—which contain the bulk of Christian doctrine—concerning the gift of tongues.

²³⁶ Don't ever become confused about who and what the disciples really were. Jesus purposely chose a group of fairly stupid and unenlightened men as his disciples. For the most part, the ones that we know anything about, were blue collar workers who never graduated from high school (and probably didn't make it through junior high). Paul, later chosen by our Lord, was a whole different story. If you took the valedictorian of your class and paired him (or her) with the student who ranked #450, you've got Peter and Paul (rather, Paul and Peter).

²³⁷ As a matter of fact, the *Holy Spirit* is mentioned almost as many times in the book of Acts as He is in all the preceding portions of Scripture. That should obviously indicate that something is up.

²³⁸ Surprisingly enough, this is not a direct quote. It is a paraphrase of what our Lord encouraged the disciples to do in Luke 11:13.

68. Before we launch into exegesis of these passages, let me include a few rather simplistic, but true rules concerning the study of God's Word:

Ask these questions when reading a passage:

- (1) WHO is speaking?**
- (2) TO WHOM is the speaker speaking?**
- (3) ABOUT WHAT is he speaking?**
- (4) WHEN was it spoken?**

Remember that "While al the Bible was written FOR you, it was not all written TO you, nor was it all written ABOUT you."²³⁹

<Return to Page One>

69. There are only five passages in Scripture which deal explicitly with the gift of tongues. First of all, we can dispense with Mark 16:9–20, as most textual scholars agree that this is not a part of the original text (we have already covered this point early on). The handling of snakes and drinking of poison mentioned in that passage is practiced, however, those only by the most fringe elements of Pentecostalism (and most Pentecostals see them as a fringe group). The remaining five passages are the three historical accounts of tongues: Acts 2:1–13, 10:44–47 and 11:15–18, and 19:1–7. The only passage which deals with this in the epistles is 1Cor. 12–14, where the intention of that passage is to correct the misuse of the gift. Then, Paul mentions an Old Testament verse, Isa. 28:11–12, which explains and substantiates the use of tongues. We will exegete all of these passages, and then we will throw in a bonus Pentecostal verse.
70. Prior to moving into the book of Acts, we need to stop and pause at John 20:22–23:

And this having been said, He breathed and he says to them, "Receive the Spirit Holy. If of whom you forgive the sins, they are forgiven them; if of whom you retain, they have been retained."

John
20:22–23

And this having been said, He breathed and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If of any you may pardon sins, they are pardoned to them; if of any you may retain, they have been retained."

And having said this, He breathed upon them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you pardon a person's sins, that person's sins will stand pardoned; if you retain a person's sins, that person's sins will be retained to him."

There are various explanations for this passage, and I do not hope to clear this up completely in your mind with the short exegetical explanation of it. The first thing that our Lord does is the aorist active indicative of *emphusáō* (ἐμφυσάω) [pronounced *em-foo-SAH-oh*], which means *to breath, to breath on, to blow in or on*. Strong's #1720. Now, there is disagreement whether Jesus here breathed upon the disciples and thus gave them the Holy Spirit or whether the gift of the Holy Spirit came later. What He says to them is the 2nd person plural, aorist active imperative of *lambánō* (λαμβάνω) [pronounced *lahm-BAHN-oh*], which means *to take, to receive*. Strong's #2983. There are two ways this can be taken—some noncharismatics take this to mean that our Lord is telling his disciples to receive the Holy Spirit, although that would not occur until the future. Others take it to mean that there is some sort of endowment of the Spirit, different from what we have in Acts 2.

²³⁹ Taken from Wayne Webb's pamphlet *The "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" and "Speaking with Tongues"*; Greystone Bible Church; p. 16. I have seen it elsewhere as well. I should point out that this little pamphlet had a great deal of information, albeit not completely accurate. However, it was, for the most part, doctrinally correct, and I spent nearly 2 days pouring through this little booklet and amending and revising this doctrine to reflect many of the insights found here.

We have already spent a short time with the Holy Spirit as He is found in the Old Testament, and we found that He had a somewhat different ministry to the saints during that time period. He was given to a minuscule number of believers for service and the Holy Spirit could be taken away. For all intents and purposes, we are still in that time period. The Spirit had not yet been given—not as Jesus had promised (John 14:16–17, 26–28)—because Christ had not yet been glorified (John 7:39); and Christ is glorified at the right hand of God (Heb. 1:3–4). Several times, Jesus told the disciples that He must go to the Father in order to send to them the Helper (John 14); so, what occurred here was clearly different than Pentecost. Now, we may debate back and forth just exactly what the Apostles had then which would be different than what they would have in Acts 2, but our Lord explained it immediately. They would be given an authority here. We have the 3rd class condition of *if*; maybe it's true and maybe it's false. Then we have the aorist active subjunctive of *aphiêmi* (ἀφίημι) [pronounced *af-EE-ay-mee*], which means *to send forth, to send away, to dismiss, to pardon, to forgive*. Strong's #863. The result will be the present passive indicative of the same verb—these sins will be dismissed or pardoned with respect to that person. The converse is also true—if the Apostles did not pardon the sins of any person, then those sins would not be pardoned. In other words, the Apostles had a clear enough understanding of the gospel at that point to present the gospel, and with confidence, make it known that a person has been forgiven. In other words, this is an issue of authority. Our Lord, when He was continually with them, had the spiritual authority. Now He would be leaving them, and He would give them the authority of the Holy Spirit—the authority to pardon or not to pardon a person of his sins. This was all tied to the gospel—i.e., Peter could not choose some dude out of a crowd whom he liked a lot and tell him he was saved, apart from the gospel. Their authority extended to a correct pronouncement and application of the gospel of Jesus Christ. As is true throughout much of Scripture, a passage is often explained by the context in which it is found. What we do not find here is conclusive proof that the Apostles received a little bit of the Holy Spirit when they were saved (this passage occurred long after they were saved), but that they would need to seek a greater experience with the Holy Spirit in the future. The context reveals that authority is the issue here—that is stated, as well as the clear parameters of that authority—and nothing more is stated or implied.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

71. A brief outline of the book of Acts: Our Lord Himself gives us the outline for the book of Acts in Acts 1:8: **“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and even to the most remote part of the earth.”**
 - a. First, God gave the Holy Spirit to the Apostles (Acts 2:1–4). The Holy Spirit is clearly given to the disciples (Acts 2:4).
 - b. Then the Apostles were witnesses to the Jews in Jerusalem and throughout all Judæa (Acts 2:5–8:3).
 - c. Then they witnessed to those of Samaria, which were part Jewish and considered outcasts by the Jews (Acts 8:4–9:43). The Holy Spirit is clearly given to the Samaritans (Acts 8:14–17). Furthermore, this comes from the laying on of the hands of the Apostles Peter and John, something that the disciple Philip was apparently unable to do, even though he was able to do signs and wonders and healings (Acts 8:4–8, 14–17)
 - d. Finally, the Apostles go to the remotest areas of the civilized world (Acts 10:1–28:31). The Holy Spirit is clearly given to the gentiles **just as it had been given to the Apostles** (Acts 10:44–46 11:15–16). This occurred **while the Apostle Peter was speaking the gospel to them** (Acts 10:44). During Paul's missionary travels, Paul comes upon some of the Jewish disciples of John (the Baptizer). Although it is not perfectly clear, they appear to be believers and **the Holy Spirit is given to them by the laying on of the Apostle Paul's hands** (Acts 19:1–7).
72. Let's summarize what these last three incidents of the bestowing of the Holy Spirit had in common: the Holy Spirit was given only through an Apostle or Apostles.
73. Let's summarize the differences of these last three incidents when the Holy Spirit was given:
 - a. Timing: the Samaritans (and the Apostles) were given the Spirit **after** they believed; the gentiles were given the Spirit **while** they believed; and it is uncertain as to the timing of the giving of the Holy Spirit to the Old Testament saints of Acts 19.
 - b. Ceremony: the laying on of hands was used with the Samaritans and with the Old Testament saints; the gentiles received the Holy Spirit while Peter was giving them the gospel.
74. How can we apply this to ourselves today?

- a. The book of Acts is a transitional period of time. Previously, the authority of God rested in the Old Testament Scriptures, in the temple, in the synagogue, in the prophets and in the priesthood of Aaron. Now the authority of God would be shifted to the New Testament Scriptures, to the Church, to the Apostles, and eventually to the pastor-teacher. This transition of authority was accompanied by signs, wonders and powers. God bore witness to the authority of the Apostles from which the transfer to the new authorities followed.
- b. The book of Acts marks a change in God's plan with respect to the Jews: God, for over 2000 years, had worked primarily through the Jews and those who believed in Him often became Jews. When Jesus first sent the Apostles out to proclaim the kingdom of God, they were admonished **not** to go to the Samaritans or to the gentiles (Matt. 10:5). However, this changes in the book of Acts. The believers in Jerusalem were scattered under great persecution, sending them out to Judæa and to Samaria (Acts 8:1). Only the Apostles remained in Jerusalem, so they expanded their evangelism beyond Jerusalem. One of their disciples was evangelizing in Samaria, and the Apostles Peter and John went to assist. Then Peter was sent by God the Holy Spirit to a gentile home. Now, when the Apostles went to the Samaritans and to the gentiles, this was marked by the giving of the Holy Spirit to these two groups. Very few of us appreciate how disharmonious the Jews, Samaritans and the gentiles were; add to that, the cultural barriers between men and women, and between slaves and free. Therefore, in the book of Acts, we see some of those barriers erased, always presenting the Apostles as the clear authorities in the area of spiritual things. Paul confirms this in his epistle to the Galatians: **For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus** (Gal. 3:26–28).
- c. If we would take our cue from any of these disparate groups in the book of Acts, it would be from the gentiles, who received the Holy Spirit as they believed.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

75. Keeping these points of summary in mind, the first passage that we will examine in relative detail is Acts 2:

Historically, Biblical exegetes have understood the general idea behind the book of Acts—this is an historical record of the Church of God in its infancy. Dillow: *We have to remember that Acts is a transitional book, spanning the years between the synagogue and the church, from the law to grace, from the Old Testament saints to the New Testament Christians and from an exclusively Jewish body of believers to the body of Christ, in which there is neither Jew nor Gentile.*²⁴⁰ This change from the synagogue to the church did not take place overnight. Most of the first century was included in this transitional period. Even Paul taught in the Temple of Jerusalem as late as Acts 21 (which would have been about 56–58 A.D.). This marked the end of Paul's ministry to the Jew (which continued through Acts 23). The negative volition was so intense against Christ Jesus, that there was a near riot, and many Jews took a vow not to eat again until Paul had been assassinated by one of them. This probably marked the end of the sign gifts, as Paul's dealings from that day forward were with gentiles and gentile churches (which may have included some Jewish believers). Paul remained under Roman house arrest for the next year or so (it is generally agreed that he was incarcerated in 60 A.D. when he wrote four of his epistles).

Take any church which is older than 20 years—it has a certain way of doing things. What they did the first day or the second day that it opened is not how that church operates today. When I first moved from my studying under a pastor teacher to more of a self-directed study, what I did the first few days is not the same as how I operate today. So, it should be understood that what occurred historically in the book of Acts is not necessarily exactly how things are done today or should be done today—we would go to the epistles of Paul for that. The accurate comments of charismatic Gordon Fee are applicable here: *If the primitive church is normative, which expression of it is normative? Jerusalem? Antioch? Philippi? Corinth? That is, why do not all the churches sell their possessions and have all things in common? Or further, is it at all legitimate to take [any] descriptive statements as normative? If so, how does one distinguish those which are from those which are not? For example, must we*

²⁴⁰ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 59.

follow the pattern of Acts 1:26 and select leaders by lot? Just exactly what role does historical precedent play in Christian doctrine or in the understanding of Christian experience?²⁴¹ So, if the Bible says, **Jesus Christ, the same today, yesterday and forever**; does that mean that all of these churches were founded and operated incorrectly except for one of them? Certainly not. Not only is that verse completely misunderstood and completely misapplied by charismatics, that verse does not mean that God does not have different programs for different time periods. The divine essence of Christ Jesus is the same today, yesterday and forever. His programs periodically changed with regards to mankind. If you do not recognize that God does things differently from time to time, then your ignorance of Scripture should be considered profound; even legendary.

Now, if anything is obvious to charismatics and to noncharismatics, is that a person who believed in Jesus as the Messiah during the life of Jesus did not receive the Holy Spirit because Christ had not yet risen. I don't believe that there are any believers of any denomination who would deny that. Therefore, all *Old Testament* saints (those who believed in Jesus prior to His resurrection and ascension) would have to receive the Holy Spirit **after** they believed. A noncharismatic should not be disturbed by this; nor should a charismatic point to this as *proof* of Spirit baptism after salvation as the norm for all believers.

MacArthur: *...the book of Acts was never intended to be a primary basis for church doctrine. It records only the earliest days of the church age and shows the church in transition from the Old Covenant to the New. The apostolic healings, miracles, signs, and wonders evident in Acts were not common, even in those days. They were exceptional events, each with a specific purpose, always associated with the ministry of the apostles, and their frequency can be seen decreasing dramatically from the beginning of Acts to the end...Acts, therefore, covers and extraordinary time in history. The transitions it records are never to be repeated. And so the only teachings in the book of Acts that can be called normative for the church are those that are explicitly confirmed elsewhere in Scripture.*²⁴²

Now, there is a point of view that I have only recently come upon which I should touch on. This point of view is that this portion of Acts is spuriously recalled. It is suggested by some that (1) Luke deliberately misrepresented the facts of Pentecost, and that the believers there actually spoke in ecstatic, heavenly languages. (2) Others maintain that this portion of Acts was reworked sometime later by another author to distort the nature of the gift of tongues. To answer the first objection: if we cannot trust the writers of Scripture, then we have absolutely no Scriptural basis for argument. We either agree that the Bible is God's Word or it is not, textual criticism aside for the moment. I will approach this subject primarily on the basis of Scripture (although you wouldn't know that after gone through 30 or so pages of what is essentially introduction). If we remove Scripture from this debate, then I can call this gift whatever I want and others can call it whatever they want—but we have no true foundation from which to argue. I personally approach this topic believing the Bible to be the Word of God. I have covered the topic of inspiration elsewhere.

The second objection, although interesting, has no basis in textual criticism. We have no alternative manuscripts which give a different point of view. This is simply someone coming along centuries and centuries after the fact who decides to simply say *I don't agree with Acts 2; therefore, someone must have changed it to suit their theological bend*. I guess I should present the actual theological position. B. L. Königsmann, in 1798, suggested that because the latter portion of the book of Acts uses the verb *we* and the earlier portion does not, that there were two sources for the book of Acts woven together. The author, Luke, clearly indicates that he attempted to carefully record the life of Jesus and the early church by using various source materials—chiefly eyewitness reports, to produce a proper chronological history (Luke 1:1–4). We find the pronoun *we* later in the book of Acts because that is where Luke hooks up with Paul and becomes an eyewitness himself. To depreciate the previous chapters is to take the position that God's Word is not God's Word.²⁴³ Furthermore, one does not get to slander Luke's account

²⁴¹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 172, who took it from Gordon D. Fee, "Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent—a Major Problem in Pentecostal Hermeneutics," in Russell P. Spittler, ed., *Perspectives on the New Pentecostalism*; Grand Rapids, MI; Baker Books, 1976, p. 123.

²⁴² John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 172.

²⁴³ I read dozens of books on this subject and only found this point of view mentioned once, and that in Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates' book *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, pp. 25–31. They did not agree with either point of view,

of Pentecost to the end of keeping that portion that one likes and dispensing with that with which one does not agree. I would also like to point out that if Luke's account were spurious, then the other Apostles would have had something to say about this widely circulated history.

First, we must get integrated into the context. Our Lord had already breathed the Holy Spirit upon the disciples following His resurrection (John 20:22), something which apparently lasted a relatively short time. 50 days had passed (*Pentecost* means 50), and the disciples were back to being the lunkheads that they always were. In Acts chapter 1, they come up with the *brilliant* idea that they ought to elect a twelfth Apostle. The main difference between the disciples at this time and while our Lord was with them is now they were misapplying Scripture. Before, they didn't know enough Scripture to misapply, but now they had grown some. They cast lots for their hand-picked candidates, and the lot fell on Matthias, of whom we never hear again.

What was happening outside was that Jews from all of the surrounding areas had come to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost. Most of us drive around the corner to the nearest church and spend our Sundays there. From the very beginning, wherever the Ark of God was, that is where the people of Israel would gather to worship. They gathered periodically for certain feast days in one place. Part of the emphasis was that there is One God. The Israelites were never to become confused and think that other heathen worshipped the same God, only gave Him a different name. They worshiped the one God, and therefore, they had to gather at the temple, which spoke of Him. Therefore, all of Jerusalem was filled with Israelites from all over the surrounding areas.

Slavishly literal:²⁴⁴

And in the fulfilling of the day of Pentecost, they were all of one mind at the same place.

Acts
2:1

Less than literal:

And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all [gathered] in agreement in one place.

When the day of Pentecost had come, they all gathered in the same place as they had previously agreed to.

After the *kaì* conjunction, we have the articular infinitive of the verb *sumplêroô* (συμπληρώω) [pronounced *soom-play-ROH-oh*], which literally means *to fill a ship with water*. However, the more often used figurative meaning is *to fulfill, to approach, to come*. Strong's #4845 Arndt & Gingrich p. 787. The articular infinitive, when used with the *en* (ἐν) preposition, generally expresses the *time* in which something occurs; we often use the words *when* or *while* to convey this meaning.

We actually don't have the word *one* in this verse. We have the adverb *homothumadón* (ὁμοθυμαδόν) [pronounced *ho-moh-thu-mah-DON*], which means *of one mind, by mutual consent, by unanimous consent, in agreement, in one accord*. Strong's #3661 Arndt & Gingrich p. 569. This means nothing more or less than they agreed to gather together on that day. Thieme: *...the word HOMOTHUMADON has additional implications: it depicts minds that were free from mental attitude sins and harbored neither antagonism nor hostility. It showed both outward and inner accord—oneness of purpose, oneness of mind. This state of mind characterized the 120 disciples gathered "with one accord in one place"—not because they were such wonderful people or because they tarried and agonized, but because they had by grace been given the Holy Spirit. Together they awaited the dawn of the new dispensation—the Day of Pentecost.*²⁴⁵

but they spent more time than I explaining why the second viewpoint was goofy. Their footnotes on p. 103 go into even more detail about Königsmann's position along with that of Adolph Harnack.

²⁴⁴ If you are not familiar with my approach to exegesis, I give first a slavishly literal rendering of the passage, in the same word order and the same number as found in the Greek. In the next selection, I might change the word order somewhat and either insert or remove definite articles, as we are more accustomed to in the English. Finally, in the third rendering of the verse, I give a more thought-for-thought rendering, which sometimes conveys more of the inference of the original Greek. The inference of this verse, for example, is that they would meet together on the day of Pentecost. Obviously, this was a decision made prior to their arriving—they did not suddenly all appear at the same place by coincidence.

²⁴⁵ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, pp. 18–19.

<Return to Page One>

Now, there are denominations and groups which make a big deal out of Pentecost. What occurred at Pentecost was a one-time event (when our Lord sent the Holy Spirit), and, although there are two subsequent references to Pentecost (Acts 20:16 1Cor. 16:8), these references are simply to the annual Jewish feast of Pentecost (the Old Testament references to Pentecost are Lev. 23:15–21 Num. 28:17–25). Since the average Pentecostal has little or no understanding of the day of Pentecost or of the Pentecost Feast, it would be beneficial to examine the first few feast days:

The Feast Days			
Name OT References NT References	OT Time Modern Time	Description and Purpose	Symbolic Meaning
<p>Passover</p> <p>Ex. 12:1–14, 21–27, 48 Lev. 23:5 Num. 9:1–14 28:16 Deut. 16:1–3a, 4b–7</p> <p>Matt. 26:17 –19 Mark 14:12–26 John 2:13 11:55 1Cor. 5:7 Heb. 11:28</p>	<p>1st month: Abib 14</p> <p>March or April</p>	<p>This was Biblically the beginning of the months for the Jews (Ex. 12:2). A lamb was slain and eaten with bitter herbs and unleavened bread in every household (leaven was removed from the house prior to the slaying of the Passover lamb—Ex. 16:14). More importantly, this commemorated the passing over of the death of the firstborn in Israel for those who slapped the blood up upon the door sill. This looked backward to Yahweh delivering Israel from bondage to Israel. The man who was clean and did not observe Passover was to be cut off from his people and to bear [the punishment for] his own sin (Num. 9:13). Aliens could observe the Passover (Num. 9:14). The sacrifice for the Passover was only to occur where Yahweh designated (Deut. 16:5–6). Our Lord's last supper with His disciples was the Passover. In connection to this, <i>the first day of unleavened bread</i> in Mark 14:12 was probably the day before the feast began (as only unleavened bread could be eaten with the Passover). Our Lord changed the Passover into the Eucharist (Mark 14:22–24). The wine and bread taken during the Eucharist, are obviously unleavened (Deut. 16:3–4).</p>	<p>The Passover also looks forward to our Lord, the Passover lamb, sacrificed on our behalf. Recall the chilling Ex. 14:5–6: <i>The lamb is to [all of] you an unblemished male a year old...and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel will kill it between the evenings.</i> The blood on the door sills of their original homes in Egypt caused they and their families to be passed over and the first born was spared and represented the bleeding of our Lord Jesus Christ which took place on His hands, His feet and from His head. Jesus is called our Passover in 1Cor. 5:7. The unleavened bread eaten at the last Passover was our Lord's uncorrupted body and the unfermented wine was His blood of the covenant shed on behalf of many (Mark 14:22–24).</p>

Name OT References NT References	OT Time Modern Time	Description and Purpose	Symbolic Meaning
Unleavened Bread Ex. 12:15–20 13:3–10 23:15 34:18 Lev. 23:6–8 Num. 28:17–25 Deut. 16:3b, 4a, 8 Matt. 26:17 Mark 14:1 Acts 12:3 1Cor. 5:6–8	1st month: Abib 15–21 March or April	The Passover was to then be commemorated with a week long feast. An assembly was held in at the beginning and at the end of this week-long appointed time and all bread eaten had to be unleavened, as leaven represents corruption of the world. The unleavened bread was the bread of humility (Deut. 16:3). This feast did not necessarily begin on a Saturday or a Sunday. However, no work was to be done on that first and seventh day. This one of the great pilgrim or regathering feasts of Israel, one of the three when all males were to appear before Yahweh. None were to appear before Yahweh empty handed. The Feast of Unleavened Bread also looked backward to the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. Several burnt and tribute offerings were presented to Yahweh during this appointed time.	The Jews were given the truth directly from God and they were nationally a light unto the world. Leaven represents corruption and their memorial to the Passover, their witness for Jesus Christ, was to be uncorrupted worship. Scofield writes <i>this feast speaks of communion with Christ, the unleavened wave loaf, in the full blessing of His redemption and of a holy walk. The divine order is beautiful; first, redemption; then, holy living.</i> ²⁴⁶ Passover occurs for a day, just as salvation occurs in an instant of time. The Feast of Unleavened Bread, wherein we have fellowship with our Lord, continues for a longer period of time.
Firstfruits Lev. 23:9–14 Rom. 8:23 1Cor. 15:20–23	Abib 16 March or April	A sheaf of the first of the barley harvest was offered to Yahweh as a wave offering, along with a burnt offerings and a tribute offering. The seed dies, is put into the ground, and the first sheaf to arise was the firstfruit of the remaining crop to be harvested later. This originally recognized our Lord's provisions for the Jews in the land.	Being filled with the Holy Spirit and having our own spiritual gift(s) are the firstfruits to us from God, in anticipation of our resurrection bodies. Our Lord, risen from the dead, represents the firstfruits of the resurrection (1Cor. 15:23). Notice how this is long before the celebration of the harvest, as He was raised long before we receive our resurrection bodies. The seed dies, is put into the ground, and the first sheaf to arise was the firstfruit of the remaining crop to be harvested later.
Weeks (or Harvest or Pentecost)¹ Ex. 23:16a 34:22a Lev. 23:15–21	3rd month: Silvan 6	Fifty days after the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread we have the Feast of Weeks where mandatory and voluntary offerings were brought to the Lord, along with the firstfruits of the wheat harvest. This is roughly equivalent to the amount of time that it took to travel from Egypt to Mount Sinai. The offerings were burnt offerings, tribute offerings, sin offerings and peace offerings. Two loaves of unleavened bread were also offered along with ten animals. However, leavened bread is allowed as this is our	This is our life here on earth. Leaven speaks of corruption because we live in bodies of corruption. Our salvation and initial fellowship our past, ultimate sanctification is future, and in between we have this very short amount of time here on earth. That is Pentecost, which is why God chose this day to give us the Holy

²⁴⁶ *The New Scofield Reference Bible*; Dr. C.I. Scofield; ©1967 New York-Oxford University Press; p. 156–157.

Name OT References NT References	OT Time Modern Time	Description and Purpose	Symbolic Meaning
<p>Num. 28:26–31 Deut. 16:9–12</p> <p>Acts 2:1–4 20:16 1Cor. 16:8</p>	<p>May or June</p>	<p>time here on earth. Scofield writes: <i>Observe, it is now loaves; not a sheaf of separate growths loosely bound together, but a real union of particles making one homogeneous body. The descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost united the separate disciples into one organism.</i>² It was at this time that the priest emphasized the needy and providing for them (Lev. 23:22 Deut. 16:11–12). This is the second feast where the males of Israel were to gather themselves before Yahweh. Later on, the Ten Commandments and the book of Ruth were read publicly during this feast day. The timing of this feast is quite interesting. The fifty days are seven Sabbaths, (<i>Sabbath</i> means <i>seven</i> and is the Biblical number referring to perfection) and one more day. This places the feast day on a Sunday, which is quite unusual for a feast day. This day appears to just be inserted into the feasts, just as the Church Age is inserted into the Age of Israel. Furthermore, what they brought was interesting—Israelites brought not grain, but the bread which had been made out of the grain, as an offering to God.</p>	<p>Spirit. The gleanings of the field which are left behind for the poor is what the sons of Israel left for us and we have been able to feast from the Old Testament since that time. The fact that Pentecost occurs on a Sunday is significant, because the official day of worship of the church is Sunday, as that day commemorates the day our Lord was raised from the dead. Finally, the bread made from the grain which God has given speaks of the transformation by God the Holy Spirit from the raw material into divine production.</p>
<p>You will note in all of this that the mystical experience touted by the charismatics appears to be missing when these feast days are carefully examined. We do not find it even in shadow form.</p>			

[<Return to Page One>](#)

The short version is the our Lord died on Passover, as our Passover lamb. Then He was resurrected on the Feast of the Firstfruits, as Jesus Christ was the firstfruits of all that are to be resurrected. Then, 50 days later, we have the celebration of the harvest, or Pentecost, where God gave the Holy Spirit to the Church.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

And came suddenly from the heaven a sound as of a carried breath, violent, and filled whole the house where they were sitting.

Acts
2:2

And [there] suddenly came from the heaven a sound as a driven, violent breath, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

And, suddenly, from the heaven, there came this sound, like a powerful directed wind which filled the house where they were sitting.

What came from the heaven was a sound. This is followed by the conditional adverb *hōseí* (ὡσεὶ) [pronounced *hoh-SIGH*], which is used in comparisons (*as if, as it were, as, as though, like*) and before words of number or

measure to indicate and approximate value (*approximately, roughly, about*). Strong's #5616 Arndt & Gingrich p. 907.

What this sound is, is described by the present passive/middle participle of phérô (φέρω) [pronounced *FEH-row*], which means *to bear, to carry*. In the passive, this means *to be carried, to be borne*. When used with *wind*, the concept is that this is a *driven* wind—something is forcing it along and causing it. It is controlled and not random. Strong's #5456. The next word used to describe it is the adjective bíaios (βίαιος) [pronounced *BEE-aye-os*], which means *violent, vehement*, and it is used of the wind. Strong's #972. The noun which is being described is pneé (πνοέ) [pronounced *pnoh-AY*], which means *breath* more than it means *wind* (it is found in Gen. 2:7 Isa. 42:5 Acts 17:25). Strong's #4157. Luke, the writer of this book, was a scholar, a doctor and an historian. He could have used the word for *wind*, but he did not. He used the word for *breath*, yet described it with adjectives that we would associate with a violent wind. A wind gives us the concept of something which is uncontrolled and unpredictable. This breath, despite the fact that it is powerful, is controlled and purposeful. This is the same word used in Gen. 2:7, where God breathed into Adam the *breath* of lives.

The description that we find here of the Holy Spirit is unique. We do not have a repeat of v. 2 anywhere else in Scripture. The Holy Spirit came to this earth one time, and He was then here. There are some things which are a one-time experience. The incarnation of our Lord occurred but once; His death on the cross on our behalf occurred but once. What occurred at Pentecost, for the most part, did not reoccur. Once the Holy Spirit came, He was here. He did not have to come back. Now, certainly, a person who knows a little Scripture will point out that there are three other instances in Scripture (all in the book of Acts) where the Holy Spirit was given in what appears to be a separate experience from salvation. Actually, only two of the incidents occurred after the salvation of those involved. You see, there were Jews, Samaritans (who were half-Jewish),²⁴⁷ and gentiles. God had changed His program or His dispensation, and the Apostles—Paul, primarily—were in charge of establishing this new program, which included local churches with both Jewish and gentile believers. For those who had been reborn prior to the death of our Lord and the giving of the Holy Spirit, this change of administration and the change of authority had to be authenticated. Therefore, rather than send the Holy Spirit to fill all believers from the previous dispensation all at once, they were filled in the presence of an Apostle, so that the Apostle's authority could be simultaneously established. Had it been done any other way, and the authority of the Apostles would have been undercut.

**And were seen to them divided tongues
as fire and it is seated upon one each of
them,**

Acts
2:3

**And appeared to them distributed
languages like fire and it remained on
each one of them,**

**And languages, as if a judgement from God, were distributed to each one of them, as a pronouncement
of judgement [against the Jews].**

The verb is the aorist passive indicative of optánomai (ὀπτάνομαι) [pronounced *op-TAHN-oh-my*], which means *to see, to perceive with the eyes, to look at*; however, we have more than the simple act of seeing here (which would be blépô), but we have a correct perception or understanding of what one is observing, or a concentrated effort to examine what is occurring. In the passive, this is often rendered *to appear*. Strong's #3700.

We then have the present middle/passive participle of the word for *divided*; and we get all kinds of renderings here: *cloven* (like the hoof), *divided, separated*. We find the same word used by Luke in Luke 12:52 23:34, and what is being done is that these *tongues* are *distributed* to the various disciples. Whatever was brought into the room was *distributed* to the disciples. This is followed by the plural of the noun *tongues*; however, bear in mind that it also means *languages*. I certainly hope that you don't have this goofy picture of burning human tongues being tossed around the room by some chaotic wind and these tongues are dropping out of the sky and landing on everyone. First of all, yuck; and secondly, that would be goofy and meaningless. What gets distributed to the Apostles in the room are languages.

²⁴⁷ It is actually more complicated than that.

We have *hōseí* again (*as, like, as though*) and the genitive neuter noun *pûr* (πύρ) [pronounced *purr*], which means *fire*, and is used that way literally throughout most of the New Testament (e.g., Matt. 3:10 7:19 13:40 John 15:16). It also has several symbolic uses. However, so that we don't get way out there (because when dealing with symbolic language, that is easy to do), the preponderance of symbolic uses of *fire* deal with judgement (e.g., Matt. 18:8 1Cor. 3:10–15 Heb. 10:27). One of the incredible Old Testament prophecies which, in this verse, is being fulfilled, is a judgement from God, upon Israel. That is Isa. 28:9–14—but don't go there yet; we will get there eventually. Strong's #4442. However, let me give you the gist of what the prophecy is and what is really going on: God will speak through the Apostles to their fellow Jews in the languages of Gentiles, to evangelize them. This is a great judgement against Israel, predicted back in the book of Isaiah. God would leave the hard-hearted Jews and go to the Gentiles and this was one incredible sign of judgement against them. We might better understand *tongues of fire* to mean *languages of judgment [upon the Jew]*. This is what they are here and this is how Paul will properly interpret them in 1Cor. 14, which we will also exegete. Just keep in the back of your mind the fact that we have the mention of *fire* here and that fire represents judgement.

Now, I need to stop for a moment to those people who always say, "Well, a lot of people interpret the Bible in a lot of different ways"; somehow, implying in that statement of unparalleled brilliance that there are many different ways to look at God's Word and we won't really have it figured out until we go to heaven. Bull crap—people interpret the Bible in a bunch of different ways because they have their thumb up their ass. God the Holy Spirit inspired Luke to use just the words that he uses throughout this narrative for a reason. Each of the words means something and we can and will understand them. So far, every word in these past few verses which didn't make sense to you before or you read over them quickly, not giving them any thought, should now make sense to you. When we have worked through enough passages of Scripture, what we should end up with is a theology where we have no internal contradictions. That is the proper way to unveil God's Word.

The we have the aorist active indicative of *kathízô* (καθίζω) [pronounced *kah-THÉE-zoh*, which means *to sit, to sit down, to sit down with* and the implication can be *to abide, to continue with, to remain, to stay* (see Luke 12:49 Acts 18:11). Strong's #2523. We don't have this wind rushing in and rushing out, and some temporary thing occurs. The Apostles are *sitting* (v. 2); these languages *sit* with them. The preposition which follows is *epí* (ἐπί) [pronounced *eh-PEE*], and it means *on, upon*. Strong's #1909. This is followed by two adjectival nouns (adjectives used as nouns). The first is *heís* (εἷς) [pronounced *hice*], which means *one*. Strong's #1520. Then we have *hékaston*, the neuter form of *hékostos* (ἕκαστος) [pronounced *HEH-kas-tos*], which means *each, every one*. Strong's #1538. Finally we have the personal pronoun. All this simply means is each Apostle received one language that he could speak—and it remained on them (this was quite unusual for the Apostles, who were used to breaking fellowship about every 25 seconds).

What is taking place here is a one-time event. Our Lord continually spoke of this as a future event. There was no indication in anything that He said that the sending of the Holy Spirit would be repeated again and again. Our Lord ascended once into heaven and He sent the Holy Spirit, our Helper, to us one time. The Spirit came down one time and baptized the believers into Christ, first beginning with the Apostles, so that it was clear where the authority was. We only find the mighty, rushing wind one time; there is no celebration of Pentecost recorded again in Scripture, in terms of a repeat performance by the Spirit of God. The Lord sent the Holy Spirit at a specific time—the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:5); the Spirit was sent to a specific city, Jerusalem (Luke 24:49); He was sent to a specific group of people—the Apostles (Acts 1:5–8). All subsequent baptisms and fillings by the Holy Spirit were done at the hands of the Apostles; and in only one case did this giving of the Spirit clearly take place after salvation. Please note carefully what the charismatic does: he takes this one-time event and extrapolates it throughout an extended period of time. He scraps the Apostle angle and the one-time event and the speaking in known foreign languages; he ignores the cloven tongues distributed to each Apostle and the mighty wind which is so loud that it brings people from all over into the Apostles' meeting place—in other words, when the charismatic relives his own made-up Pentecost—it is a different, counterfeit Pentecost. There was a world conference in 1976 in Jerusalem by Pentecostals to *celebrate the ongoing miracle of Pentecost*" *Significantly, delegates had to have interpreters and headphones in order to hear and understand in their own languages!*²⁴⁸ Getting the right city is just not enough. **Every other detail is wrong!** They are preaching another Jesus and they tout a different spirit.

²⁴⁸ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 179.

And they are filled all by a Spirit Holy and they began to speak in other tongues according as the Spirit gave them to declare.

Acts
2:4

Then they were filled with the Holy Spirit and then they began to speak in other languages just as the Spirit had given them to speak.

Then they became filled with the Holy Spirit and they began to speak in other languages, just as the Spirit had given them to speak.

You will note that the disciples were not straining or praying to get the Spirit, and nothing that they did or didn't do would have prevented the Spirit from coming. Jesus said that He would go to the Father and send a helper to them, and that is what he did. This is simply the fulfillment of the promise. There is no indication in Scripture that there is some sort of an elevator where Jesus comes down to earth, and then goes up again and sends the Spirit again. The Spirit is first given to those who have the authority.

The first verb is the aorist passive infinitive of plēthō (πλήθω) [pronounced *PLAY-thoh*], which means *to be filled [with something], to be totally imbued, affected or influenced [by something]*. Strong's #4130. *By* is not a preposition found in the verse, but placed there because *Spirit* is in the genitive case.

Began is in the aorist middle and it is followed by the present active infinitive of *to speak*. The aorist tense refers to the point of time that they began *to speak*; and the present tense of *to speak* (which is continuous action) means that they kept on *speaking*. The word for *other* is hēteros (ἕτερος) [pronounced *HEH-ter-os*], which means *another, other*. There are two words for *other* in the Greek and this is the stronger one; it is often thought of as *another of a different kind*. Strong's #2087.

The word for *tongues*, as we have mentioned before is glōssa (γλῶσσα) [pronounced *GLOHS-sah*], and it never, ever, ever means some *unknown, holy angelic language*. It simply means *foreign language*, where the emphasis is upon the sound of the one speaking. It is used clearly to refer to a human language in Rev. 5:9 7:9 11:9 13:7 14:6 17:15. When you find the words *unknown tongue* in your KJV, the word *unknown* is in italics, meaning that the translators did not find that word in the original Greek, but they supplied it, hoping that it would be helpful. Since it is misleading, it is obviously not very helpful. The NKJV leaves the word *unknown* out of its translation (which is the case for most of the English translations).²⁴⁹ Strong's #1100 Arndt & Gingrich #161.

We then have, literally, *according as the Spirit gave them* and then we have the present middle infinitive of apophthēggomai (ἀποφθέγγομαι) [pronounced *ah-pohf-THENG-oh-mai*], which means *to utter, to speak, to declare*. Zodhiates calls these *pithy and remarkable sayings*. Strong's #669.²⁵⁰

So far, what we have is the Apostles being filled with God the Holy Spirit and a foreign language as of fire, or divine judgement, is distributed to each one of them. Now this is extraordinary and a miracle (and there are very few real miracles in human history—although that is a whole other story).²⁵¹

I do want you to note one thing in particular: the Apostles are speaking in tongues in public. There is no justification anywhere in Scripture for praying quietly or loudly in tongues (we will cover 1Cor. 14:28, which is one of the many verses distorted by charismatics). But to hold you until that time, keep in mind that in 1Cor. 12:7, Paul tells the

²⁴⁹ The exceptions being *The Amplified Bible*, Young and Weymouth; the TEV calls them *strange tongues*; the NEB *language of ecstasy*; Williams: *speaks in ecstasy*. You will note, in most cases, the less literal the translation, the more likely they are to *interpret* 1Cor. 14 rather than to *translate* it.

²⁵⁰ As an aside, there is this Dr. Vincent, a Greek scholar, who claims that the language used here allows for the gift of tongues to be either a tongue which spoke miraculously or for the ear of the hearer who miraculously heard. Although, at this point in the game, perhaps that could be argued; however, given 1Cor. 14, it just makes that seem rather unlikely. It was an interesting theory, and I mention it only for that reason. Furthermore, if the key were in the hearing, then only one Apostle would need to speak, and the Jews from all over would have been able to understand him.

²⁵¹ I've covered this in part in Judges 19.

Corinthians: **But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good** (1Cor. 12:7). Or *to profit withal*, as the old King James Version has it. It is not a little ironic that one of the books I own which favors the use of tongues in prayer is *To Profit Withal*.²⁵² This simply means that the exercise of spiritual gifts is to profit the congregation as a whole, and not for personal use, like, say, a set of weights. A lady who attended J. Vernon McGee's Bible class in Orange County approached him and said, *Dr. McGee, I speak in tongues, but never publicly. I do it in my private devotions, and I do it for my own spiritual benefit.*" And I tell her, "Dear lady, **'love doesn't seek its own.'** A gift is never to be exercised like that. A gift is to be used to build up the church. And if you can't use it to build up the church, you're not going to use it privately." To begin with, how can you become spiritual by speaking in tongues? What is it that you can say in tongues that you can't just tell the Lord? He'll understand you. Just tell Him in plain English because He understand English too. And you can worship Him; you can grow in grace and in the knowledge of Him without going off in tangents. Love, you see, seeks not her own.²⁵³

**Were also in Jerusalem dwelling
Judæans—men, pious, from every nation
of [those] under the heaven.**

Acts
2:5

**Jews were also residing in
Jerusalem—devout men from every nation
of those under heaven.**

**There were also Jews temporarily residing in Jerusalem [for the religious celebrations of Pentecost];
these are religious men who have come from all over the world.**

The Hebrew and the Greek tend to begin almost every sentence with a conjunction (the *wâw* conjunction in Hebrew and the *kaí* conjunction in Greek). The first word in this verse is not the first word in this verse. It is the post-positive conjunction *dé* (δέ) [pronounced *deh*], which indicates a simple transition from one thought to another. It can be opposed to the previous thought, or simply continuative or explanatory. It is generally rendered *but, and, or also, namely*. *Post-positive* means that this word never comes at the beginning of a sentence, although this is where we would place it in the English. Strong's #1161. What begins the verse is the 3rd person plural, imperfect indicative of the absolute status quo verb *to be*, which is followed by *in Jerusalem*. This is followed by the present active participle of *to dwell, to reside*. The ones dwelling in Jerusalem are called *loudaios* (Ἰουδαίος) [pronounced *ee-ou-DYE-os*], which means *Jew, Judæan, from Judea*. Strong's #2453. It is in the plural here.

Then Luke describes these men. The noun for *men* is the one which is often used to distinguish *males* from *females* (as opposed to the more generic *anthropos*). They are described by the adjective *reverent, devout, pious*. It is not a negative or a positive term—that is, we cannot unequivocally say that we are speaking of believers or simply religious unbelievers by the use of this word apart from the context. These are simply religious Jews who have gathered in Jerusalem from India, Asia Minor and North Africa. For many of them, their roots in these countries go back three hundred years to the time of Alexander the Great, during which time they had been dispersed on friendly terms. Thieme: *After the conquest of Tyre and Sidon, Alexander intended to invade Jerusalem. To his surprise, Jaddus the high priest, followed by the priests and the citizens of Jerusalem, came out to welcome him. Jaddus was carrying the Word of God in his arms. Solemnly, he unrolled the sacred scroll and stopped at the Book of Daniel; he showed Alexander that his conquests had been prophesied. So impressed was Alexander with these Jews that he appointed them as ministers of his far-flung empire. Alexander established many cities in the ancient world, some as far away as India. To all these, he sent the Jews, and they became prominent and respected leaders in their communities.*²⁵⁴ In fact, the group which had settled in Alexandria, Egypt were later responsible for the Old Testament translation of the Septuagint. While under the rule of Caligula and Claudius, other Jews also either were moved or chose to move out into these countries as well. During various holy days, they came back and stayed in Jerusalem to celebrate.

The only portion of this verse which is rather difficult is that we have the ablative plural form of the definite article which precedes *under the heaven*. In this case, the article acts as a pronoun, generally referring back to the

²⁵² See Conrad Murrell, *To Profit Withal*; Saber Publications, ©1969, pp. 71–72.

²⁵³ J. Vernon McGee; "Gifts of the Spirit"; Thru the Bible Books, ©1972, p. 27.

²⁵⁴ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, pp. 21–22.

nearest masculine plural noun. Now that we know its function, it is still not easy to deal with. To show you that this is rather difficult, I will list what two other translators did (I will be staying with the most literal translations):

NASB	Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men, from every nation under heaven.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation of those under the heavens.

Most of the translators completely ignored that article (e.g., KJV, NKJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, REB). I will go with Young's understanding of the article, which refers back to *nation*, although they do not agree in number. The proper understanding is that these Jews came from every *nation* of the nations under heaven.

Coming to pass, also, the sound this came together the multitude and they were confused, because was hearing one each the his own dialect speaking them.

Acts
2:6

Also, this sound coming to pass gathered together the multitude and they were perplexed because each one heard them speaking his own dialect.

Furthermore, the sound of this rushing wind caused a multitude to be gathered [around the Apostles]. And they were quite perplexed, as each man heard them speaking his own dialect [to him].

V. 6 is a deceptively simple sounding verse, from the standpoint of the English, but it is rather difficult in the Greek. It begins with the aorist middle participle of *gínomai* (γίνομαι) [pronounced *GIN-oh-my*], which means *to become, to come into existence, to come to pass, to be*. Strong's #1096. This is followed by the post positive conjunction *de* again, and the genitive/ablative noun *the sound*. This is followed by the aorist active indicative of *sunérchomai* (συνέρχομαι) [pronounced *soon-EHR-khoh-my*], which means *to come together, to gather together, to convene, to assemble*. Strong's #4905. This is followed by the neuter noun *plēthos* (πλήθος) [pronounced *PLAY-thos*], which means *a multitude [of people], a throng [of persons], a crowd, a large group*. Strong's #4128. It was the occurrence of the sound mentioned back in v. 2 which was very localized and brought together a very large group of Jews to where the Apostles were. You see, the participle, *the coming to pass of the sound*, acts as the subject of the verb *to gather together*, as this verb is in the active voice. If the multitude assembled themselves, it would be in the middle voice; if they were assembled by someone else, the verb would have been in the passive voice. However, the multitude of people are the ones who are assembled here.

Then we have the reaction of the multitude—the aorist passive indicative of *sugchéō* (συγγέω) [pronounced *soog-KHEH-oh*], which means *to cause a multitude or an assembly to be confused, to be excited, to be put into an uproar; for individuals, to cause them to be amazed, to be placed into consternation, to be confused and perplexed*. Strong's #4797. Why they are confused will be only partially explained in the following verses. But the general idea is that these Galileans, these fishermen, these men who barely speak one language, their own, are now speaking in the languages of the hearers, and that is amazing. Pick someone out of your periphery who strikes you as being pretty stupid, but with enough sense to dress himself, and suddenly, one day, he begins speaking in a second language and speaking in such a way that he sounds intelligent and grammatically correct in that language. This would cause you to become quite confused. Suddenly being able to speak in a second language is not what you would expect from something that lacking in intelligence.

Now, I want you to listen carefully to this: this is the *only* passage in Scripture which clearly defines the **nature** of the gift of tongues (although it is implied in 1Cor. 14 when Paul refers back to Isa. 28). Nowhere else is it positively clear exactly what the gift of tongues is. We remove this passage from Scripture, and one could debate pretty much anything they wanted to with regards to the nature of the gift of tongues. The tongues movement takes the stance that those who speak in tongues, for the most part, are not speaking in a know, human language but that they are speaking or praying in a heavenly language or a language of angels as the Spirit gives them utterance. Please realize that **nowhere** in the Bible is this use or this angle on tongues ever explicitly stated. Understanding the gift of tongues to be something other than the speaking of a human foreign language that the speaker has not learned must be taken from (1) experience and/or (2) from inexplicit references and desired implications. In other

words, in this passage only, can any person read it and say, *this is what tongues are, and I grasp the concept*. Anywhere else, a person must determine that *this is what I want tongues to be, so this is how I will interpret these passages*. Essentially what a charismatic holds to is that there are two different gifts of tongues—one where a foreign language is spoken and those present understand it and another where an unknown language is spoken (generally thought to be *tongues of angels*) that no one understands except, occasionally, someone with the gift of interpretation of tongues. Charismatics may try to convince you that it is all one and the same, but it is not. These are two separate gifts, with two entirely different purposes and results. In fact, a case could be made for there being three separate gifts, the latter two being (1) speaking in angelic tongues during a church service, where they will be interpreted; and, (2) speaking in angelic tongues in prayer, which will not be interpreted. Again, if you choose to believe that the latter two are valid gifts, realize that there is no explicit statement in Scripture to warrant this viewpoint—you **must** hold to this position by the inference of Scripture. “Here is what the gift of tongues means to me in this passage,” is your doctrinal position. I’m not certain that I would want to hold to merely the inference of Scripture as I choose to interpret it as the foundation for a significant portion of my spiritual life.

At this point, as to exactly what was occurring, we may have to do some conjecture. There were men from all over the surrounding areas and each of them heard his own dialect, or language spoken, which would indicate probably that we do not have all the Apostles speaking at once, but speaking in some kind of order. Either this, or they walked out into the multitude, each one carrying on a conversation in another language with whomever was in his periphery. In any case, the fact that these Galileans were speaking in a language other than their own was quite surprising.

Amazed, also, all, and [they] marveled, saying face to face with one another, “Not, behold, all these are the [ones] speaking Galileans?”

Acts
2:7

Furthermore, all were amazed and they marveled, saying one to another, “Listen, are these not all Galileans [who are] speaking?”

Furthermore, all of the Jews were amazed, and they were astounded, and they kept saying to each other, “Aren’t these men who are speaking Galileans?”

We have two more verbs which describe the way each person in the crowd reacted to this gift of tongues. The first verb is the imperfect of *existēmi* (ἐξίστημι) [pronounced *ex-ee-STAY-me*], which means *to remove out of a place or state*. We only find this verb used when one *stands outside his mind*; when one *is beside himself*. More clearly, *to be astonished, to be amazed, to be astounded*. Strong’s #1839. The second verb is the imperfect of *thaumázō* (θαυμάζω) [pronounced *thau-MAUd-zoh*], which means *to wonder, to marvel, to be struck with admiration or astonishment*. Strong’s #2296.

After the present active participle *saying*, we have the preposition *prós* (πρός) [pronounced *pros*], which means *face to face with*. Strong’s #4314. When followed by *allēlōn* (ἀλλήλων) [pronounced *al-LAY-lohn*], which means *one another, another*. Strong’s #240. When found together, they mean *one to another, to each other*.

What they say begins with the negative and then we have the demonstrative particle *idou* (ἰδοῦ) [pronounced *ih-DOO*], which means *behold, lo*. Although we do not use this language anymore, it was found in the Hebrew, the Greek and the King James’ English. To give a modern translation, we might use something like *listen, listen up, focus on this, get this, look, look here*. Strong’s #2400.

We have in here the definite article and the present active imperative of *speak*. This could be rendered *the speaking ones, the speakers*, or, literally *the speaking*. Now, what is so amazing. We have Israelites throughout all the populated earth who all speak several languages and here they are listening to other Jews speak several languages as well. So, what’s the deal? Why do we have three words which tell us that they were totally blown away by this? The key is that these men are Galileans. They live near the Sea of Galilee and they were primarily fishermen. They were uneducated and barely spoke their first language. You don’t know this to read the book of John, but you will not find a simpler, more basic vocabulary anywhere. If you are a first year Greek student, you can read the book of John in the original Greek and get 90% of it. The disciples were well-known, but not well-

respected. These were uneducated, blue collar workers. That they had any religious leanings was a fluke; however, the idea that they had any idea how to speak these different languages was amazing. In the south, we have the Judæans, who were more academically accomplished and comprised the Jewish aristocracy. They spoke Latin, in order to communicate with the Romans; Greek, which was the language of that culture; and Aramaic, which was a combination of Chaldean and Hebrew.²⁵⁵ If these Apostles had been Judæans, then their ability to speak in the dialects of the surrounding areas would not be so astounding; but that they were Galileans, who pretty much struggled to communicate in any language—that was phenomenal. The Galileans spoke Aramaic primarily, although the Apostles wrote the New Testament in Greek, as that was the more prevalent language (some think that Matthew may have been written in Aramaic, originally; and, as was mentioned, the Greek of John’s writings is unbelievably simple).

God has a sense of humor and a sense of irony. The pharisees and the scribes and the Sadducees were well-educated in the matters of religion, and probably had a relatively thorough liberal arts education as well. They were certainly tri-lingual at the minimum. However, they do not even understand the Sacred Scriptures, which was the focus of their academic as well as current studies. Now, here we have a dozen or so Galileans giving them the gospel in the dialect where they were born. Afterwards, Peter will stand up and explain the Old Testament to them. If it weren’t so tragic, it would be humorous. In any case, **God has chosen the foolish things of the world to discredit the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to discredit the strong** (1Cor. 1:27).

Now, we probably don’t have one Apostle reeling off sentences in several different languages, but each Apostle is probably speaking in one to maybe three different languages. If he is in the front speaking, he probably speaks in one language, then another Apostle stands up and begins to speak (*as the Spirit gave them utterance*). Or, the less likely scenario, but also a possibility—these disciples mingled with the crowd and spoke the native language of whomever they happened to be speaking to.

Now, regardless of the way in which this was presented to them, each Jew leans over to the Jew next to him and makes these remarks. What we have in vv. 7–8 are the gist of what each man said. After being totally amazed, he looks to the man next to him and asks, “Aren’t these Galileans? Aren’t these fishermen? Where did they suddenly learn to speak all these languages?”

Now you ought to ask yourselves—when an unbeliever wanders into a church where the gift of tongues is used, do they ever respond in this way? Do they quietly converse amongst one another in amazement that they are so totally impressed, yet confused with what is being done? Do they hear, say, a foreign language of their parents or grandparents being spoken? You know damn well that most unbelievers, and many believers, when a holy roller church suddenly bursts into tongues, it just about scares the pie out of them and they start looking for the door. Many of them just walk on out. It is an unnerving experience, but not because something amazing is occurring. It is unnerving because something frightening and psychologically suspect is occurring.

“And how we are hearing the his own dialect of ours in which we were born?”

Acts
2:8

“So, how are we—each one [of us] hearing his own language in which we were born?”

“So, how is it possible that each one of us is hearing them speaking in the language of our birthplace?”

Prior to the word *dialect*, we have the definite article and the adjective *ídios* (ἴδιος) [pronounced *IH-dee-os*], which means *one’s own*. It refers to something which belongs to oneself and not to another. Strong’s #2398. After *dialect*, we have the personal pronoun *hêmōn* (ἡμῶν) [pronounced *hay-MOHN*], which simply means *ours*. Strong’s #2257. It places emphasis upon the fact that these are their languages, not those of the disciples who are speaking.

This is followed by the preposition *in*, the relative pronoun *which*, and the 1st person plural, aorist passive indicative of *gennáō* (γεννάω) [pronounced *gen-NAH-oh*], which means *to sire, to bear [a child]*. In the passive, it means *to*

²⁵⁵ Partially quoted and partially paraphrased from R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 20.

be born. Strong's #1080. The hearers cannot believe that they are hearing these Galileans speak in their language. You see, the Israelites had been scattered out of their country; and much of their country had been conquered by Gentiles. Therefore, even those who lived inside what would have been Israel proper a millennium ago were now living amongst the Gentiles and they were raised with Gentile languages. In fact, most Jews—not the Galileans—learned Aramaic, Greek and the dialect of the land in which they were born. Now, that a Galilean would know their language is incomprehensible to them.

Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the [ones] dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of the Libya, the one toward Cyrene, and the [ones] visiting [from] Rome; both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians;

Acts
2:9–11a

[There were] Parthians, Medes and Elamites, as well as the one dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya, which is toward Cyrene; and the ones visiting from Rome; both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians.

There were Parthians, Medes and Elamites. There were men who lived in Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia and Egypt. There were those who came from Libya, which is toward Cyrene, and others visiting from Rome—both Jews and their converts, as well as Cretans and Arabians.

There is some disagreement as to whether this belongs to the extended quotation between vv. 8 and 11b, or whether this is simply a parenthetical insert to give us an idea as to from how far these Jews had come. The general result is the same. There were Jews there who had come from all over to be in Jerusalem for the holy days. Few pastors have the grasp of ancient history that Thieme does, so I will allow him to give us some background: *Parthia was the buffer nation between the Roman Empire and India. Its original inhabitants were the Scythians, an Indo-European and Mongolian mixture. When Alexander defeated the Parthians, he established a few cities in that land and left behind his Jewish administrators. Few outsiders spoke or understood Parthia's guttural language, and the nation was and remains today one of the most mysterious aggregation of people of the ancient world. Rome conquered the world in its day; but Rome could not conquer the Parthian vernacular. Yet fluent Parthian came from the lips of Spirit-filled Galileans!*

In the high plateaus beyond Assyria, a wild and rugged people called the Medes had united with the Persians to master the world in the time of Cyrus the Great. Then, suddenly, they disappeared again into their native highlands and, of course, took with them their strange language. But note that even in those geographically isolated regions the Jews had put down roots. They had adopted the language of the Medes, and—to their utter surprise—that language was clearly voiced in the streets of Jerusalem.

The Elamites were a fierce race in Abraham's time. Partly Persian and partly Semitic, they posed a constant threat to Babylonia. Aggressively, they swept down from their high mountains east of Chaldea and subjugated the Chaldeans. They moved on to dominate the Arabian desert, but soon afterward they were riven back into their secluded, mountainous retreats, cut off from contact with other people. Here, too, Alexander the Great left Jewish administrators in the wake of his rapid conquests. Now these Jews' progeny had returned in A.D. 30 to Jerusalem, where they intended to celebrate the feasts in the Holy City. It was God's design, however, that they hear the Gospel declared in the language of the Elamites!

The phrase "dwellers of Mesopotamia" incorporates several languages that were spoken by this group of people, among them, Chaldaic (Akkadian) and Syriac. The Judeans spoke excellent Aramaic, which was quite a contrast to the curious, guttural language of the Cappadocians. Cappadocia, comparable to Armenia in Asia Minor, has an inaccessible mountainous terrain interspersed with valleys. This presented a problem of communication in the ancient world. Hence, the Cappadocian dialect would be among the lesser-known tongues; yet it too was represented among the languages spoken on the Day of Pentecost.

Pontius, then a Roman province north of Asia Minor and now Southern Russia, is that area along the Black Sea coast where the Scythians had settled and where the Greeks had traded on occasion. In Phrygia and Pamphylia, a mixture of Greek and ancient Phrygian had combined into one vernacular under the Greeks. In Egypt, Coptic was spoken, while in parts of Lybia the population conversed in an obscure, antiquated dialect of North Africa. The Cyrenians were bilingual, and, of course, the “strangers of Rom” spoke fluent Latin. Yet the Gospel was heard in all these languages!

In addition to foreign-born Jews, native Jews, who had come to Jerusalem from other parts of the Land, were present. Upon hearing the Lord’s disciples witness in all these strange languages, they should have understood that Isaiah’s prophetic message was being fulfilled right before their eyes. Nor does the divinely-inspired reporter of these incidents overlook the proselytes—converts to Judaism. They too had made the annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Then there were the Cretes who were known to have talked in a rare and difficult form of Greek and the Arabians who boasted many dialects. A diversity of languages indeed! Yet in all that babble of voices there was only one aim—the declaration of the Gospel of salvation. Each person present on that momentous day heard “the wonderful works of God” (the content of the Gospel) in his own native tongue.²⁵⁶

<Return to Page One>

Now, we are going to fast forward, past the next few verses to v. 11b. It is not my intention to carefully exegete this passage of Scripture (I may have exegeted more than you have every heard before, but if I were to carefully exegete Acts 2, we would have spent two or three times as long on each verse. We are skipping over the names of the birth places of the Jews who were in Jerusalem for the religious holiday to their own theories of what was occurring. In giving their pet theories, not a single one of them realizes that this is a fulfillment of Scripture.

“We keep hearing speaking, them, in the our own tongues the great [things] of the God!”

Acts
2:11b

“We [continue] hearing them speak, in our own languages, the great works of God!”

“We are hearing them speak, in our own languages, the great works of God!”

We begin what they say with the present active indicative of the very common verb ακούω (ἀκούω) [pronounced *ah-KOO-oh*], which means *to hear*. Strong’s #191. The present tense indicates continuous action in present time—they continued to hear this. This is followed by the present active participle of *to speak* and the personal pronoun *they* or *them*. Then we have *the our own tongues*; i.e., *our own languages*. Now, we simply do not have phrases being spoken of, e.g., *hey, how’s it goin’? Are you from Pamphylia? I’m not*. We have the content of the messages. We have the definite article and the noun μεγαλειός (μεγαλειός) [pronounced *meh-gah-LEE-os*], which means, in the plural, *great works, wonderful works, great things*; it is an outpouring of the greatness of God’s power and glory. Strong’s #3167. Now, we are not given any more by way of specifics here. We don’t know if the Apostles were quoting Scripture from, say, the book of Psalms, or whether they were saying things from the top of their head. It does not appear to be the gospel, as Peter will Launch into that in Greek, a language which all of the hearers could understand.

McGee: Pentecost was God’s answer to Babel. God was here breaking through the sound barrier that He had put up at Babel when He had confused the language. Now the gospel is to go out to all people—that is the message of Pentecost. The gospel is for all. Pentecost is a blessing: Babel was a judgment. On the day of Pentecost, 3,000 were saved and made one in Christ; on the day that God came down at Babel, men were scattered and there became tribes and tongues, peoples and nations. There was made one body at Pentecost; there were made many divergent peoples at Babel.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁶ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, pp. 23–25.

²⁵⁷ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part II*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 11.

Now, isn't it peculiar that Pentecostal and charismatic missionaries must spend a great deal of time learning the language of the people to whom they go? In fact, take any non-charismatic missionary, and any charismatic missionary, and they will spend roughly the same time learning a foreign language. You would think that they would simply follow the example of the Apostles here and begin speaking in the appropriate foreign language. After all, it is abundantly clear that God worked this great miracle through the Apostles on the day of Pentecost; why on earth would God withhold His Spirit from those who proclaim its importance so fervently? If we are supposed to follow the example of the Apostles, why go half way? Now either God is holding back, or the Pentecostals just *don't have enough faith*, or—now here's a thought—perhaps they have completely misunderstood Scripture and are unable to distinguish between what has occurred historically and what we are to do.

Now, I want to point out something. It is obvious that the Apostles are speaking in languages that others understand. They are not babbling in some energized, frenzied, ecstatic trance state. Now, nowhere in the Bible do we have anything to indicate that the gift of tongues changed or mutated or evolved into something different. Brumback wrote: *We vigorously object to the teaching that this was the primary purpose of tongues in the early church. It was the exceptional and not the usual manifestation of tongues in those days, and likewise, in its subsequent manifestations.*²⁵⁸ When you point to this passage and say that these are known human languages but the *tongues* spoken of in 1Cor. 14 are ecstatic utterances, you are taking your experiences (or the experiences of others) and superimposing them upon Scripture. You are taking an experience, calling it reality, and then forcing it upon God's Word, and you then force God's Word to adhere to this reality. There is no clear statement anywhere in Scripture that the gift of tongues and its manifestation ever changed or evolved into angelic languages. Now, I realize that some of you right now are telling me, under your breath, that Paul specifically talks about *tongues of angels* in 1Cor. 13:1. Again, you have taken your experience as spiritual reality and you have made Scripture fit into this reality. We will get to 1Cor. 13:1—we are taking it a step at a time. No one learns God's entire Word overnight. When I first believed in Christ Jesus almost 30 years ago, I began within that first year or so to study the Bible (primarily under the guidance of a pastor teacher) an hour each and every day. This gave way to several hours a day studying over the past five years or so. During this time period, I feel that I have got a reasonable grasp of most important doctrines. I can go to a reasonably number of passages and exegete them correctly. However, there is no way that I can lay claim to having a complete knowledge of God's Word. That is a lifetime goal, which will not be fulfilled. Don't expect your understanding of God's Word, and therefore, your understanding of your place in this world, to be finished by next week. And do not expect this study of the gift of tongues to be something that you can read through in an hour and a half. The weakness of the studies of tongues which I have read are generally that they do not go into great enough detail when it comes to exegeting the Scriptures. That is from where we mine the truth. Therefore, I am going to spend a great deal of time when it comes to God's Word. You either hang in there because you are interested in God's Word or you do not. There are no cliff notes for the Bible²⁵⁹ and no shortcuts to your spiritual life. When someone indicated to you that you could go from a staid, stuck-in-the-mud Christian life to a vibrant, exciting, powerful walk with God overnight (or, by means of one experience), they lied to you. What you think you have experienced is actually the result of auto (or group) hypnosis, suggestion, peer pressure, and/or the placebo affect. There might even be demon activity to some degree. However, you do not get to take this experience and superimpose this upon Scripture and twist Scripture to fit what you think you have experienced.

Amazed, and all and thoroughly perplexed, each one face to face with each one, saying, "What would wish [or purpose] this to be?"

Acts
2:12

They were all amazed and thoroughly nonplused, each saying to each, "What does this purpose to be?"

The continued being amazed, as well as perplexed, each one saying to their neighbor, "What is going on here?"

²⁵⁸ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, p. 12, from Carl Brumbeck, *What Meaneth This?*; Springfield, Mo., Gospel Publishing House, 1947, p. 36..

²⁵⁹ I am speaking metaphorically; I realize that there are cliff notes for the Bible.

We begin this verse with the imperfect of *existêmi* again; (ἐξίστημι) [pronounced *ex-ee-STAY-me*], means to *remove out of a place or state*. This is actually a compound verb from the word *out* and the verb *to stand*. Literally, it means *to stand outside [onself]*. We only find this verb used when one *stands outside his mind*; when one is *beside himself*. More clearly, *to be astonished, to be amazed, to be astounded*. Strong's #1839. We then have the post positive connective *dé* and the word for *all*; then we have *kaí* and the imperfect of *diaporéō* (διαπορέω) [pronounced *dee-ah-por-EH-oh*], which means *to be thoroughly perplexed, to be much in doubt, to hesitate greatly [due to doubt]*. Strong's #1280.

Let's see what others have done in translating what they said:

CEV	"What does all this mean?"
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	What doth this please to be?
NASB	"What does this mean?"
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	'What would this wish to be?'

It looks like we are pretty much in agreement when it comes to *what* and *this*. After *what*, we have the generally untranslated particle *án* (ὄν) [pronounced *ahn*], which indicates uncertainty, and very occasionally rendered *perhaps*. It is found with the optative, subjunctive and indicative moods. Zodhiates: *In interrogations, direct or indirect, where the thing inquired about is possible, or certain, but the inquirer is uncertain when or how it is to take place.*²⁶⁰ Strong's #302. This is followed by the optative of *thélō* (θέλω) [pronounced *THEH-loh*], which means *to will, to have in mind, to wish, to desire, to purpose, to intend, to please*. One's active volition and purpose are implied. This gives us Strong's #2309. "*What would purpose [or, wish] this to be?*" They are confused as to the mechanics and the meaning of what they are seeing. Now, we have a dozen or more dialects being spoken, so that many people may recognize two or three of them, but, for the most part, the others will seem like gibberish. Their response is recorded in the next verse:

Others, and, mocking, kept saying, "Because, sweet wine—filled they are."	Acts 2:13	So, others, mocking, kept saying, "[It is] because they are filled with sweet wine."
--	--------------	---

Others mocked them, saying, "They are speaking in other languages because they are filled with sweet wine."

The last words in this quote is *they are*. We actually begin what they say with *hóti* (ὅτι) [pronounced *HOH-tee*], which means *that, because*. The intention is to give an explanation for what is occurring. Strong's #3754. The second word in this quotation is *gleúkos* (γλεύκος) [pronounced *GLYOO-kos*], which means *sweet wine* (there's much more to the explanation than this). Strong's #1098. Then we have our verb, the perfect passive participle of *mestōō* (μεστόω) [pronounced *mes-TOH-oh*], which means *to fill*. In the passive, it means *to be filled*. Strong's #3325. The perfect tense refers to an act which occurred in the past with results that continue into the present. This is followed by the 3rd person plural, present indicative of *to be*. What we have is a continuation of the speaking back and forth of those who are watching this. We have people who make the accurate observation that there are Galileans speaking their personal dialect; we have some who suspect that this might mean something, or that it should mean something. We have your scoffers who don't give much thought to the fact that they heard their own language spoken—they make a joke, saying that these are simply drunken Galileans. Some charismatics have pointed to this passage to *prove* that what the Apostles used were ecstatic utterances like the tongues spoken today. Sorry, that dog won't hunt. Luke has already told us that these Apostles spoke in the dialects of the visitors—vv. 7–11 make that fact abundantly clear. There are over a dozen different languages being spoken by the Apostles. Obviously, not all of those present understood each and every language. Furthermore, Luke tells us exactly what the motivation is for saying that they are drunk—the Apostles are being *mocked*. It says that right in the verse. When you cannot explain something, or you disagree with someone, yet the facts are not on your side, then the best way to deal with it is to mock them. By the way, the second reason that we know that the Apostles were not babbling nonsense is that there were 3000 converts added to the Church of God that day. An unbeliever does not listen to eleven people babbling nonsense and suddenly decide, *I really want to be a part of*

²⁶⁰ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament*; AMG Publishers; ©1992, p. 140.

this—this is alright; this is what I have been looking for. Stupid believers would be so inclined because they tend to pursue almost anything but the truth, but not unbelievers.

Then, of all people, Peter stands up before the crowd and speaks.

Standing up, and, the Peter with the one-ten, lifted up a sound of his and said to them, “Men, Judæans and the [ones] residing in Jerusalem all [of you], this to you [be] known and listen to the words of mine:

Acts
2:14

And Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and said to them, “Men, Judæans, and all those residing in Jerusalem, this [be] known to you and listen to my words:

Then Peter, who was standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and he said to them, “Men, Judæans, and all of you who reside in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and listen carefully to my words:

Peer stood up with the héndeka (ἑνδέκα) [pronounced *EN-deh-kah*], which means one-ten, being a combination of the Greek words for that. This was the word used for the eleven disciples once Judas had deserted them (Matt. 28:16 Mark 16:14 Luke 24:9, 13 Acts 1:26 2:14). Strong’s #1733. Do you recall that phoney election in Acts 1? The disciples are still referred to as the *eleven*.

Now I realize that many translations have Peter lifted his voice up to *men of Judæa*; however, both *men* and *Judæans* are in the vocative (for this to read *men of Judæa*, *Judæa* would be in the genitive singular).²⁶¹ Then we have the definite article and the present active participle of *katoikéō* (κατοικέω) [pronounced *kah-toy-KEH-oh*], which means *to live, to reside*; this is a word which usually refers to one’s semi-permanent dwelling. Since this is also the word found back in v. 5, the implication is that this is not always a permanent dwelling place. Strong’s #2730. This is followed by the word *all*, which refers back to those *living in Jerusalem*.

Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, begins to speak to these men. He gives them a reasonable introduction. Bear in mind that Peter was not speaking from notes here, but from the top of his head. He says *This to you [be] known and...* *Known* is an adjective and not a verb. The verb *to be* is understood. He follows this with the aorist middle imperative of *listen*. This is followed by *the words of mine*. *Words* is the neuter noun *hrēma* (ῥῆμα) [pronounced *HRAY-mah*], which means *words, that which is spoken*. Strong’s #4487. This is followed by *of mine*.

Now, something that you may not realize here or fully appreciate, but Peter stands up and speaks in Greek and everyone understands him. It is not as though the people from all of these other areas could not speak Greek and the only way to reach them was through their native language. Greek was the universal language at that time. So, communicating truth to the crowd via their own language was not the end in itself, but simply a sign. It was a sign to these Jews, a sign which had historically meant that they were going to be dispersed by the Assyrians, and now it meant they would be dispersed by Rome. It was a sign, not a necessity. It got the attention of the crowd, and now Peter would give them the gospel.

“Not, for [you see] as you are taking up these being drunk; it is, for [you see] an hour third of the day.

Acts
2:15

“For [you see] these are not drunk, as you are thinking because it is the third hour of the day.

“First of all, these men are not drunk, as you have supposed, as this is the third hour of the day.

I almost skipped this verse, as it does not pertain directly to our subject. I do want to make a stop at one verb—the present active indicative of *hupolambánō* (ὑπολαμβάνω) [pronounced *hu-poh-lam-BAHN-noh*], which means *to*

²⁶¹ As I go through this, I need to explain some of the simple points of accurate translation, so that we get a correct rendering of the passage.

take from, to receive from; and figuratively to take up the discourse and continue with it, to take up a thought and to go with it. Strong's #5274. Men, when faced with something that they do not want to face, will take on to themselves any explanation whatsoever. The explanation is that these men are simply drunk. The fact that they stupid fishermen speaking in foreign languages is simply explained away that they are drunk. Had no one said anything, this would have been the explanation that they would have clung to. You may think it seems goofy that they could actually latch onto an explanation which was offered in a mocking way, but they had nothing else that they liked. Peter will straighten them out. First thing, he explains, is that it is way too early in the morning for these men to be drunk.

“But, this is the spoken [thing] by the prophet Joel:

Acts
2:16

“But, on the contrary, this is the spoken [thing] by the prophet Joel:

“On the contrary, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

The first word in this verse is the adversative particle *allá* (ἀλλά) [pronounced *ah-LAH*], which serves to mark opposition, antithesis or transition. It is generally rendered *but*; however, after an full negative, *allá* is used as an emphatic antithesis, and can be rendered *but, but rather, but on the contrary*. Strong's #235. Then we have the demonstrative pronoun *toúto* (τούτο) [pronounced *TOO-toh*], and it means *this, this one*. It is used to refer to that which follows, as in Luke 18:11. Strong's #5124. What *this is*, is the perfect passive particle of *eréô* (ἐρέω) [pronounced *eh-REH-oh*], which means *to say, to declare*. With the definite article and the participle, this is something which was spoken. The perfect tense means it was spoken in the past with results that continue into the present. Strong's #2046.

Now I should touch on a doctrine that we will not go into any great detail on, which is called the Doctrine of Intercalation. From the Law and the Prophets to the epistles of Paul, there was a great change in the program of God. Some churches, falling under the misconception of *Covenant Theology*, seem to think that the *Church* began in Abraham's tent and that the *assembly* of Israel in the desert is essentially the same thing as the *church* today. This is a goofy theological perspective held to by people who have either spent about 7 minutes of real study in the Old Testament or they have been taught this by people who have been taught this, so they just hold to it. I can show anyone that they are, in truth, a dispensationalist, whether they think they are or not. What was done in the nation Israel is so much different than what is done in the Church Age. However, that is also another topic, your position on which will not affect the approach to our topic at hand, which is the gift of tongues, or languages. However, the concept of intercalation is this: the Church Age is a parenthetical doctrine which is not found in the Old Testament. There are many doctrines which pertain directly to the Church Age and only to the Church Age (the universal priesthood of the believer, the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the distribution of gifts to all believers, the great body of believers who function outside of the nation Israel) which are not found and never taught in the Old Testament. In fact, whenever the Tribulation and the Millennium are spoken of, the Church Age is completely and entirely ignored. Therefore, Old Testament passages jump from the Age of Israel, to the incarnation of our Lord, to the Tribulation, the judgement seat of Christ (or, Y^ehowah in the Old Testament), and into the Millennium, yet nothing is said about the Church Age. Old Testament passages which make this jump are: Psalm 22:22–23 Isa. 61:2–4 Dan. 2:40–45 7:23–27 8:20–26 11:35–36 Hosea 3:4–5 5:15–6:3. In every one of those passages, we would expect the prophet to say something about the Church Age, but nothing is ever stated. It is always as though this Church Age was not a separate period of time. In Daniels 70 weeks, 69 of these weeks have transpired (the Age of Israel) and there is one week left to occur (the 7 years of the tribulation). Nowhere does Daniel ever hint that there will be this period of time inserted in between these weeks. The Apostles expected our Lord to return during their lifetimes. Even though they wrote all of the Church Age doctrine by which we live, not one of them realized that His coming was at least 2000 years away. Joel promised the coming of the Holy Spirit, and, had Israel turned toward our Lord, that would have been that time. Our Lord offered the kingdom of heaven to the Israelites, and had they taken it, there would have been no Church Age (this is all theologically theoretical). God knew that Israel would reject Him and turn to legalism. Now, the understanding of this passage is a bit tricky. Had Israel turned toward God at this time, this would have been the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel. What Peter is stating is accurate. However, the final fulfillment of this prophecy will be the Millennium. What we have here in between the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the prophecy of Joel is the intercalation of the Church Age, which Peter will set

forth the doctrine of in his later epistles. So, what we have is a partial fulfillment of what Joel spoke of—the Holy Spirit was poured out upon true Israel.

Now, all that having been mentioned, let me add that Peter, when he said *this is the spoken [words] of the prophet Joel*, is not thinking of the doctrine of intercalation. He does not even realize that Jesus is not returning in his lifetime. He does not even realize that he will not observe what Joel spoke of in his lifetime. He is simply saying that what follows are the words of the prophet Joel. We often and mistakenly think that Peter is applying it to the speaking in tongues. Peter actually, nowhere in his message, explains to the crowd what exactly this gift of tongues was all about. That was not the focus of the message. As with all signs, the sign itself is **never** the focus—the focus is what the sign points to, which will be Peter's message (which we will not study in full).

Now what is said and what Peter is thinking is moderately complicated. What he really is saying here is: *"This [what I am about to say] is something which Joel, the prophet, has spoken..."* These are religious Jews and he will engage them first with some Scripture. Then he will give them the gospel. Few believers appreciate the concept of progressive revelation. Progressive revelation means that God did not reveal His entire plan all at once to man. In fact, it was not until John, the Apostle, on the Isle of Patmos, penned those last few words of the book of Revelation, that God had finally given us an outline for the remainder of history. Here is where things get a little tricky, as we are going to both read Peter's mind and exegete a portion of what he has to say. Peter may—in fact, he probably does think that he is living in the last days, and that what occurred at Pentecost was a fulfillment of the Scripture from the book of Joel. Given the doctrine of intercalation, this could be considered to be the pouring out of the Holy Spirit as per the book of Joel. However, this is also the beginning of the Church Age, something which Peter was not fully aware of. Now, here is one of the most remarkable aspects of the Bible: throughout Scripture, from Adam to John, each writer of Scripture had a piece of the puzzle. No writer of Scripture ever had the entire puzzle, although, once John had written those last few words of Revelation, he probably had more pieces of the puzzle than anyone else. Now, what God the Holy Spirit did throughout history is He took men, who had an incomplete knowledge of God's complete plan, and had them record what they knew of this plan. If any of them had a misconception due to the fact that they did not have knowledge of God's complete plan, this misconception was not recorded. So, every Apostle had a piece of the puzzle; no Apostle, when he wrote, had the complete puzzle. God the Holy Spirit so directed the writers of Scripture as to record what was true and accurate, and to leave out what was false and misleading, even if they believed what was false and misleading. Let me give you some examples: I would dare to say that all of the Apostles believed that Jesus would return in their lifetimes. However, what they taught was the imminency of the rapture—that is, that the return of Christ for the body of believers could occur at any time. No Apostle wrote that Jesus would return in their lifetime, even though they probably all thought that. God the Holy Spirit saw to it that they recorded what was accurate, despite what they believed because they did not have a full and complete revelation from God. One more example: let's say Peter decided to hold a question and answer period after the service at Pentecost and someone in the crowd raised their hand and asked if the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon the gentiles as well. I would guarantee you that Peter would have said, "I don't think so." Therefore, even if Peter did have a question and answer period after his message here, it is not recorded. When Peter was filled with the Spirit, he spoke the truth, even though he may have had a few personal misconceptions. Now, later in the book of Acts, which we will study, Peter will find out that God will pour out the Holy Spirit upon the gentiles just as He did upon the Apostles and the disciples of Christ on the day of Pentecost. Now, this will surprise him, which means that he did not realize prior to that experience that the gentiles would very much be a part of God's plan after the resurrection and ascension of our Lord. In other words, Peter, while giving this message on the day of Pentecost, is laboring under some misconceptions. He will not teach these misconceptions, as he is being guided by God the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, he has these misconceptions, just the same. So Peter may have even thought that the day of Pentecost was the fulfillment of the words of Joel—he does not say that, however. He says, *this is what Joel wrote*. Perhaps you don't follow this, or you understand, but you just don't buy it. Then, skip ahead in your own Bible and read vv. 19–20. I will wait right here while you do that.....see what I mean? Was that fulfilled? Did Peter teach that was being fulfilled?

When we study the book of Acts, we will cover all of this in much greater detail. However, note that once the tongues were over, once the sign had been given, once the attention of the crowd had been gotten, then Peter launches into his sermon. Then he gives the gospel to this crowd. Even though tongues were a sign, and even

though various individuals throughout the crowd recognized their own dialect being spoken by the Apostles, the bulk of what is said is by Peter in the common language of the day, which was koine Greek.

“ ‘And it will be in the last days,’ says the God, ‘I will pour out from the Spirit of mine upon all flesh, and will prophesy the sons of yours and the daughters of yours; and the young men of your visions will see; and the old men of yours, dreams they will dream.’

Acts
2:17

“ ‘And it will be in the last days,’ says God, ‘I will pour out from My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy; and your young men will see visions; and your old men will dream a dreams.’

“ ‘And it will come to pass in these last days,’ said the God, ‘I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.’

Peter will now quote from Joel 2:28–32. We begin with the future indicative (deponent) middle of the verb *to be*. Those who were brought up with the KJV recognize this beginning phrase as *And it will come to pass*. Then we have that phrase *in the last days*. This phrase is not found in the Old Testament—neither in the Hebrew or in the Greek of the Septuagint. Peter adds this by way of interpretation. In the Hebrew, it reads *after this*; *after this* refers to the restoration of Israel. Now, it is going to be very tough to restrain myself at this point in time. These four words which Peter *uses*—*in these last days*—opens up a whole host of topics. We find this phrase, or the phrase *the last time(s)* in 2Tim. 3:1 Heb. 1:2 James 5:3 I Peter 1:5, 20 II Peter 3:3 1John 2:18 Jude 18. Without going into detail, Old Testament believers, who did not know that there were be such a thing as an assembly of Jews and gentiles, considered the time of the Messiah to be the last times. Our Lord’s incarnation and His return over the tribulation are properly the last times. Also during that time, there will be the restoration of Israel after, apparently, great judgment and humiliation. However, sandwiched in between the first and second advent is the Church Age. Even if the Church Age lasts for ten millenniums, because it is sandwiched between these two advents, which together make up *the last times*, the Church Age becomes a part of those *last times*. There is actually a trigonometric theorem used in calculus which is very similar to this.²⁶² If you read through those passages, you will see that such an interpretation is easily sustained (you may also note the irony that Peter spoke more of the last times than any other Apostle, yet it was to Saint John that the revelation of the last days was given).

Peter does not attribute these words to Joel, but to God. This is part of the **Doctrine of Inspiration**.²⁶³ However, *said* is not in the aorist tense (which generally denotes past time) but in the present active indicative. God is speaking to the Jews in this crowd right now and He keeps on speaking to them.

If you are a charismatic, and you often quote Joel in order to support the gift of tongues and prophecy, you may want to examine what Joel said more carefully. **Then Jehovah will be passionate about His land and He will have compassion for His people. And Jehovah will answer and say to His people, “Listen, I am going to send you grain, new wine and oil. And you will be satisfied with them, and I will never again make you a reproach among the nations. And I will remove the northern army far from you and I will drive it into a parched and desolate land. And its vanguard into the eastern sea and its rear guard into the western sea and its stench will arise and its foul smell will come up for it has done great things.” Do not fear, O land, rejoice and be glad, for Jehovah has done great things. Do not fear, beasts of the field, for the pastures of the desert-wilderness have turned green, for the tree has borne its fruit and the fig tree and the vine had yielded in full. So rejoice, O sons of Zion, and be glad in Jehovah your God, for He has given you the early rain for vindication and He has poured down for you the rain, the early and the latter rain as before. And the threshing floors will be full of grain and the vats will overflow with the new wine and oil.** “Then I will make up to you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the creeping

²⁶² Given three functions f , g and h ; if $f(x) \leq g(x) \leq h(x)$ over any particular interval; and if the Limit of $f(x) = \text{Limit of } h(x)$ as they approach any particular value within this interval, then, because $g(x)$ is squeezed in between them, $g(x)$ approaches the same limit.

²⁶³ Found in the introduction of Judges 18.

locust, the stripping locus, and the gnawing locus. My great army which I sent among you. **And you will have plenty to eat and you will be satisfied. And you will praise the name of Jehovah your God Who has dealt wondrously with you. Then My people will never be put to shame. Thus you will know that I am in the midst of Israel and that I am Jehovah your God and there is no other. And My people will never be put to shame.** And it will come to pass **after this** that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy and your old men will dream dreams and your young men will see visions.” (Joel 2:18–28). Has Israel suddenly become incredibly prosperous and has Israel turned toward their true God? Perhaps I missed this in the news as of late. It is clear from **any** English version that the pouring out of God’s Spirit in the last times would occur when God has restored and prospered Israel and Israel has turned toward God.

I hesitate to bring this up, but there is a certain brand of believers (and this is cross-denominational) who hold to what is called covenant theology. Briefly, this is a doctrine that holds that Israel has been spiritualized and has become the church. That is, God’s promises and dealings with Israel in the past have been transferred over to the church and, insofar as God is concerned, there are no more Israelites and there is no more Israel; furthermore, they, according to covenant theology, are a non-issue since the book of Acts throughout eternity. All of God’s promises to Israel can be considered null and void insofar as Israel is concerned and that these promises will be given to the church in sort of a spiritualized form. Some hold that there never was really an Israel but that the church began in Abraham’s tent. This is the sort of theology that arises when men study the New Testament and simply read quickly through the Old. No one can carefully examine God’s covenant to Israel and ever think that He has cast aside Israel as a nation forever. Continually throughout Old Testament, God warns that Israel will leave Him and pursue other gods and that, in the end times, they will return to Him. We are not in the end times and Israel has not yet returned to God—but listen to me carefully, God chose the Jew long before He chose you and me; and God has not forsaken Israel, Israel has forsaken God. Reread that passage from Joel. Israel will return to Jehovah and Jehovah to Israel. Our world is filled with Jews in every nation, as this is what God promised would happen as far back as 1440 B.C. (Lev. 26:33). The fact that Israel rejected her God and rejected her Savior and that God scattered her throughout all the nations of the earth—this is no surprise to anyone who has read the Old Testament. Nor should any believer be surprised when God returns to the nation Israel and prospers her in the Millennium. Obviously, this is a whole other subject.

Covenant theology is blasphemous and ignores the Old Testament. The true understanding of God’s plan is found in dispensational theology; and everyone, including covenant theologians, are dispensationalists to some degree. If you understand that at one time, man offered God animal sacrifices and that such sacrifices are no longer necessary, then you are a dispensationalist. You believe that God had one plan at one time for one people and that this plan changed somewhat. In 3000 B.C., there was no nation Israel; there was no Abraham—does this mean that God had no plan for the people at that time? Certainly not. God saw to it that His Word was recorded and He had a relationship to man through the death of Christ Jesus even then. With the birth of Abraham, and more accurately, with the leadership of the people of Israel under Moses, we have a great change in God’s program—a change which is verified by signs and wonders and miracles.

I was first exposed to the dispensational teaching in, of all places, a charismatic book store. However, I have since had conversations with two charismatics who were adamant about covenant theology as being the accurate understanding of God’s program. The reason for this, is that they must take passages like this one from Joel 2 and spiritualize Israel so that, if we don’t look too closely, we interpret this as God giving great blessing to the church and then pouring out His Spirit on the church as the latter rain. The result is that almost all of this passage must be *spiritualized* and parts of it ignored (e.g., “**I will never again make you a reproach among the nations, but I will remove the northern [army] far from you.**”) or *spiritualized* out of recognition. What I mean is that this symbolizes that, that symbolizes something else, and the result is that the passage has been so far removed from what any normal person would read that it loses all of its meaning and impact. What such an approach does allow is for anyone to come along and interpret a passage in almost any way that they would like. This turns passages where God’s passion toward Israel is so evident and overpowering into almost meaningless devotions to whomever reads it. The more symbolizing and spiritualizing that is done, the less important becomes God’s Word. However, as I said, one of the attacks of the charismatic movement is against God’s Word—it does not matter how much lip service they give to the Bible; if they don’t like what the Bible says, they spiritualize it. If the Bible contradicts their experience, then they reinterpret the Bible. If someone puts too much emphasis upon the Bible, then they

emphasize that God just said *this* to them yesterday; or they will glibly quote, “**The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.**” (2Cor. 3:6), completely ignoring its context.

What is most important for us to ascertain is just exactly what this passage means. You do not get to quote this verse, associate it loosely with Pentecost and a Holy Ghost revival and then go on your merry way. We need to know why Peter quoted this passage (and please note that he does not stop with this verse). If all Peter wanted to get across is that this day of Pentecost was a Holy Ghost revival, then he would have stopped quoting Joel at this point. The audience is made up of over 3000 religious Jews. They have read much of the Old Testament or they have had it read to them. They know the verse and they know the time period that Peter is talking about. Some rejected the Messiah because they did not expect Him to come and die on the cross. They expected their Messiah to deliver Israel from the domination of Rome. Now, before we get into the interpretation of all this, let’s examine the next verse.

“ ‘**And upon the male slaves of Mine and upon the female slaves of Mine in the days those, I will pour out from the Spirit of Mine and they will prophesy.**

Acts
2:18

“ ‘**And, in those days, upon My male servants and upon My female servants, I will pour out from My Spirit and they will prophesy.**

“ ‘**And in those days, I will pour out My Spirit upon My male and My female servants, and they will prophesy.**

This verse continues in the same vein as the previous verse; and, if Peter was indicating that this was a simple fulfillment of what Joel prophesied, then this would be the end of his quotation for Joel. You will note that Peter adds the last phrase by way of interpretation. It is not found in the passage that he is quoting.

In the next verse, it will be obvious that Peter is not referring to that day at Pentecost as a fulfillment of Joel 2; it is a similar situation. The Jews believed in what Joel wrote; therefore, what they were hearing and seeing at Pentecost should not be difficult to believe. What we do not have here or in Joel 2 is any indication at all that the various sign gifts will suddenly re-emerge in the end times. However, what we can be certain of is that false prophets and lying wonders will increase as we move closer to the end times (Matt 7:22–23 24:11, 24 2Thess. 2:9–12).

“ ‘**And I will give wonders in the heaven above and signs upon the earth below—blood and fire and vapor of smoke.**

Acts
2:19

“ ‘**And I will give wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth beneath—blood and fire and vapor of smoke.**

“ ‘**And I will give wonders in the heavens above as well as signs on the earth below—blood and fire and great columns of smoke.**

Peter appears to be quoting the Septuagint (the Septuagint and the Hebrew Bible do not appear to be very different in this passage. But Peter adds a word—*signs*. When Paul discusses the gift of tongues, he will call them *signs* as well. Peter is speaking by means of God the Holy Spirit and this is recorded as Scripture, so we know that the addition of these few words is bona fide.

Now, you need to stop and ask yourself—do Peter and his audience now see blood and fire and columns of smoke? Is this why Peter is quoting this passage?

“ ‘**The sun will be changed into darkness and the moon into blood before the coming the Day of [the] Lord—the great and glorious [day].**

Acts
2:20

“ ‘**The sun will be changed into darkness and the moon into blood before the coming of the great and glorious Day of the Lord.**

“ ‘And the sun will be made dark, and the moon will appear blood red prior to the coming of that great and glorious Day of the Lord.

Peter continues to quote the book of Joel, but there is no indication that the sun had gone dark or the moon had become red as blood. During the three hours of judgement of our Lord on the cross—the sun was made dark then.

“ ‘And it will be, all who call the name of [the] Lord will be saved.’

Acts
2:21

“ ‘And it will be [that] all who call the name of the Lord will be saved.’

“ ‘And it will come to pass that all those who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.’

It is in this verse that we see why Peter was quoting all of Joel. He was going somewhere with that. He was not saying that what Joel said was being fulfilled. Those in his hearing did believe in the Day of the Lord. They did believe that God would cause wonders to occur in the sky and that He would cause there to be signs on the earth below. And, Peter’s first point: his listeners believed that God would, at some time, pour out His Spirit upon all flesh—therefore, what they observed—the Apostles speaking their own dialects and declaring the marvelous works of God—this is not unheard of. It is in Scripture. Therefore, if the listeners believe Scripture, then the pouring out here of the Holy Spirit and giving them the sign of speaking in their own dialect is reasonable. Now, at best, Pentecost was a partial fulfillment of Joel. The Holy Spirit was not poured out upon all flesh nor did it have the same reaction which Joel described. The sun has been turned to darkness during the crucifixion.

The question that you should be asking yourself is, *still—why did Peter quote all of this passage?* Two (and possibly three) reasons: (1) what was being observed by the audience at Pentecost with the sign of the gift of tongues—that was simply not that wild of an occurrence. In Scripture, which they believed in, there were much wilder things that would occur. Peter, in quoting these, reveals that what has occurred is minor league compared to what will occur. (2) Here is a rather obscure reason why Peter quoted this verse: the Apostles believed the Jesus would return in their lifetimes. They saw themselves as living in the last days. Therefore, Peter may have been thinking that he was in the last days and that these things would occur. Now, note very carefully—Peter nowhere says that these things were about to occur, as he is speaking under the control of God the Holy Spirit. But he may have expected that the signs of wonders of that passage were about to be fulfilled any day. (3) Finally, this passage of Joel’s led Peter right into the point of his message: **Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.**

Now let’s go back to the phrase *in the last days*: one can give two different interpretations to this phrase, and either one will be fine for us with respect to this study. (1) *The last days* in their entirety were future from Peter’s speaking; or, (2) *the last days* began to be fulfilled with our Lord upon the cross, with the parenthetical Church Age. Although I believe the latter to be the correct interpretation, taking either does not do damage to our interpretation of Peter’s quotation of Joel.

Peter now confirms that the credit card of the Messiah were the signs and miracles which our Lord performed:

“Men, Israelites, hear the words these: Jesus the Nazarene, a Man from the God, having been attested to you by powers and wonders and signs, which [were] performed by Him, the God in a midst of your, just as also yourselves, you know this one by having been determined purpose and foreknowledge of the God delivered up taking by hands, lawless, nailing, you killed Him.”

Acts
2:22–23

Men, Israelites, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man demonstrated by God to you by powers and wonders and signs which were performed by Him—the God in your midst, just as also, you yourselves know this One by a predetermined purpose and foreknowledge of God, was delivered up, taken by lawless hands, nailing [Him to a cross], you killed Him.”

“Men of Israel, listen carefully to these words: this Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God to you by great powers and wonders and signs which He performed—God in your midst—just as you yourselves also know that this one was delivered up—taken by lawless hands according to a predetermined purpose and the foreknowledge of God, and then He was nailed to the cross—you killed Him.”

We will look at just a few translations:

Interlinear idiomatic	Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man having been attested by God to you by miracles and wonders and signs which God performed by Him in your midst just as you yourselves also know, this <i>One</i> delivered up by the defined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you took by lawless hands nailing <i>Him to a cross</i> you killed <i>Him</i> .
NASB	“Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— this <i>Man</i> , delivered up by the predetermined plan and the foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of Godless men and put <i>Him</i> to death.”
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	‘Men, Israelites! hear these words, Jesus the Nazarene, a man approved of God among you by might works, and wonders, and signs, that God did through him in the midst of you, according as also ye yourselves have known; this one, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, being given out, having taken by lawless hands, having crucified—ye did slay;...’

After *a man*, we have ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ. The preposition ἀπό (ἀπό) [pronounced *aw-PO*], which means *from, away from, by*. Strong’s #575. Then we have *the God*. This phrase is followed by (and, in some editions, preceded by) the perfect passive participle of ἀποδείκνυμι (ἀποδείκνυμι) [pronounced *ap-od-IKE-noo-mee*], which means *to show, to demonstrate, to exhibit*; in the perfect passive participle, it means *approved, confirmed*. Strong’s #584. We would expect this verb to precede *from the God*, which it does in some manuscripts. The applicable rule of textual criticism is that we take the rendering which makes the least sense, unless we have a specific reason why a copyist made the error. However, we will puppy out here, and simply go with the accepted *approved by God* or *demonstrated by God*. This is followed by the preposition εἰς (εἰς) [pronounced *ICE*], which means *into, to, toward*. Strong’s #1519. This gives us: *...a man confirmed by God to you [all]*.

Pretty much, all that we were after here is the means by which Jesus was approved (we can argue at a later time whether this should be *Jesus, a man from God, attested to you* or *Jesus, a man approved by the God to you*. What we are after for this study is the means by which He was *approved, attested, demonstrated, confirmed*. He was confirmed by *powers and wonders and signs*. This is how our Lord stood out from every other man. God chose not to speak to Israel for 400 years; He performed no mighty works or signs in Israel for 400 years. Then, when our Lord came on the scene, God gave Him confirmation via the signs and wonders which He performed in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now many people go off the deep end with these *powers, signs and wonders* and point out John 14:12, where Jesus tells His disciples: **“Certainly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father.”** The key word here is *works*, which is ἐργον (ἔργον) [pronounced *ER-gon*], which means *works*. Strong’s #2041. This is not the word for *powers, signs* or *wonders*. It is ironic. Charismatics focus in on the spectacular, although they rarely see anything which is all that spectacular. Jesus raised from the dead; he returned a withered hand to new again; he cured lepers; people went through unmistakable visual changes. The closest that we can come to this is by the special effects of a movie. We don’t see anything like this occurring on a regular basis anywhere in any charismatic church. Besides which, these are relatively unimportant works, other than to confirm the person of Christ. When He left this earth, suffering continued; in fact, suffering, pain and disease continue, despite all of the medical advances that we have—and it all continues despite the increased number of charismatics. What is far more important than the miracles which

our Lord performed is regeneration. The response to our Lord was quite mixed—He came to His Own people and His Own people rejected Him. Even the early church, although it had its moments (the Day of Pentecost being one of those moments), began with a relatively small following of believers who were easily corrupted or led astray. However, what we have today is sometimes tremendous responses to evangelists. I like using Billy Graham as an example—he speaks to millions upon millions of people and huge numbers respond to the gospel as he presents it. This is a great work and this is the power of the Holy Spirit working in him. The regeneration of one human soul is worth a million healings. Just as Paul would rather speak 5 words that made sense in a church, rather than 10,000 in a foreign language; so we would rather see 5 souls come to Christ rather than 10,000 healings. You must have the proper perspective and emphasis. Powers, signs and wonders were simply done to establish Who our Lord was—they were means to an end. If you focus on the miracle, you lose sight of what is important.

<Return to Page One>

“This the Jesus raised the God, of Whom all we are witnesses, to the right hand, therefore, of the God, having been exalted; and the promise of the Holy Spirit, having been received from the Father. He poured out this the [signs] now you see and hear.”

Acts
2:32–33

“This Jesus, God raised up, of Whom we are all witness, therefore, having been exalted to the right hand of the God. Furthermore, the promise of the Holy Spirit, having been received from the Father—He poured out this [that] you now see and hear.”

This is the Jesus Whom God has raised from the dead—and we are witnesses to this raising from the dead, and therefore, He was also exalted to the right hand of God. Furthermore, He fulfilled His promise of the Holy Spirit, Whom we have received from the Father. He poured out these signs that you now see and hear.”

What Peter does in this verse is finish answering the question from v. 12, *what does all this mean?* What they see, which is not altogether clear; however, what they heard was this sound like a tornado, which gathered them to the disciples, and then they heard the Apostles speaking to them in their own dialects. Peter gives them the gospel and then confirms that all that they see and hear is a result of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. Now we will jump ahead to the final words of Peter, after giving the crowd some Old Testament background:

“Assuredly, therefore, let know all the house of Israel that both Lord and Christ Him the God made this the Jesus whom you crucified.”

Acts
2:36

“Assuredly, therefore, let all the house of Israel know that God made Him both Lord and Messiah—this Jesus whom you crucified!”

“All the house of Israel should know, therefore, that without a doubt, this Jesus, whom you crucified—God made Him both Lord and Messiah [Christ].”

For the previous verses, Peter has been quoting from the Old Testament, giving the audience Scripture about the Messiah Who was to come. And then he identifies the Messiah as Jesus, the One whom the Jews crucified (Peter uses the 2nd person plural, which refers to those who are present and listening to him).

Then, hearing [this], they were pierced in heart, and they said to the Peter and the remaining Apostles, “What will we do, men and brothers?”

Acts
2:37

Then, hearing this, they were pieced in [their] heart, so they said to Peter and the rest of the Apostles, “What will we do, men and brothers?”

Upon hearing this, their hearts were deeply moved and they cried out to Peter and the other Apostles, “What should we do, men and brothers?”

in this verse, we have the aorist passive indicative of *katanússō* (κατανύσσω) [pronounced *kaht-an-OO-soh*], which means *to pierce through*. Metaphorically, it means *to be greatly pained or deeply moved*. It is only found here and in Psalm 109:16 in the Septuagint. Strong’s #2660.

In this verse and in v. 41, we see how Peter does works which are even great than our Lord’s, as he is equipped with the Holy Spirit. Peter, having only use the gift of foreign languages to get the attention of those present, now teaches them what is in the Old Testament and they are convicted of the Holy Spirit and 3000 of them will respond with positive volition to the gospel. Although Jesus spoke to crowds that large, He never had a response like that which has been recorded in any of the gospels.

Then Peter said face to face with them, “Change your mind and be baptized each of you upon the name of Jesus Christ for a standing away from sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, for to you is the promise and to the children of yours and for all those far away, as many as will call Lord the God of ours.”

Acts
2:38–39

Then Peter said to them, “Change your mind and be baptized each [one] of you on the name of Jesus Christ for the freedom from sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, for the promise is to you and to your children, and to those [who are] afar off—as many as will call to the Lord, our God.”

Then Peter said, facing them, “Change your minds and be baptized, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for remission from your sins, and then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, for this promise is both to you and to your children, as well as to those who are afar off—it is to those who will call out to the Lord, our God.”

The first verb that Peter uses is the 2nd person plural, aorist active imperative of *metanoéō* means *to change one’s thinking, to change one’s mind*. This is the word that we find repeatedly as a part of salvation. The key is whatever it is that we are to change our minds about, which is generally found in context. However, when we do not have an obvious target, then it means to either *change one’s mind about Jesus Christ*. Strong’s #3340. Peter, in the previous verses, has not been talking about *sins*; so many people want you to *repent* of your sins, meaning they want you to feel bad about what you have done. This is not what Peter is saying. This word simply means *to change your mind*. The context tells us about what their minds should be changed. Peter, from vv. 22–36 has spoken of the Messiah and has told these men, some of whom were complicit in the crucifixion of Christ Jesus, that the man they crucified was the Messiah sent from God to them. They had certain ideas about Who and What the Messiah was, and they had certain ideas about Who and What Jesus was—Peter tells them to change their minds. Now, did they feel badly? Certainly, they were complicit in the crucifixion of the Lord of Glory (1Cor. 2:8). Were they saved because they felt badly about that? Absolutely not! They were saved because they changed their thinking concerning the Lord of Glory.

What they would receive is the *áphesis* (ἄφεσις) [pronounced *AWF-ess-iss*], which means *forgiveness, remission, freedom*. Its verb cognate means *to stand away from, to cause to stand away from, to release from*. Strong’s #859. They are both freed from and stood at a distance from their sins. With this remission of sins, they would also receive the promise of the Holy Spirit. These promises are to those who call out to the Lord, Who is their God.

Now, note carefully from here until the end of the chapter, there is not a word about these converts having a charismatic moment. There is no speaking of tongues since the beginning of this service. Now, I want you to notice that, after all of this has occurred, and 3000 souls were added to the church that day (Acts 2:41), and there is nothing said about the Holy Spirit being given a few days or a few weeks after they believed; there is nothing said

about these 3000 converts speaking in tongues. You would think that if 3000 people began speaking in tongues that Luke might have mentioned that little fact.

Then they were continuing in the teaching of the Apostles and in the fellowship and in the breaking of the bread and in the prayers. Then came in every soul fear, and many wonders and signs by the Apostles were being done.

Acts
2:42–43

Then they continued in the teaching of the Apostles and in the fellowship and in the breaking of the bread and in the prayers. Then fear came to every soul, and the Apostles performed many signs and wonders.

Then they continued in the teaching of the Apostles, as well as in their fellowship, the breaking of the bread and in the prayers. And a sense of awe came upon all of them as the Apostles performed many signs and wonders.

We do not have the converts of the Apostles doing anything other than being in awe of the Apostles. It was the Apostles who performed the signs and the wonders.

What charismatics do is they see what they want to see and ignore what they would like to ignore when it comes to Scripture. Even though the three key, differentiating doctrines of the charismatic are never taught in the epistles, and even though these three fundamental, differentiating doctrines are not found consistently in the book of Acts, they take the few places where they are possibly found and build their entire theology upon these places. Some small groups have done the same with the next verse. In the next verse, which we will not study, all of the Apostles and their converts held all their worldly possessions in common, sharing with one another as they had need. They often sold their property and more expensive possessions. Now, there are some cults which do this, and one would think that a charismatic church, which takes its fundamental differentiating doctrines from the book of Acts, would also take v. 44 to heart as well.

Now, I do not have to go too far afield of our topic, which is the gift of tongues. We will leave Peter here, speaking to this crowd. Now, I want you to notice the importance of the miraculous gifts: they gave the speaker some credibility. Thieme always referred to the sign gifts as the credit cards of the Apostles. Our Lord used the gifts of healing and miracles in the same way. He could have, with a wave of His hand (had he wanted to be that demonstrative), removed illness from the earth, not just then, but forever more.²⁶⁴ This was not why He came to this earth. Our Lord cured illness because this gave Him an audience. They realized that this was not just some ordinary man. Now, there are a lot of believers who believe in the sign gifts, such as the gift of healing—and they believe that people have and demonstrate these gifts today. Not one of these healers ever gets off of his butt and walks into a hospital and begins healing person after person, giving them the gospel as he goes. They might blame it on that it is not God's will, that God may not want Charlie Brown healed, that Charlie Brown may not have enough faith to be healed—whatever kind of crap they want to feed you—even though our Lord never gave excuses like these (nor did the Apostles). And since I have mentioned this, although this is not the focus of our study, let me explain what the gift of healing was all about. God was about to make a major change in His program. He had, for centuries, worked through the nation Israel. He came to their nation and their nation alone, and for centuries, Jehovah God was the God of Israel, and there was no other God. Israel was responsible for writing and preserving Scripture, and for evangelization (although, most people actually came to them, rather than the other way around). Now, this was about to change. God was about to turn to the Gentiles. There was going to be a radical change in organization. God, any time there is a radical change in His plan, always makes this known with signs and wonders. These signs and wonders are given by His spokesmen; these signs and wonders give credibility to what his spokesmen have to say. Once their authority is firmly established, the sign gifts are pulled. When Timothy has

²⁶⁴ Murrell explains that Jesus was unable to heal just *anyone*, and backs this up with John 5:19–21 (is it a surprise that the context of that verse has **nothing** to do with healing?). Murrell also says that anyone who claims to be able to be able to heal anyone is a charlatan (turning the tables here). As if someone would make that claim (you don't know how badly I wanted to just say *as if*). When Jesus healed—even when Paul healed and performed miracles—there seems to be very little that ever stood in their ways (read Acts 19:11–12, for instance). All the considerations and excuses that Murrell makes on pp. 50–52 mean that if the gift of healing is still around today, it is pretty damned puny by comparison to the first century.

a continuous upset stomach, Paul doesn't visit him, lay hands on him, and heal him. He suggests that he take a little wine for his stomach's sake (1Tim. 5:23). When Trophimus took ill in Miletus, Paul didn't heal him—Paul left him there (2Tim. 4:15). Today, no pastor ever rests his authority upon some bogus sign gift. His authority rests firmly upon the Word of God. When Paul writes to Timothy and to Titus, pastors that he had trained, he gives them no advice or guidance concerning their sign gifts (which they did not possess)—Paul's emphasis in these epistles is often the Word of God (1Tim. 2:7 4:1, 6, 13, 16 6:3 2Tim. 3:14–17 4:2–4 Titus 2:7–8, 11–15).

Now, how does the charismatic explain these things away? Easily, the gift of healing in the Bible is different than the gift of healing and the promise of healing for the church. Healing today is part of the atonement—the sanctification of the body. Healing in the Bible was mostly a sign gift. People in the Bible with the gift healed at will; they walked up to a blind man, a man lame from birth, and, apart from any faith or lack of faith on the sick person, they healed the man. Contrast this with the healings found in charismatic churches, some which appear to be miraculous, but most of which appear to be spurious. Sometimes God heals, sometimes He doesn't. Sometimes it doesn't really appear to be all that miraculous. Sometimes it seems to take, but then it doesn't take. So, all the charismatic has to do is put a slightly different spin on the gift, just as they have done with the gift of tongues. It was used for this purpose then; it is used for this slightly different purpose now. You want to know the real problem? The real problem is that the doctrine of the charismatic does not stand up to careful Biblical exegesis—so they have to fudge their doctrine just enough so that they have one foot in the Bible and one foot in experience. You know, I don't care what incredible, miraculous healings you have observed; I don't care if you witnessed actual, almost instantaneous, physical changes in a person's burned skin; and I don't care if someone came and spoke in tongues with a hundred different known languages and then spoke in a hundred different angelic languages, and you and everyone else felt really holy and spiritual and your life was completely changed for the better ever since. Do you know that is not the issue? Not even a little? The issue is, what does God's Word say?

[<Return to Page One>](#)

76. A great deal is made out of the sign gifts of our Lord and of the Apostles of the first century, as well they should be. These sign gifts were essential to the identifying Jesus as the Christ and they were absolutely necessary to the Apostles to establish their authority.
- a. First of all, the sign gifts were the credentials of the Messiah. No one was certain exactly what to look for when Jesus came in the flesh. What most people expected was a strong, political leader, like Moses, who would successfully lead the Jews in revolt against the Romans, just as Moses led the Jews out of Egypt. And, in part, they were correct in their expectations. It is true that our Lord will return at the end of the tribulation and destroy huge populations of those who are antagonistic toward the Jew. However, no one expected someone like Jesus (and there was a reason for that, by the way). However, when His office was questioned by one who believed (John the Baptizer), Jesus fell back on His sign gifts as proof of Who He was. **Now when John in prison heard of the works of the Messiah, he sent word by one of his disciples, and said to Him, "Are You the One Who Has Come, or should we look for another?" And Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John the things which you hear and see. The blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is he who keeps from stumbling over Me."** (Matt. 11:1–6 Isa. 35:5–6 61:1). The proof of Who Jesus was rested upon His miracles which He performed here on earth.
 - b. These sign gifts were also the credentials of an Apostle. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: **The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles** (2Cor. 12:11; see also Rom. 15:19). The writer of Hebrews also testifies as to the importance of the sign gifts in establishing the authority of the apostles: **For how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, God also bearing them witness with both signs and wonders and by various miracles and by the gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will** (Heb. 2:3–4). On that great day of Pentecost, the reason that Peter could stand up and speak to all the religious Jews who had gathered in Jerusalem was the fact that they had demonstrated the fact that they could communicate to the assembled Jews in their native gentile languages. In the first half or so of the book of Acts, we have the Apostles continually gaining an audience

via signs and wonders. However, the true work was when they reasoned from the Scriptures with those who would listen (Acts 13:46 17:2, 10–11, 17, 22–32 18:24–26 19:8).²⁶⁵ McGee wrote: *If you can find an apostle living today then you will find signs. But there are no apostles living today—the sign gifts died out with the apostles.*²⁶⁶

- c. Interestingly enough, after Stephen was stoned, there are no more signs or miracles performed in Jerusalem (at least, none are recorded). This act of stoning Stephen, even though he had given them the gospel and tied it carefully to the Old Testament, which they knew, indicated that Jerusalem no longer had any positive volition, so signs and wonders would be wasted there.
- d. Apart from the gift of tongues, we do not find in the New Testament is the sign gifts being used by the average believer. The sign gifts—the gifts of miracles and healings—were demonstrated in Scripture by Apostles and those closely associated with Apostles. Although Paul mentions the gift of healing in 1Corinthians, he does not give any guidelines for the use of the gift of healing in the church (nor do Peter or James or John). That groups of people run around from person to person to lay their hands on them to heal them during a service—we don't find that in the book of Acts nor in any of the epistles. People coming forward in a service to be healed—this is not recorded in Scripture. James mentions prayer by the elders for those who are sick (which should be practiced), but not the gift of healing.
- e. Another purpose of the sign gifts was to reach heathen gentiles. Now, I could allow for, as could many other people, the sudden use of the gift of foreign languages on the mission field when there is no other way to reach a people. I don't know that it has occurred, but I could accept that it is possible (just as I believe in divine healing, without believing in divine healers). That Paul performed signs and wonders in order to reach the gentile unbeliever is evident not only in the book of Acts, but by his own personal testimony. **For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit, so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ** (Rom. 15:18–19).
- f. It is important to note that in the more civilized world, it was the Jew who sought for signs and the Greek who sought wisdom (1Cor. 1:22). When the Jews, as a whole, rejected Jesus Christ, despite the sign gifts, the sign gifts were removed. When the gentiles and the civilized Greeks responded with positive volition toward the gospel, the authority of the Apostles was established, and the sign gifts were removed.
- g. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are mentioned in two places, primarily. In 1Cor. 12:8–10, we have a listing of the gifts of the Holy Spirit: *the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, production of miracles, prophecy, distinguishing of spirits, various languages, and the interpretation of languages* (see also 1Cor. 12:28–29). This was written around 55 A.D., during his third missionary journey. At this time, his authority had begun to be established and you will note fewer and fewer signs and miracles at this point (this is around Acts 19). Paul, four or five years later, writes to the Ephesians gives another listing of spiritual gifts in Eph. 4:11: *Apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers.*²⁶⁷ Do you notice the difference between the two passages? There is no mention of the sign gifts in Ephesians. Not even one sign gift is mentioned! Certainly, this is not a complete listing of all the spiritual gifts in either place (there is no complete listing of spiritual gifts, as new ones are given as time moves on). However, in 1Cor. 12, we have nearly a half-dozen sign gifts and gifts which really require no real preparation; and, a few years later, the gifts mentioned center on the communication of God's Word, and most require preparation. You see, the sign gifts established the authority of the Apostles; the Apostles use this authority to communicate the mystery doctrine of the Church Age. Once their authority is firmly established and once the epistles of Paul and the others begin to go into circulation, then there is no longer a need for the sign gifts. That which is incomplete and imperfect are replaced by that which is perfect.
- h. Let me add one more passage, written by Peter in 65 A.D.: **But false prophets also arose among the people [i.e., the Jews], just as there will also be false teachers among you [Jewish and Gentile believers of the New Testament], who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master Who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves** (1 Peter 2:1). Why do we have *false prophets* mentioned in connection with Old Testament believers and false teachers mentioned in conjunction with

²⁶⁵ This is merely a handful of the Scriptures which could have been cited.

²⁶⁶ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part I*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 14.

²⁶⁷ This should be hyphenated here, as per the Granville Sharp rule.

New Testament believers? Simplest explanation in the world. At the time that Peter wrote, there were no more men with the gift of prophecy (apart from the remaining Apostles). The Old Testament gift which was counterfeited was that of prophecy; the corresponding New Testament gift which is counterfeited is that of teaching. When the gift of teaching supplanted the gift of prophecy in the first century, then the counterfeit gifts correspondingly changed. When the common gift of instruction in the New Testament became the gift of teaching, then Satan sought to counterfeit this gift instead.

- i. Some charismatics point to Heb. 13:8, and say that since **Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, and forever**, that we can therefore conclude that we will have miracles, signs, wonders, healings and tongues etc. nonstop, throughout eternity. That is just plain goofy. This refers to the essence of Jesus Christ—this refers to His deity. His human body progressed from that of a baby, to a young man, to an adult; He was taken to the cross and executed; He took upon Himself our sins one time for all; He died and was resurrected. These are actual changes in Jesus with respect to His humanity. Now even if you wrongly believe that dispensationalism is a heresy, you still recognize that prior to Abraham and Moses, there was no nation Israel; then there was, and that God worked through that nation; then there was this body of believers known as the Church and the nation Israel disappeared for centuries from history—these are obvious, basic changes which took place in the plan of God. This does not mean that He is not the same **yesterday, today and forever**. For the first 30 or so years of the life of the humanity of our Lord, He did not perform any miracles; He did not carry on a public ministry—then for three years, He did; and now He is no longer on this earth in bodily form. This does not contradict Heb. 13:8. It is His essence, His deity which the writer of Hebrews is speaking—not His humanity or His program here on earth. God intended for His Word to be handled by professionals—those men with the gift of pastor teacher. This verse cannot be misapplied to mean that the gift of tongues is a part of Christianity today. Tongues were not used prior to Pentecost; we know that they will cease, even though we may disagree when (1Cor. 13:8); so you cannot use a verse like Heb. 13:8 to justify speaking in tongues today. Furthermore, the tongues at Pentecost are way different from the tongues heard at charismatic churches today (and the *miracles* and *healings* which occur today are of a much lower quality than those performed in the time of our Lord). God did not intend for amateurs to take verses like this way out of context and misapply and misinterpret them.²⁶⁸
- j. A verse that many charismatics will quote²⁶⁹ is John 14:12: **“Certainly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do as well; and greater than these he will do, because I go to the Father.”** And, properly, this is because Jesus would send the Holy Spirit upon coming to the Father. Charismatics want these to be the spectacular miracles and signs of our Lord. However, by taking this position, they shoot themselves in the foot in two ways:
 - i. The miracles and signs and wonders performed by Jesus were the least important of His great works. His work on the cross cannot be paralleled by anything that we do. However, His evangelism and His teaching of the Word of God, these two things, done as a man on behalf of other men—this is what is important. When a charismatic emphasizes the signs and miracles, he immediately shows that he is confused about what is important and what is not.
 - ii. Secondly, no charismatic group or individual has performed such incredible miracles as changing water into wine; feeding 5000 and then feeding 4000 with a few loaves of bread and a few fishes; curing men of illnesses immediately and completely that even modern science could not cure; raising a man from the dead who had been in the grave for four days to the point of putrefaction. No charismatic can claim a miracle even a tenth as impressive as any of these. So if they want to identify these greater works with miracles, then it is obvious that our Lord was not speaking about them.
 - iii. Chantry clarifies this verse: *No work of Jesus while he was upon earth brought 3,000 souls to spiritual birth by one sermon. After all has been said, is not the radical change of a soul and the rescue of a man from everlasting torment greater than the babbling of voices and the restoration of bodily health? Alas, Pentecostals have diverted our attention from the greater things to the lesser!*²⁷⁰ Let me add, the rushing wind of the Holy Spirit brought those men to the disciples; the gift

²⁶⁸ Don't get me started when it comes to home Bible studies and sharing sessions.

²⁶⁹ Like Jehovah's Witnesses, they often comb the Scriptures for anything which may be taken as support for their heresy.

²⁷⁰ Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles*; ©1973 by The Banner of Truth Trust, p. 66.

of tongues got their attention and placed them under judgement; but it was the Word of God as spoken by Peter to which they listened and by which were saved.

- iv. MacArthur gives us a great conclusion, quoting firstly, charismatic Jerry Horner, who is an associate professor of biblical literature at Oral Roberts University: [Horner:] *“Who in the world would want a God who has lost all of His zip? Could God do one thing in one century but not in another century?...Has God lost all of His power?” Charismatic Russell Bixler concludes that anyone denying the normality of apostolic-style miracles today has a “faith which gives no room to a Jesus Christ who is the same yesterday and today and for ever. They are quite comfortable with a distant God who hasn’t done anything significant in 2,000 years.” Has God lost his zip? Has he done nothing significant in two thousand years/ That’s hardly the case. All around us we see evidence of God’s marvelous work in the transforming new birth in the lives of millions around the world who trust Christ; in daily answers to prayer; in the providential matching of people and resources to bring glory to himself; in the resilience of his church, which has survived ruthless persecution and various internal assaults through the centuries and continues to do so today. But God has not placed spokesmen with miracles-working power in the church today. You can be sure that if he did, they wouldn’t resemble charismatic miracle workers such as those we see on television or on the tent-meeting circuit. Why would God authenticate bad theology? Why would he give miracle power to people who teach heresy? Yet every movement today that highlights miracles as a central theme is tainted with shoddy theology, confused and inconsistent doctrine, outright heresy, or a combination of these.²⁷¹ After all, charismatics certainly do not all agree with the Bible nor do they agree with each other. Can God be giving His assent to that inconsistency and to those who tout their own personal experiences over His Word?*
- k. The basic problem is perception which has been clouded by a slipshod examination of Scripture. There are some who know a few passages of Scripture here and there, and know very little about those passages. Miracles and signs are not scattered haphazardly nor are they distributed evenly throughout Scripture. They are found during specific points of time for specific purposes. Moses would take the Israelites out of Egypt into the Land of Promise (and don’t think they wanted to go, necessarily). The signs which were performed through Moses were as much for the Israelites as they were for the Egyptians. At no other time has God reached into a nation and taken out a nation separated unto Him. For the greater portion of the 38½ years in the desert, there were no miracles of any kind. In fact, Moses was so despondent over that, that he wrote a psalm disparaging the lack of movement in their lives (Psalm 90). In fact, Moses saw so little of God, that he had no idea that this psalm was even inspired by Him. When Israel finally picked up stakes and went into the Land of Promise, then we see a few more miracles (a handful is all); and another handful upon Joshua’s entry into the land. Then, with only a few exceptions, we find no miracles in Scripture until the time of Elijah and Elisha. Why then? What was the purpose? Simple—God was going to speak to Israel about her impending doom; about the successful attacks and wars that would be waged against Israel. God chose to speak to Israel via the prophet, and He sent prophet after prophet. First God had to make it known that He was speaking through these prophets—He did that by working some miracles and signs at the hands of Elijah and Elisha. Then again, the signs and miracles disappear—in fact, we find no signs and miracles for 400 years; and then, suddenly, at the hand of our Lord, for three years, there are phenomenal signs and miracles. He was God come in the flesh and it was important for man to recognize that. Therefore, when it came to miracles, we have never ever witnessed a period of time like the three years of our Lord’s public ministry in the land of Palestine. You see, miracles did not occur for their own sake, nor did they occur in a vacuum—every time, there was a reason.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

77. It would be worth our while to examine Heb. 2:2–4 more carefully:

²⁷¹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 126–127. Horner was quoted in Charles and Frances Hunter’s *Why Should “I” Speak in Tongues?* Houston, TX; Hunter Ministries, 1976, pp. 74–75 and Bixler was quoted from his book *It Can Happen to Anybody*; Monroeville, PA; Whitaker, 1970, p. 59.

For if through the angels having been spoken, a word became steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward,...

Hebrews
2:2

For if the word, having been spoken by the angels, became certain, and every transgression and [act of] disobedience received a just recompense,...

For if, and it is true, that the word was spoken by the angels was deemed unalterable, and that a just recompense was meted out for every transgression and every act of disobedience,...

I offer v. 2 without much commentary, as it simply integrates us into the context. One of the methods of revelation was through angels (two of the others are mentioned in Heb. 1:1), and the author of Hebrews states that this word was made certain—and part of God’s Word to man is that every act of disobedience would receive its just recompense. Now, all Jewish religious types fully understood this.

...how [will] we escape so great having neglected a salvation? Which [salvation] a beginning was taken to speak through the Lord, [and then] by the [ones] having heard, unto us it was confirmed...

Hebrews
2:3

...how will we escape, having neglected so great a salvation? Which [salvation] began to be spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard [Him]...

Then how could any of us escape, if we neglect so imperative a salvation? Which salvation began to be spoken through the Lord, and when then confirmed to us by those who heard Him.

Since my greatest interest in the Bible has been the Old Testament and the proper interpretation thereof (as there are so many covenant theologians who have muddied the water), Hebrews has always been a book which I have wanted to tackle verse by verse. Then when I exegete a verse or two, I again recall how difficult the grammar and the structure of this book is. Let’s begin first by examining quite a few translations:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	{For if the message given through angels [that is, the Law spoken by them to Moses] was authentic <i>and</i> proved sure, and every violation and disobedience received an appropriate (just and adequate) penalty,} How shall we escape [appropriate retribution] if we neglect <i>and</i> refuse to pay attention to such a great salvation [as is now offered to us, letting it drift past us forever]? For it was declared at first by the Lord [Himself], and it was confirmed to us <i>and</i> proved to be real <i>and</i> genuine by those who personally heard [Him speak].
CEV	[The message spoken by angels proved to be true, and all who disobeyed or rejected it were punished as they deserved.] So if we refuse this great way of being saved, how can we hope to escape? The Lord himself was the first to tell about it, and people who heard the message proved to us that it was true.
<i>Complete Jewish Bible</i>	[For if the word God spoke through angels became binding, so that every violation and act of disobedience received its just deserts in full measure,] then how will be escape if we ignore such a great deliverance? This deliverance, which was first declared by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him;...
Interlinear word-for-word	...how we shall escape so great neglecting a salvation, which, a beginning having received to be spoken by the Lord, by the ones having heard <i>Him</i> to us and was confirmed,...
Interlinear idiomatic	...how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation, which in the beginning was spoken by the Lord, <i>and</i> was confirmed to us by the <i>ones</i> having heard <i>Him</i> ,
NASB	[For if the word spoken through the angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense,] how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard.
NIV	...how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.

NJB	...then we shall certainly not go unpunished if we neglect such a great salvation. It was first announced by the Lord himself, an <i>dis</i> guaranteed to us by those who heard him;
NLT	What makes us think that we can escape if we are indifferent to this great salvation that was announced by the Lord Jesus himself? It was passed on to us by those who heard him speak,...
The 20 th Century NT	[For if the Message which was delivered by angels had its authority confirmed, so that every offence against it, or neglect of it, met with its fitting requital,] how can we, of all people, expect to escape, if we disregard a Salvation as great s this? It was the Master who in the first instance spoke of this Salvation, and its authority was confirmed for us by those who listened to him,...
Weymouth	...how shall we escape if we are indifferent to a salvation as great as that now offered to us? This, after having first of all been announced by the Lord Himself, had its truth made sure to us by those who heard Him,...
Williams	[For if the message spoken through angels proved to be valid, and every violation and infraction of it had its adequate penalty,] how can we escape, if we pay no attention at all to a salvation that is so great? This is so because it was first proclaimed by the Lord Himself, and then it was proved to us to be valid by the very men who heard Him themselves,...
Young's Lit. Translation	[...for if the word being spoken through messengers did become stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience did receive a just recompense,] how shall we escape, having neglected so great salvation? Which a beginning receiving—to be spoken through the Lord—by those having heard was confirmed to us,...

Let me make a few superficial observations apart from our study. There are many who claim that the Apostle Paul wrote this epistle. In reading these various translations through, it is certain that the author is Jewish (like Paul), as the thrust of this verse is how can **we** neglect such a great salvation—we of all people, who have been a witness to and custodians of God's truth for these past many centuries—how can we neglect such a deliverance, knowing the justice and severity of God? Furthermore, the writer is very learned in the Hebrew Scriptures, and he is a **second generation** believer. He did not hear himself the gospel given directly by Jesus, which Paul did. Finally, his Greek and his arguments are just as complex—if not more so—than Paul's. This person is probably writing from Rome (Heb. 13:24) and he is closely associated with Timothy (Heb. 13:23). I have always thought Apollos to be the author of Hebrews and only today found out that was Luther's²⁷² opinion as well.

You will note that I quoted from more translations than I have ever done in any other exegetical approach to any other verse. We are going to spend a lot of time with verb tenses here, as well as a little grammar and vocabulary. We begin with the future indicative of *escape*. The future tense in the Greek is a logical future. It is generally aorist (point in time) in nature and dependent upon volition. The next verb is the 1st person masculine plural, aorist active participle of *ameléō* (ἀμελέω) [pronounced *ahm-el-EH-oh*], which means *to not show concern, to not care for, to neglect*. Strong's #272. The aorist participle generally precedes the action of the main verb; the aorist tense refers to a point in time, which would be our lives here on this earth.

Prior to *ameléō*, we have the adjective *têlikóutos* (τηλικούτος) [pronounced *tay-lik-OO-toss*], which means *so vast, so great, so mighty*. Strong's #5082. Because of its morphology, it modifies the noun *salvation*.

After the verb *ameléō*, we have the relative pronoun and the accusative singular of *archē* (ἀρχή) [pronounced *ar-KHAY*], which means *beginning*. Strong's #746. With this is the aorist active participle of *lambánō* (λαμβάνω) [pronounced *lahm-BAHN-oh*], which means *to take, to receive*. Strong's #2983. Together, these two words mean *having taken a beginning, having made a beginning, began*. This gives us: **How will we escape, having neglected so great a salvation, which took a beginning...**

²⁷² Martin Luther, not Lex Luther.

This is all followed by the present passive infinitive of *to speak*. The present infinitive is continuous or repeated action without reference to time (i.e., any determination of time must be ascertained by context). It is this so great salvation which began to be spoken *through the Lord* which gives us the time frame. Then we have the preposition *hupó* (ὑπό) [pronounced *hoop-OH*], which means *under, beneath, through*. With the genitive (as we have here), it means *from whence, from under, from which something comes forth, by, through, from*. Strong's #5259. This is followed by the genitive masculine plural definite article, which can be rendered *the ones*, thus giving us: **How will we escape, having neglected so great a salvation, which began to be spoken through the Lord by the ones...**

Then we have the masculine plural genitive, aorist active participle of *akoúō* (ἀκούω) [pronounced *ah-KOO-oh*], which means *to hear*. Strong's #191. The aorist participle implies simple action as opposed to continuous action without reference to time, apart from context. The structure of this verse and the definite article demands that this be translated as a verbal noun. We could render this *the ones having heard* or *those who heard*. Now, this is extremely significant. We have the Lord proclaiming salvation to His Apostles and to His followers; it was **they** who heard Him. This message was confirmed **to us** (the writer of the book of Hebrews and the readers), God bearing witness through signs and wonders (next verse). We do not have God bearing witness via signs and wonders through the writer of Hebrews but through those who heard our Lord. Signs and wonders died out with the first generation of believers in the first century. Nowhere in the New Testament do we have a continuation of signs and wonders beyond the Apostles.

The final verb is the 3rd person singular, aorist passive indicative of *bebaiōō* (βεβαιόω) [pronounced *beb-ah-YOH-oh*], which means *to make certain, to strengthen, to make true, to fulfill, to confirm*. Strong's #950. This would be rendered *it was confirmed*.

Now, what is most important in all of this is that *escape* is in the future tense, as in this life, we do not pay necessarily, for the sins that we commit. However, the confirmation by those who heard of this salvation given by our Lord, is in the aorist tense, referring to a point (or points) of time, generally in the past. The participles are generally coterminous with or previous in time with respect to the main verbs. *Escaping* is off in the future; the *confirmation* of the salvation of Jesus is in the past.

...bearing witness, God, with signs both and wonders and various powers and of [the] Spirit Holy distributions according to the His will.

Hebrews
2:4

...God [also] bearing [them] witness, with both signs and wonders and various powers and gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His will.

God also was a witness for these men, demonstrating both signs and wonders, as well as with miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit as He willed.

Again, we should examine a few translations:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	[Besides these evidences] it was also established <i>and</i> plainly endorsed by God, Who showed His approval of it by signs and wonders and various miraculous manifestations of [His] power and by imparting the gifts of the Holy Spirit [to the believers] according to His own will.
CEV	God himself showed that his message was true by working all kinds of powerful miracles and wonders. He also gave his Holy Spirit to anyone he chose to.
Interlinear word-for-word	...also bearing witness God with signs both and wonders and various miracles and of the Spirit Holy distributions according to His will?
Interlinear idiomatic	God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His will?
NAB	God added his testimony by signs, wonders, various acts of power, and distribution of the gifts of the holy Spirit according to his will.
NASB	God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His will.

NLT	...and God verified the message by signs and wonders and various miracles and by giving gifts of the Holy Spirit whenever he chose to do so.
The 20 th Century NT	...while God himself added his testimony to it by signs, marvels, and miracles of many kinds, as well as by imparting the holy Spirit as he saw best.
Weymouth	...while God corroborated their testimony by signs and marvels and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed in accordance with His own will.
Williams	...while God continued to confirm their testimony with signs, marvels, and various sorts of wonder-works, and with gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed in accordance with His will.
Young's Lit. Translation	God also bearing joint-witness both with signs and wonders, and manifold powers, and distributions of the Holy Spirit, according to His will.

We begin this verse with the genitive masculine singular, present active participle of *sunepimarturêô* (συνεπιμαρτυρέω) [pronounced *soon-ep-ee-mar-too-REH-oh*], which means *to testify, to bear witness to, to attest to*. Strong's #4901. *The God* is the subject of this verb. Now, by itself, this would appear to say that these signs and wonders are an ongoing affair, because of the present participle. However, the present participle expresses continuous or repeated action and the time of the action of the participle is relative to the main verb. The present participle will express continuous action concurrent with the time of the main verb. We go back to the previous verse to pick up the main verb (there are no more verbs in this verse). That verb was the aorist passive indicative of *confirmed*. Those who *confirmed* the salvation offered by our Lord were principally the Apostles, who did have these sign gifts. By applying the normal rules of Greek, God continued to bear witness to the message of these Apostles **in past time** when they *confirmed* the salvation offered by our Lord. To most people, this understanding is conveyed in the English by most translations. However, I am providing the exact reasons why, in this verse, that the time frame is continuous action in past time—the present participle in the Greek is continuous action which subjects itself in time to the main verb.

God gave the Apostles a continuous barrage of signs, wonders, powers and gifts. What we saw in the time of Moses and in the time of Elijah and Elisha was nothing compared to the time of our Lord and of the Apostles. God continued for at least two decades to provide a barrage of signs, wonders, powers and gifts. The writer of Hebrews indicates that this was essentially continuous, but that it occurred in past time from when he wrote.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

78. A reasonable question is how is a person's authority established today? **If there come any to you and they do not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house, neither bid him God speed (2John 10). But even if we or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have proclaimed to you, let him be accursed (Gal. 1:8).** By the way, I hope that you noticed in Gal. 1:8, Paul uses the exaggeration of an angel preaching just as he used a similar exaggeration in 1Cor. 13:1. For congregations where most speak in tongues of angels, I am certain that you have angels also banging your doors down, several a week, desiring to give sermons on false doctrine.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

79. The next thing that we ought to cover are the additional references in the book of Acts to the filling of the Holy Spirit as well as to any references to the gift of tongues. However, bear in mind that by far the majority of the references in the book of Acts to those who are saved do not include a separate Baptism of the Holy Spirit nor do they include speaking in tongues. One thing that I want you to notice is that there is no coaching in any of these passages to *tarry for the Holy Spirit*, or to pray for the Holy Spirit, or anything of that sort. Very few students of the Bible have any true appreciation for the history which preceded the New Testament. From a precursory glance at Romans, they conclude that they, as Christians, are the true Jews or the spiritual Jews, and give the matter little more thought. God worked through the nation Israel and through individuals of Jewish ancestry for over two millennia. In fact, God has worked through the nation Israel longer than He has

worked through the body of Christ, which is known as the church. The idea that God would go directly to the gentile was a very foreign concept, even to the early Jewish believers. In fact, there were probably many early Jewish believers who did not think of the gentiles as people that God would even go to for anything. Therefore, when God took the gospel to the gentiles, this was something that they would have to see with their own eyes. Part of the history of the early church in Acts reveals that God will no longer work exclusively through the Jew (which was an accurate theological conclusion) and exclusively to the Jew (which was not altogether accurate), but that this new body of Christ, formed by the baptism of the Holy Spirit would also include gentiles. That the church would eventually become composed almost entirely of gentiles was out of the realm of the imagination of the early believers. Another one of the tremendous changes in the function of God on this earth is that He would work through all believers. In the Old Testament, God worked primarily through a tiny percentage of those who believed in Him. Those were men who were specifically endowed with the Holy Spirit and they could lose the Holy Spirit (recall the King David prayed for God not to take the Holy Spirit from him). In the Church Age, the Holy Spirit was to be given to all believers and all believers would have the potential to be as great as any Old or New Testament saint. These were radical changes in the theological structure which were contained in existing Holy Writ and which had been taught over the previous two millennia. God had to make this message as clear to the early church which meant that this had to be made clear to the founders of the early church. They were founding something other than a simple continuation of the Old Testament with the knowledge that Messiah has come and paid for our sins. This was clearly made known to the early founders of the church by (1) the giving of the Holy Spirit to all believers, both Jews and Gentiles; and, (2) the giving of spiritual gifts to all believers, both Jews and Gentiles. Three significant conversions mentioned in the book of Acts were those of Samaritans (half Jewish and half gentile—Acts 8); people who were completely gentiles (Acts 10–11); and Old Testament saints who had either been converted or pointed toward the gospel (Acts 19). The book of Acts is filled with a tremendous amount of evangelism; however, many charismatics are only aware of these three incidents and Acts 2.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

In the book of the Acts of the Apostles, we have a gradual moving of God from the Jew to the Gentile. Fifty years after the death of Solomon, Omri began to build the city of Samaria in northern Israel, which was later finished by King Ahab, who apparently employed Phœnician construction workers to complete the job. It became the capitol city of the northern kingdom, which was eventually called *Samaria* as well. The Assyrian general-king, Sargon II, besieged Samaria in 721 B.C., and populated the area of Samaria (a reference to the territory rather than the city) with gentiles (2Kings 17:24). They appeared to be quite religious, worshiping the gods from the countries from which they came as well as worshiping the God of Israel. In later years, both Alexander the Great and Herod the Great settled populations of Greeks and other gentiles into the city of Samaria, many of them military veterans. Not long after the deportation of the Israelites and the re-population of this area by Sargon II, there are passages of Scripture which would indicate that the Israelite tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim also populated that area (2Chron. 29–30). What would appear to be the case is that northern Israel (Samaria) was populated over time by both Jews and Gentiles, to where the result was not entirely Jewish or entirely pagan. Although historians have many disagreements concerning Samaria, I think that we are safe in assuming (1) Samaria was a mixture of Jews and gentiles, which resulted in (2) a very negative attitude of the Jews toward this amalgam (see, for instance, Ecclesiasticus 50:25–26 and John 8:48, where Jesus is insulted by being called a Samaritan). When Jesus sent his disciples out to evangelize the first time, they were told not to go to Samaria, as these would not be considered to be true Jews (Matt. 10:5–7). In Acts 8, we have the Samaritans being brought into the body of Christ.

Back in Acts 6, the Apostles were doing everything with regards to the church and, like Moses, realized that they had to delegate some of this responsibility. They chose seven men as the church's first deacons, among whom were Stephen and Philip. The Apostles laid their hands upon these seven men, which ceremonially recognized them as having some authority in the church. It is not stated anywhere directly, but it appears as though this also gave to them the power of the Holy Spirit. Since this is not stated, one could debate this point either way. In any case, after this appointing, we follow two of the men from this group.

In Acts 7, we have the tremendous message of St. Stephen, who was stoned to death for what he said. He had been falsely accused and was brought before the Sanhedrin, a council of religious Jews, for blaspheming against God by speaking against the Law and Moses. The high priest asked him if these things were so, as they allowed a man to speak in his own defense. When he spoke between these religious types, who were the experts in the Law, who considered themselves men of God, they were unable to bear it. Many actually put their hands over their ears, as their negative volition against God was that great. And then they killed him for what he said in the Sanhedrin, which was that Jesus was the Messiah promised in the Old Testament, and that their fathers had stoned the prophets, and they were simply carrying on in that tradition. After his stoning, the religious Jews began to persecute the Christian church by even entering into their small church services, which were held in individual's homes, and the religious Jews hauled the believers into prison (notice that the religious Jews had become much more bold in their persecution of the church). This caused various believers to be scattered throughout Judah and Samaria and further outward, and we find Philip the evangelist in Samaria in Acts 8.

In general, the Jews looked down upon the Samaritans as half-breeds, and originally, the idea of going out to the Samaritans was a foreign concept to the church. In fact, most of the believers would have been fine with remaining in Jerusalem and speaking only to other Jews. However, in this wake of persecution, they were forced out of Jerusalem and into surrounding areas (Acts 8:1–4). Philip the evangelist had great power, and he cast out demons and healed the lame and the paralyzed (vv. 5–7). In other words, people came to him with incurable diseases and he had the power to cure completely incurable diseases. This half-breed people received him with great rejoicing (v. 8). The Apostles, still in Jerusalem, hear about this. So Peter and John went north to investigate (v. 14).

In Samaria, the people were willing to listen to Philip preach Christ to them. Again, for whatever reason, the book of Acts does not say specifically that these people believed in Jesus, although that appears to be the case. Large groups of people listened to him and observed him performing signs and wonders; many in the city rejoiced over his having come to their city (certainly, because of the healings and the bringing to them of the Word of Christ) (Acts 8:4–8, 10–12). And it does say that many believed Philip (not *in* Philip), who proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ; and, afterward, they were baptized (v. 12). So, I would think that it would be reasonable to assume that we are speaking of believers. Now, the people of Samaria had been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, but they had not received the Holy Spirit, so Peter and John prayed for them to receive the Holy Spirit (vv. 14–16). When they laid their hands upon them, the Samaritan believers did receive the Spirit of God (vv. 17–18). Philip, although he obviously acted in the power of the Holy Spirit, was unable to bestow the gift of the Spirit upon these Samaritans. When the Apostles laid their hands upon them, they received the Spirit. Another character in all of this, a magician named Simon, who had also believed in Jesus (v. 13), observed the giving of the Holy Spirit and was willing to pay for that authority, which, obviously, Philip did **not** have. So, note, apart from your own beliefs, that (1) even though Philip demonstrated great power of the Holy Spirit, he was unable to bestow the Holy Spirit upon those who believed; and, (2) this appeared to be done only through the Apostles.

Now, although it is never directly stated, there had to be something overt which indicated that these Samaritans were given the Holy Spirit. We don't know if they prophesied, quoted long passages of Old Testament Scripture, or spoke in tongues; or whether there was a mighty rushing sound as there was at Pentecost. We are not told as that is not really an issue—we simply know that both the Samaritans and the Apostles who observed this (as well as Simon) realized that the Holy Spirit had been given to the Samaritans. If I was to make a guess, I would guess that several of them spoke in tongues and others prophesied (I would guess this because of Acts 10 and 19). However, that is not the emphasis of this passage—the emphasis of this passage is that these are Samaritans and God has just given them the Holy Spirit.

Two things were accomplished here: first, the authority was still firmly in the hands of the Apostles. Philip, a believer and a disciple of the Apostles, could not bestow the Holy Spirit. Peter and John had to come down and they acted as conduits for the giving of the Holy Spirit. This preserved the authority of the Apostles. Furthermore, recall, it had been Peter specifically who had been given the keys to the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 16:19). You find Peter first speaking at Pentecost, offering salvation to the Jews who would take it. You find Peter here with the Samaritans, as a conduit for the Holy Spirit. Finally, we will have Peter with the Gentiles, speaking the gospel; and when they hear the gospel and believe, they will be baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit as well. Now, what is just

as important as establishing the authority of the Apostles is that the Apostles had to recognize that God the Holy Spirit had been given to the Samaritans (and then later, to the gentiles). Remember, when the Apostles were first called and then sent out to proclaim the gospel, Jesus specifically told them **not** to go to the Samaritans or to the gentiles (Matt. 10:5). This incident of Acts 8 is clear, incontrovertible evidence to the Apostles that God's plan and all the God has for man now includes the Samaritans.

John MacArthur explains this well: *The hatred between Jews and Samaritans was well known. If these Samaritans had received the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation without any supernatural sign or fanfare, the terrible rift between the Jews and Samaritans might have continued in the Christian church. Pentecost had been a Jewish event, and the church born at Pentecost was made up exclusively of Jewish believers in Christ. If the Samaritans had started their own Christian group, the age-old rivalries and hatreds could have been perpetuated, with a Jewish church competing against Samaritan and Gentile assemblies. Instead, Jewish apostles could be with them. Everyone needed to see—in a way that could not be disputed—that God's purpose under the New Covenant transcended the nation of Israel and included even Samaritans in one church. It was also important that the Samaritans understand the power and the authority of the apostles. It was important for the Jews to know the Samaritans were part of the body of Christ, and it was important for the Samaritans to know that the Jewish apostles were the channels of divine truth.*

MacArthur goes on: *A point of grammar in Acts 8:16 makes the meaning clear: "He has not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." The Greek word for "not yet" is oudepô. The term does not simply signify something that **has not** happened, but something that **should have happened** by has not yet. In other words, the verse is saying that the Samaritans were saved, but for some peculiar reason what **should** have happened—the Holy Spirit's coming—had not yet occurred*

And so although there was an interval between the Samaritans' receiving Christ and their receiving the Holy Spirit—subsequence, in a sense—it was due to the crucial transition that was going on in the early church. The gap allowed everyone to see clearly that God was doing a new thing in the church. It proved to the apostles and all the other Jewish believers who were witnesses, that the Samaritans were accepted by God into the church the same a Jewish believers. They had the same Christ, the same salvation, the same acceptance by God, and the same Holy Spirit; and they were under the same apostolic authority.²⁷³

In the Old Testament, the person who wanted salvation generally had to become a Jew and move to Israel. It was not absolutely required, as a person simply had to believe in Christ for that—however, for spiritual growth and any sort of impact, they had to become assimilated into the Jewish culture. However, it had gotten to a point where the Jews did not see gentiles or Samaritans as having what they had. There was an incredible amount of religious and racial prejudice which had to be broken down. We have no real concept of how incredible Paul's statement was when he wrote: **There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus** (Gal. 3:28). There was a phenomenal mutual hatred between Jews and Samaritans and between Jews and gentiles. God had to break down these racial barriers and simultaneously uphold the authority of the Apostles. When God makes it absolutely clear to Peter that the gentiles are a part of the new church, Peter still has problems (Gal. 2:11–16) and the church in general had problems as to what part of the Law, if any, would be applied to the church itself; and, in particular, to the Gentiles who became a part of the church.

Frederick Dale Bruner: *To teach this basic and important fact—it was the fact of the gospel—God withheld His gift until the apostles should see with their own eyes and—let it not be overlooked—be instrumental with their own hands in the impartation of the gift of God...merited by nothing, least of all by race or prior religion.²⁷⁴*

This was an historic moment in the church to have the inclusion of the Samaritans, who were half-Jewish (which also made them half-gentile). They had assimilated in the opposite direction—rather than become assimilated into Jewish culture and religion, they had become an entity of their own and God the Holy Spirit had to make it clear that

²⁷³ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 180–181.

²⁷⁴ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 181 and taken from Frederick Dale Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit*; Grand Rapids, MI; Eerdmans, 1970, p. 176.

there were no longer boundaries between peoples. It had to be made clear that there was only one Holy Spirit. And the authority of the church had to be firmly established with the Apostles.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

80. In Acts 10, we have the meeting between Peter and the gentiles of the house of Cornelius. What many people do not realize is that Peter had some deep-seated prejudices against gentiles which came out now and again. Paul had to brace him for having eaten with the gentiles, and then distancing himself from them in the presence of other Jewish believers (Gal. 2:11–15). Peter was simply a blue collar redneck and God had to set him straight.

We have a time frame which is important. F. Lagard Smith, who put together *The Narrated Bible* (which is the NIV in chronological order), estimates the bringing of gentiles into the church to have occurred between 34–38 A.D., which is almost immediately after the Acts 2 Pentecost. The timing is quite important. For well over 2000 years, it was clear that God came to and spoke to the Jews. Those gentiles who wanted salvation came to Israel. Suddenly, in this chapter, Peter goes to the gentiles and not vice versa. Not only does he go to them, but then God the Holy Spirit goes to them as well. This set a new precedent which very few people appreciate. This was a definite change in the plan of God. You see, in the Old Testament, God worked through the Jew; if anyone wanted to know the true God of the universe, they typically had to go to Israel (there were certainly exceptions). Israel was not a missionary nation nor is there anything in the Old Testament which indicates that Israel should have been. Israel did not go out after converts, and God generally did not require that of them (Jonah was an exception to this). In the book of Acts, all of that will change. God will no longer work exclusively through Israel, and many of those who have believed in Him—both Jews and Gentiles—will go out into the world as missionaries. If your understanding of the Old Testament is weak, which is the case for most believers, you fail to appreciate this dramatic change in God's program.

It might help if you knew these things: *[There was] a practically unbridgeable chasm [which] had developed between Gentiles and Jews. When Jew came back from traveling in a Gentile country, he would shake the dust off his feet and his clothes because he did not want to drag Gentile dirt into Judea. A Jew would not enter the house of a Gentiles, and would not eat a meal cooked by Gentile hands. Some Jews would not even buy meat cut by a Gentile butcher.*²⁷⁵

The chasm between Jews and gentiles was so great, that God even gave Peter a vision to tell Peter that there was nothing inherently unclean about the gentiles. We have very, very few visions in the New Testament, so when we have one, it should jump out and grab us.

To read us into the context of this passage, there was a gentile named Cornelius who was either a believer already, or was a gentile on very strong, positive signals toward God. In reading Peter's message, the indication would be that he was still an unbeliever. We all reach God-consciousness at various times and it is after that, if and when we express positive volition toward Him, that we are given the gospel. Cornelius was sympathetic to the plight of the Jew (who was under some Roman persecution at that time, which would intensify greatly over the next few decades). An angel of God²⁷⁶ came to Cornelius in a vision and told him to send for Peter. At about the same time, God spoke to Peter in a vision telling him to eat food that he considered to be unclean. When three men from Cornelius came to Peter, requesting him to come to Cornelius, Peter accompanied them. What we have here is a meeting, engineered by God, between two men who, otherwise, may not have met. Peter then gives the gospel to the house of Cornelius (we do not know how many people were involved, but Cornelius was able to send three of his servants to Peter and still have his household run relatively smoothly). This is a summary of Acts 10:1–33.

²⁷⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 182.

²⁷⁶ The Angel of God in the Old Testament is not the same as angels of God in the New. In this chapter of Acts, however, a case could be made either way.

When Peter arrives at the home of Cornelius, he gives the gospel. There is no reason to exegete this, so I will simply quote it: **And, opening his mouth, Peter said, “I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him. The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, proclaiming peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all), you yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed. Jesus of Nazareth; how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. And they also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. God raised Him up on the third day, and granted that He should become visible, not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God—to us, who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. And He ordered us to preach to the people, and to solemnly testify that this is the One Who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone one who believes in Him received forgiveness of sins.”** (Acts 10:34–42). In the next verse, we read:

**Yet speaking the Peter the words these,
fell the Spirit the Holy on all the [ones]
hearing the Word.**

Acts
10:44

**[While] Peter was yet speaking these
words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all the
ones hearing the Word.**

While Peter was speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those listening to him speak.

As you will notice in your English Bible, you have the word *while* (in most translations). It is not found as a word in the Greek; however, the syntax of the Greek requires it. It is called a genitive absolute in the Greek and involves a noun in the genitive (*Peter*) as the subject of a verb, which is a genitive participle (*speaking*). This portion of the sentence is then subordinated to the rest of the sentence, which is often expressed in the English with *when* or *while*.²⁷⁷ We do have the adverb *éti* (ἔτι) [pronounced *EH-tee*], which means *yet, still*. Strong’s #2089. What Peter gave was simply the gospel—he said nothing whatsoever about the Holy Spirit. Peter had the keys to the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 16:19). He had brought God’s salvation to the Jew, to the Samaritan, and now to the gentile.

While Peter was speaking, the people of Cornelius’s household obviously believed in Christ Jesus and were saved. Coterminous with this belief, the Holy Spirit fell on them. *Fell* is the aorist active indicative of *epipíptō* (ἐπιπίπτω) [pronounced *eh-pee-PEEP-toh*], which means *to fall upon*; it metaphorically means *to come upon, to come over, to enter into the soul of another and cause a fundamental reaction*. Strong’s #1968. The aorist tense means a point in time. With the genitive participle of *to speak*, we have a coterminous action. The household of Cornelius was primed and ready for this. They all believed almost all at once (as Peter said was required of them—v. 43), and God the Holy Spirit fell upon them. It will be obvious that, like Acts 2, this was an experiential event. That is, it was clear to all there what was occurring, even though the Holy Spirit was not, for instance, falling upon Peter and company.

I want you to notice carefully what has occurred. Peter is giving the gospel to these gentiles, which indicates that they are not believers. As he gives the gospel to them (he says nothing about the Holy Spirit), they believe; and, as they believe, God gives them the Holy Spirit. We do not have any sort of indication that there is any time between their salvation and the receiving of the Holy Spirit.

There are two things which occurred simultaneously here. The gentiles receive the Holy Spirit as Peter speaks the gospel to them—it is clear that Peter, as an Apostle, as a Jew, is their spiritual authority. It is imperative that the authority of God is well-defined in this transitional period. What is equally important is that Peter, a Jewish redneck Apostle, understand that the gentiles are as much a part of God’s plan as anyone else. When God gave to them the Holy Spirit, it was made clear to Peter that there is no difference between Jews and gentiles. This doesn’t come easy to Peter and Paul had to brace him pretty severely to make that sink in (Gal. 2:9–16).

²⁷⁷ Wesley Perschbacher, *New Testament Greek Syntax*; Moody Press; ©1995; p. 397.

And were astonished the out from the circumcision believing ones as many as came with the Peter, that even upon the gentiles the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out, for they heard them speaking in tongues and magnifying God.

Acts
10:45–46a

And those of the believing circumcision, as many as came with Peter, were astonished, that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even upon the gentiles, for they heard them speaking in [foreign] languages and magnifying God.

And the Jewish believers with Peter were completely astounded that the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon these gentiles, because they heard them speaking with the gift of foreign languages and magnifying God.

One of the things which perturbs me as I exegete Scripture is the division of the verses. There are so many times that I wonder, *what were they thinking?* V. 46 contains both the end of v. 45, as well as the beginning of v. 47. Why it was placed as a separate verse is inexplicable. Therefore, I have placed the first half of v. 46 it where it belongs—with v. 45.

Often, what is most important is stated first in a Greek sentence. After the connective *kaí*, we have the aorist active indicative of *exístêmi* (ἐξίστημι) [pronounced *ex-ee-STAY-me*], which means *to be astonished, to be amazed, to be astounded*. Strong's #1839. We saw this word back in Acts 2 when the religious Jews heard the disciples speak in the gentile language of their home. They were completely amazed and astonished. Here, Peter and company hear them. Now, here we have a somewhat unusual use of the gift of tongues—they were evidence to Peter and those he was with that God had come to the gentiles and would give the gentiles everything which He had for the Jews.

As I have said in the past, two things are important: Peter, by being the one speaking to these gentiles, establishes his spiritual authority, so that we do not have a branching out of a gentile church separate from a Jewish church. And equally as important, that God gave of the Holy Spirit to the gentiles is made clear to Peter and to the Jews with him. Please do not think that this is some sort of a trivial issue. The entire next chapter of Acts will be Peter arguing before the Jewish disciples in Jerusalem that the kingdom of heaven has come to the gentiles as well. His evidence will be what he saw and heard. **"If God therefore gave to them the same gift as to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?"** (Acts 11:17). I am not giving you some little pat theory here—read Acts 11:1–18 for yourself. Peter's witness of this event was essential to the recognition that God had come to the gentiles and what was offered the Jew was offered as well to the gentile.

As the Holy Spirit came upon these gentiles, they began to speak in foreign languages (understood by those present) and they also were doing the present active participle of *megalúnô* (μεγαλύνω) [pronounced *meh-gah-LOO-noh*], which means *to make great, to enlarge, to magnify, to praise*. Strong's #3170. Now, the participles here which tell us that the gentiles *were speaking in languages* and *were magnifying God* are all preceded by the imperfect of *akoúô* (ἀκούω) [pronounced *ah-KOO-oh*], which means *to hear*. Strong's #191. Peter and his missionary group heard these gentiles speak in foreign languages and the gentiles were magnifying God. I hope you don't think that these gentiles were babbling like idiots and that Peter and company took that to mean that they were magnifying God (giving them the benefit of the doubt, I suppose). Peter and company heard them speak in gentile languages (there is no indication whatsoever that these were *tongues of angels*)²⁷⁸ and, *what* the gentiles said magnified or glorified God. The former word is used here so that God was not *glorified* by the fact that the Holy Spirit had been given to them, but that God was *magnified* by *what* they actually said.

So that you do not miss the import of this passage (Luke spends a full chapter of 47 verses on this, as it is a subject close to that gentile's heart), this made it clear to the early Apostles that, right from the very beginning, gentiles were as much a part of God's salvation through Jesus Christ as were the Jews. If you have a full understanding of the Old Testament, then this makes perfect sense. If you read the Old Testament through in a year, falling asleep often through most of the passages, then you have little appreciation for what has happened

²⁷⁸ Which is a bogus concept, by the way—and I will go into this in greater detail than you thought possible.

here. However, what you must understand is that the emphasis in this chapter is upon the inclusion of the gentile believer into the Church of God (the bulk of this chapter which we did not exegete, vv. 1–43, deal with God causing Peter to bring the gospel to the home of a gentile). Those who focus in on only the verses which I have exegeted here lose the forest through the trees. The emphasis here is not about speaking in unintelligible tongues—in fact, that did not even occur. The emphasis is not even upon gentiles speaking in languages which could be understood. The emphasis is upon the inclusion of the gentile believers, a fact driven home to Peter in particular. The next chapter of the book of Acts looks back upon this incident retrospectively, and, the emphasis is upon God going to the gentiles and calling to them. Peter will cite the giving of the Holy Spirit to the somewhat legalistic Jews that God has called the gentiles in His plan just as He called on the Jews.

Now, why did they speak with tongues? I will later show, when we get to 1Cor. 12–14 that tongues were not simply a sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit; that all believers in the Church Age are baptized by the Holy Spirit at salvation; that tongues had a very restrictive use in the early church—and I will back all of these statements up by the careful exegesis of Scripture. Right now, you will just have to take my word for it. However, if that is the case, then I need to explain what is going on here with tongues. The least of all the gifts is tongues and it required absolutely no training to be able to speak in tongues. It did require some training to understand the purpose of tongues and when they should and should not be used (1Cor. 14); but the simple use of the gift required no real training (unlike a pastor teacher who might train for decades). So why do some of them speak in tongues? In the book of Acts, it occurred for several reasons: (1) here, to let Peter know that the Holy Spirit was undeniably given to the gentiles just as to the Jews (if we were studying the entire book of Acts as well as Galatians, we would find that, even after this incident, Peter still had some reservations concerning gentiles, and Paul had to straighten him out). (2) Secondly, for those who had the gift of tongues, their speaking in tongues let them know that they had that particular gift. (3) Tongues also indicated that there was great judgment which was to come against the Jews (in fact, for a person who understands this last point, the second half of Acts 11 makes more sense). Now, if you are a charismatic, I do not expect you to necessarily believe anything in this paragraph. This is the twist which I put on these incidents and you put your own twist on this incident. I fully understand that. We are reasoning from what we believe to be true and applying it to this passage. We are using this passage to infer something that it does not directly state. If what I believed concerning the gift of tongues was going to be based upon the kind of inference and explanation that you find in this paragraph, I might as well quit writing and find something worthwhile to do with myself. If you are a charismatic, you probably agree with that. However, similarly, you do not get to base your essential doctrines upon the inference that you get from this verse, even if you have had experiences which seem to confirm that inference. Once we get to clearly-stated doctrines, as we will find in the book of 1Corinthians, then we can take a position, as we will no longer be dealing with inference. However, if I am to interpret this passage differently from you, then I should properly place that inference here, even though I can no more back up my inference than you can back up yours.

The remainder of this chapter has Peter baptizing these new gentile disciples. By the way, this is one of the very few passages where we have *speaking in languages* and the word *tarry* (in the KJV) together. For newer charismatics, you may not be aware that earlier on in the charismatic movement, people would be encouraged to *tarry* for the Holy Spirit (whatever the hell they thought that meant). Here, in v. 47, the gentiles ask for Peter to *tarry* with them after the Holy Spirit had been given, obviously not as keen on charismatic doctrine as they should have been.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

81. Peter then confirms the gift of the Holy Spirit given to the gentiles was the same as was given to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost. When Peter went to Jerusalem immediately after evangelizing the household of Cornelius, the believers who were there somehow thought that the salvation of Jesus Christ and the gifts which pertained thereto were exclusive rights of the Jew (Acts 11:1–3). This is a distortion of the Old Testament Law. Israelites were to be a light to the gentiles and gentiles came to them for salvation. We have several instances of positive volition on the part of the gentiles beginning with such examples of the *mixed multitude* that traveled with Moses and the Israelites from Egypt to the Land of Promise; we have the crafty Gibeonites who secured themselves a place in God's plan during the time of Joshua; and we have the queen

of Sheba. All came to Israel (or, in the case of the *mixed multitude, with* Israel) and their salvation was delivered in that way. In vv. 13–14, Peter tells how the angel spoke to Cornelius, and told him to send for Peter.

He [Cornelius] declared also to us how he saw the angel in the house of his standing and saying to him, “Send to Joppa men and call for Simon, the one being called Peter, who will speak words face to face with you in [or, by] which you will be saved—you and all the house of yours.

Acts
11:13–14

He declared also to us how he saw an angel in his house standing and saying to him, “Send men to Joppa and call for Simon, the one being called Peter, who will speak words to you, [words] by which you will be saved—you and all of your house.

Furthermore, he told us how he saw an angel standing in his house, saying to him, “Send some men to Joppa and call for Simon, who is also known as Peter. He will speak words to you, words by which you will be saved, both you and your household.

Lest you be too worried, we won't launch into deep exegesis unless we are dealing with a *problem* passage—that is, a passage which has been classically misinterpreted. Speaking of which, you may recognize this little phrase *and you will be saved, both you and your household*. We find almost the exact same phrase in Acts 16:31, where some people, taking this verse out of its context, have concluded that when someone believes in Christ, he and his household (eventually) will be saved. This is not necessarily true. In Acts 11 and 16, it was true, as the entire household heard the message of the gospel and believed (for those wondering about *this* interpretation of Acts 16:31, all you have to do is read v. 32).

The angel could have given the gospel message to Cornelius directly. Jesus Christ gave the gospel directly to the Apostle Paul. However, the key is as much sending a message to Peter, as well as to the church in Jerusalem, that the gentiles were now fully a part of the plan of God. At this point in time, it was inconceivable to the Jew that the gentile would play a big part in the church, the body of Christ. For two thousand years, God had worked primarily through the Jewish race. In fact, the Jews had become so warped in their thinking that they did not realize that they even had a ministry to the gentiles.

So, the Holy Spirit speaks to Peter, preparing him for this excursion, and He told Peter to meet with the gentiles who arrived at his house at that moment; and an angel of God had sent those men, under the direction of Cornelius.

“And in beginning of me to speak, fell the Spirit, the Holy, upon them just as also upon us in a beginning.”

Acts
11:15

“And in my beginning to speak, the Holy Spirit falls upon them just as also [He fell] upon us in the beginning.”

“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them exactly like He had fallen upon us in the beginning.”

I should mention that the two words which I have translated *beginning* are not the same words, but have the same root. The first is the aorist middle infinitive of the verb and the second is its noun cognate. Peter had barely gotten out the gospel message, when the gentiles believed and **immediately** the Holy Spirit fell upon them (this is what the first verb, *begin*, is saying). The adverb used is *hōsper* (ὡσπερ) [pronounced *HOH-sper*], which means *wholly as, just as, exactly like*. Strong's #5618. The use of this adverb does not indicate that the results of the Holy Spirit falling upon the gentiles was any different than His falling upon the Jews on the day of Pentecost—quite the opposite, it is *just as, exactly as* He had fallen upon the Apostles in the beginning. This adverb is repeated again in v. 17: **“Forasmuch then, God gave them the same give exactly as He did to us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.”**

The second time we have the word *beginning*, it is a noun, in the anarthrous construction (i.e., it lacks a definite article), which means it refers to *a* beginning, but not to *the* beginning of all things. The reason that I include this passage right after Acts 10, is that we have no reason to think that what happened in Acts 10 was any different than Acts 2—that is, there is no reason to think that the *tongues* spoken in Acts 10 were mysterious heavenly languages. There is nothing in that passage to indicate it, and this passage would contradict such a notion. Let me see if I can explain something to you about the use of language. When a new term comes along, or a new concept is developed, then what we generally find, at least in the works of a good writer, is some very complete, full explanation as to what that *word* or *thing* is. Then, after that, we just find the term. There is no longer a need to give a full and complete explanation as to what a term means if it has already been fully defined. Luke is not some simpleton. He has fully explained what tongues are in Acts 2; no one can read that passage and come up with any different understanding than the disciples spoke in gentile languages which they did not know themselves, but which the Jewish crowd which gathered there did (they had been scattered to various gentile countries and areas, and now spoke gentile languages themselves). Luke made that abundantly clear. Now, throughout the rest of the book of Acts, when Luke speaks of the gift of tongues, he does not have to define it again, as he has given a complete and full explanation as to what it was and how it functioned. Only an idiot would explain in full what it was a second time. What we will find instead are phrases like *as it was in the beginning*. Now, what would make no sense is for the gift of tongues to go through some radical change and for Luke (in the book of Acts) and Paul (in 1 Corinthians) to neglect to tell us that. But this is what a charismatic would have us believe. Take the two most intelligent, cogent writers of Scripture, and tell us that a gift of the Holy Spirit underwent this incredible transformation from being a gentile foreign language used to evangelize Jews into an angelic language used to pray for burdens that we don't know what they are. And Paul and Luke just neglect to mention this? Luke is the most verbose and painstakingly careful of all the writers of Scripture (next to Moses in his first three books—Exodus through Numbers). You don't really think that he observed first-hand the transformation of a gift of the Holy Spirit and never states this change outright. Why doesn't Luke clearly document that such a change in the gift of tongues took place? The reason is simple: the gift of tongues underwent no change, no metamorphosis. What it was in Acts 2, is what it is in Acts 10, 11, 19 and 1Cor. 12–14. You do not get to say, *a change is inferred*, because no change is ever inferred. Stay with me on this and you will see clearly, through passage after passage, that one cannot carefully exegete God's Word and come up with even an *inferred* change. In every modern church where tongues are spoken, those who speak in tongues view this as one of the most important aspects of their spiritual lives. Paul and Luke are two of the last people who would ever let such a change in a gift slip by them without clearly stating that a change has occurred—particularly, a gift of such great importance. The whole purpose of the book of Acts is to record the history of the early church and no author is more painstakingly careful than Luke. Don't forget—Luke is a gentile; he is the only gentile writer of Scripture—he can't screw this up.

Paul, and to some extent, Luke, developed a theological vocabulary which is with us even to this day. Paul coined several words which became fraught with significant theological meaning. Once a word is taken into the spiritual realm and clearly defined as a technical spiritual term, then we must infer **that** meaning wherever else that word is found. We may not put a spin on the meaning different from what it was when it was defined. When a theological term is found elsewhere in Scripture, and it is not clearly defined in that particular passage, then we must infer the meaning from where it was previously defined. Don't you know this is how people talk? We don't continually define each and every word as we use it—that would be totally psycho. Once a word is defined, then we continue to use it in that way. Let me explain how a normal person would approach writing a history of the early church. If there was an unusual occurrence or gift, then it would be fully explained at its inception, and then it could be referred to simply by its name. The gift of *tongues* does not refer to one thing in Acts 2 and then something else in Acts 19 or in 1Cor. 14. If the gift of tongues in this passage was different from the gift of tongues in Acts 2, then Peter would not have testified, **"The Holy Spirit fell upon them, just as upon us at the beginning."** Peter would have been telling them that these new converts spoke in some holy ghost language unlike anything that he had heard before—but he does not because some of them spoke in foreign languages and some exalted God (i.e., prophesied). God's Word is tough enough to properly interpret without each and every theological term being dynamic and going through periodic yet never fully explained metamorphisms. I realize that I am beating this to death, but there is a huge cult out there who does not even begin to grasp this concept. They *know* what they experienced is right and good and of God, and **even God's Word is not going to budge them from that position.**

Let's just catch the last two verses:

“And I remembered the word of [the] Lord, how He said, ‘John certainly baptized with water; but you will be baptized in [or, by] [the] Holy Spirit.’ If, therefore, the equal gift gave to these the God as He also [gave] to us believing upon the Lord Jesus Christ, then I who [i.e., *who am I*] to be able to hinder the God?”

Acts
11:16–17

“And I remember the word of the Lord, how He had said, ‘John certainly baptized with water, but you will be baptized by the Holy Spirit.’ If, therefore, God gave to these the exact same gift as He also [gave] to us [who] believed upon the Lord Jesus Christ, then who am I to be able to hinder God?”

“Then I recalled the word of the Lord and how He had said, ‘John did indeed baptize with water, but you will be baptized by the Holy Spirit.’ If God therefore gave the exact same gift to these as He had given to us who had believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, then who am I to hinder God?”

Actually, all that I want to do is mention one word here—the word which modifies *gift*. It is the adjective *isos* (ἴσος) [pronounced *EE-sos*], which means *equal, alike in quantity, alike in quality*. It is used in Philip. 2:6 when Jesus is said *to be equal* to God (that passage requires some serious exegesis, as few people have even a clue as to what it really says). Strong's #2470. However, the point that you need to grasp is that the gift of the Holy Spirit is said to be equal to that which was received by the Apostles in Acts 2. Of all of the writers in the New Testament, Luke is the most thorough with regards to historical events. He thinks chronologically (unlike most writers of Scripture, who think topically) and he is a details man. Why on earth would he use the adverb *exactly* as twice and the adjective *equal to*, if this was somewhat different from Acts 2 with regards to the giving of the Holy Spirit. If the Gentiles spoke in *angelic languages*,²⁷⁹ then why didn't Luke note this difference. Even if the thrust of this passage is the giving of the Holy Spirit to the gentiles, Luke covered a lot of details in Acts 10 and 11; why did he not note this very significant difference between the giving of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 and Acts 10? Simple answer: there was no difference between the giving of the Holy Spirit in those two passages. When the Holy Spirit fell upon the gentiles, they began to speak in real human languages, some or all of which Peter and company knew—either from their own speaking in tongues or through their upbringing²⁸⁰—exactly as Acts 2. There is no foundation whatsoever for assuming that what occurred here was any different from Acts 2.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

82. From here, we will go to the last passage in Acts where the gift of tongues is mentioned: Acts 19. Here we have Paul and Apollos²⁸¹ on Paul's third missionary journey. It is the early 50's and Paul has written letters to the Galatians and to the Thessalonians. Although it could be debated either way, in this chapter we have men that, 25 years ago, were baptized by John the Baptizer, yet had not yet believed in Jesus Christ. In being baptized by John, they had expressed their positive volition toward God; however, for whatever reason, never put it all together afterward. This would indicate that there can be large gaps of time between a person reaching God-consciousness, a person going on positive signals, and a person believing in Jesus Christ.

Now, let me repeat something which I said earlier: if anything is obvious to charismatics and to noncharismatics, is that a person who believed in Jesus as the Messiah during the life of Jesus did not receive the Holy Spirit because Christ had not yet risen (John 14:16–21 15:26–27). I don't believe that there are any believers of any denomination who would deny that. Therefore, all *Old Testament* saints (those who believed in Jesus prior to His

²⁷⁹ And we will deal with this, I promise you!

²⁸⁰ Peter, of course, is excluded from the group of those who would have learned several foreign languages from an early age, being a Galilean.

²⁸¹ I have always been in the small minority of people who believes that Apollos wrote the book of Hebrews—the end of Acts 18 indicates that he was well-qualified to do so. However, I have very little to substantiate this with, nor can I explain why a name was never attached to this book.

resurrection and ascension) would have to receive the Holy Spirit **after** they believed. A noncharismatic should not be disturbed by this; nor should a charismatic point to this as *proof* of Spirit baptism after salvation as the norm for all believers. Bear this in mind as we study this final passage where the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs (or possibly occurs) after salvation.

And it was in Apollos was in Corinth, Paul, having gone through the interior parts, to come to Ephesus, and finding some disciples, said face to face with them, “If the Spirit Holy you received having believed?”

Acts
19:1–2a

And it was, in Apollos being in Corinth, Paul, having gone through the upper parts, came to Ephesus, and, having found certain disciples, he said to them, “You did receive the Holy Spirit, having believed?”

And it came about when Apollos was in Corinth, that Paul, having gone through the interior parts, had finally come to Ephesus. When he came upon some disciples, he said to them, “You did receive the Holy Spirit when you believed, didn’t you?”

Apollos had been left in Corinth—more than likely to teach them doctrine (in the previous chapter, it is made clear that he had an outstanding understanding of the Bible (Acts 18:24–28). Paul has traveled through the *méros* (μέρος) [pronounced *MEH-ros*], which means *part, portion, side, coast*. Strong’s #3313. This is further modified by the adjective *anōterikós* (ἀνωτερικός) [pronounced *ah-noh-the-ree-KOS*], which means *upper, higher*. Strong’s #510. These words refer to the areas which are further inland from the Mediterranean Sea, which would include Phrygia and Galatia. Paul comes to Ephesus and he finds these disciples. They are modified by the adjective *tís* (τις) [pronounced *tis*], which has several uses. As an adjective, it can mean *certain*. Strong’s #5100.

There are pluses and minuses when it comes to being brought up with the King James Version. One of the great pluses for me is that when I can recall a few words from a verse, then it is easy for me to go to my Strong’s Concordance (a necessity for anyone who studies) and look up those few words and locate the verse that I want. Had I been brought up with the Living Bible, for instance, then locating specific verses would be rather difficult to do. However, on the negative side, there is the anachronism of the KJV and its inaccuracies which sometimes plague us. In the KJV, Paul asks these Jews, **“Have you received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?”** While this is not a bad translation, it is nevertheless subject to misinterpretation.

What Paul asks them begins with the conditional conjunction *ei* (εἰ) [pronounced *I*], and it means *if*. It can be used with an aorist indicative, as it is here, to represent a question, although there is no exact English equivalent. Strong’s #1487. We might render this as **“You did receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”** *Received* is in the aorist active indicative. In this verse, we also have the aorist active participle of *to believe*. The aorist participle creates a time relationship with the main verb, and indicates antecedent action with respect to the main verb. The action of the aorist participle is coterminous with or antecedent to the action of the main verb. We could render this **after you believed, having believed, when you believed, since you believed**. This use would allow for a period of time to intervene between believing and receiving the Holy Spirit; however, that period of time is not determined by this context, meaning that it could be a split second (a logical consequence) or a longer period of time (which is what charismatics hold to). In the English, we separate these verbs—in the Greek, they are right next to each other, indicating that receiving is a logical consequence of believing. We have no idea what prompted Paul to ask this question. Charismatics might hold that it just came right out of the blue and I would hold that it occurred following some conversation between Paul and these disciples. It became obvious to Paul, after engaging these men in conversation, that there was some confusion as to the basis of their salvation and its results.

But the ones said face to face with him, “But not even whether a Spirit Holy [there] is we did hear.”

Acts
19:2b

But they said to him, “But, on the contrary, we have [not] heard that [there] is a Holy Spirit.”

But they answered him, “On the contrary, we had not even heard that there was a Holy Spirit.”

They begin what they say with the adversative particle *allá* (ἀλλά) [pronounced *ah-LAH*], which serves to mark opposition, antithesis or transition. It is generally rendered *but*; however, with an full negative, *allá* is used as a rather emphatic antithesis, and can be rendered *but, but rather, but on the contrary*. Strong's #235. In this verse, we also find *ei* again; (εἰ) [pronounced *I*]. Although it means *if*, with the indicative, it can express possibility without the expression of uncertainty. This is called the first class condition in Greek. We could even get away with rendering this *that*. Strong's #1487. John the Baptizer was a herald of our Lord, as a herald precedes a king. Those who came to him were generally on positive signals toward God. However, this does not mean that they immediately came to know Jesus. You will note that Paul will give them the gospel—he will tell them about Jesus Christ, their Savior.

And he said face to face with them, “Into what then were you baptized?” But the ones said, “Into the of John baptism.”

Acts
19:3

So he said to them, “On account of what were you baptized?” And they said, “On account of John’s baptism.”

So he said to them, “On what basis were you baptized?” And they said, “On the basis of John’s baptism.”

This verse begins with the enclitic particle *te* (τε) [pronounced *teh*], which acts as a conjunction. It means *and*, and is chiefly found in the writings of Paul, Luke and in the book of Hebrews. Zodhiates explains that *kaí* connects and *te* annexes. Strong's #5037.

Paul begins his question with the preposition *eis* (εἰς) [pronounced *ICE*], which means *into, to, toward*. *Eis* can also be used for an intention, purpose, aim or end. It could therefore be rendered *unto, in order to, for, for the purpose of, for the sake of, on account of*. We might even get away with *on what basis*. Strong's #1519. This makes it clear that there has been more conversation than Luke has recorded. Paul didn't instantly know that these men had been baptized. In speaking to one another, it became clear that they were positive toward God, that they considered themselves *believers*, and that they had been baptized. However, Paul, in their talking, also detected that something was wrong. So, he inquires further concerning their baptism.

But said Paul, “John baptized with a baptism of repentance, to the people saying, into the One coming after Him that they should believe, that is, into the Jesus.”

Acts
19:4

Then Paul said, “John baptized by means of a baptism of changing [one’s mind], [while] saying to the people, on account of the One coming after him they should believe—that is, on account of Jesus.”

Then Paul said, “John baptized on the basis of a change of mind, while he also said to the people, on the foundation of the One Who is coming after him, they should believe—on the foundation of the Messiah, Jesus.”

This is not an incredibly difficult verse, but it is difficult enough to where we ought to look at some other translations before getting started:

The Emphasized Bible

Then said Paul— John immersed with an immersion of repentance, unto the people, saying, That on him who was coming after him, they should believe, —that is, on Jesus.

Interlinear idiomatic

But Paul said, “John baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe in the *One* coming after him, that is in Christ Jesus.”

NASB

And Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus.”

Williams

Then Paul said, “John baptized with a baptism that was an expression of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was to come after him; that is, in Jesus.”

Wuest

“John,” he said, “administered a baptism of repentance, bidding the people believe on One who was to come after him; namely, on Jesus.”

Young's Lit. Translation **And Paul said, 'John, indeed, did baptize with a baptism of reformation, saying to the people that in him who is coming after him they should believe—that is, in the Christ—Jesus.'**

There are two types of *repentance* spoken of in the Bible—the one which we hear the most often, which means *to change one's mind* (it is simply the combination of the words *to change* and *mind*). Strong's #3341. This is the word that we have here and this is a word which has become quite distorted (along with the word *confess*). Although emotion is not prohibited by the use of this word, it is not a matter of emotion or regret or vowing never to do something again. Repentance here means a simple change of mind. Because it is an old English word that is not used by anyone but fundamentalists, it has become distorted in its meaning. There is another word which is often rendered *repent*, which should be rendered *regret* instead. That word has an emotional connotation to it. You will recall when Judas betrayed our Lord, and then repented—he was emotionally upset over what he had done; he regretted what he had done (see Matt. 21:29, 32 27:3). Strong's #3338. This is a different word than the word *repent* here. The religious establishment in John's time had taught to obey the Law in order to receive salvation and blessing from God; and it had ways about getting around portions of the Law which they didn't like. John the baptizer taught that the Messiah was coming and that those who were baptized were to change their minds as to the way that they thought of their relationship to God and as to what they thought about the Messiah. Paul, in v. 4, essentially explains to these men what John's baptism was all about. They did not seem to grasp just what it was all about. They were on positive signals toward God, yet got waylaid on route.

Now, you will notice at the very end that there seems to be some disagreement as to how this verse ends. The 26th edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament does not include *Christ* in this verse. Some of the Greek manuscripts do. Since there are 24,000+ manuscripts upon which the 26th edition of Nestles is based, there are bound to be some discrepancies. However, what we need to focus on here is that Paul gives these men the gospel of Jesus Christ, just as he had in Acts 10. He does not have them tarry for the Holy Spirit; he does not say anything beyond the gospel at this point.

And hearing, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts
19:5

And hearing [this], they were baptized on account of the name of the Lord Jesus.

And, when they heard this, they were then baptized on the basis of the Lord Jesus.

Hearing is the aorist active participle of *to hear*. The main verb is in the aorist passive indicative. The aorist participle precedes the action of the main verb—they *heard*, and then they were baptized.

And placing on them, Paul, the hands, came the Spirit, Holy, upon them and they spoke in tongues and they prophesied.

Acts
19:6

And Paul placed [his] hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in [foreign] languages and they prophesied.

And when Paul placed his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them and they both spoke in foreign languages and they prophesied.

In this verse, it is unclear when they believed in Christ Jesus. It appears as though they did when Paul gave them the gospel, but whether they believed while being baptized, after being baptized or before is unclear (yes, I fully realize that the proper order is to believe in Christ and then to be baptized). Again, here, as in Acts 10, a case could be made for an interval of time between believing and the receiving of the Holy Spirit. In fact, an even better case could be made here than in Acts 10 for some interval of time. However, we do not even know when Paul placed his hands on them—whether it occurred prior to the baptism or afterwards (Luke, more than any other author of Scripture, tends to be more grounded in a chronological sequence of events). The big picture is that we have some Old Testament saints, if you will, who are as welcome to the Holy Spirit as are anyone else who believes in Christ. Had they believed in Him who was to come when John baptized them, then they would not have received the Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit had not yet come. All things considered, I would admit that this verse does not clearly

indicate one way or the other whether the Holy Spirit is One to pursue after salvation; in fact, this is probably the strongest passage in favor of a separate baptism of the Spirit, and only because the time element is unclear. Let me make this clear: this verse does not say that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is an experience separate from salvation. It could be interpreted that way and it could be interpreted differently. Personally, I would not suggest that anyone base the focus of the thrust of their church upon one passage which could be taken either way.

In any case, these men were **not** seeking the Holy Spirit. Since Paul does give them the gospel, it appears as though these are Old Testament men who were John's disciples who never made the natural transition to become disciples of our Lord. Paul gives them gospel. When he quizzed them about the Holy Spirit, he recognized not that they lacked the Holy Spirit alone, but they lacked the Holy Spirit because they were without Christ. They had not taken what should have been that normal progression of steps—the baptism of repentance of John's to belief in Christ Jesus.

Furthermore, this was during a transitional period of time, and in the verses which immediately follow, we have miracles, healings and signs being worked by Paul. As we have discussed in Acts 2:16 (and will discuss again in 1Cor. 13), Paul appears to lose this gift of healing. Therefore, regardless of the way that the time element is viewed with regards to this verse, we are still in a time when Paul's authority (along with that of the other disciples) is being established. We are in a time when things are in a state of flux; we are in a time of Apostles and healings and miracles and signs and foreign languages. Historically, all of these things disappear for nearly eighteen centuries; when they appear again in the early 1900's, they are an anemic counterfeit of what had been utilized by the apostles during that first century.

The next question is *did these disciples of John speak with angelic tongues?* Donald Burdick: *Inasmuch as Luke uses the same term (glôssa) as he uses in the other two accounts, and inasmuch as he does not distinguish between this experience and those of the other two passages, it is necessary that we understand that the phenomenon is the same in Acts 19 as in Acts 2 and 10.*²⁸² Again, there is no foundation for assuming that the gift of tongues in this passage or in Acts 10 is any different from that which was presented in Acts 2. I've heard people speak in tongues and I've heard people speak in foreign languages—there is a big difference. Almost anyone can hear the difference between the two.

Joseph Dillow adds a nice summary to this: *We must not make the tragic mistake of teaching the experience of the apostles, but rather we must experience the teaching of the apostles. The experience of the apostles is found in the transitional book of Acts, while the teaching of the apostles is set forth clearly in the epistles, which are our guide for our Christian experience today.*²⁸³

[<Return to Page One>](#)

83. Finally, I am more than willing to concede the following point to any charismatic: Of the three incidents which we studied—the Samaritan believers in Acts 8, the Gentile believers in Acts 10–11, and the Old Testament believers of Acts 19 all received the Holy Spirit, and, in two of those cases, very possibly **after** they believed (it is debatable with those who were baptized by John the baptizer). As we examined carefully, with the gentiles, the Holy Spirit appeared to descend upon them when they believed. The first two incidents took place somewhere between 32 and 38 A.D. Only a few years have transpired since the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord. The church is barely in its infancy. The last one in 55 A.D. Now, I want you to notice several things which are understated or ignored in charismatic literature: (1) we only have these three incidents; and all three were special situations. (2) Even though Philip was able to perform miracles unlike anything that you have ever witnessed before in your life, and even Philip had received a special recognition from the Apostles by the laying on of hands, he was unable to bestow the Holy Spirit himself. (3) **In the New Testament, after the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit is bestowed, it is ONLY given through an Apostle.** Not only

²⁸² Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, pp. 17–18.

²⁸³ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 186–187, and taken from Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Grand Rapids, MI; Zondervan, 1975, p. 66.

is the Holy Spirit *never* said to be given through the laying on of hands by any other believer other than an Apostle, we have one case history where a man who is greatly endowed with the power of the Holy Spirit and who is still unable to bestow the Spirit upon the people to whom he has proclaimed Christ (Acts 8). (4) Therefore, if you are going to base your theology on the historical record, then you must recognize that only an Apostle could bestow the Holy Spirit as an experience after salvation. (5) Finally, the last incident where one could argue that the Holy Spirit was bestowed after they believed (Acts 19), occurred somewhere between 53 and 55 A.D. This still places us during a transitional period of time.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

84. Let's begin exegeting portions of 1Cor. 12:

But, concerning the spiritual things, brothers, not do I wish you [all] to be ignorant.

1Corinthians
12:1

Now, concerning spiritual [gifts], brothers, I do not wish you to be ignorant.

Now, members of the family of God, I do not wish for you to be ignorant concerning spiritual matters.

The noun is actually the genitive neuter plural of the adjective pneumatikós (πνευματικός) [pronounced *nyoo-mat-TEE-koss*], which means *spiritual*; as a plural with a definite article, it acts like noun. The proper meaning is *spiritual things, spiritual matters* and context would allow, but not require, the rendering *spiritual gifts*. Strong's #4152. This verse should be the theme of this study.

You [all] know that when gentiles you were to the idols—the speechless ones—how you were led, being carried away.

1Corinthians
12:2

You know that when you were gentiles how you were led, being carried away, face to face with the speechless idols.

You will recall that when you were gentiles, some of you allowed yourselves to be swept way in the face of speechless idols.

Paul calls the Corinthians formerly gentiles because they became family of God when they believed in Christ Jesus. The first verb is the imperfect passive indicative of ágo (ἄγω) [pronounced *AHG-oh*], which means *to go, to lead, to follow*. Strong's #71. The imperfect tense is continuous action in past time; the passive voice means that they were led. The indicative mood means that this really happened. Preceding this verb is the verbal particle án (ἄν) [pronounced *ahn*] which is often not translated, but offers a possibility or a probability. What this tells us is that not every single Corinthian came from a pagan, idolatrous background; some did, and it is to these Paul makes reference. Strong's #302. This is followed by the 2nd person masculine plural, present passive participle of apágō (ἀπάγω) [pronounced *ahp-AHG-oh*], which means *to carry, to lead, to lead away*, and metaphorically *to be swept away, to be seduced*. Strong's #520. This participle simply adds to or complements the action of the main verb.

Paul's mind is working ahead and he knows that he will be dealing with the gift of tongues and speaking out in church using this gift. They have allowed themselves to be swept away by the Holy Spirit just as they allowed themselves to be swept away under the deluding influence of speechless idols. In view of things to come, it is Paul exercising a bit of quiet humor. Obviously, it was a mistake for the Corinthian pagans to allow themselves to be swept away by dumb idols; similarly, it is a mistake for them to be swept away by the Holy Spirit, not allowing their minds to guide them as to the proper function and the intelligent use of spiritual gifts.

Since tongues are our subject, we will jump ahead to verse 4:

But distributions of gifts there are but the same Spirit;

1Corinthians
12:4

Now there are [specific] distributions of gifts, but the same Spirit;

Now, there are classifications and distributions of spiritual gifts, but it is still the same Spirit;

In the church at Corinth, there were apparently groups of believers who were having serious disagreements about the various gifts which God the Holy Spirit had given them. The word found here is the neuter plural noun charisma (χάρισμα) [pronounced *KHAHR-ees-mah*], which means *gift*. Sometimes it is translated *spiritual gifts*. Strong's #5486. This is further modified by the feminine plural noun diairesis (διαίρεσις) [pronounced *dee-AIH-rehs-iss*], which means *a division, a distribution, a classification, a separation*. This word is only found in 1Cor. 12:4–6 and it *does not merely mean the Spirit bestows different gifts, but bestows certain gifts to certain people, not the same to all*.²⁸⁴ Strong's #1243.

And distributions of ministries there are and the same Lord; and distributions of workings there are but the same is God the [One] working the all [things] in all [things].

1Corinthians
12:5–6

And there are [specific] distributions of ministries and the same Lord; and there are specific distributions of activities, but the same God is working the all things in all things.

Furthermore, there are classifications and distributions of ministries, and yet the same Lord; and there are specific distributions of activities, but it is the same God Who does all things in all things.

Everyone has a different ministry, a different plan for his individual life—we still have the same Lord.

But to each one is given the manifestations of the Spirit to the profiting.

1Corinthians
12:7

But the manifestations of the Spirit are given to each one to the profiting [of one another].

But the manifestations of the Spirit are given to each one towards the general good of the congregation.

The last phrase of this verse is *prós* (πρός) [pronounced *pros*], which means *toward, to, face to face with*. Strong's #4314. This is followed by the definite article and the accusative neuter singular, present active participle of *sumphérō* (συνφέρω) [pronounced *soom-PHER-oh*], is a compound word, which brings together the words *together* and *to bear, to carry, to bring*. Although it means *to bring together*; it is used in that way only in Acts 19:19. It is more often used to mean *to be profitable, advantageous, to contribute or bring together for the benefit of another*. In the three places where we find this participle with the definite article, it is a reference for the benefit of the ones receiving the letter or hearing the words. Because the implication is that this is *for the profit or the benefit of one another*, we find this variously translated as *the common good* (NASB, NIV, NRSV), *to profit withal* (KJV), *the general good* (NJB), *servicing others* (CEV), *as a means of helping the entire church* (NLT), *the profit of all* (NKJV). It is probably most clear that this word is not used for personal profit in John 11:50, where the high priest says, **"It is profitable for one man to die for the people."** He was referring to Jesus and, not realizing the importance of what he was saying, stating that it would be profitable for the nation Israel for Jesus to die. The profit was for the whole and not for the individual. Now, there are times when this word is used for personal profit or advantage or good; and this is always clearly stated as it is followed by *for you* or that individual profit is clearly meant by the context (Matt. 5:29–30 18:6 1Cor. 10:33). Strong's #4851. Now, you may think that I am beating a dead horse here, which I do throughout this study, but I want it to be clear what this word means in this context. Paul will, in the same vein, compare the individually distributed spiritual gifts to the various parts of the body—each part of the body has a necessary and specific function, and this function is not separate from the rest of the body—that is, the function of each part of the body supports and profits the entire body.²⁸⁵ To further support that the use of these

²⁸⁴ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament*; AMG Publishers; ©1992, p. 428; most of my definitions come directly from Zodhiates; however, now and again, I quote him specifically when it comes to interpretation.

²⁸⁵ To those who realize, arguing from analogy is weak in and of itself. However, this is added simply as supporting evidence.

spiritual gifts is designed for the benefit of the congregation as a whole, 1Cor. 13—this chapter is the antithesis of self-profit and self-interest.

I am going to lump the following verses together, not because they are unimportant, but simply because we are going to take just one simple principle from them:

For to one through the Spirit is given a word of wisdom, but to another a word of knowledge according to [the norm of standard of] the same Spirit; but to another, faith in the same Spirit, but to another gifts of healing in the same spirit, but to another activities of miracles, but to another prophecy, but to another discernings of spirits, but to another kinds of tongues, but to another translations of tongues.

1Corinthians
12:8–10

For to one is given a word of wisdom through the Spirit, but to another a word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; but to another, faith by means of the same Spirit, but to another gifts of healing by means of the same spirit, but to another activities of miracles, but to another prophecy, but to another discernings of spirits, but to another kinds of languages, but to another translations of languages.

For you see, to one is given the word of wisdom by means of the Spirit; however, another is given the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; and to another, faith—by means of the same Spirit, and the gift of healing to another by means of the same Spirit; and to another is given the ability to perform miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another, the ability to discern spirits, and to another, different languages, and to another, the translation of these languages.

We find the same Holy Spirit distributing to the body of Christ various gifts, some of which we might even be hard pressed to fully understand (however, there are many gifts of the Spirit today and in the past several centuries that our spiritual fathers would not have understood either).²⁸⁶

One word that I should mention which is found here is the plural of *génos* (γένος) [pronounced *GEHN-oss*], which means *offspring, posterity, family, lineage, nation, people, kind, sort, species*. Strong's #1085. It simply refers to different languages and not necessarily to different groupings of languages in the sense of foreign languages as well as excited utterances.

What is most important to grasp here is that there is no inference that any particular gift is universal or almost universally given by the Holy Spirit. When determining what is correct for this age, we cannot simply go to the book of Acts and take out the portions that we like. It is certainly true that when the four groups of people—the Apostles, the Samaritans, the gentiles and the converts of John—were baptized by the Holy Spirit, that they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There is no indication in Acts 2 that the 3000 converts spoke in tongues; there is no indication in the other three instances that all of the individuals spoke in tongues (in Acts 19:6, they spoke in tongues and prophesied, meaning that some did one and some did the other). And, as has been mentioned, in **every one** of the four cases recorded in the book of Acts, there was an Apostle (or Apostles) present—and, in one instance, it was clear that Apostles had to be present. The charismatic might also point to Acts 19:6 and claim that each of the men spoke in tongues and each of the men prophesied—and, if that passage is taken completely apart from all other Scripture, that would be one possible understanding. However, the Bible is a whole and it is God's Word. In this passage, it is clear that tongues are simply one manifestation of the Holy Spirit and it is clear that there were a myriad of gifts handed out by the Spirit. What is never implied or stated is that everyone gets the gift of tongues.

²⁸⁶ Some dedicated men have devoted their lives, for instance, to the unearthing of the Greek language, to explain each and every word with as much detail as possible, giving references throughout ancient Greek literature. Such a gift would have never occurred to most Corinthians. Obviously, gifts which involve the use of computers for spiritual good would be gifts not even thought of twenty or thirty years ago.

Even if one were to concede incorrectly that the gift of tongues is still valid today, they still cannot justify a post-salvation baptism of the Spirit accompanied by speaking in tongues for each and every believer.

But all these [things] works the one and the same Spirit, distributing His own to each one just as He wills.

1Corinthians
12:11

But the same Spirit works all these things, distributing individually to each one just as He wills.

However, the same Spirit causes all of these gifts to function, distributing them individually as per His own sovereign will.

The distribution of spiritual gifts is completely the call of the Holy Spirit. We have no say in the matter. When we get to v. 31 in this verse, Paul is not suggesting that the individual desire the best gifts, but that the church as a whole desire the best gifts, which would serve to best edify the church as a whole.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

85. It is about time that we examined the doctrine of the **Baptism of the Holy Spirit**. Now, before we get into this, I want you to understand that the thrust of this study is primarily the gift tongues with several side roads dealing with charismatic doctrine. With regards to these side roads, we will touch on the information, but the following does not represent a complete and thorough study. It might be more complete and thorough than you have ever seen before, but trust me—this is the abbreviated version.

a. Let's first get the false version of the baptism of the spirit:

- i. Charismatics teach that the baptism of the spirit is an experience which occurs after salvation which believers must often seek. MacArthur writes: *Charismatics generally believe that after someone becomes a Christian, he or she must seek diligently for the baptism of the Spirit. Those who get this baptism also experience various phenomena, such as speaking in tongues, feelings of euphoria, visions, and emotional outbursts of various kinds. Those who have not experienced the baptism and its accompanying phenomena are not considered Spirit-filled; that is, they are immature, carnal, disobedient, or otherwise incomplete Christians. That kind of teaching opens the floodgates for believing that vital Christianity is one sensational experience after another. It sets in motion a contest to see who can have the most vivid or spectacular experience. And, of course, those with the most awesome testimonies are held in highest esteem spiritually. Incredible claims are made, and they almost always go unchallenged.*²⁸⁷ Larry Christenson, a Lutheran charismatic, wrote: *There is a sound biblical theology for the baptism with the Holy Spirit. But the baptism with the Holy Spirit is not a theology to be discussed and analyzed. It is an experience one enters into.*²⁸⁸
- ii. Frederick Dale Bruner: *Pentecostals believe that the Spirit has baptized every believer in Christ (conversion), but that Christ has not baptized every believer into the Spirit (Pentecost)...The most important characteristics of the Pentecostal understanding of the baptism in the Holy Spirit...are (1) that the event is usually "distinct from and subsequent to" the new birth; (2) that it is evidences initially by the sign of speaking in other tongues; (3) that it must be "earnestly" sought.*²⁸⁹
- iii. Don Basham: *The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a second encounter with God (the first is conversion) in which the Christian begins to receive the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit into his life...The Christian is brought into a deeper relationship with Christ.*²⁹⁰

²⁸⁷ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 27.

²⁸⁸ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 45, taken from Larry Christenson, *Speaking in Tongues*; Minneapolis, MN; Dimension Books, 1968, p. 40.

²⁸⁹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 173, taken from Frederick Dale Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit*; Grand Rapids, MI; Eerdmans, 1970, pp. 60–61.

²⁹⁰ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 44; taken from Don Basham, *A Handbook on Holy Spirit Baptism*; Reading, Berkshire, England; Gateway Outreach; distributed in US by Holy Spirit Teaching Mission, 1969, p. 10.

- iv. Charismatics and Pentecostals often present what they called the *full gospel*; i.e., what we have right now, by faith in Christ, is only part of God's truth for our lives. Paul had problems with similar false teachers who came in to certain churches after him. Legalistic teachers came into Galatia, teaching that a fuller experience in the Christian life would involve obedience to the Law. We have similar *full-gospel* teachers who had come to the Colossians with their own philosophies, deceptions and traditions of men (Col. 2:8). Paul affirms that the Colossians have Christ, and in Him dwells the fulness of God (Col. 2:9–10). **Therefore, let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the reality belongs to Christ. Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on what he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind** (Col. 2:16–18). Although these false teachers did not come to these churches with the same teaching, they came with the same idea: what the believers had in Christ was not quite enough; they did not get the full gospel. Paul stopped short of giving them the full benefits of the Christian life—and they had come to fill in the believers as to what would fulfill them. As I have pointed out, the charismatics evangelize more often within the ranks of believers than they do without. Dillow: *The believer already has everything. Absolutely nothing can be added. In the first century any teaching of a “fulness beyond Christ” was called heresy. Should it be called less in the twentieth?*²⁹¹
- v. Some charismatics have additional experiences of being *slain in the spirit*. This can occur many times after salvation.
- vi. Charismatics may have a lot of weird and differing beliefs, but they almost all tend to agree that this baptism of the spirit should transpire after salvation; that the gift of tongues is generally the sign that the baptism has taken place; and that the average believer must seek out this experience. We can refer to these as the three exclusive and essential charismatic doctrines.
- b. Then, let me give you a **brief** rebuttal to the charismatic viewpoint here:
- i. There are only seven passages which use this term, the *baptism of the Holy Spirit*. Matt. 3:11 Mark 1:8 Luke 3:16 John 1:33 Acts 1:5 11:16 1Cor. 12:13. The first five of these passages simply predict the baptism of the Holy Spirit; Acts 11:16 recalls the prediction historically and only the last passage gives us a definition.
- ii. 1Cor. 12–14, the longest passage which deals with the gift of tongues (among other things) does not indicate that there is a separation between the time a person is saved and when he is baptized by the Holy Spirit. 1Cor. 12:13 indicates that these are simultaneous (a passage we will exegete).
- iii. 1Cor. 14 does not indicate that everyone will have the gift of tongues. In fact, it states quite the opposite in 1Cor. 12:4–12, 14–30.
- iv. There is no passage anywhere in all of Scripture which indicates that we should seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- v. There is no passage anywhere in all of Scripture which uses language like *slain in the Spirit*; nor is there any indication anywhere in Scripture of an activity which is even close to the charismatic ritual of being slain in the Spirit.
- vi. Believers are encouraged to be *filled* with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18), which is accomplished through naming one's sins to God and being forgiven those sins (1John 1:5–10). One could dispute this if he felt there was a state of being for a Christian where he was walking in the light and in fellowship with God, but not filled with the Spirit; as well as a time when believers would be filled with the Spirit, yet not walking in the light or enjoying fellowship with God. There is nothing in the Bible which indicates that such a divergence of the human soul and spirit could occur.
- vii. In the book of Acts, although there are two occasions where the Holy Spirit is clearly received after salvation—Acts 2 and 8. There are two occasions where this is not necessarily the case (Acts 10 and 19).
- viii. There are three cases where tongues accompanied the filling of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts (Acts 2, 10 and 19) and one case where it is not mentioned (Acts 8). It is not clear that this is an experience which all who were filled actually had in the three cases where it occurred. In fact, a

²⁹¹ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 83.

- more reasonable case could be made that some spoke with tongues and some prophesied in the latter two cases, and that only the Apostles actually spoke with tongues in Acts 2.
- ix. In Acts 2, it is clear that the Apostles were waiting to be filled with the Holy Spirit, as they had been promised that it would occur. In the other three cases, there was no indication that this was an experience which anyone sought (although an argument could be made that the Samaritans did wait for the Apostles in order to receive the Holy Spirit).
 - x. In all of those cases, a fact which is generally ignored by the charismatics, an Apostle or two was present. There are no recorded instances of the baptism of the Spirit as a post-salvation experience occurring apart from the presence of an Apostle. In fact, this is the **only** consistency found in these passages. The charismatics have taken some things which are **not** consistently found from passage to passage in the book of Acts and have made these things there fundamental, differentiating doctrines and, at the same time, ignored the only clear consistency of those passages.
 - xi. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is mentioned fewer than ten times in Scripture, and always in the indicative mood. There is not one passage telling us that we must pursue this baptism. The New Testament is filled with hundreds of commands regarding the Christian life—there are hundreds of imperatives found in the New Testament, but not a single one of them deals with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. There is one imperative associated with the Holy Spirit; in Eph. 5:18, Paul writes: **And do not become drunk with wine, for that is excessive, but be filled by the Spirit.** Paul does not give any mechanics, or even the fruit of being filled with the Spirit. What this verse tells us, among other things, is the result of being filled with the Spirit is similar to being drunk with wine; the latter has an effect on all of our thoughts, actions and words; being filled with the Spirit also has an effect upon all of our thoughts, actions and words. The context of Eph. 5 and 6 does give us some of the results of being filled with the Spirit, which affects our relationships with our family and with those at work. In Gal. 5:16, Paul exhorts the Galatians to **walk by means of the Spirit so that you will not carry out the desires of the flesh.** In that context, Paul gives the fruit of the Spirit (as well as the production of the flesh). It is the Apostle John who gives us the mechanics in 1John 1:9. He does not use the vocabulary of being filled with the Spirit or walking by means of the Spirit; he uses the expression *walking in light* as opposed to *walking in darkness*.
 - xii. Now, let's just say that starting tomorrow, the Pentecostals, in the light of this information, realize that the phrase *being baptized in the Holy Spirit* is not really the correct Biblical designation for what has happened to them; and let's say that they say that what the experience is, is called *the filling of the Spirit*. Would this not validate their theology? After all, Paul does tell us to **Be filled with the Spirit** (Eph. 5:22). The problem here is that we have a hundred years of hundreds of charismatic organizations and millions of charismatics using the wrong term—would this indicate that their theology had been well-researched and carefully thought out, or not?
 - xiii. Therefore, based upon just a precursory glance at the evidence, there is no indication that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is always a post-salvation experience; the epistles would indicate that it accompanies salvation. There is no indication that speaking in tongues would be a result of being baptized with the Holy Spirit. There is clear indication that many would **not** have the gift of tongues. Finally, there is no indication that there is a post-salvation experience which believers should seek for. It would be irrational that the epistles, which are written primarily to believers, mention salvation over and over again, and yet do not indicate that there should be a seeking for this additional experience after salvation. Take away the book of Acts and there is no indication anywhere that there is a post-salvation experience and there is no indication that there is a post-salvation experience that anyone should seek out (and, in the book of Acts, this stance is debatable). We will cover all of this in detail, almost word-by-word at times.
 - xiv. What the charismatic does is take the barest of Scripture—most of it from the chronicles of the early church—and extrapolates from that a spiritual life which is not taught clearly in the Bible. Anytime a believer or a group of believers have a tenet which they see as fundamental to their doctrine, then that tenet had better be taught clearly in several passages throughout God's Word. Not one of the three charismatic essential exclusive doctrines can be systematically derived from Scripture.
 - xv. MacArthur: *Significantly, charismatic writers are not all agreed on how believers are to receive the baptism of the Spirit. Why all the confusion and contradiction? Why is it that charismatic writers do not quote the Bible plainly and let it go at that? The reason no charismatic writer can do that is*

the Bible never tells **how** to get the baptism of the Spirit; it only tells believers that they are already baptized with the Spirit.²⁹² **In Him, you have been made complete** (Col. 2:10). **His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness** (II Peter 1:3). There is no need to go looking for something that you've already got.

- c. The gift of tongues and the charismatic movement:
 - i. In the beginning of the charismatic movement, it was taught that the gift of tongues was speaking in a foreign language.
 - ii. When this was disproved, then it was decided that it must be an angelic language, misusing and misinterpreting one lone verse (1Cor. 13:1—and I should pause and recognize that this verse and its context has **never**, to the best of my knowledge, ever been properly exegeted). The logic which Paul employs, which is obvious in the English, has never been properly explained. In any case, the charismatics took the experience and twisted Scripture to fit the experience.
 - iii. Twice in Scripture, it is made clear that speaking in tongues is speaking in a foreign language which the speaker does not know (Acts 2 and 1Cor. 14:21–22). Nowhere in Scripture is it ever stated that tongues is speaking in some holy language or some angelic language.
 - iv. I have personally examined and studied dozens of Christian cults and they generally have several Scriptures to back up their beliefs for their fundamental, differentiating doctrines. When it comes to their most fundamental, differentiating doctrines, no cult rests on shakier Scriptural ground than does the charismatic cult when it claims speaking in tongues is speaking in an unintelligible, angelic language. For the charismatic to believe this, he must disregard Scripture where the use and quality of tongues is clearly stated, and cling to the phrase *tongues of angels* as a life preserver in deep waters. Charismatics must take these couple words completely out of their Scriptural context in order to sustain their fundamental, differentiating doctrines.
 - v. If I am going to take a doctrinal stand which is in opposition to fundamental, Protestant doctrine, then I am going to damn sure base it on more than three words (in the Greek) taken out of their Scriptural context.
- d. There are some charismatics who speak of *the fire baptism of the Spirit*, quoting Matt. 3:11. Since this is the first place in the New Testament where the *baptism of the Holy Spirit* is mentioned, we ought to stop here for a moment and correctly interpret this verse:

John the Baptizer is speaking to a crowd of those who are sympathetic to him (as he is baptizing in the Jordan River), but there are some Pharisees and Sadducees in the crowd who also approach him to be baptized (vv. 6–7). In v. 11, he is speaking directly to these Pharisees and Sadducees (note vv. 8–10), and indirectly toward the believers in that crowd.

“I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance; but the One after me coming, stronger than me is, whose not I am worthy sandals to carry—He you will baptize in the Spirit Holy and fire.

Matthew
3:11

“I indeed baptize you by means of water with a view toward a change of mind; but the One coming after me is greater than me, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry—He will baptize you by means of the Holy Spirit and fire.

“I indeed baptize you by means of water, looking to a change of mind, however, the One Who is coming after me, Who is greater than I, who sandals I am not even worthy to carry—He will baptize you by means of the Holy Spirit and by means of fire.

The word *baptize* is transliterated from the Greek verb baptizō (βαπτίζω) [pronounced *bap-TEED-zoh*], which obviously means *to baptize*, which tells us nothing. Although some teach that it means *to immerse*, in the baptism of Moses, 1Cor. 10:2, those who were *baptized* into Moses remained high and dry, and those who were not *baptized* by Moses (or *by means of Moses*) were immersed. Although I haven't been completely thrilled by any translation,

²⁹² John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 193.

Thieme often rendered this word with *identify*. So, here, John identifies the people with the water. The preposition is en (ἐν) [pronounced *en*], which means *in, by means of, with*. Strong's #1722.

The Greek word which is rendered *repentance* is metánoia (μετάνοια) [pronounced *met-AHN-oy-ah*], which means *a change of mind*. Context determines what this change of mind is about, although here it is not completely clear (we do not have all of John's quote). Strong's #3341. Now, given that this word means *a change of mind*, it shouldn't take a genius to figure out if it is a masculine, feminine, or neuter noun.

Baptize is later followed by the locative/dative/instrumental case and it can therefore be rendered *with* the Holy Spirit or *by means of* the Holy Spirit or *in* the Holy Spirit. Then we have the phrase *and fire*. The Granville Sharp Rule states if a single article links two or more singular substantives (not including proper names), then the second and subsequent substantives are closely related to or further describe the first. That is **not** what we have here. There are no definite articles. The implication is that Christ will both baptize by means of the Holy Spirit and by means of fire, but that these will be **different** baptisms. Baptizing by means of the Holy Spirit is for blessing for the believers in the Church Age. Baptism by fire (fire speaks of judgement) is the judgement where all unbelievers will be removed from the earth. Does context support this? Certainly, John is baptizing those who have come to him in positive volition; and he is speaking to the Pharisees and Sadducees, who are very negative toward the plan of God. John goes on:

“Whose winnowing shovel in the hand of His, and he will gather the wheat of His into the barn, but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable.”

Matthew
3:12

“Whose winnowing shovel is in His hand. And He will gather His wheat into the barn, but the chaff He will burn with an unquenchable fire.”

“And the winnowing shovel is in His hand, which He will use to gather His wheat into the barn and separate out the chaff, which He will burn with an unquenchable fire.”

Here we have what is known as the baptism of fire, which Jesus speaks of in Matt. 13:18–30 (by parables) and in Matt. 24:36–42 (which most people confuse with the rapture). He preserves the believers on earth and removes the unbelievers with a baptism of fire—an identification with judgment. The primary point that I am making with these verses is that the baptism by means of the Holy Spirit and the baptism by means of fire are not synonymous and identical actions. We know this from (1) context, (2) the Greek grammar, and from (3) the support of other passages.

- e. When a charismatic says that something is required beyond salvation, they are essentially redefining salvation. The Lutheran charismatic Larry Christenson wrote: *Beyond conversion, beyond the assurance of salvation, beyond having the Holy Spirit, there is a baptism with the Holy Spirit. It might not make sense to our human understanding any more than it made sense for Jesus to be baptized by John...We are not called to understand it, or justify it, or explain it, but simply to enter into it in humble obedience and with expectant faith...Sometimes the baptism with the Holy Spirit occurs spontaneously, sometimes through prayer and the laying on of hands. Sometimes it occurs after water baptism, sometimes before. Sometimes it occurs virtually simultaneously with conversion, sometimes after an interval of time...But one thing is constant in the Scripture, and it is most important: It is never merely assumed that a person has been baptized with the Holy Spirit. When he has been baptized with the Holy Spirit the person knows it. It is a definite experience.*²⁹³ I guess this means that we can pretty much ignore 1Cor. 12:13, which tells us that **all** believers have been baptized into Christ by God the Holy Spirit. After all, once you have had the experience, then Scripture just isn't as important anymore.
- f. Now that we have covered the false, we can proceed to the true doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. In order to properly understand the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we need to first examine the ministry of God the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament: God the Holy Spirit only worked directly in the lives of a few believers

²⁹³ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 191, taken from Larry Christenson, *Speaking in Tongues*; Minneapolis, MN; Dimension, 1968, p. 37.

for specific functions. He functioned in the lives of judges, prophets, rulers, priests, etc. (see, for instance, Gen. 41:38 Ex. 28:3 Num. 11:17, 25 Judges 3:10 6:34 11:29 13:25). The Holy Spirit probably empowered less than one-tenth of 1% of the population of Israel at any given time. It was so rare that it was often mentioned (see the Scriptures quoted) and God could withdraw the Holy Spirit (David, after falling into terrible sin, prayed that God not remove the Holy Spirit from him in Psalm 51:11). Believers were not generally given the Holy Spirit until after the death, burial, resurrection and glorification of our Lord (John 7:39).

- g. The Apostles were in the Age of Israel and Jesus offered them the Holy Spirit. Believe it or not, they were so lame as to not take advantage of this (insofar as we know), and Jesus finally gave them the Spirit apart from their own volition to tide them over. See Luke 11:13 John 20:22.
- h. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit receives surprisingly little attention in the New Testament. For a doctrine that the charismatics depend so much upon, it is actually as rare as the gift of tongues in the New Testament epistles.
- i. We find the baptism of the Spirit being spoken of a half dozen times in the gospels and the book of Acts as a future event (e.g., Matt. 3:11 Luke 3:16 Acts 1:5). From these passages alone, one could argue that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was a one time event which occurred on the day of Pentecost (Peter's mention of it in Acts 11:16 would not contradict that).
- j. The baptism of the Spirit is so called in Acts 2; what occurred in Acts 11 is identified as being baptized by the Spirit (Acts 11:15–16). We do not find the phraseology elsewhere, although we could assume it would be proper to apply it to Acts 8 and 19 as well.
- k. As we have examined, two of those instances (Acts 2 and Acts 8), the baptism of the Spirit definitely occurred after salvation—the first directly from the Holy Spirit and the second only through the Apostles.
- l. With the Gentiles, the Holy Spirit came with salvation, arguably simultaneously with salvation (Acts 10–11). Now, this takes us to 38 A.D. at the latest.
- m. In Acts 19, almost twenty years later, we have a more difficult situation. These appear to be Old Testament saints. They responded to John the baptizer's ministry; however, it is not clear that they believed in Christ Jesus. In fact, when asked about their baptism, they identified it as *John's baptism*. People exhibit positive volition toward God prior to believing. God only *owes* the gospel to someone who has exhibited positive volition toward Him. It could be argued that these men had not yet believed in Jesus Christ and it could be argued that they had. In either case, they received the Spirit while Paul laid hands on them.
- n. In all of these instances, an Apostle was present. In Acts 8, even though Philip, who had been chosen by the Apostles, had evangelized them, he was unable to impart the Holy Spirit to them. Peter and John came for that.
- o. The book of Acts is a book about the early church. It primarily deals with evangelism, missionary work, the establishment of churches, and, of course, the salvation of various men. From Acts 2–19, we have signs and miracles and a baptism of the Holy Spirit which occurs in at least two instances, after salvation. In the four instances mentioned, bear in mind that this is not the only evangelism which took place in the book of Acts.
- p. **In every instance mentioned, the believers involved were not seeking the Holy Spirit.**
- q. **In every instance mentioned, getting the Holy Spirit did not involve the volition of those who received the Spirit, apart from their believing in Christ Jesus. In other words, there is not one case history in Scripture of a person who first believes in Christ and then seeks after the Holy Spirit.**
- r. **In every instance mentioned, an Apostle—and not someone chosen by the Apostles—had to be present for the Spirit to be imparted.** My point being, if you choose to take your theology and mechanics from the book of Acts, then embrace all of it. Don't take what you want and ignore the rest.
- s. This is not a point, but a question: do you think that you could believe in Jesus Christ, be saved eternally, and then decide, *you know, I really don't want to be a part of this Holy Spirit stuff; I think I'm going to exercise my volition and pass on the Holy Spirit; God, You can double up on someone else. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him* (Rom. 8:9b).
- t. People are broken down into two classes in Scripture: believers with the Spirit and unbelievers without the Spirit.

- i. Jude 18b–19: **In the last time, there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts.” These are the ones who cause divisions, [who are] soulish, devoid of the Spirit. Rom. 8:9b (again): If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.**
- ii. 2Thess. 2:13: **But we should always give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. Rom. 8:14: For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.**
- u. According to 1Cor. 12:13, **all** have been baptized by means of God the Holy Spirit, including the carnal Corinthians, to whom this letter was addressed. According to Pentecostals, only a small percentage of believers have been so baptized.
- v. Gal. 3:26–27 reads: **For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.** Salvation and becoming a son of God is simple: that comes through faith in Christ. Then Paul tells the Galatians that *all of you* (referring to the Galatian believers) were baptized *into* Christ. The only baptism that we know like this is called the *baptism by means of the Holy Spirit*. Therefore, we have several Scriptures which indicate that all believers are baptized into Christ by means of the Spirit; that a person is a believer and a part of the body of Christ, or he is an unbeliever and not a part of this body. We have no Scripture which indicates that there are believers who are not in the body of Christ or who are without the Holy Spirit. The only time that occurs is early on in the church when the authority of the Apostles was being established.
- w. This is further confirmed by Paul in Eph. 4:4–6: **There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one confidence of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all Who is over all and through all and in all.** There is only one body of believers, which is the body of Christ, which is the church—and, as 1Cor. 12:13 tells us: **For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.** The one baptism in Eph. 4:4 is the baptism of the Holy Spirit; obviously, it is not water baptism, as some churches, dip, others immerse and some sprinkle. This is a verse which speaks of the unity of the body of believers (see Eph. 4:3); water baptism speaks of disunity, even in the early church (see 1Cor. 1:12–14).
- x. The thrust of the charismatic movement is that the average Christian is lacking in his Christian life and in his daily Christian walk. That he did not receive everything at salvation. What does the Bible say about this teaching? **Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ (Eph. 1:3). For in Christ all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form; and in Him, you have been made complete, and He is head over all rule and authority (Col. 2:9–10).** So what is it that you want? The fulness in Christ which you already possess, or is there something else out there that the Apostle Paul never alludes to in any of his letters? You may feel as though your Christian life is lacking, but that is because you do not exploit what God has already given you. God has given everyone the Holy Spirit, whose control is obtained by simply naming your sins to God. God has provided His Word—at present, I am aware of two sources: J. Vernon McGee, who is on the radio every day, usually on several radio stations in the same city; and R. B. Thieme ministries, which will send out tapes to those who are interested without charge. My strong recommendation are the tapes from the late 60’s and early 70’s when Bob used to exegete full books. It is my contention that most believers are to learn by hearing spiritual truth rather than by reading it (which is a reasonable substitute once and awhile). I personally do not believe in self-study. Not only is your examination of God’s Word going to be pitifully superficial, but you will often misunderstand some passages, because you do not have a fuller understanding of other passages which would better explain what you are studying.
- y. Along the lines of the fulness that we already have in Christ, Dillow relates the following story: *An aged silver miner had spent all his life searching for silver in the mountains of the Old West. He had become so obsessed with his search that his wife and children had left him. When he died, the handful of people who came to bury him found in his possessions a note instructing them to bury him under his cabin. As the spadeful of earth were turned over a lustrous gray material began to appear. It was the famous Comstock Silver Vein, the richest in California history. That miner had been a billionaire all his life, but he had never claimed his wealth. Likewise, many believers are spiritual billionaires but never claim the blessings God has for them. Every person who is in Christ has everything God can every give him.*²⁹⁴

²⁹⁴ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 87.

- z. Now, in the epistles, we hear even less of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Paul only *possibly* mentions the baptism of the Spirit in six passages: Rom. 6:3–4 1Cor. 12:15. Gal. 3:27 Eph. 4:4 Col. 2:12 and Peter mentions it once in I Peter 3:21. In only one of those passages listed do we even have the phrase *baptized by the Holy Spirit*. The Holy Spirit is not mentioned in the others. In one of those passages (Rom. 6:3–4), one may argue that water baptism is being referred to. The baptism of the Spirit is grouped with the other baptisms²⁹⁵ in Heb. 6:2. All other mentions of baptism in Scripture clearly refer to water baptism, or to one of the other types of baptism.
- aa. **There is not even one passage of Scripture in the epistles which specifies the mechanics by which a believer is to be baptized by the Spirit. There is no gift ever mentioned in Scripture which deals with the impartation of the Holy Spirit.** That is, there is, in Scripture, the gift of healing; there is no gift of the giving of the Holy Spirit. The epistles are filled with doctrine and mechanics, and the New Testament in particular is filled with information concerning the Holy Spirit (there are close to 200 verses which deal with the Holy Spirit). However, not one word is said concerning the mechanics of how a believer without the Holy Spirit would go about becoming a believer with the Holy Spirit. It is obviously important that if baptism by the Holy Spirit is a post salvation experience for all believers (or, even for some believers), then there should be some specific mechanics outlined. In the book of Acts, it appears as though it can only take place when an Apostle, one chosen directly by Jesus Christ, is present. A charismatic may want to argue that Paul wrote these letters to people who had already been saved, which was true, but he mentions salvation, its mechanics and all the doctrines pertaining thereto in almost every single letter that he writes. The churches to whom he wrote would bring in new converts. If a post-salvation experience was required, then we would expect some sort of mechanics to be specified somewhere. I have not even found specific mechanics given in any charismatic book. Some charismatic churches pray as a group around someone; some pray as a group and speak in tongues and all lay their hands on a person; in some, the pastor strikes them on the forehead and they go down as if hit by Cassius Clay (Mohammed Ali) in his prime; in some, the pastor lays his hands on them; and in some churches, spirit-seekers are urged to *tarry* (apparently mimicking the Apostles in Acts 2).
- bb. In every Scripture in the epistles where Paul mentions the giving of the Holy Spirit, it is in the past tense (i.e., the aorist or the perfect tense). Rom. 8:2, 11²⁹⁶ 2Cor. 2:12 3:16 12:7, 13 Gal. 3:2–3 Eph. 1:13 4:30 1Thess. 4:8²⁹⁷ 1John 4:13.
- cc. Being sealed by the Holy Spirit is tied to faith in Christ in Eph. 1:13.
- dd. Receiving the Spirit is tied to faith (Gal. 3:2 2Thess. 2:13).
- ee. On this earth, there is one body of Christ. Every believer is a part of this body. Every person who has believed in Jesus Christ—has trusted in Him for their salvation—is a part of this body. They become a part of this body by being baptized by the Holy Spirit. We do not have a few believers hanging around who are not a part of the body of Christ. All believers are a part of this body, which means that all have been baptized by the Holy Spirit, according to 1Cor. 12:12–13. Therefore, before we move forward with this doctrine, we will stop and deal with the only passage in the epistles which positively and unequivocally deals with the baptism of the Holy Spirit—1Cor. 12:12–13:

For just as the body one is and parts has many, but all the parts of the body the one, many being, one are body, so also [is] the Christ [or, the Messiah].

1Corinthians
12:12

For just as the body is one and has many parts, yet all the parts of the one body, being many, are one body, so also is [the body of] Christ.

For, just as the body is a single unity, but has many parts, all of these parts are one body, although they are many, they make up one body—so also it is with the body of Christ.

²⁹⁵ I believe there are seven different baptisms in Scripture, if memory serves; three of them involve no water and one, the baptism of Moses, those who are baptized remain dry and those who are **not** baptized are immersed.

²⁹⁶ Because the main verb is in the indicative mood (the mood of reality), the *if* at the beginning of the verse is in what is called a 1st class condition; i.e., *if [and it is true]*.

²⁹⁷ This is the present participle, which speaks of what God the Father consistently does.

Let's see how others have rendered this verse:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	For just as the body is a unity and yet has many parts, and all the parts, though many, form [only] one body, so it is with Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One.
CEV	The body of Christ has many different parts, just as any other body does.
Interlinear word-for-word	For just as the body is one and has many parts, but all the parts of the body one, many being one are body, so also <i>is</i> Christ
NASB	For even as the body is one and <i>yet</i> has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.
NLT	The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up only one body. So it is with the body of Christ.
REB	Christ is like a single body with its many limbs and organs, which, many as they are, together make up one body;...
Weymouth	For just as the human body is one and yet has many parts, and all its parts, many as they are, constitute but one body, so it is with the Church of Christ [lit., the Christ].
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	For, even as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the one body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ,...

My purpose in inserting these two verses is not to exegete them carefully, but allow them to speak for themselves. I have listed several translations, trying to find ones which are very different from one another (which was quite difficult for v. 13). Most people would accept that we are not speaking of Christ Jesus in all actuality, but of His body here on earth, which is also called the church. Now, roughly, to the nearest integer, how many bodies of Christ are there on this earth? This is not a trick question. And how do we become a part of this body? Read the next verse.

For also by one Spirit we all into one body were baptized, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or freemen, and all into one Spirit we were made to drink.

1Corinthians
12:13

For we also were baptized into one body by means of one Spirit, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, and all were caused to drink on account of one Spirit.

For we also were all baptized into one body by means of one Spirit, whether we were Jews or Greeks, or slaves or free; and we all were allowed to drink by means of one Spirit.

I don't know that we will need to deal with a lot of exegesis here, as this is fairly straightforward. However, let's just see what some others have done:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	For by (means of the personal agency of) one (Holy) Spirit we were all, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, baptized [and by baptism united together] into one body, and all made to drink of one (Holy) Spirit.
CEV	Some of us are Jews, and others are Gentiles. Some of us are slaves, and others are free. But God's Spirit baptized each of us and made us part of the th ebody of Christ. Now we each drink from that same Spirit.
Interlinear word-for-word	For also by one Spirit we all were baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all given to drink into one Spirit.
NASB	For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.
NLT	Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves and some are free. But we have all been baptized into Christ's body by one Spirit, and we have all received the same Spirit.
REB	For in the one Spirit we were all brought into one body by baptism, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, we were all given that one Spirit to drink.
Weymouth	For, in fact, in one Spirit all of us—whether we are Jews or Gentiles [lit., Greeks], slaves or free men—were baptized to form but one body; and we were all nourished by that one Spirit.

Young's Lit. Translation ...for also in one Spirit we all to one body were baptized, whether Jews or Greeks, whether servants or freemen, and all into one Spirit were made to drink,...

I realize that it doesn't get much clearer than this in Scripture. Here we have the Corinthians, undoubtedly the most carnal Christian church in the first century, and Paul never tells them that what they lack is the Holy Spirit. He calls them sanctified early on in his letter to them (1Cor. 1:2, 30) and here he makes it clear that, regardless of their background, they have been baptized by means of the Holy Spirit into that one body of which he speaks throughout this chapter. *Baptized* is the 1st person plural, aorist passive indicative—the aorist tense refers to a point of time (actually to several points of time; the time that each member of the Corinthian church believed) and that point of time is generally in the past; the indicative mood is the mood of reality; and the passive voice means that they did not do a thing, but the Holy Spirit did it to them.

Thieme gives us a clear explanation of this verse: *The Greek verb BAPTIZO means "to identify." The aorist tense indicates that the action of the verb occurs in a point of time, at the moment of salvation. The passive voice—the voice of grace—shows that the believer receives the action of the verb: he is placed into union with Christ, eternally and completely. Spirit baptism cannot be experienced nor can it be improved upon. It is a perfect work performed by God the Holy Spirit for each believer who receives Christ as his Savior during the course of the Church Age. The startling manifestations of the first occurrence clearly marked the beginning of the new dispensation and that grace period which would extended over four decades. An entire generation of Jews would be warned by a series of events (all of which took place according to the divine timetable) that divine discipline was inevitable.*²⁹⁸

Now, I know if you are a charismatic, you may want to get weird on me at this point and say, *here we are baptized by means of the Holy Spirit, but in the book of Acts, they were baptized in the Holy Spirit.* Wrong. The preposition is en (ἐν) [pronounced *en*], which means *in, by means of, with*. This is the same preposition and the same case found in all seven of our *baptism by the Holy Spirit* passages (Matt. 3:11 Mark 1:8 Luke 3:16 John 1:33 Acts 1:5 11:6 1Cor. 12:13). Strong's #1722. Now, we may disagree upon whether this should be translated *in, by, with, or by means of*; fine; however, if you translate one way in Matt. 3:11, then you must translate it that same way in every one of the remaining six passages, because it is exactly the same phrase. Occasionally charismatics accuse noncharismatic exegetes of using slippery Greek to make a point. The Bible was written in Greek—you do not get to change the English at a whim to fit your theology (nor do I). In matters of uncertainty or disagreement as to what a passage means, the best place to go to is the Greek. This is why it is imperative that every pastor-teacher have some reasonable amount of training in the Koine Greek language (and no one can have too much). It might be interesting to note that the Holy Spirit is nowhere in the Bible the subject of this baptism. He does not do the baptism himself. It is always Jesus Who is the One Who does the baptizing (Matt. 3:11 Mark 1:7–8 Luke 3:16 it's all seven passages again).

Now you may wonder about the phrase *into one body*; is that the same preposition? No, it is a different preposition—it is the Greek word eis (εἰς) [pronounced *ICE*], which means *into, to, toward*. When it follows a verb of motion which results in being transported to a place, its primary use is *into, to, toward*. Although I would have expected the locative case, this goes with the accusative case. Strong's #1519.

You might protest that we are examining all of this in too great a detail—that we should just sit back, read something like the CEV or New Living Translation, and just let the Bible talk to us and look at this from afar away from so much detail. Well, certainly, I am more than willing to stand back from all of this for a moment and try to take in a broad picture. Charismatics maintain that the baptism of the Holy Spirit resulting in speaking in tongues brings to them a greater power and devotion and strength—now, as much as I would like to hold up the personal experience of a charismatic is the end-all and be-all of truth, I'm just not quite ready to go that far yet. But, in the big picture, the most carnal group of believers mentioned in Scripture is the Corinthians. And they are the only local church in the Bible associated with speaking in tongues. That's a big picture to look at.

Are tongues the evidence of being baptized by means of the Holy Spirit? In other words, do all those who are baptized in the Spirit also speak in tongues? That's a big picture question, is it not? One of the big points of this

²⁹⁸ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 16.

one chapter is that we all have different spiritual gifts—in vv. 29–30, Paul runs through the list of spiritual gifts and one at a time he tells us that we all do not have the gift of Apostleship, of healing, of prophecy and, of tongues—we do not all have the gift of tongues. So, big picture is that not everyone will speak in tongues; and the big picture of this particular verse is that everyone is baptized by means of the Holy Spirit into one body—the body of Christ. Isn't that almost the exact opposite of what the charismatics teach? Don't they teach the not everyone has been baptized by means of the spirit but that those who are all speak with tongues? So, I don't mind stepping back from the details now and again and taking in the big picture.

The second verb, *potízō* (ποτιζῶ) [pronounced *poh-TEED-zoh*] means *to drink*. Strong's #4222. It is also in the aorist passive indicative. Whereas, in the early church, we have at least two instances of the Holy Spirit being given after a group had believed in Christ (and four instances at the most), we have many more statements throughout the epistles indicating that we all have the Spirit. Do you think that God has only given His Spirit to a privileged few? Where Paul speaks of the fruit of the Spirit, being filled with the Spirit, etc. etc., do you think he only is referring to those who go to full-gospel or charismatic churches? Go back in the history of the church—prior to the 20th century, there is not one significant Christian figure who got a post salvation baptism in the Spirit or spoke in tongues (I should probably change that to not one single historical Christian figure between 100 and 1900 A.D.).

During the first seventy years since the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord, the church was in a transitional period. Prior to Christ going to the cross, He had not given the Spirit to the Apostles (although He did offer it on at least one occasion). Then it had to be made clear to the entire church, including the Apostles, that the body of Christ would incorporate all who believed in Him, whether they be Jews, Gentiles, a mixture (Samaritans) or Old Testament saints. Once this was made clear, and once the authority of the Apostles had been established, there is no indication that salvation was separate from the giving of the Spirit; and there is also great inference that certain gifts of the Apostles faded away (it appears that this took place between 57 A.D. and 60 A.D.).

Now let's step back from the verse, and ask the question again: how many bodies does Christ have here on this earth? One. And how does one become part of this body? He is baptized into the body by means of one Spirit. If you are a charismatic and you encourage others to get baptized by the Spirit, just stop for a moment before you encourage another *brother or sister* to get baptized by the Holy Spirit—stop and ask yourself, is this a believer in Jesus Christ? Is this a brother or sister of yours on this earth? How many bodies does Christ have on this earth? Is this person not a part of Christ's body? If you are saying that he or she has not been baptized by the Holy Spirit, then you are saying that he or she is not a part of the body of Christ. If he or she is not a part of the body of Christ, then he or she is not a believer and he or she is not your brother or sister. Therefore, they cannot be baptized in the Spirit (if they don't have the Spirit of Christ, they are none of His). Do you understand how illogical this is? We do not have a select group of people who have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit (and are therefore a part of Christ's body) and a much larger group of believers who have not received this baptism, and are therefore not a part of Christ's body. There is only one body—you are a believer, you are a brother or a sister in Christ, you are part of the body of Christ, you have therefore been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ. The other option is that you are not a believer, you are not a brother or a sister, you have not been baptized with the Spirit, and you are not a part of the body of Christ. **If there is only one body of Christ on this earth, that body being the church; so where do you get the nerve to tell a believer that he is not a part of this body? Have you never read these verses before? How can you account for the fact that there is but one body of Christ and that most of the people who have believed in Christ, according to your theology, have not been baptized by means of the Holy Spirit and are therefore not a part of this body?**

Now, even though I do not have Christian fellowship with charismatics, I cannot deny that, if they believed in Christ, then they are part of the body of Christ. They may have ignored the gift which God has given them and they have settled for a phoney substitute, but if they have believed in Jesus Christ, then I cannot deny that they are a part of the body of Christ. I may want to identify the charismatics with a shirt button; or, if there were such a thing as a vestigial organ, I would certainly identify them with that organ—but one thing is clear in this passage: there is one body of Christ and all believers in Him belong to that body because they have been baptized into that body by God the Holy Spirit. All charismatics who have believed in Christ as well as all non-charismatics who have believed in Christ belong to the same body—now, you cannot agree with me on this unless you believe 1Cor. 12:13, which tells us how we got put into that body: by means of God the Holy Spirit, who **baptized** us into that body. Being in the

body of Christ means that we are all necessary and have a definite function, but Satan short-circuits most charismatics, by making them think that they need to be baptized in the Spirit, although they already have been baptized or placed by the Spirit into the body of Christ, and then Satan short-circuits them by making them desire this bogus gift, rather than desire the gift or gifts which God the Holy Spirit had already given them at salvation. **Do not seek for something that you already have! Do not tell others to seek after something that they already have!**

My voice is horse from yelling. Let's return to the doctrine of the **Baptism of the Holy Spirit**:

- ff. The ministry of God the Holy Spirit has changed from the Age of Israel to the Church Age. In the Old Testament, only a few believers, a minuscule percentage of them, were indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and they could lose this. In the New Testament, every believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. We have to have a transitional period. With the Age of Israel, we had a transitional period. God led the Israelites out of Egypt to the Land of Promise. They spent 38½ years in neutral out in the desert. During that time, they still worshipped, they still offered sacrifices, there was still the Tent of Jehovah. However, what was done was slightly different from the entering into the land. Prior to the Israelites being in Egypt, we have 400 years between Abraham, God's chosen man, to Moses. This was a transitional period of time which was quite different from what God did during the Age of Israel, even though this was, strictly speaking, the Age of Israel. My point is simply that, just as there was a transitional period of time from the Age of the Gentiles (before there were any Jews), to the Age of Israel (when God worked through the nation Israel), there was also a transitional period of time when the Age of Israel gave way to the Church Age. During this period of time, what we should expect that there should be some significant differences. Now, with that in mind, let's continue dealing with the Baptism of the Holy Spirit:
- gg. We certainly ought to do first is to get our vocabulary straight, as well as clear up a minor, but important, point:
- i. We first have Jesus baptizing believers with the Holy Spirit. This was promised prophetically in Matt. 3:11 Mark 1:8 Luke 3:16 John 1:33 Acts 1:5. Christ is the subject of the verb. There is no indication that this would be a repeated process, or occur several times. It was fulfilled in Acts 2, where the Apostles were baptized by means of or with the Holy Spirit.
 - ii. Simultaneous and subsequent to that, we have that believers are *filled* with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4 4:8 13:9).
 - iii. Thirdly, we have the Holy Spirit baptizing us into the body of Christ at salvation (1Cor. 12:13—note that we have the same verb, *baptízō*, but a different subject). I have read one place where this is considered to be a different baptism from i. above. Therefore, we should examine this minor point:
 - (1) In the gospels, where our Lord promises to baptize with the Holy Spirit, there is the preposition *en*, and *Holy Spirit* is in the locative/instrumental/dative case. *En* can therefore be rendered *with* the Holy Spirit or *by means of* the Holy Spirit or *in* the Holy Spirit. Therefore, if one takes this as meaning *by means of the Holy Spirit*, then it is possible to take this as referring to the same act as the Holy Spirit baptizing us into the body of Christ (in other words, the Holy Spirit is the instrumental means by which Christ baptizes us). *En*, by the way, is *ἐν* [pronounced *en*] in the Greek, and it means *in, with, by means of*. Strong's #1722.
 - (2) However, what would seem to support i. and iii. as being different would be that in 1Cor. 12:13, the Holy Spirit baptizes both Jew and Gentiles into the body of Christ; and there were only Jews at Pentecost. As I said, that would *seem* to differentiate these as two baptisms; however, there is really no reason to think that the Apostles and their proselytes were not placed into the body of Christ on the day of Pentecost.
 - (3) What actually clears this up for us is Eph. 4:3–6, which gives us the unity of our faith. This passage reads: **Be diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all.** This *one baptism* is obviously **not** water baptism, as that is a divisive, rather than unifying, doctrine. If there is only *one baptism* (again, as a unifying doctrine of the church), then we cannot hold to *Christ baptizing us by means of the Holy Spirit* and *the Holy Spirit baptizing us into the body of Christ*

as being two separate baptisms. Both are obviously unifying doctrines of the faith; therefore, the two are actually one.²⁹⁹

- iv. Acts 11:16–18 tells us that these following things are interrelated. In other words, there are these three interrelated things which occur—all three occur at salvation and one occurs periodically after salvation.
 - (1) At salvation, Christ gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit; He baptizes us with the Holy Spirit. This occurs for the first time in Acts 2, which was obviously after the Apostles had been saved.
 - (2) At salvation, and in subsequent intervals, we are filled with the Spirit, the mechanics of which are given in 1John 1:9.
 - (3) The Holy Spirit also places us into the body of Christ, or fully identifies us with the body of Christ. This is where the Holy Spirit baptizes us into the body of Christ (1Cor. 12:13).
- v. And I would be remiss if I did not mention begin reborn or regenerated by the Holy Spirit. This is salvation, the second birth, which took place in both the Old and New Testaments (John 1:13 3:6 1Cor. 15:50 Eph. 2:1–2).
- hh. The baptism into the body of Christ is also found in Rom. 6:3–6 Gal. 3:26–27 Col. 2:11–12. In all of these passages, *baptize* (or, coterminous verbs) are in the aorist tense, which refers to a point of time, generally in the past (it is usually quite clear when aorist refers to a point of time in the future).
- ii. The charismatic movement is a relatively new movement in Christianity. There are groups of charismatics during the early church (they were Hellenistic groups of people who were not associated with the Church of Jesus Christ); and we have the charismatics coming into view in the late 1800's at the most recent, and the early 1900's is more likely. However, in between those heathen charismatics of old and the *Christian* charismatics of the early 1900's, we do not have any great tradition of charismatic believers. This is important to know.
- jj. The charismatics have several false views:
 - i. A person is not filled with the Spirit until they experience a second experience called the baptism of the Spirit. This logically means that there have been millions upon millions of believers, some very instrumental in getting God's Word out, who have never had this experience, and therefore, whose works are worthless. It also means that there are only a handful of believers, and almost all from this century, who have really had any sort of an impact on Christianity, as these could logically only be believers who have been empowered by the Holy Spirit. All of these people are called charismatics or Pentecostals or full-gospel types.
 - ii. David Shibley suggests that everyone might receive the baptism of the Spirit at salvation, but that there is another experience with the Holy Spirit afterwards where the believer is, for the first time, under the total control of the Holy Spirit. I don't know if, by this, he means that there are Christians without this extra experience who have done, you know, just so-so in their Christian walk (we could insert the names of Luther, Calvin, Billy Graham, or whomever, right here), but they would have done so much more if they had been completely taken by the Spirit of God. Perhaps the Apostle John was confused when he indicated that we could either walk in the light or walk in darkness and forgot to add that we could also walk in the evening or in the early morning right before the sun came up (see 1John 1:6–7).
 - iii. Now, that there is a filling of the Holy Spirit which occurs periodically after salvation, certainly to that, any believer would stipulate. In this case, mechanics would be key.
- kk. Let's examine this from a logical point of view: either the Pentecostals and the charismatics are right about this additional Christian experience which occurs after salvation or they are not. What I am referring to, for those of you who do not know about this, is that charismatics hold that a person is saved, and then, days, weeks, months, or even years later, this person is baptized by the Holy Spirit. In fact, there appear to be some branches of the charismatics who believe that this can occur and reoccur. Their Scriptural evidence for this is in the book of Acts where we have three instances of people who were believers who, after believing in Christ, later were baptized by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2, 8, 10). Rather than

²⁹⁹ At the time when I write this, such a differentiation is rarely made—in fact, I only know of one author who made this distinction. However, one never knows what will occur in the future, which is why I went into some detail on a point which, for most people, is not a controversial one. In fact, the idea of differentiating the baptisms of Acts 1:5 and 1Cor. 12:13 probably never even occurred to you before.

seeing this as a transitional period of time, they see this as the model that true Christianity should follow (sans Apostolic involvement, of course).

- II. Now, what this means is that we have a great chasm in Christianity—we have the believers who have been baptized/filled with the Holy Spirit through this second, post-salvation experience, and we have a huge group of believers who have not had that experience. Now, quite frankly, I have no problem with a small subset of believers being right and the vast majority of believers being wrong. I can live with that. However, the charismatic must realize that Billy Graham, J. Vernon McGee, L.S. Chafer, Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley, Charles Spurgeon, Dwight L. Moody, Billy Sunday and pretty much every great historical Christian figure³⁰⁰ you can mention, apart from a very small handful of television evangelists and a few public figures (Oral Roberts, for one), have never enjoyed this second so-called baptism of the Holy Spirit experience. Here are the options: (1) these historic Christian figures who did not have an additional post-salvation experience lied—they really did have this experience, but either didn't tell anyone or they kept it a secret (the most energizing experience of their Christian lives, and for some, the most important—and these great men kept it a secret); (2) they had it and didn't know it (again, the most energizing experience of the Christian lives of charismatics); or, (3) they were never baptized or filled with the Holy Spirit and everything that they did was done in the flesh. David Shibley fully admits that it would be ridiculous to think that these men were not filled with the and moved by Holy Spirit. This means that everything that these men did was worthless wood, hay and stubble which will be burned at the judgement seat of Christ (1Cor. 3). One thing which I will acknowledge, and any believer with a little doctrine would acknowledge, is that, apart from God the Holy Spirit, we are nothing and can do nothing. Our works, if not guided and fueled by God the Holy Spirit, are works of the flesh and will be burned in our final evaluation by God the Son. (4) A fourth option is that some people have this great experience and some do not; and, I guess we could determine that the difference is how we happen to feel. If we feel that our Christian life is weak and we don't feel energized, then, for some reason, we never got the quiet baptism of the Holy Spirit, so we must get the more demonstrative version, which can only be gotten in a charismatic setting with other charismatics putting their hands on us, or by listening to a church burst out speaking in the tongues of angels. However, no matter how you slice it, **charismatics must account for the fact that there are a huge number of great historical believers, who have done great things in the realm of evangelism and teaching God's Word, who have NEVER had this post-salvation experience.** In fact, this chasm is so great and significant, that I would expect it to be addressed in the Word of God (however, it is not, of course). If you believe in the *second blessing*, then you need to account for this important chasm in your own mind—you may even want to publish your thoughts, as no one has given this any significant print space. The best explanation for all of this is from David Shibley, who says that people have different reactions to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I would assume that he would say that the baptism of the Spirit could occur at different times. The only problem is this: why is God creating some believers to be second class Christians for a portion of their lives? If we are going to be regenerated on one day, but then not receive the Spirit until a half dozen years later—why would God do that? And why would He do it to some, but not to the vast majority? And, again, if some people need to be baptized in the Holy Spirit after salvation, why doesn't Paul, in one of his epistles, suggest that to one of the churches? When Jesus spoke of the lukewarm Laodicians in Rev. 3, why doesn't He suggest that they get the Holy Ghost? Every believer is baptized by the Spirit in a moment of time. **For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greek, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit** (1Cor. 12:13).³⁰¹ According to charismatic theology, there are millions of believers running around out there who have not yet been baptized by the Holy Spirit. Not only does this contradict what Paul is saying here, but it automatically separates believers into two classes, and those of us who have not *experienced* the baptism of the Holy Spirit (as they define it) are second-class Christians. We have not yet been empowered, and our lives, logically, would could as nothing, without the Holy Spirit. So, if your Christian friends have not experienced what you think is the baptism of the Spirit, then keep in mind, you are telling them that they are second class Christians, and

³⁰⁰ And don't forget that there are thousands of great believers whose names you don't even know who used their gifts to bring the Word of God to the people of God—like Count Konstantin von Tischendorf, Tregelles, Drs. Grenfell and Hunt.

³⁰¹ *Baptized* in this passage is in the aorist tense, which refers to a point of time.

that if you tell them that they have a vacant life because they lack the Holy Spirit, then you are contradicting the clear teaching of Scripture.

- mm. Another serious problem is that if this *baptism of the Spirit* is so important, then we should have several instances of Paul telling various congregations that they need to seek out the Holy Spirit and get baptized by it. However, throughout all of the epistles, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is always spoken of in the aorist tense, which usually denotes a completed event or fact in a point of time. Recall that lukewarm church in Laodicea that Jesus speaks of—now, there would be the opportunity to suggest that the congregation seek after the Holy Spirit; but, that is not presented. Probably one of the most repeated doctrines in Scripture is salvation and how to obtain it. If a believer's life is not complete at salvation, and if a believer needs to seek after the Holy Spirit, then that should be the second most repeated doctrine in Scripture. *If an individual experience of the "baptism of the Spirit" subsequent to conversion is the true pinnacle of spirituality, why is there no reference to this in the epistles? Wouldn't the carnal Corinthian Christians have been candidates for such an experience? Or wouldn't the fickle Galatians have been in line for it? The Apostle Paul did not so much as mention such an experience in the letters he addressed to them, nor did he tell them to seek it. Nor did he write in this manner to any of the other churches.*³⁰² That the Holy Spirit is necessary in our lives—that is clearly taught. That we, as regenerated believers, **must** seek after an additional experience—that is not taught. At best, the charismatic can point to 3, maybe 4 passages (all of which we have studied in great detail) where the giving of the Holy Spirit and salvation may have occurred at different times (and this is debatable).
- nn. It is equally obvious that a person who does not believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is an experience separate from salvation and that the speaking of tongues is not for this time period must be able to explain the passages in Acts 2, 8, 10 and 19.
- oo. Those who were baptized by the Spirit as a separate experience from salvation had believed in Jesus during His earthly ministry. This is obviously true with the Apostles (Acts 2). When it reads that the Samaritans *had received* the Word of God (Acts 8:14), *received* is in the perfect tense, which is something that has occurred in the past with results that carry on into the future. The final people who received the Holy Spirit as a separate experience from salvation are found in Acts 19—the disciples of John the Baptizer. It actually appears that in this case that when they were baptized by John the Baptizer that that was an expression of positive volition and that they were not saved until Paul spoke to them, as Paul does give the gospel in this passage (Acts 19:1–7).
- pp. Our model is Cornelius, who is a Gentile who believed in Christ and received the Holy Spirit at salvation. When the Gentiles were baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit in Acts 10:44, the Holy Spirit apparently fell upon them as they believed in Jesus Christ. Although this could be argued that they had believed earlier,³⁰³ what we appear to have is positive volition (Acts 10:1–2), whose desire for salvation is answered by a missionary, so to speak (Acts 10:3–23). Peter gave Cornelius the gospel of Christ Jesus when they first spoke (Acts 10:34–43). While Peter was speaking the gospel, the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius and company, which would be the time that they believed in Christ (Acts 44). **Then** Cornelius and the other Gentiles with him are baptized with water (Acts 10:47–48). The fact that Peter spoke the gospel to Cornelius and baptized him after this message; this would indicate that Cornelius, although he expressed positive volition toward God after reaching God consciousness, was saved when Peter spoke to him.
- qq. The distribution of spiritual gifts is not a matter of human volition or desire. One does not surrender, beg, cajole, pray or ask God for specific gifts. **But one and the same Spirit works all of these [gifts] and distributes them to each one individually, just as He wills** (1Cor. 12:11). It is not a matter of what we desire. We do not have to seek after these gifts—God the Holy Spirit distributes them as He chooses, according to His sovereign will. We don't receive them because we seek them, we don't receive them because we tarry, or because people lay hands upon us—we receive these gifts as a part of God's sovereign will. How different this is from the charismatics who push you toward this extra experience that they attribute to the Spirit.

³⁰² G. Christian Weiss, *Birth, Baptism, Filling: The Holy Spirit's Work* [pamphlet]; Back to the Bible Broadcast, ©1973, p. 15.

³⁰³ Cornelius, the Gentile in question, is called *righteous*; but that is by his servant (Acts 10:22).

- rr. The baptism of the Holy Spirit places us into union with the body of Christ—it is a **unifying** factor (1Cor. 12:13 Eph. 4:5³⁰⁴). The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the *one baptism* referred to in Eph. 4:5. In that general passage, Paul lists the unifying factors of believers: **There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one confidence of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all Who is over all and in all** (Eph. 4:4–6). Obviously, this one baptism is not water baptism, as that is (1) not a doctrine which should be at a high level of importance, and (2) is certainly not a unifying factor of Christianity (my saying that it is a relatively unimportant doctrine right there would cause some divisions). The *so-called* baptism of the Holy Spirit as taught by charismatics is also a divisive doctrine.
- ss. A person who is baptized with the Holy Spirit is baptized into Christ and clothed with Christ (Rom. 6:3 Gal. 3:27).
- tt. One of the tremendous factors of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is that it is a leveling ground. It sets all social, racial and gender distinctions aside (Gal. 3:26–28). Historically, when the Holy Spirit was first sent by our Lord, He first baptized the existing Jewish believers into Christ (Acts 2), then the existing Samaritan (half Jewish) believers into Christ (Acts 8); and finally, the most surprising of all, He then baptized the Gentile believers into Christ (Acts 10).
- uu. This baptism identifies us both with Christ’s death on the cross as well as with His resurrection into life (Rom. 6:3–4³⁰⁵ Col. 2:12).
- vv. Everyone who believes in Christ is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. **Now on the last day, the great feast day, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living waters.’ ” But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified** (John 7:37–39 Isa. 58:11). By this, I don’t think that our Lord meant that 90% of the believers today (and 99% of the believers historically) would not receive the Holy Spirit. Again, keep in mind that the charismatic movement is relatively new and that we have over 1800 years of believers who did not experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a separate, ecstatic experience.
- ww. Distinctions: the baptism of the Holy Spirit does not equal the filling of the Holy Spirit does not equal being slain in the spirit.
- i. Nowhere in the Bible are we every commanded to be baptized by God the Holy Spirit. If Paul tells us that this occurs for all believers and Jesus promises the same thing, that means that you have been baptized by God the Holy Spirit whether you feel as though you have or not.
 - ii. We are commanded to be *filled* with the Holy Spirit. This is simply yielding our lives over to God. The precise mechanics are naming our sins to God. Only someone who has been baptized with the Spirit can be filled with the Spirit. Therefore, only believers can be filled with God the Holy Spirit and unbelievers cannot. However, **every** believer can be filled with the Holy Spirit. Again, the mechanics are naming your sins to God (1Cor. 11:31 1John 1:9).
 - iii. There is no such Biblical phrase as being *slain in the spirit* nor is there any case history or doctrine in the Old or New Testaments which document anything like being *slain in the spirit*.
- xx. Next distinction: the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not equivalent to regeneration. Believers were regenerated in the Old and New Testaments; the baptism of the Holy Spirit was initiated at Pentecost and continued throughout the Church Age.
- yy. Let me reiterate the these most important points to bear in mind when it comes to the baptism of the Holy Spirit:
- i. Christian history is filled with thousands upon thousands of well-known, dedicated believers who never received the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a separate experience (or, even as an *experience* at all).
 - ii. Both Paul and Jesus told us that all believers would receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
 - iii. We are nowhere commanded to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Nowhere, even in the book of Acts, is it presented as a matter of human volition.

³⁰⁴ This one baptism—and I tell you this as a person who attended a Baptist church for five years—is Spirit baptism, not water baptism. Water baptism often divides (see 1Cor. 11–17).

³⁰⁵ We know this passage refers to Spirit baptism because we are being baptized into Christ.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

86. One point which many charismatics have made over and over with me is that, no matter what I say, no matter what arguments I present, they know that speaking in tongues is right, because they have experienced it for themselves. Speaking in tongues makes them feel good and energized, therefore, they know it has to be right and good and from God. I used to hear the exact same argument from people who used drugs. They claimed that a person who did not use drugs could not reasonably evaluate them. Wrong. We evaluate what is right and wrong by Scripture. It does not matter how good or how right an experience seems to be to us—this is not the way that we determine whether or not it is good and right. For some believers, this is going to be a difficult point to grasp, but try to consider this: did you realize that there are hundreds of things in life which feel really good and yet are not right nor are they from God? Ask anyone who has taken diet pills or amphetamines. The first few times a person takes amphetamines, they will swear by them. They have this great burst of energy, these wonderful feelings and emotions, they get things done. However, amphetamines are some of the most evil types of drugs on this planet. The fact that using amphetamines feels good is not a good enough reason to recommend them. The fact that you and your friends speak in tongues and it feels good and everyone in your congregation does it, and that it seems to give you this great blast of spiritual energy—although these things seem important, we cannot evaluate the gift of tongues by these criteria. **No matter what has happened to us, no matter how we feel, no matter how these things are substantiated by those around us—if the Bible repudiates it, then it is wrong. You do not get to judge spiritual truth by how you feel or by what has happened to you.** It should be clear to every person who speaks in tongues that this additional experience of speaking in tongues after being baptized by the Spirit or slain in the spirit is either a necessary experience (in which case, we would have not only precedence for it in Scripture, but imperatives associated with it) or it is not. We do not get to tread some middle ground and say that it's good for some, but not for others. I was personally lucky. Very early in my Christian life I had to subordinate some of my pet ideas and philosophies to the Bible. At the time, I had been a believer for only six months. However, this was very difficult to do. I thought that certain things were true, and the Bible told me just the opposite. I realized that I had to go with Scripture. Now, I clearly recall how difficult it was for me way back then, so that I can't hardly imagine someone who, after spending years and even decades in bogus activity, to be able to subordinate that to Scripture.
87. As we launch into an exegesis of a few passages in 1Corinthians, you should be aware of the background. Paul founded the church at Corinth during his second missionary journey (Acts 18) and taught there for over a year, which is a particularly long time for the Apostle of grace. After he left, the church became severely infected with problems: incest, the abuse of spiritual gifts, infighting, divisions, just to name a few. One of the biggest problems was their misunderstanding of the function and use of spiritual gifts. This was likely the most corrupt church in that time period—and, what a surprise, many were speaking in tongues whenever they felt like it (and this was the legitimate gift of tongues).
88. We will now launch into an exegetical study of portions of 1Corinthians 12–14. John MacArthur gives a fairly reasonable background to this church on pp. 161–167, which pages I will utilize when I exegete properly the entire letter of 1Corinthians. He covers some of the esoteric and ecstatic religious practices of the ancient world, which would appear, superficially, to be apropos in our study. The fact that such things exist definitely applies to the use of the gift of tongues today; however, I don't find Paul spending any time distinguishing between the false and the true with regards to spiritual gifts; therefore, we will not need to do so either.
89. In 1Cor. 12, we have a number of principles that we will not explore fully. However, we will make the following points:
- The gifts of the Spirit are all distributed by the sovereign will of God the Holy Spirit (1Cor. 12:4–6, 11).
 - The manifestation of the Holy Spirit's gift giving is for the common good (1Cor. 12:7).
 - There are a variety of gifts all given by the same Spirit (1Cor. 12:5–6, 8–11).
 - We are all a part of the same body; no one is less a part of the body than anyone else, no part of the body is inferior to any other part, and no part of the body is without a necessary function (1Cor. 12:15–27).
 - Paul lists several of the spiritual gifts in order of their importance, giving those gifts which are related to communication of doctrine first; then gifts which establish the authority of those who communicate God's Word; then those related to administration around a church; and finally, tongues, which was a special kind of evangelism (1Cor. 12:28).

- f. Nowhere in 1Cor. 12–14 does Paul explicitly differentiate the gift of tongues here from the gift of tongues in Acts 2. There is no reason to assume that there is a difference between the gift of tongues here and in Acts 2, apart from theological predilections.
- g. Now, even though these gifts can be listed in order of importance, they are all necessary and no one necessarily gets whatever gift that they want (1Cor. 12:29–30). Then we have v. 27:

But you are [the] body of Christ and parts from a portion. 1Corinthians 12:27 **Now you are [the] body of Christ and members from a portion [of Him].**

Now, you all are together the body of Christ and each one of you is a member of His body.

There is no Scripture in the New Testament which indicates that any particular believer is not a part of Christ's body. Or, stated in the positive, we are all a part of the body of Christ. The third to the last word in this verse is the plural neuter noun μέλος (μέλος) [pronounced MEL-oss], which means *a limb, member, or part* of a body. Strong's #3196. This is followed by the preposition ek (ἐκ) [pronounced ehk], and it generally means *out of, out from, from, of*. Strong's #1537. The last word is the genitive neuter singular of μέρος (μέρος) [pronounced MEH-ros], which means *part, portion, side, coast*. Strong's #3313. Rendering this so that it makes sense is rather difficult, so let me give you what others have done:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Now ye are the body of Christ, and members severally;—
Interlinear word-for-word	Now you are <i>the</i> body of Christ and parts from <i>each</i> part.
Interlinear idiomatic	Now you are <i>the</i> body of Christ and members individually.
NASB	Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.
Weymouth	As for you, you are the body of Christ, and individually you are members of it.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	...and ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

To be quite frank with you, I am not overly thrilled with the translations listed above (which are the most literal of the translations); nor am I all that happy with mine. I think we can safely derive from this verse that each one of us is a member of the body of Christ; and collectively, we make up the body of Christ. The entire context would allow for at least that.

And those who has set the God in the church: first, Apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers; then powers; then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, kinds of tongues.	1Corinthians 12:28	And God has placed these in the church: first, Apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers; then [demonstrations of] power; then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of foreign languages.
--	--------------------	--

And God has appointed these gifts in the church: Apostles, first of all; prophets, second; teachers, third; then the gift of miracles; and finally the gifts of healings, helps, administrations and varieties of dialects.

Paul sets up an order of importance here. The foundation of the church, in terms of spiritual gifts, is the Apostles, and therefore, they are listed first. The Apostles laid the foundation for the Church in terms of doctrine, function and organization. Secondly, the prophets explained the doctrines of the Church Age, as there was not yet a canon of Scripture. Teachers were those who taught the epistles which Paul and other Apostles had written, as well as explain the Old Testament in the light of what had happened. Therefore, first and foremost in importance in relation to the Church of God is teaching.

Powers is δύναμις (δύναμις) [pronounced DOO-nahm-iss], which means *power, ability, able, capable*. Strong's #1411. This is a word used for the demonstration of God's power; what is achieved is not necessarily a miracle, although it may appear to be. This does not mean that it is magic. For those of you who studied the book of Exodus with me, I showed you how some of the miracles performed through the agency of Moses were not

necessarily miracles, but things which God had set in motion in eternity past to occur just at that moment. Some people incorrectly assess that somehow the greatness of these *natural* miracles is lessened because they fall within the realm of explainable phenomena. Not true—God in eternity past had planned for these things to happen just as they did at exactly the right time. This shows a tremendous power to plan a great work to occur just at the right time in the right place. This reveals much greater power than God doing something outside the realm of physics.

There is another word that we should look at. Charismatics, although they sometimes resent a teacher going back to the Greek in order to explain more completely what a verse actually says, will often take one word and blow that one word out of proportion or take it out of its context. Here, it is the plural neuter noun *génos* (γένος) [pronounced *GEHN-oss*], which means *offspring, posterity, family, lineage, nation, people, kind, sort, species*. Strong's #1085. Charismatic often seize this word and claim that it means there are two types of speaking in tongues: (1) known human languages; and (2) holy angelic languages. However, we do not see such a distinction clearly made elsewhere in Scripture (be patient—we are coming to 1Cor. 13:1). Since the gift of translating tongues is not mentioned here, but is in v. 30, which implies that it was a legitimate spiritual gift, that this could refer both to speaking in tongues and translating them; however, what is more likely, is that this simply refers to the varieties of human languages. There is no reason to read more into a verse than is really there; and **you must never base an important doctrine upon what you read into a verse**. The very first time the gift of tongues is mentioned in Scripture, it is clearly known, human languages. This passage is the last time that tongues will be mentioned, and, when we get to 1Cor. 14:21, it will be clear that we are still speaking of known, human languages. If there were two different types of gifts of tongues, then Scripture is completely silent on making such a distinction. If you want to read that into this verse, I cannot stop you—but you are reading more into this verse than is warranted. You are taking your experiences, which you have assumed, ipso facto, to be spiritual truth, and then you build upon that. Approaching divine truth from that standpoint—i.e., what you have experienced is the norm and standard of divine truth, and all else will be made to be in conformance with your experience—then believing in tongues on **that** basis is completely valid. Furthermore, interpreting this verse and any other verse in that light, assuming first that the experience is spiritually genuine, and that all Scripture must fall in line with the experience, then your other interpretations are also absolutely valid. My arguments are based 100% on Scripture, its Greek text and literary context, and 0% upon experience. If this is the case, then we simply have two different measures of truth and one interpretation is no more valid than the other, because the bases of truth to which we defer are different.

What does this phrase mean *varieties of tongues*? In the ancient world, there were several languages spoken throughout the area evangelized by the Apostles. The primary ones were Greek, Latin and Aramaic (think *Yiddish*). However, not all Greek was Greek; not all Latin was Latin. An Irishman might attempt to speak to an American southerner and they may have a very difficult time understanding one another, even though they both speak English. Near the end of my teaching career, there were some kids who could converse with one another and I barely got the gist of what they were saying. They had developed a slang which was English, but difficult for some (primarily adults) to understand. These are dialects. A dialect could be thought of as a member of a particular linguistic family. People who speak different dialects from the same parent language can generally get the gist of what is being said; but not all of what is being said. A Mexican, for instance, could overhear two Italians speaking, and he would get the gist of the conversation, but he wouldn't understand all of it. So, what we had in the ancient world were three major languages and all of their various dialects. Taken together, they would be thought of as *varieties of tongues*. A person with the gift of tongues could speak one or more languages or dialects that he previously did not know.

Not all Apostles; not all prophets; not all teachers; not all [workers of] powers; not all gifts of healings; not all with tongues speak; not all translate.

1Corinthians
12:29–30

[Are] all Apostles? No. [Are] all prophets? No. [Are] all teachers? No. [Do] all work powers? No. [Do] all [have] gifts of healing? No. Do all speak with tongues? No. Do all translate? No.

Are all Apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all demonstrators great powers? Do all possess the gift of healing? Do all speak in foreign languages? Do all translate?

A question which I was unable to resolve is why these phrases are translated as questions. The Greek certainly allows for them to be translated as questions, but it does not seem to demand that (there are no marks of punctuation in the Greek). In a question, the use of *mē* (μή) [pronounced *may*] demands a negative answer. Strong's #3361. In any case, the result is the same—not every believer is an Apostle; not every believer is a prophet; not every believer speaks in tongues. It does not matter that dear old pastor so-and-so, who was kind and dramatic and dynamic, who encouraged you to get the *baptism* and showed you how to speak in tongues as you did—it does not matter what a fine, marvelous person he was or is—not everyone speaks in tongues. In a question, *mē* **demands** a negative answer; context **demands** a negative answer. This is **not** a negative answer simply because most believers choose not to pursue an additional charismatic experience, believing it to be unwarranted, if not demonic—this demands an absolute, unconditional negative. **Everyone** receives a spiritual gift—a manifestation of the Spirit—for the common good. **But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good** (1Cor. 12:7). Now, I realize that someone can twist the meaning of this verse, as they do many others, and say that everyone gets a manifestation of the Spirit—a spiritual gift—designed for the common good; but then everyone also gets tongues for his own personal good if they want it. You can twist, you can add, you can modify—but realize that you are taking your personal experience and your interpretation of that experience to be the basis of reality, and then making Scripture conform to that reality. Anyone can read the first few verses of this chapter, and realize that the context is spiritual gifts (vv. 1,4); that these gifts are manifestations of the Holy Spirit (v. 6–7); that **everyone** gets a gift or more (v. 7); that these gifts are for the common good (v. 7); and **not everyone gets the same gift or gifts** (v. 8–11, 12, 14–25, 29–30). That latter point is the point of this chapter more than anything else. I don't care what your position is and if you have not yet been convinced that the gift of tongues is not for today—if your pastor or your church teaches that you need a second experience which they call the baptism of the spirit and **that this baptism will be accompanied by speaking in tongues**, then you know that they are teaching complete and utter falsehoods, at least in this regard. The major point of this chapter is that we all have different spiritual gifts—**you cannot read this any other way**. Now, if your church or your pastor is teaching you wrong on a point that is so absolutely clear and incontrovertible; and **if everyone in your church who gets the ghost also speaks in tongues**; then do you realize that you have both a doctrinal and an experiential problem?

Let's break that down and make it clear. Most charismatic churches teach that the manifestation of this baptism of the Spirit will be speaking in tongues. This passage unequivocally says that is wrong. This passage clearly states that everyone has different spiritual gifts—there is not even the slightest indication that most believers speak in tongues. The implication, if anything, is that most believers do not and will not speak in tongues. If your church teaches you just the opposite, then in how many other areas is it teaching falsehood? This is not only the proper interpretation of this chapter, but no one can really contest that without a lot of mangling of Scripture. The second problem, which is extremely important if you like to base your reality upon what you have experienced is this: it is clear in this passage that not all will speak in tongues; **how come, in a charismatic church, almost everyone speaks in tongues who gets this additional baptism of the spirit?** Do you grasp what a serious problem this is, experientially? It is just as though *everyone* claimed to have the gift of Apostleship; it is as though everyone claimed to have the gift of healing; it is as though everyone claimed to have the gift of miracles (or, powers). And even though we are not speaking of each and every charismatic church, we are speaking of most charismatic churches. Those who get the baptism also speak in tongues in most charismatic churches. My point is, that if you have to base your theology upon what has happened experientially, then you are left with this conundrum: Paul has stated, unequivocally, in verse after verse after verse, that not all people have the same spiritual gifts (and he also stated that tongues was on the bottom with regards to importance). Yet in your charismatic church, everyone has spoken in tongues (if they got the baptism). Therefore, that experience does not line up with the Bible—it is not even close. Now, which is correct—the Bible or the experience of most charismatic churches? Now, why on earth would the gift of tongues be the gift which is manifested by every believer at First Charismatic Church of Your Town? Simple: **anyone can fake and/or learn the gift of tongues**; not everyone could fake or learn how to heal or even how to prophesy (speak out God's truth without notes and without preparation).

I certainly admit that there are some passages, that, apart from their context, or apart from other passages, could be looked at in two or three different ways. That is one reason the Bible is not meant to be handled by amateurs. Have you ever heard of the gift of pastor-teacher? That is his job, to teach difficult passages in their context.

However, God meant for every doctrine to be understood and for His Word to be fully understood by any believer who desires to know His Truth. You start with the simple, most fundamental truths; you start with the clearest, most repeated doctrines; you start with the passages which cannot be taken in two or three different ways; and then you build upon that. When it comes to God's truth, you do not get to factor in your experience as a determining factor of how anything should be interpreted. **Let God be true and every man a liar** (Rom. 8:4). And, if you are going to factor in your experience, then you must examine it from every aspect. Even if tomorrow, every single charismatic church in the world began to teach that the baptism of the spirit as a second experience is required; but only a small percentage would speak in tongues—there is still the problem that for one hundred years, that has not been the case, giving us a clear, incontrovertible contradiction between this chapter and the experience of the charismatic movement.

Now, some charismatics will still say, *tongues are used by all in private and only a few use these in the public church assemblies*. There are several problems with that: (1) there is no evidence that a spiritual gift is designed for self-edification (such a view not only contradicts verses in this chapter, but flies in the face of what Paul teaches in chapter 13); and, (2) if you are going to have people speaking in tongues in private, then are their people who are Apostles in private? People who doing healings, but only in private (and, I guess, just on themselves)? You don't get to interpret things one way for the gift of tongues and differently for the other gifts mentioned. Finally, (3) the whole tenor of this chapter is that everyone is given their own spiritual gift—not everyone has the same spiritual gift. There is nothing in here about using a gift in private for personal edification. That has to be added by personal theology into this context because it isn't there in reality.

It is interesting that there is a *tongues* movement, but not *helps* movement. Dillow asks the question: *Doesn't it seem strange that the charismatic movement has centered on the more outwardly showy and miraculous gifts and the ones that are the least edifying to others but the most edifying to oneself?* it is simple human psychology. You don't have dozens of Christians banging on the door of their church demanding to dump the garbage, answer the phones, mow the lawns or to sweep the parking lot. These are real things which edify the church and need to be done and those who do them function within the realm of their spiritual gift. However, in some churches, there are an inordinate amount of believers who claim to speak in tongues and want to do so publically at every opportunity. Why don't these same people want to mow the church's lawn at every opportunity? Why aren't they demanding to take out the garbage six times a day to exercise that spiritual gift? Those gifts are not as showy—they involve work, they involve actual dedication, they involve the building up of the other believers by providing a clean environment within which to learn God's Word. These people actually have spiritual gifts that they use to benefit the church as a whole; and they do not have to exercise these gifts in front of everyone else. You don't see the one who scrubs the toilets calling everyone's attention to their position and demanding recognition for their very necessary contribution. But, the ones who speak in tongues—they are going to yell this out in church like wild Banshees so that everyone can hear that they have got the gift. This calls attention to themselves; it does not build up the church; and it is not a legitimate function of a spiritual gift.

And desire earnestly the better gifts.

1Corinthians
12:31a

And [you all should] desire earnestly the better gifts.

And all of you should earnestly desire the better gifts.

After the connective *kaí*, we have the 2nd person plural, present active imperative³⁰⁶ of *zêlóō* (ζηλόω) [pronounced *dzay-LOH-oh*], which means *to desire zealously, to be zealous for something, to make a show of zeal, to profess affection in order to gain someone as a follower*. Strong's #2206. Paul orders all of them (i.e., the church at Corinth) to desire, to focus on, to choose to have, to earnestly desire the better gifts. If tongues is listed in last place, then this **would not be** tongues (I know that is a deep point). I mention this because if you are a charismatic, and some newbie is being pushed to get the ghost, do you encourage him or her to desire the office

³⁰⁶ This can be taken as a present active indicative. Joseph Dillow, who takes issue with the charismatic movement, makes a reasonable argument for that on p. 71 of *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975. I still opt for the imperative, as do most translations. I believe the indicative is contraindicated here, as the Corinthians did not seem to desire the better gifts; therefore, Paul would have used the indicative mood (the mood of reality) only in sarcasm.

of Apostleship? Do you push him or her in the direction of pastor-teacher, prophet, evangelist? Is this the gift that is stressed and therefore striven for? No, every charismatic group surrounding a newbie will push for him or her to desire to speak in tongues. In fact, even though not everyone will speak in tongues (1Cor. 12:17, 29), the pastor and the surrounding group will encourage this person to begin speaking in tongues. They, as a group, are doing exactly the opposite of what Paul tells them to do. Rather than earnestly desiring as a group that this newbie be touched with a great gift, they all desire that this person receive the least of all spiritual gifts; they all desire that this newbie speak in tongues. Now, no matter where you stand with regards to this gift of tongues, you cannot deny that this is how 99% of all charismatic churches deal with newbies. They desire for this person exactly the opposite of what Paul suggests that they desire. They desire for their church just exactly the opposite of what Paul orders them to desire. And, if anyone should know these passages of Scripture, shouldn't it be members of a charismatic church? So, even if you are wrong and you believe that tongues are a part of the spiritual gifts given by the Holy Spirit today, and even if you are wrong and believe that men speak with the tongues of angels; when you desire that a new member of your congregation (or a prospective member) speak in tongues and you so encourage him, you are acting in opposition to Paul's directive right here. Doesn't that tell you that something is wrong? Doesn't that tell you that there is a serious fundamental problem with the charismatic movement? In the charismatic literature which I read, I cannot tell you how many times I was told that this subsequent-to-salvation experience brought believers into a deeper and more obedient relationship with Christ. **If you are doing, as a group, the exact opposite of what Scripture tells you to do, then how is that a deeper and more obedient relationship with Christ?**

And yet according to a more excellent way to you I show: 1Corinthians 12:31b

And I will point out to you a still more excellent way:

Let's approach spiritual gifts from another angle:

After *and yet*, we have the preposition *katá* (κατά) [pronounced *kaw-TAW*], which means *down, down from, down upon, according to, after*, according to a norm or standard. Strong's #2596. This is followed by the feminine accusative singular of *huperbolē* (ὑπερβολή) [pronounced *hoop-air-bohl-AY*], which means *to throw beyond the others*. It means *abundance, excellence*, and when used with *katá*, it means *more exceedingly, a far better way*. Strong's #5236.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

90. Where we will go next is 1Cor. 13, the **only** passage where the *tongues of angels* mentioned. For those who are unfamiliar with the so-called gift of tongues, you must first realize that when people speak with tongues inside and outside the church building do not speak in Russian, or in Portugese, or in Arabic—they speak with the *tongues of angels*. They babble and babble, and they ascribe this babbling to God the Holy Spirit and most of them believe that they are speaking in the same languages that angels use. Furthermore, every single one of them knows about this passage which mentions *tongues of angels*; yet, not a single one of them has a clue as to what this passage actually says. The phrase *tongues of angels* is there and that means to them that (1) everyone who is saved needs to get the baptism of the Spirit; (2) the sign of this will be the speaking in tongues; and, (3) these will be the *tongues of angels*. Now, if I were going to base my experience of speaking in tongues, which is this marvelous experience to me, on Scripture, I would want to have some clue as to the interpretation of the Scripture. I don't want to be like one of those people who reaches into Scripture, wrenches a verse like Heb. 4:9 out of its context, and then declare that believers must observe the Sabbath day (Saturday).

Before we get into this passage, let us just assume, only for a moment, that there is such a thing as the gift of tongues and that those who speak in tongues are speaking in a variety of angelic languages. First of all, most people who speak in tongues would have to agree that there are many different angelic languages, as, apart from certain consistencies in the speaking in angelic tongues (the general repetition of vowels and consonants), two people who speak in tongues generally sound as though they are speaking two different languages, even though

the interpretation of what they say might be exactly the same. Now, here is the problem: why on earth are there several angelic languages? We know what there are several languages of man, but there is no indication that angels speak in different languages (in the angelic courtroom scene in Job 1–2, there appears as though there is no communication barrier). When angels speak with man on earth, they speak in human languages (in whatever language the man speaks). The point that I am making is that there is no reason whatsoever to assume that there are hundreds of different angelic languages. There is no justification for such a position in Scripture or in the realm of logic. Yet, such a thing is accepted without thought and certainly without justification on the part of charismatics. It fits in with their predispositions, therefore it must be true.

In this chapter we will also stop and take a look at several of the temporary gifts of the church which faded out of existence. We will examine the function of the gifts as well as the reasons and the documentation that they disappeared from the scene.

Now, before we exegete this passage, we need to make a general observation. The church at Corinth was the most carnal of all the churches. And it is only this church which had problems with speaking in tongues. They were the most out of control church that Paul wrote to. From this church, we have the early stirrings of demonism (1Cor. 1:11–15). They did not grasp the power of the Word of God, nor did they differentiate between spiritual knowledge and worldly knowledge (1Cor. 1:18–2:16). One member of the church was living in an incestuous relationship with his father's wife; but, the real problem was that the believers at Corinth seemed to think that this was some sort of great thing, which extolled the grace of God (1Cor. 5). These believers were taking one another to pagan courts for real or imagined wrongs in order to sue them (1Cor. 6:1–8). Apparently, some were having sexual relations with prostitutes (1Cor. 6:12–20). There were problems with marriage, sexual sins, etc. (1Cor. 7). They were confused about what liberation in Christ meant and how far they could and should take this liberty (1Cor. 8–9). They had no understanding of the use or interdependence of spiritual gifts (1Cor. 12–14). Some did not even believe in bodily resurrection (1Cor. 15). Therefore, if we are going to have a problem with the gift of tongues, this is where you would expect it to be. Now, why is this significant? Because charismatics indicate that you can go from having a lame Christian life to a vibrant, fulfilling Christian life by being baptized in the Holy Spirit after salvation (sometimes years and years after salvation) which proof comes by speaking in tongues. Too bad the Corinthians didn't know this. Why are tongues and this post-salvation experience supposed to work one way for charismatics, but in our only historical record of tongues being used in the church (after Pentecost), there is not the same revitalizing, revolutionizing affect? In fact, if anything, we could point to the Corinthians as being about the lamest, most immoral church that Paul wrote to. Frank Stagg: *It is significant that it was at Corinth, where conduct was most disgraceful, that speaking in tongues was most prized.*³⁰⁷ Paul accused them of making judgments based upon superficial criteria: **You keep looking at things as they are outwardly. If any one is confident in himself that he is Christ's, let him consider this again within himself, that just as he is Christ's, so are we** (2Cor. 10:7). Paul apparently was not much to look at, nor did he have a powerful voice; and these things entered into their evaluation of him (2Cor. 10:10). They were one of the church's, despite seeing Paul demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit, who demanded proof of Paul's authority (2Cor. 12:12 13:2–3). They were so interested in experiential matters, that Paul was forced to finally speak of something experiential which happened to him that he apparently had not discussed for 14 years—since it originally happened (2Cor. 12:1–7).

Let me give you the brief overview of the point of this chapter. In Corinth, they were disputing about who had what gift, which gift was better, and those with the legitimate gift of tongues were demonstrating their gift at the most inappropriate times—right in the middle of the church service, they would start speaking in tongues. Now tongues is a very specialized gift—it is a pronouncement of judgement upon the Jew because the gospel is given to the Jew in a gentile language or God is speaking to the Jew in a gentile language. That is its specific purpose. Therefore, to use the gift of tongues just to show that you have the gift of tongues was inappropriate. If there was a Jewish unbeliever in the church, particularly an out of town; or if one encountered a Jewish unbeliever in one's personal life, using the gift of tongues would be appropriate. Obviously, we are not talking about a daily use here—a person in that day and age, when the gift of tongues was legitimate, might use this gift correctly a half dozen times in his entire life. It was a very specialized gift and it was supernatural. Other believers had the gift of translation of

³⁰⁷ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, pp. 38–39.

languages, and it is never made clear whether this was a supernatural gift.³⁰⁸ Because of the nature of the gift of tongues, a believer, when in fellowship, could speak in tongues at will. Well, this was quite impressive sounding and some would do it pretty much to hear the sound of their own voices. Have you ever listened to a toddler talk and talk and talk? He is not communicating with you so much as just talking. He might be just as verbal when you are out of the room. This is the same deal. When a believer with the gift of tongues spoke, it was clear that he had a gift given to him by God. There was no doubt about that. So, often, these people with that gift used it simply to hear themselves speak. There was no spiritual purpose; it did not edify the members of the congregation; it did not judge an unbelieving Jew; it did not evangelize an unbelieving Jew (if none were present, which would be the majority of the time). Well, Paul will explain the rules and regulations in chapter 14, but he stops in chapter 13 and approaches this from a different direction. In order to use your spiritual gift properly, you must be filled with the Holy Spirit. If you are filled with the Holy Spirit, you will manifest certain characteristics, one of which is love toward your fellow believers. If a person exercises his spiritual gift with a view toward edifying or building up the rest of the congregation, that is a manifestation of love, which is a manifestation of the filling of the Holy Spirit. Paul is simply telling the believers at Corinth to use their gifts in love—that is, if the use of the gift is an outpouring of love—they use the gift for the benefit of others—then that gift is being used legitimately. If the gift is used for self benefit (called *seeking one's own* in v. 5); if the gift is used and the user subtly or not-so-subtly implies that he is on a higher spiritual level, then the gift is not being properly used. **Love does not brag nor does it act arrogant.** If the gift is used because someone else used their gift, then the gift is not being properly used. **Love is not jealous.** If someone just blurts out with the gift of tongues at inappropriate times, the gift is not being properly used. **Love does not act unbecomingly.** So, we will get to the specific restrictions upon the use of tongues; however, this chapter gives us a good rule of thumb in the realm of the use of spiritual gifts, which might be partially summarized as: **If a spiritual gift is used with the intention and reality of providing that which is beneficial to the church, then the gift is being properly used.**

We need to cover a very specific problem and a very common misunderstanding with the first verse of this chapter. Most people, including some very good expositors, interpret 1Cor. 13:1 as meaning that a person might speak with the *tongues of men* (which would be known, human languages) and some might speak with the *tongues of angels* (which are interpreted as the babbling which occurs in charismatic churches). Those who give this interpretation to this verse completely ignore the context and read into it what is not there. They make the assumption that angels have a special language (actually, if we are going to interpret this along side of the tongues movement, then they would have to have thousands of different languages) and that these languages have nothing in common with human languages, lacking both of structure and variety, and, apart from some occasional emotional intensity, are often quite mundane. And, of course, we must assume that when angels communicate with us, they use our language, but when they communicate with one another or with God, that they use these special, *audible* languages (yes, keep in mind, these other languages must be audible as well). Even though angels have spirit bodies, they therefore must speak with audible sounds. Therefore, to read into this verse that Paul speaks with angelic languages, you are reading a lot of other things into angelology.

There are some people who like to hear something new, and, for many, this will be an approach to 1Cor. 13:1 that you have never heard before. Although someone may have interpreted this passage correctly before, I am not aware of that.³⁰⁹ As I mentioned in the introduction, John MacArthur comes quite close. Before we jump into this passage, we need to understand how Paul is going to logically put us into a corner. He will state a highly unlikely scenario, which, on the face of it, would seem to be very spiritual; then he will up the ante significantly, and make the point that even under these circumstances (being without *love*). This is the whole argument of vv. 1–3. Paul first of all says, *what if I spoke in the languages of men*—and then he ups the ante—*and of angels?* He will then say, *what if I have the gift of prophecy*—and then he ups the ante considerably—*and I know all mysteries and all*

³⁰⁸ God prepares believers for their lives in a multifarious number of ways—God placed Bob Thieme, Jr. in the military and gave him a great deal of training in that area. I was placed in education and I have spent over 20 years of my life teaching logical thinking to young minds, many of whom did not necessarily want to know how to think logically. Similarly, God may have placed various believers in situations where they had to learn another language, and, later on, used that knowledge to translate what was said by a person who speaks in tongues. I am not saying this is unequivocally the gift of interpretation of tongues; I am saying that it is not clear in Scripture whether it is a completely supernatural gift (i.e., a gift exercised without any training).

³⁰⁹ Joseph Dillow did recognize that exaggeration was involved here.

knowledge and I have all faith so as to move mountains! Then he poses the next point: *What if I give all my possessions—and, you're right, he will up the ante again—and what if I deliver my body over to be burned?* You need to get the gist of his argument—he first states something which is reasonable and could be the case—he speaks in foreign languages, he has the gift of prophecy, he gives his possessions away. Each of these is possible, and there are believers (during that time period) who could say, I could make those claims. Then, he argues from a position of the absurd. He raises the limit much higher than you would think that he would. He suddenly inserts: okay, we're not just going to mention the languages of men, let's throw in the languages of angels; let's throw in knowing **all** mysteries, having **all** knowledge and having enough faith to pick up and move mountains; let's also add in giving my body over to be burned. So, you know someone who gave his body over to be burned? Well, maybe you read a story about someone in history like that. You know someone who knows all mysteries, has all knowledge and can, by his faith alone, move a mountain? Obviously not. Now, do you know anyone who speaks with the languages of angels? Sure, my entire church does that pretty much every time we get together. Do you now grasp how you have completely missed the point of Paul's argument? Do you understand how Paul reasons and how you have totally ignored the logical basis of his reasoning in order to justify your beliefs? It's not like this is difficult to understand; it's not like we have to dig deeply into the Greek to grasp it. The reasoning is there; Paul's mode of argument is obvious to any person with half a brain. You may not like it because it doesn't fit in with your theology. You have twisted and taken the Scriptures out of their context (which includes their literary context) in order to justify what you believe. And let me remind you again and again—this is the **only** mention of *tongues of angels* in the entire Bible. You and all your charismatic friends speak with the tongues of angels, and you allude to this passage, to which you have only given the most condescending and brief examination, because a careful examination would indicate that no one (or, perhaps, one in a million) would speak with the tongues of angels. That is, if you believe that this is Scripture inspired by God the Holy Spirit and if you are willing to take this as Paul gave it. You see, you don't get to wrest the Scriptures out of their context and force them to mean something that you want them to mean. You don't get to twist the meaning of this passage to suit your personal theology. You don't get to give this passage your own private interpretation in order to validate the experiences that you have had. I don't know why I keep beating this dead horse. If you speak in tongues, you really do not give a damn about what the Bible says. If you have to choose between your experiences and what the Bible says, you are going to go with what you *feel* is right. You're going to stand on your experiences—and that is why you are a failure as a believer and an emotional wreck. That is why you are dishonorable in your dealings with others and why you are unstable in all your ways. And that is why all your accomplishments on this earth will make for one grand and glorious bon fire at the Judgement Seat of Christ. Now, you might be saved, so as by fire; but all of your works will be burned right in front of you. Now, those of you who speak in tongues and have been slain in the spirit or think you have received some special kind of baptism of the Spirit—if you haven't believed in Christ, if you haven't placed all of your faith on Him, you will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. You won't need to dress warm for that trip.

Let's go one step further—let's even assume for a moment that there are special, audible, even mundane angelic languages with which the angels use to communicate to one another and to God. This verse still does not mean that every single believer who gets the *baptism* will speak with angelic tongues on a regular basis. Even if such a thing existed, this verse still functions **in context** as an argument from absurdity or an argument from the standpoint of exaggeration, which would imply, if anything, that no one speaks in these angelic languages (and that is after assuming that they exist).

Now, even though I have covered the logic of what Paul has to say, we will still exegete this passage:

If with the tongues of man I speak and [even] [with the tongues of] the angels, but love I do not have, I become brass resounding, or cymbals shouting. 1Corinthians 13:1

Suppose I speak with the languages of man and even of angels, yet I do not have love, I become [as] resounding brass or shouting cymbals.

Suppose I continue to speak with the languages of men, and even of angels, and yet I do not have love [by the filling of the Spirit], then I am clanging brass or banging cymbals.

In this verse, we begin with the conjunction εάν (ἐάν) [pronounced *eh-AHN*], which is actually a combination of the conditional particle *if* and the particle of supposition. *Ei*, by itself, simply expresses a condition which is hypothetical—contracted with *an*, together, they refer to a condition which experience must determine, an objective possibility, however, something which is always future.³¹⁰ With the subjunctive mood, as we have here, this forms what is known as a 3rd class condition; *if*, and maybe it's true and maybe not. More specifically, this kind of construction *simply projects some action or event for hypothetical consideration*.³¹¹ Do you understand the meaning of the word *hypothetical*? Let me give you the Webster definition in relation to logic: *highly conjectural; not well supported by available evidence*. Strong's #1437. Paul is not stating some circumstance which is an actuality; he is not saying, *look here, kids, I speak with the tongues of men and angels*. He is making a supposition to make a point. There is a Greek conditional clause known as the 1st class condition, which means *if [and it's true]*. That is not used here. You cannot, from the standpoint of the Greek, from the use of the first word in this sentence, think of this as Paul stating something which is true in order to make a point. He is simply making a hypothetical supposition in order to make a logical point. One of the things that you do not know about Paul, because your studies of Scripture are superficial and border on meaningless, is that he is a master at debate. Although we have no substantiation of it, it appears as though Paul has had training in classical Greek debate (and this supposition is not based upon this verse alone). A good one-word rendering for this word, when followed by the subjunctive is *suppose*. *I speak* is in the present active subjunctive. The present tense refers to continuous action, but the subjunctive mood means *maybe it's true and maybe it's not*. The subjunctive mood is used as a part of the Greek debater's construction here. The next three verses are all constructed the same way, which is what you would expect when someone is making a point. *Suppose* + the present active subjunctive might be a better way to translate this. Then we have the two words *the tongues*. As has been pointed out in the very beginning, this means *the languages*. Now you see the word *with* in your Bible, yet there is no word for *with* in the Greek. This is because, in the Greek, many of the prepositions are understood because of the case of the noun. This noun is in the instrumental plural, meaning that we understand this to mean *by the languages* or *with the languages*. We might think of this as the preposition being built into the suffix of the noun. The first part of this clause reads, *Suppose I speak with the languages of men and of angels...* Now, this is how we place the verb in the English. We actually lose a little meaning when we do that. This clause literally reads: *Suppose with the tongues of men I keep speaking—and with [the tongues of] the angels...* Placing the verb between the two nouns alerts us to the fact that something is up. Now, the Corinthians who read this epistle did not speak *in the languages of angels*—and you know what? No one did. Paul adds this after the verb, to set it apart from *the tongues of men* in order to make a greater point. As I mentioned at the beginning—he is upping the ante. He is making almost an absurd conjecture here. How on earth could we convey this in the English? We could render *καί* as *and even*; that would give us the proper emphasis without going far afield from a literal rendering.

Then he adds to this the phrase: *and love I don't have*. Again, we are using the present active subjunctive and I have to give you the correct interpretation of what he is saying here, even though you probably won't buy it at first. In the Greek language, there were essentially three types of *love*, and the word *agapê* here was adopted by Paul and the early church to refer to divinely-inspired or divinely-motivated love. Without going off on a tangent as to a more precise meaning of *love*, suffice it to say that the ability and the energy here is from a divine source. In other words, what we are referring to is the filling of the Holy Spirit. We know that the *fruit* or the *production* of the Spirit is *love* (among other things—Gal. 5:22). Please understand what the book of 1 Corinthians was addressing. Paul, in chapter 3, spoke of the difference between divine good and human good (the latter would be burned at the Judgement Seat of Christ). Then, in the subsequent chapters, Paul covers proper Christian conduct and behavior. He covers topics like lawsuits, the use of one's liberty, avoiding the mistakes of Israel, conducting oneself properly in church. Then Paul covers the topic of spiritual gifts, which, during the time of the establishment of the early church (i.e., the time of Paul's missionary journeys), there were sign gifts. A sign gift, although spectacular in some instances, had a very limited use—they drew one's attention to the message being spoken. They were road signs with arrows on them pointing out a particular person or a particular authority. We have allowed our thinking to become so muddled and confused that we have no idea that the primary purpose of our Lord healing people was to teach them the gospel—to offer Himself in their stead for their sins. We think Jesus healed in order to alleviate suffering. That is completely wrong. The world, from one end to the other, is filled with suffering, both now and

³¹⁰ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament*; AMG Publishers; ©1992, p. 492.

³¹¹ Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*; JSOT Press, ©1992, p. 262.

then. With the wave of His hand, Jesus could have removed all illness and all suffering from the earth. He did not. Only in rare instances³¹² did He heal from a distance (and, in those rare instances, there was a point of doctrine being made). Jesus healed in order to get an audience and in order to show that His power was from God. The sign gift is for the unbeliever—in fact, primarily for the unbelieving Jew (1Cor. 1:22)—to point them in the right direction. Now, think for just a moment—why would someone speak in tongues during a church service? If an unbelieving Jew wandered into the congregation from somewhere else, a person just standing up and speaking in that Jew's language (which would not have been classical Hebrew during that time) would capture his attention. Now, the focus would be directed toward whoever was teaching, but the speaking in his tongue would grab his attention. This is why speaking in tongues continually in a congregation was a distraction and did not perform any sort of meaningful service. There would be a point at which, once the authority of the Apostles was fully established and once the change in the plan of God was better understood, that these sign gifts would no longer be necessary.

Here is how Joseph Dillow rendered this verse: **Though I speak with the tongues of men, or even if I could speak with the tongues of angels (not that there is anything such as tongues of angels), it would be valueless if I had no love. So quit overemphasizing a few miraculous gifts and concentrate rather on love.**³¹³

Let me go off on a tangent here. The interpretation of Scripture is not to be in the hands of amateurs. I'm talking about you, by the way. I think it is great that you have a Bible that you take everywhere you go and that you read it and that you tell everyone how much you enjoy reading and studying your Bible. However, God gave the gift of pastor-teacher for a reason—He did not give this gift to men so that they could encourage you to study your Bible. For perhaps the first sixteen or so centuries of the Church Age, personal Bible study was almost unknown. God gave believers the gift of pastor teacher to teach and to guide their congregation. The pastor teacher is not suppose to be an unlicensed, third-class psychologist, nor is his function to marry and bury people. A pastor teacher is the professional when it comes to understanding and teach the Word of God. My personal secular background is in mathematics, which was a marvelous background, as I studied systems whose primary function was to exist and move logically from point to point without internal contradiction. A system with an internal contradiction was no longer a mathematical system, but just a collection of random ideas. The Bible is God's Word—there are no internal contradictions in the Bible. As you study the Bible more and more (and, I mean under the leadership of a well-trained and/or well-studied pastor teacher), more and more things fall into place. More and more things make sense. And this expands. As every piece of the Bible begins to fit logically together, as if a puzzle of some mosaic, more pieces begin to logically fall into place—furthermore, your life and your suffering and your sadness and your happiness, what you have and what you don't have, all begin to make more sense. Why did this or that happen to you? Well, I certainly could make a guess, and I might even be right more times than not, but that really isn't my job. That's your job. God made it possible for you to understand why He gave you this, but He didn't give you that. He made it possible for you to grasp why He blessed you here, but disciplined you there (or, allowed you to suffer apart from discipline). The key is the complete understanding of His Word—the only thing of value that you will take with you into eternity—as taught by a pastor teacher. In fact, if your primary focus is on anything else, then you are confused and misled.³¹⁴

Allow me another tangent. We are spending three pages or more on the nineteen Greek words of this one verse. In fact, we have only dealt with half of them specifically. Why are we spending so much time here? This is because so many amateurs have read this verse in 2 seconds and have decided that this justifies them speaking in gibberish in church. They read this verse and think that Paul is telling them that they ought to speak with the tongues of angels. Are you beginning to grasp that this verse does not even come close to saying that? Do you follow Paul's logic, which in no way, shape or form, tells us that there is a gift for the church known as speaking in the tongues of angels? Is it beginning to dawn on you that only through the most superficial glance at this verse, could anyone point to this verse to justify babbling and attributing that to God's Spirit. Bear in mind, as we continue,

³¹² I can actually only recall one instance of the Centurion and his daughter.

³¹³ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 18

³¹⁴ Now, this does not mean that we don't have various functions in this life and various divine purposes for our lives. We all have different gifts and God has an individual plan for our lives which we ascertain through the knowledge of His will (and make just a flying, random guess as to where that would come from). Yes, I realize that some of you mentally answered, *by speaking in gibberish at the end of a church service*. Good call, Einstein.

that this is the **only** place where speaking in the languages of angels is mentioned in the Bible. Therefore, do you think it is correct that everyone that you know who speaks in tongues (which, in many congregations, is the vast majority of the members) speaks in the tongues of angels? Either privately at home, or in their prayers,³¹⁵ or at the end of a church service, or, sometimes, right in the middle of it, they speak with the tongues of angels? I can't begin to tell you how cultic this position is. Tongues do have a specific purpose, which I have covered in the book of Acts and will explain once again when it comes up in context. Now, on the other hand, of these charismatics who purport to speak in heavenly languages, not one of them claims to speak in a foreign language, let alone *the languages of man*. They read over this passage in 2 seconds, ignore Paul writing *Suppose I spoke with languages of men*. When the spurious gift of tongues first burst on the scene this previous century, certainly, those present claimed it was some foreign language (I believe Chinese was the one claimed in 1900). However, when linguists looked into this, the charismatic backed off on this position and claimed these to be angelic languages.

Let's return to the exegesis of this passage. We have Paul making the supposition that he speaks in the tongues of men and angels as a debater's position, and then also supposes *what if he does not have love?* Our correct understanding of this is *what if he is not filled with the Spirit?* What if Paul is speaking in all of the languages of men and even of angels and yet is not in fellowship. This is what it means when it says that *he is without love* (present active subjunctive of *to have* plus the negative). Now do you grasp even more of what is being said? Paul is talking about talking in the languages of men and even in the languages of angels, and yet he is not even filled with the Spirit. He does not even have the most basic quality of the filling of the Spirit, which is love. Paul is making the debater's supposition, while thousands of Pentecostals are right now speaking in tongues of angels and thinking that they are filled with the Holy Spirit. Hey, if you are going to misinterpret and go with part of the *if*, why not take all of it. If you're going to speak with the tongues of angels, don't forget to throw in the languages of men and being out of fellowship as well. That is all a part of Paul's supposition.

It's probably time that we look at the rest of the verse, which shouldn't take too long. In the protasis of this condition, Paul then goes to the Perfect active indicative of *gínomai* (γίνομαι) [pronounced *GIN-oh-my*], which means *to become, to come into existence, to come to pass, to be*. Strong's #1096. The perfect tense is generally used to describe an act which takes place in the past, and has results that continue into the future. There is more than simple continuative action implied by the verb; there is an out and out permanence attached to the action of the verb. When Paul speaks with the languages of men and even of angels, and yet does so apart from the filling of the Spirit, he becomes something and stays that something. We then have the word *chalkós* (χαλκός) [pronounced *khahl-KOSS*], which can refer to *copper* or *brass*, or *copper* or *brass money*. It was also used of two pieces of metal which were banged together by peddlers to call attention to their wares. Strong's #5475. This is followed by the present active participle of *êchéō* (ἤχέω) [pronounced *ay-KHEH-oh*], which means *to sound, to roar, to resound*. Strong's #2278.

Paul's second illustration involves cymbals. The word is *kúmbalon* (κύμβαλον) [pronounced *KOOM-bal-on*], which was a hollow brass instrument that magnified sound; it is the hollow portion which caused the sound to resonate. Thieme: *It was generally used by professional mourners and brought forth a volume of meaningless sound.*³¹⁶ Strong's #2950. Paul further describes this with the present active participle of *alalázō* (ἀλαλάζω) [pronounced *ah-lah-LAHd-zoh*], which is the military shout given by the Greeks before entering into battle. This would be an unintelligible sound, and Paul uses it to describe a cymbal. Strong's #214. I want you to fully grasp this: back when the gift of other languages was legitimate, when someone used that gift apart from its proper function and design, it was like carrying a pair of cymbals into the congregation and bashing them together over and over again. The next time you go to a charismatic church service and people start babbling loudly, take along a pair of cymbals and began banging them together. See how well that goes over. Sure, they won't get the point, but for personal entertainment value, that would be superb. Now, Paul, if he began speaking in the languages of men and of angels,

³¹⁵ Oh, by the way, there is no Scriptural support for this stuff either—when Paul discusses what is right and wrong with regards to church services and speaking in tongues, he nowhere states, in 1Cor. 14, that you ought to pray in the tongues of angels at home (this is gotten through a wrenching of 1Cor. 14:28 from its context and from its meaning; and there is one other passage elsewhere in Scripture which is also taken from its context and completely misinterpreted as well to support this mistaken notion.

³¹⁶ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 40.

he might as well haul out his brass cymbals and began bashing them together—this is what his speaking in tongues—i.e., legitimate, known, human languages—would be like, apart from the filling of the Spirit.

Now, I realize that some of you skimmed this, got down to here and are thinking, *well, I speak with the tongues of angels while I am in fellowship*. Don't you get it? That is not the point Paul is making. *Angels* was added by Paul for emphasis, not to add in an additional spiritual gift that he forgot to mention earlier. He is not saying that anyone ever speaks in an angelic language. He has taken his supposition to a higher level, way beyond what was being done in the church at Corinth, and beyond, even, the gifts given to man by God. God did not give out the gift of speaking in the languages of angels. This passage does not support that interpretation, and such a gift is nowhere else mentioned. Never allow your theology to stand upon some flaky, isolated, misinterpreted verse of Scripture.

Now, we are going to cover the next few verses so that we can see the continuity of Paul's reasoning.

And if I have prophecy and [even] I know the mystery all and all the knowledge and suppose I have all the faith, so as a mountain to remove, but love I have not, nothing I am.

1Corinthians
13:2

And if I have [the gift of] prophecy and I understand the entire mystery [age] and all the knowledge and [further] suppose I have all the faith so as to move a mountain, but I have not love, [then] I am nothing.

And suppose I have the gift of prophecy, and I know the entire realm of the mystery doctrine, and I have all knowledge, and further suppose that I have enough faith to remove mountains—if I do not have love, I am nothing.

In the immediate context of a few verses back (in the previous chapter—although this letter was not originally separated into verses and chapters), we were speaking of spiritual gifts. Paul mentions a spiritual gift at the beginning of v. 1—speaking in the languages of men, and then he ups the ante. In this verse, we have the same basic construction, with the *eán* conjunction and the present active subjunctive of *I have* and then we have the accusative of the feminine noun *prophêteía* (προφητεία) [pronounced *proh-fay-TIE-ah*], which means *prophecy*. In fact, you will note that this is from whence we get our word *prophecy*. Strong's #4394. In this context of this passage, it refers to the *gift of prophecy*, and most Bibles have that as the translation. Similarly, the better translations let you know that *gift of* is not in the original, and they let you know that by putting it in italics (KJV, NKJV, NASB).

Many people associate prophecy just with that which will occur in the future. Although it makes me grimace to say it, prophecy is both foretelling and forth telling. B. F. Cate expressed it well when he wrote: *All the Word of God is prophecy. The same thing is true of prophets. People usually think of a prophet as one who foretold the future. But...a prophet was one who received the Word of God by divine revelation. Sometimes his message had to do with the past, [and] sometimes it had to do with the present, sometimes it had to do with the future.*³¹⁷ A person with the gift of prophecy did not know everything there was to know; they did not even know all Church Age doctrine. They knew a little bit here, and a little bit there. They had a few pieces of the puzzle, which they revealed to the congregation.

We need to stop for a moment and discuss something else. Is there *one* gift of prophecy or do some have the *gift of prophecy* and others have the *gift of knowledge*? In fact, I was almost finished with this doctrine of tongues before I realized that it could be interpreted that there is but one gift. As I examine this, I am leaning more and more toward this being a single gift; no matter how you interpret it, it will not affect our reasoning concerning the gift of tongues.

³¹⁷ B. F. Cate, *The Nine Gifts of the Spirit*; Regular Baptist Press, ©1956, ©1974, p. 12.

	Pros	Cons
<p>There is one gift: the <i>gift of knowledge and prophecy</i> or there is no <i>gift of knowledge</i> at all</p>	<p>The phrase <i>gift of knowledge</i> occurs nowhere in the New Testament; not in this chapter, not in any of the listings of the spiritual gifts, not anywhere. The <i>gift of prophecy</i> is found in 1Cor. 12:28 Eph. 4:11 and implied in 1Cor. 13:2. <i>Knowledge</i> and <i>prophecy</i> have the same verb of cessation in 1Cor. 13:8; and they are taken together in v. 9. They could easily be taken as two aspects of the same gift. 1Cor. 13:2 appears to list only the gift of prophecy (...if I have prophecy...) and then it ups the ante to describe <i>knowing</i> all mysteries and all knowledge).</p>	<p>For those who have interpreted this verse, most have separated the gift of knowledge and the gift of prophecy, although few spent much time differentiating between the two gifts.</p>
<p>There are two separate gifts: the <i>gift of knowledge</i> and the <i>gift of prophecy</i></p>	<p>Prophecy and knowledge are treated separately in 1Cor. 13:8. We have the <i>word of wisdom</i> given to one person in 1Cor. 12:8 and the <i>word of knowledge</i> given to another. Two separate gifts is how most (or possibly all) exegetes interpret 1Cor. 13. The <i>gift of teacher</i> (1Cor. 12:28) could be equivalent to the <i>gift of knowledge</i>.</p>	<p>None of the spiritual gift lists list a <i>gift of knowledge</i>. Whereas 1Cor. 13 might to be comparing 3 different gifts (tongues, prophecy and knowledge), 1Cor. 14 only deals with two different gifts (tongues and prophecy). The <i>word of wisdom</i> given to one person and the <i>word of knowledge</i> given to another in 1Cor. 12:8 are not necessarily differentiations between two separate gifts of <i>knowledge</i> and <i>prophecy</i>.</p>

[<Return to Page One>](#)

Now, why on earth did Paul choose the gift of tongues and then the gift of prophecy to discuss in this passage? Why didn't he choose two other gifts? Simple—his argument of the next chapter contrasts those two gifts (see 1Cor. 14:1–6). Paul, like any other genius, is thinking way ahead of where he is writing. The contrasting of the gifts is coming up and it is on his mind—he is just taking a side road here before he gets there. He is showing us a *more excellent way*.

In the previous verse, he says suppose I speak with the tongues of men. In this verse, he says, suppose I have the gift of prophecy. Then, he ups the ante. He not only has the gift of prophecy, but we have the present active subjunctive of *to know*, and then *the mystery entire*. The adjective is *pás* (πάς) [pronounced *pahs*], which means *all, entire*. Strong's #3956. Now, again, like some of the points which I have made, this is a whole topic to itself, but *mystery* (which is a transliteration) refers to the doctrine of the Church Age. In case you didn't know, at the time that Paul wrote this, he did not know everything there was about the Church Age. The word is *mustérion* (μυστήριον) [pronounced *moos-TAY-ree-on*], which refers to the doctrines of the Greek fraternities which were not known outside of these organizations. Similarly, there is nothing in the Old Testament to get us prepared for the Church Age. The entire Church Age is a mystery to the Old Testament saints. Ask Moses, the greatest man of the Old Testament, or Isaiah or Jeremiah, the great prophets of the Old Testament—and none of them had a clue that God would reorganize His plan and program on this earth and seemingly desert Israel (don't become confused,

however; God has not and never will completely abandon the nation Israel). Only those who are inside the fraternities understand their mystery doctrines, and only someone inside the Church Age knows the doctrines of the Church Age. Strong's #3466.

Now, I don't really care whether you buy that or not, as Paul makes it very clear, even to you, how much he has upped the ante in this second verse—he adds the words *and all the knowledge*. So, not only does Paul say *suppose I have the gift of prophecy and know the entire mystery doctrine and all the knowledge*. Suppose that Paul has the gift of prophecy? Sure—he claims that. Suppose that he speaks in the languages of men? Sure, he claims that as well. But then note how the ante is upped—speaking with the tongues of angels, know the entire mystery doctrine and having all knowledge. Now, you know what someone who claims to speak with the tongues of angels is doing? They are placing themselves on equal footing with the person who knows the entire Church Age doctrine and has all knowledge. Do you know who knows all of that? Not Paul, and certainly not Peter. Paul is using exaggeration in order to make a point.

Then Paul keeps upping the ante: *And suppose I have all the faith so as to remove mountains*. The last three words are the conjunction *so as*; *mountain*; and then the present active infinitive of *methistánō* (μεθιστάνω) [pronounced *meh-this-TAH-noh*], which means *to remove, to move, to transfer*. As he writes, you know he is thinking—*maybe these Corinthians think that I do know it all; let me make this unbearably clear—let's throw in that suppose I can, by my faith alone, move a mountain from here to there*. Now no one can even think that what Paul proposes here is possible.

Then Paul adds the clincher: *But love, I do not have...* Again, this refers to the fruit of the Spirit, which comes by means of the Spirit's work in our lives, first by His filling, and then by our growth in His Word. Here the point Paul is making is simply the filling of the Spirit. Without this love, he is *oudeís* (οὐδεὶς) [pronounced *oo-DICE*], which means *not one, nothing, not a thing*. Strong's #3762. Now, I know you're not going to buy this because I didn't when I first heard it, but if you are living your life by some false system of spirituality, you have wasted away all that time as a believer. I've been in churches where the women imitated the vocal inflections of the pastor's wife; I've been in churches where the men tried to cultivate the personality of the pastor in themselves—this does not make you spiritual, it simply means you are psychologically unfit. You may have determined to live a moral life and you may have been giving money to the church and you might even study your Bible every single night—apart from the filling of the Holy Spirit, you are nothing. You have wasted your time on this earth. It does not matter what you do or think you do, if you are not filled with the Spirit, you are inconsequential in the realm of spiritual things. Now, if you grasp what I have just said, then you understand what Paul is saying. This is the point that he is making. Now, where are the mechanics? Paul gave the mechanics a couple chapters ago: **If we should judge ourselves, we will not be judged** (1Cor. 11:31). As John put it: **If we acknowledge our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins** (1John 1:9). That is spirituality.

And suppose I distribute all of the possessions of mine, and suppose I deliver [over to another] the body of mine that I may boast, but love I have not, nothing do I profit.

1Corinthians
13:3

And suppose I distribute all of my possessions and [further] suppose I give my body that I may boast, but I have not love, [then] I profit nothing.

And suppose that I distribute all of my possessions to the needy and further suppose that I give my body on behalf of another that I may boast, but am lacking love—then I have profited nothing.

The first verb is the aorist active subjunctive of *psômízō* (ψομίζω) [pronounced *pso-MEED-zoh*], which means *to feed by providing food, to divide into mouthfuls, to distribute food*. Strong's #5595. What Paul supposes that he gives or distributes is *all* of his *hupárchonta* (ὑπάρχοντα) [pronounced *hoop-AHR-khon-tah*], which is the present active participle, neuter plural of the verb *hupárchō* (ὑπάρχω) [pronounced *hoop-AHR-khoh*]. *Hupárchonta* refers to all of the possessions, goods and things which a person has. Strong's #5224. Paul says suppose that he takes every single thing that he owns and just distributes it all as one would give our food in the food line.

Then, you know what he's going to do—he's going to up the ante. He is going to suggest the supreme sacrifice. Paul uses the aorist active subjunctive of *paradídōmai* (παράδιδωμαι) [pronounced *pah-rah-DIH-doh-my*], which means *to give up, to deliver over [to the power of someone else]*. Strong's #3860. Now Paul will give us the purpose of delivering over his body. He uses the conjunction *hina* (ἵνα) [pronounced *HEE-nah*], which means *that, so that, for the purpose of*. Then we have the 1st person singular, aorist passive subjunctive of *to boast*. I should mention here that most English translations have this as *to burn*. There are three problems with this: (1) if this read *to burn*, then we would expect the 3rd person here rather than the 1st, to correspond with the *body*. (2) At the time of writing, burning Christians had not become a typical pastime of the heathen. (3) Finally, the best manuscripts have *to boast* rather than *to burn* (the difference is one letter in the Greek).³¹⁸ This would not be a problem to the exegesis—in fact, it would actually support Paul's logic here, as no one had been subjected to this yet. However, I would prefer to go with the better text. The concept of burning believers, apart from the book of Daniel, was unknown at this point in time. The Romans were not seizing believers and burning them at the stake. Paul is simply giving a tremendous boost to his point in saying this. Not only is he going to give away everything that he has, but, further, he supposes that he even gives his body on behalf of another—the ultimate sacrifice. Even the killing of Christians was not commonplace at that time (although it had obviously occurred, as Paul had taken part to some degree in the killing of at least one believer). Paul here has raised the ante to the reader to a realm generally far outside of the reader's experience, as he had with the gift of speaking in *angelic tongues*. The best illustration of this up until this time is our Lord giving His body for our salvation—the ultimate sacrifice—Paul took this as the ultimate sacrifice and used it as a part of his logical argument.

Paul again adds that *if he does not have love, then*; and then we have the present middle indicative of *ôphelêô* (ὠφελέω) [pronounced *oh-feh-LEH-oh*], which means *to help, to profit, to be of use*; in the middle/passive, it means *to be profited, to have advantage*. Strong's #5623. Again we have the noun for *nothing*. Not only does Paul offer the supposition that he distribute all that he has to those who take it, but he further supposes that he offers his body to be burned—the supreme sacrifice that any man can make—and this is a true profit of nothing to him. In heaven, this will be meaningless. The point is that it is not the act itself which is intrinsically good. You choose any seemingly good and spiritual act whatsoever, and it can have eternal effects and it can be meaningless. The difference is that of *love*. Now, I have explained what it is—now let me explain what it is not. Prior to doing an act, you don't sit around and psych yourself up into a *love* state. You don't work up these nice and mushy feelings for everyone around you so that what you do counts. That is way goofy. *Love* here is a state of being more than it is a state of mind or a state of emotion. Now, when you are filled with the Holy Spirit, there are certain identifying elements, and Paul will give those in vv. 4–7. So, one approach is that if we have or manifest any of the negatives given in those verses, this simply means that we are not filled with the Holy Spirit. How do we deal with that? Do we start trying to act and talk more like the people we feel we should emulate? Do we whip ourselves into some sort of Christian *love* frenzy? No—we simply name our sins to God—not to a priest, not to a congregation, not to our best friend.

Now, let me go off on a tangent here. You're out of fellowship. You know that you need to confess your sins. What seems to be the most logical approach? Jump in the car and drive over to your church and confess to some guy who calls himself a priest? Wait till it is convenient and do the same? Wait until Sunday and then stand up in front of everyone and publically air all your dirty laundry like some psycho-boy? Keep in mind that, from the time that you realized that you were out of fellowship to the time that you participate in any of these things, you remain out of fellowship (not that any of these things would get you back in; I am setting up a logical argument here, just as Paul did). God's plan calls for you to be in fellowship as often and for as long as possible. When you realize that you are out of fellowship, then you name the sin or sins that you realize that you have committed—right then and there, not out loud (you really don't need to frighten the people that you are with)—and this places you immediately back into fellowship. So, should you go for immediately getting back into fellowship or just whenever?

[<Return to Page One>](#)

³¹⁸ Philip Wesley Comfort, *Early Manuscripts & Modern Translations of the New Testament*; Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1990; p. 144.

Obviously, when you exegete a passage, it is easy to go off into several different directions. Paul's writings are thick with doctrine, particularly the later ones (you could almost put Paul's epistles in chronological order after exegeting them; the more that he has to say in any given verse indicates that you are dealing with a later epistle. The less that he has to say (like 1Thessalonians, for instance), the earlier the epistle is. Our topic is tongues, so we will now jump to v. 8.

The love never falls [from its place]. But if prophecies, they will cease. If tongues, they will come to an end; if knowledge, it will cease.

1Corinthians
13:8

Love never drifts off course. But if [there is the gift of] prophecy, it will become inactive. If [there is the gift of speaking in] tongues, it will cease. If [a congregation has men with the gift of] knowledge, it will become inactive.

Love never drifts from its course. However, where we find men with gift of prophecy, that gift will become idle. Where we find men speaking in tongues, that will come to an end. If anyone has the gift of knowledge, that gift will become idle.

One of my favorite passages from a pro-charismatic author claims that the position that the gift of tongues is not a part of the believer's valid Christian experience today *hardly justifies much discourse since it is so completely without scriptural support. If it were not for people who had lived for years as Christians, ignoring certain prominent passages of scripture and failing to come in contact with a demonstration of this gift being accompanied by the power of God, no such position would exist. Usually this tenet rests with the broader unsupported assertion that all supernatural works of the Spirit ceased when the "twelve apostles died."* Support is supposedly drawn from 1Cor. 13:8: "whether there be tongues, they shall cease." The Greek word for cease in the sense of coming to an utter end is *katapauo*. He hath ceased from his own works. Hebrews 4:10 the Greek work for cease in the sense of an intermittent cessation or a pause is *pauomai*. When He (Jesus) had ceased (praying) one of His disciples said— . This is the word that is translated cease in 1Cor. 13:8. If the tongues have utterly ended so did Jesus' praying. If we are to say there are no more tongues, we must say Jesus intercedes no more. But the text indicates a pause. Tongues do not continue ceaselessly. Praise the Lord for that! Who could bear it? But love does not wax, wane, start and stop. It continues without pause. Love never fails.³¹⁹ I wanted to include Murrell's entire, unedited argument against the position that tongues ceased with the Apostles.

The negative that we have in this verse is *oudéποτε* (οὐδέποτε) [pronounced *oo-DEH-po-teh*], which means *never*. Strong's #3763. The verb here is the present active indicative of *εκρίπτō* (ἐκρίπτω) [pronounced *ek-PIP-toh*], which means *to fall off, to fall from, to fall*. This verb is used of a ship being driven off course, of the fading of flowers. Things have a particular place or position and this verb indicates that they have strayed or fallen from that position. This verb is also used of an audience hissing an actor off the stage. Strong's #1601. God's love, provided by the filling of the Spirit, is never hissed off stage.

In the next phrase, we have the conjunction *εἴτε* (εἴτε) [pronounced *I-the*], which means *if, whether*. It is most often used to set items in contrast or in opposition to one another. Strong's #1535. The contrast is between the filling of the Holy Spirit (*love*) and the gifts mentioned. With *dé*, this means *but if*. Literally, this gives us: *but if prophecies*. This is followed by the future passive of *katargéō* (καταργέω) [pronounced *kaht-ahr-GEH-oh*], which means *to be idle, to render inactive, to be useless, ineffective*. In the passive, this means *to cease, to become idle, to be done away with, to be abolished, to cease being under or connected with any person or thing*. We find this same word used several times in 2Cor. 3:6–18; in this passage, the old covenant of Moses, the Law, is done away with, as Christ has brought in the new covenant of grace—the perfect has replaced that which was incomplete. Strong's #2673. Interpretation here is a little tougher. First of all, we have been speaking of spiritual gifts in the previous chapter and in this (and we will continue to do so in the next chapter). Many people, during Paul's time, had the gift of prophecy (which was more than telling the future; it was giving information, either by letter or by word, which was divinely inspired). Although most translators go with simply *prophecies* here, I will go with the *gifts of*

³¹⁹ Conrad Murrell, *To Profit Withal*; Saber Publications; Pineville, LA; ©1969, p 68.

prophecy. At the very least, we are dealing with the results of these gifts. In either case, it is obvious that this verse has less than its fair share of words. Even though this literally reads, *but if prophecies, they will cease*; all translations introduce additional words into that phrase:

CEV	Everyone who prophesies with stop.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	But whether prophesyings, they shall be done away;...
NASB	...but if <i>there are gifts of prophecy</i> , they will be done away;...
NIV	But where there are prophecies, they will cease;...
Williams	If there are prophecies, they will be set aside;...
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	...and whether <i>there be prophecies</i> , they shall become useless;...

The cryptic nature of Paul's phrasing actually accomplishes two things: (1) it draws your attention to what is being said. It's like saying, *prophecies? Gone*. (2) Secondly, the brevity of the sentence gives us an idea as to the brevity of the gift and its manifestations. In this age, certainly there are a bunch of goofballs who call themselves prophets. But, do they walk into New York City and tell the people this city will be leveled in a week, never to be built over again? Sure, all of the time. But New York City is still standing. The prophets of Scripture were 100% correct and they gave near and far prophecies so that what they had to say could be checked by the people that they spoke to. And they made prophecies which have lasted for ten's of centuries. What some people do not realize is that we do not have any need for prophets today and we haven't needed them for almost 2000 years. Once God's complete and connected Word was completed, there is no need for someone to add anything to it. Do we have God speaking new things through individual believers? No—God has spoken all that we need to know in His Word. Therefore, we do not need any additional information—obviously, if we are not going to obey what is already in God's Word, then why on earth would we follow additional directives? Furthermore, the last few verses of Revelation sealed the canon of Scripture from additions. How much sense does that make for God to have new information for us, but then to have sealed His Word? Since around 100 A.D., true prophets and their prophecies ceased from this earth. With the completion of Scripture, they were no longer necessary. Anyone, and I mean anyone, who claims to be a modern-day prophet today is a charlatan and regardless of your religious affiliation, you ought to run the other direction as far as you can go. God either sealed His canon or He did not. The book of Revelation says that He did. Therefore, how much sense does it make for God to be sending us new information through someone with the gift of prophecy if we are not to add any new information to His Word? Some of you do not realize that Scripture is the recording of God speaking to man as well as God's intervention into man's affairs. Moses was so prolific because God spoke a great deal to him and Moses was very careful as to how he wrote Exodus through Numbers, recording with great precision when God spoke and exactly what He said. The purpose of His Word is to communicate what God has to say to us. If God has more to say to us, then obviously, Scripture is not closed, even though it says it is. However, the reality is that Scripture is closed; all we need to know has been recorded in God's Word; and we do not need some *prophet* to tell us what is already in the Bible, nor do we need some *prophet* who claims to give us more information which is not found in Scripture. When the pope speaks *ex cathedra*, he is laying down some dogma which is not found in the Word of God. This is just as wrong as some holy roller claiming to have the gift of prophecy and laying down some law for his congregation not found in Scripture. Prophecies for the Church Age have ceased. Paul told the Corinthians that they would cease and they have.

We have the same sentence structure for tongues—however, the verb is different. The verb is the future middle indicative of παύω (παύω) [pronounced *POW-oh*], which means *to stop, to pause*. In the middle voice, it means *to come to an end, to take one's rest, to willingly cease*; it has an absolute sense where it means *to cease, to come to an end* (Luke 8:24 Acts 20:1). Strong's #3973. *Tongues*, or, more properly, *the gift of foreign languages*, was a sign gift with a particular function—it was God speaking to the Jew telling him the gospel, and, in doing so in a Gentile language, also indicated to the Israelite that God was taking His Word and His plan to the Gentile. Paul will quote the appropriate Old Testament passage, and we will go back there and examine it.

I realize that with the fact that παύω could mean *to pause*, that some would take a running leap with this and say that the gift of tongues paused during the Apostolic Age and started up again at the beginning of the 20th century. This would certainly be a possibility apart from the exegesis of other passages of Scripture. What tongues was, was the speaking of a gentile language by a person who did not know that language. It was spoken to a Jew as

a sign (this was the way it was used in Acts 2 and Paul will further confirm this in 1Cor. 14:21–22). There have been instances of speaking in tongues throughout the past 2000 years, which we have examined. In every case, we found the behavior to be cultic. When comparing the modern day tongues movement to the counterfeit and to the real, it has everything in common with the counterfeit usages and almost nothing in common with the real usage of the gift of tongues. The only difference between the modern-day tongues movement and similar movements in the past is that the charismatic movement today has become much more pervasive and widespread.

It is this final phrase which indicates that we are speaking of gifts and their manifestations. God’s Word will never cease nor will it ever become ineffective. God used knowledge to design the foundation of the world (Prov. 8, among others). Do you think that knowledge will be summarily dispensed with sometime off in the distant future at the end of time, and we will just exist in some sort of frenzied love state? That we will eventually exist as puddles of love ecstasy or in some sort of drugged state of mind? Knowledge will not come to an end. However, in the Church Age, the gift of knowledge will cease. Thieme: *Knowledge of doctrine in the precanon period of the Church age was fragmentary. Revelation concerning the doctrine of the Mystery (doctrines pertaining to the present dispensation) had not been completed; those who communicated doctrine by means of a spiritual gift could do so only on the basis of what they knew. They knew “in part,” and consequently, they taught “in part” (1Cor. 13:9). The doctrine these early Bible teachers taught was received by them from two sources: the Old Testament Canon and direct revelation from God from these same sources, God so directed certain apostles (Paul, Peter, John, James, Matthew, Luke, etc.) That without waiving their intelligence, personality, individuality, vocabulary, literary style, personal feelings, or any other human factor, God’s complete and coherent message to the Church was recorded with perfect accuracy in the Koine-Greek, the very words of the original manuscripts bearing the authority of divine authorship. When Paul wrote the thirteenth chapter of 1Corinthians, he anticipated the completion of the canon and the end of some of the spiritual gifts.*³²⁰

The verb is the future passive indicative of katargéō again, which means, in the passive, to cease, to become idle, to be done away with, to cease being under or connected with any person or thing. Strong’s #2673. Again, when we have the completed Word of God, we will not need anyone with the gift of knowledge. We will have God’s complete and connected thought in our hands—we do not need someone to give us knowledge that God has already given us. At the inception of the Church Age, many of the doctrines had changed. The most major changes were the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, our being placed into Christ via the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the importance of the life of the every day believer (one of Paul’s major points in the middle of 1Cor. 12. In fact, the life of the common believer is so important to the plan of God that Satan has plotted to derail as many believers as possible in their Christian lives, and his strategies include this bogus gift speaking in angelic tongues. I understand that this is a trance state or sorts; a state of ecstasy in many cases. And perhaps when a person who does not do drugs, does not get drunk and does not have sex outside marriage thinks that he (or she) is entitled to at least some holy ecstasy; but we have no such state described in the Word of God as a part of the gift of tongues. These sorts of altered states of mind exist in many different religions—however, we have no such prescription for believers in the Word of God.

Dillow presents a chart to help us grasp this verse.³²¹

Spiritual Gift	Greek verb	Tense	Voice	English Translations	Meaning
Prophecy	katargéō Strong’s #2673	future	passive	done away, ceased, become useless, come to an end, cease, brought to nothing, done away with.	To become idle, to render inactive, to be idle, to be useless, to be ineffective, a complete cessation

³²⁰ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 43.

³²¹ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 113; I modified the chart.

Spiritual Gift	Greek verb	Tense	Voice	English Translations	Meaning
Tongues	παύω Strong's #3973	future	middle	cease, stilled, cease, cease, fall silent, cease, fall silent.	To stop, to pause, to make an end, to come to an end, to willingly cease (in the middle voice)
Knowledge	καταργέω Strong's #2673	future	passive	done away, pass away, become useless, come to an end, vanish, brought to nothing, done away with.	To become idle, to render inactive, to be idle, to be useless, to be ineffective, a complete cessation

[<Return to Page One>](#)

There was a difference between the cessation of the gift of tongues and the gifts of knowledge and prophecy. The gifts of knowledge and prophecy were supplanted by the canon of Scripture. They were rendered idle or inactive because they had been replaced. This position will be further supported by v. 9, where tongues is not spoken of, but Paul writes: **For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.** After 2000 years of God working through the nation Israel, even Paul did not fully grasp at the time of this writing all of the changes which were taking place in the shift from the temple and the synagogue to the church. It was more than a different name and a slightly different institution. At the time of writing, Paul knew in part. Insofar as we are concerned, we have a full and complete knowledge of the differences between and the transition of the Age of Israel to the Church Age. We do not know everything there is to know about everything—and, it is likely that we never will (you don't think at death that you become as smart as God do you?). However, we know, or have the reference book which would help us know, all that we need as mature believers in the adult stage of the Church.

The gift of tongues willingly came to an end, as there was no longer a purpose for this gift. When the Corinthians and others fully understood the purpose of this gift and the fact that it was no longer necessary (i.e., there were fewer and fewer Jews who came to their meetings out of curiosity), then it died out of its own accord.

For, from a portion, we know; and from a portion, we prophesy. 1Corinthians 13:9 **For [you see], we know in part and we prophesy in part.**

For you see, we know a portion of God's plan and we prophesy a portion of His plan.

We begin this verse with the preposition *ek* (ἐκ) [pronounced *ehk*], and it generally means *out of, out from, from, of*. Strong's #1537. This is followed by the neuter noun *méros* (μέρος) [pronounced *MEH-ros*], which means *part, portion, side, coast*. Strong's #3313. I am less than happy rendering this *from a portion [or, part] or in part*; however, in scanning the concordance and its similar use elsewhere in Scripture, I do not have a better alternative. The verbs are both in the present active indicative. The indication here is that Paul, and others of the early Church Age, knew a piece of the puzzle; they had not put it altogether yet. Similarly, for the things which were to come, this rejection of Israel, which was sudden, confusing and disconcerting, was difficult to fully explain (John will give us the final outline of history in the book of Revelation). So, those entrusted with the gifts of knowledge and prophecy were able to provide pieces of the puzzle. However, once the canon of Scripture was completed, we would have the whole story.

Now, recall that the verbs with the *gifts* of knowledge and prophecy in v. 8 were the same; but the verb with the *gift* of tongues was different. That is because the gifts of knowledge and prophecy will give way to a different gift—the gift of pastor-teacher; however, the gift of tongues will not be replaced by a different gift. That is also why you see the gifts of knowledge and prophecy being mentioned here as a part, but the gift of tongues is not mentioned here. Frank Stagg writes: *Love is god's endless highway; "tongues" are a dead-end street, leading nowhere. Some gifts, like knowledge, will give way to something more mature, like child's talk giving way to a man's talk, or like the*

reflection in a mirror giving way to face-to-face encounter, but no such promise is made for tongues. They simply stop.³²²

We are confused and we often think that the Apostles knew it all. The Apostles had pieces of the puzzle; Paul probably had more pieces than anyone else. Do you recall what the Apostles asked Jesus prior to His ascension? “Lord, is it at this time that You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6b). They certainly did not grasp that there would be this Church Age. Paul in this verse tells us that he knows pieces of the puzzle, but he doesn’t have the complete puzzle (at least, this is what he says in this verse using the editorial *we*).

Before we move on to the next verse, I want you to notice something which almost every exegete misses (actually, I don’t know of anyone who catches this fact): *knowledge* and *prophecy* are continually lumped together. Even though these are probably separate gifts (we do not have the phrase *the gift of knowledge and prophecy*), they are always taken together. In v. 8, Paul uses the same verb to indicate their cessation. In v. 9, they are spoken of together as knowing *in part* and prophesying *in part*. They are mentioned again together in v. 2 while tongues are mentioned in v. 1. This either means that they are the same gift or it would infer that they will cease together.

But when comes the completed [thing], then the in part [thing] will cease. 1Corinthians 13:10 **But when the completed thing comes, then the partial will become inactive.**

But when the completion of the partial has come, then that which is partial will cease to function.

We have the postpositive conjunction *dé* and the verse actually begins with a second conjunction, *hótan* (ὅταν) [pronounced *HOH-tan*], which means, in reference to a future event, *then, at that time*. *Hótan* is actually a contraction of two words: *hóte* (ὅτε) [pronounced *HOH-teh*], which means *when* (Strong’s #3753); and the preposition *án* (άν) [pronounced *ahn*], a word which denotes supposition, wish, or possibility (Strong’s #302). Strong’s #3752. Now, with the adverb *tóte* (τότε) [pronounced *TOH-teh*] (Strong’s #3752), it means *when...then*.

Then we have the verb *érchomai* in the aorist active subjunctive. *Érchomai* (ἔρχομαι) [pronounced *AIR-khoh-my*] means *to go, to come*. Strong’s #2064. The subject of the verb is adjective *téleios* (τέλειος) [pronounced *TEH-lie-os*], which also doubles as a noun. Here it is in the neuter singular, and it means *the completed thing*. Strong’s #5046. This does not refer to a *person*, but to a *thing*, as it is in the neuter. We find this general topic in Scripture often. Our Lord was the fulfillment of the Law, thus doing away with the Law (in a sense). An even better example would be the animal sacrifices; they looked ahead toward our Lord’s sacrifice on the cross; when that had been completed, the sacrifices of animals was done away with. What we would look for here would be the fulfillment or the completion or the end of these particular gifts.

After this, we have *then the in part will cease*. We had all of these words at the end of v. 8. So many lame exegetes have said that this *completed thing* is heaven. Others have taught that it is when the canon of Scripture was completed. Others claim that this will be when Jesus returns for us. Others teach that it is when we become perfect and complete (obviously, not here on earth). Unfortunately, some have misinterpreted this simply because they mistakenly follow the KJV, which, instead of *the completed thing*, has *that which is perfect*. Whatever. Let me be so bold as to suggest that I do not know of anyone who has correctly interpreted this simple word and its definite article—no charismatic and no non-charismatic, to the best of my knowledge has ever properly explained this. Let me first approach this from the negative: Paul does not mean any of those things which you thought it did, which I have listed, because Paul already has a vocabulary to cover each and every one of those occurrences, and he uses that vocabulary somewhere else in Scripture (some of them are even covered in 1Corinthians).

So, what does it really mean? First off, *téleios* means *the completed thing* and not to *the perfect thing* or *that which is perfect*, for two reasons: firstly, and most importantly, that *is* its meaning; and secondly, it is in contrast to the word *in part, partial thing*. You’ve got that which is *whole* and *complete*, and you’ve got that which is *in part*. The words are in sync with one another. The next verse will give the analogy of the *part* being the child and *the completed thing* as being the adult. Now, had Paul wanted to say *heaven* or *death* or being *face to face with the*

³²² Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 56.

Lord; he could have and has used these phrases. However, that is not what he is referring to. He is referring to when a thing has been completed, reached its goal, matured, become full grown; all in contrast to that which is *in part*, which is, in context, the gift of tongues, the gift of prophecy and the gift of knowledge (if, in fact, we have three separate gifts rather than two). Let me add another point: Paul, when he writes, and particularly when he spends this long on a topic, says something of importance. He has been dealing with spiritual gifts, problems with the use of spiritual gifts, etc. for three chapters. He has carried this thought through for most of a chapter. Do you think his big conclusion (actually, sub-conclusion) is that when we die and go to heaven that we will no longer need our spiritual gifts? Do you for a moment grasp how simple and lame that is? Paul is not going to go through this kind of a build up to tell us that we won't use these spiritual gifts in heaven. Duh squared. Paul is many things, but he is not a simpleton. You may have come up with some interpretations of this passage based upon this word being *perfect*; and *your* great conclusion might have been that we will not use our spiritual gifts in heaven, but this was not Paul's conclusion. You came up with your interpretation because (1) you either got it through personal Bible study, which is a miserably lame approach to the Word of God; and, (2) because it fits your theology and experiences.

There is something else we need to discuss. And we need to do this in the light of 1Cor. 13:13, which reads: **But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.** One of the points of this chapter is the permanence of love, which, incidentally, *believes* all things and *hopes* all things (v. 7). Obviously, it is important to determine is Paul, when he speaks of *love*, as well as about hope and faith, referring to eternity or to the eternal state, or is he speaking of permanence in terms of the entire Church Age? When you interpret a passage in a certain way, then you should be able to follow this interpretation out for its theological implications. Christ is our *hope*; when He returns, he fulfills our *hope*. If His return signals the end of the gifts of tongues, knowledge and prophecy; does it not similarly signal the end of our need for hope? If we do not have to know can we not similarly conclude that we do not have to hope as well? Let's say that we want to interpret the *perfect thing* as our death and being face to face with our Lord—this would certainly mean that we no longer have to speak in tongues and would no longer require the gift(s) of knowledge and prophecy. But then do we still need to have hope? Do we still need faith? We will be separated from our old sin nature—will we still require some special gift of love? You see, we are contrasting that which is permanent (hope, faith and love) with that which will cease (the gifts of tongues, prophecy and knowledge). What makes the most sense by far is to interpret these gifts as well as faith, love and hope as being important components of our temporal existence. The gifts of tongues and of prophecy and knowledge will eventually fade from the scene of temporal life; the attributes of faith, love and hope will remain with the Church throughout the entirety of its temporal existence. My point is that the importance of the permanence of these three things makes most sense in time. Exactly how we are to understand our use of faith and hope in eternity is not clear. Exactly how we are to exercise faith and hope during the millennium (we will not be on this earth, *per se*) is not clear either. However, our use of these three attributes throughout our temporal lives and throughout the Church Age makes perfect sense.

Let's go off on a different tangent. Let's say that our Lord has returned to earth. The gift of tongues then ceases at that time. Now, if tongues are what charismatics purport it to be—a heavenly, praising, prayerful language of the angels—then why would it cease then? Would it not make more sense for such a function of the gift of tongues to be continued when our Lord returns? Would it not make sense for such a gift to continue at our death? My point is, even when you interpret the words of this passage to fit charismatic theology, the implications lead you to further conclusions which make no sense. This is probably why many charismatics eschew logic—they have to—their theology makes little or no sense if they must also embrace the logic, grammar and vocabulary of Paul. It's easier to say, *you can't fully understand it or explain it; you just have to let the spirit take you.* On the other hand, you could listen to Paul, who writes: **Why would someone hope for that which he sees?** (Rom. 8:24b). And in case you think I pulled that phrase out of context, it refers to the redemption of the body. Paul's point is that our confidence and our hope in the redemption of the body, that which will take place after we have died, is important now, as we have confidence in that which we do not see. Clearly, the importance of hope and confidence is for this life, not the next. Similarly, faith is tied to this life in the Church Age. **For we walk by faith and not by sight** (2Cor. 5:7). When hope and faith are both contrasted by Paul in Scripture with what we see, then it makes little sense to interpret the end of tongues to be when we have died and are face to face with the Lord; it makes little sense to interpret the end of tongues to occur when our Lord has returned and we can see Him. Therefore, the permanence

of love, hope and faith refer to our temporal existence in the Church Age and not to eternity; this, therefore, pushes the temporal nature of the gifts of knowledge, prophecy and tongues further back in time.

Let's approach this again from another standpoint: Joel 2:28, a passage which charismatics are fond of quoting: **And it will come to pass after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy and your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions.** Now, it is fairly obvious, as we have discussed in the book of Acts, that Joel 2:28–32 was not fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, 30 A.D. However, on Pentecost, something similar to that occurred. If God has promised such events to take place in Israel, and if the Scripture cannot be broken, then the events of Pentecost should not be perceived as something outside of the power of God. However, what Joel 2:28 does seem to promise is that in the end times, which is when our Lord returns, that there will be a pouring out of the Spirit of God upon all mankind, and that there will be those who prophesy—i.e., speak God's Word—as a result. Now, what exactly is the point of Paul telling us that the gift of prophecy is going to come to an end, that it will cease, and then for Joel to tell us at that same time, God will pour out His Spirit and daughters will prophesy? It makes no sense for the return of our Lord to signal the end of the gift of prophecy and, at the same time, to signal a rebirth of the Holy Spirit and a pouring out of the Holy Spirit and a return to those who will prophetically speak God's Word. What, do we have a five minute period of time out between the ending of the gift of prophecy and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit again?³²³

There are some of you reading this or listening to this who will continue to hold onto your lame explanation of what Paul is saying here, even after you look that word up in Strong's Greek dictionary. So, if you choose to interpret this word differently than I do, let's look at the pros and cons of the various translations and interpretations of this word:

Téleios		
Translation	Pros	Cons
The perfect or the perfect thing	This is how the KJV translates the word.	It does not mean this in the Greek. The contrast to <i>in part</i> makes little sense.
The complete or the completed thing	This is the actual meaning of the word. It is in the neuter gender. This is in natural contrast to the phrase <i>in part</i> .	None

³²³ Now, in case you wonder why God pours out His Holy Spirit after Pentecost, when He has already baptized us by pouring out the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the reason is simple: the Holy Spirit operating in the Church is removed at the rapture. This is why God' pours out the Holy Spirit once again.

Téleios		
Interpretation	Pros	Cons
The second advent of our Lord	This interpretation fits the charismatic doctrine, therefore allowing the charismatic experience to be interpreted as being of God.	Téleios is in the neuter. Paul never uses this expression to refer to the second coming. Paul and other writers of Scripture have a rich and different vocabulary for our Lord's return. This means that the gifts all terminate at the same time, which is contrary to context. Finally, we lose the importance of the permanent (<i>faith, hope and love</i>) as opposed to that which is temporary. The permanence of faith, hope and love make perfect sense when taken during the entirety of the Church Age. They make less sense as a trio when taken into eternity, because, as Paul says, Who hopes for that which he can see?
Dying and going to heaven	This fits the charismatic interpretation, therefore allowing the charismatic experience to be interpreted as being of God.	Paul never uses this expression for the death of the believer. Paul and other writers of Scripture have a rich and different vocabulary to describe death and being face to face with the Lord. This is a complete letdown when it comes to Paul's logical argument. Paul makes it sound as though he is building up to some great theological point, and then says, "It'll be different when we're dead." This means that the gifts all terminate at the same time, which is contrary to context. We lose the importance of the permanent (<i>faith, hope and love</i>) as opposed to that which is temporary. Furthermore, once we die and are face to face with the Lord, do <i>hope and faith</i> still abide? Again, as Paul wrote to the Romans, Who hopes for that which he sees?
The Bible or completed canon of Scripture	The noun is in the neuter. The correct meaning of <i>téleios</i> would be <i>the completed thing</i> . It is possible that Paul did not even know he was referring to the Bible or to the completed canon of Scripture (he wrote as guided by the Holy Spirit).	This would make the termination of these three gifts simultaneous and approximately 100 A.D. The gift of tongues would therefore be used after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.
A completion, the completed thing	The noun is in the neuter. This allows for the fulfillment or completion of the gifts of tongues, knowledge and prophecy to be completed and come to an end at different times. This allows for the inference that knowledge and prophecy would end together and that tongues would cease at a different time. This is in perfect contrast to the phrase <i>in part</i> .	None.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

Now, Paul uses this particular word because it is the perfect, exact word to describe when these various things will end. He has given a list of several different things which will cease or be done away with. However, they will not be done away with at exactly the same moment. For each item, the completed thing is slightly different. Let me give you an example: if we were speaking of animal sacrifices, we could say that they were not done away with because the completed thing or their fulfillment had come. Paul would not spend three chapters telling us all about animal sacrifices and then why animal sacrifices would stop, and then suddenly tell us, in a big finale, that we won't offer animal sacrifices in heaven—big whoop-de-do. Paul is not so lame as to give us some simpleton approach as that. He could have included animal sacrifices in a passage like this and then told us that they would pass away when the completed thing had come, and that we won't need to offer animal sacrifices when the fulfillment of animal sacrifices had come. That fulfillment, of course, was our Lord Jesus Christ, Who was our sacrificial lamb, Who died on our behalf on the cross. In this case, it would be apropos to use a word like this to describe when animal sacrifices would cease. In fact, a significant portion of the book of Hebrews covers just this topic. But what is key here is that Paul could describe their end with their fulfillment; and he describes the end of these three gifts with their fulfillment. The three gifts mentioned (along with a handful of others) will all vanish when they have come to a point of completion or when their fulfillment has come.

People mistakenly think that it is up for personal interpretation as to when did the gift of tongues, knowledge and prophecy end. Wrong! As long as you understand the purpose of these gifts and why they were given, then it will make complete and perfect sense as to why and when they were withdrawn. God has a perfect plan which makes perfect, logical sense. This aspect of it is actually one of the simpler doctrines. God gave the gift of tongues so that the new church (which was made up of, at first, Jews) could evangelize Jews in Gentile languages, indicating that God was moving away from Israel for a time. God gave the gifts of prophecy and knowledge to provide us with Church Age doctrine, as the rules had changed dramatically. God gave various sign gifts (miracles and healings) to establish the authority of the Apostles. Once it is clear that God has left Israel for a time; once the authority of the Apostles was established, once we have the completed canon of Scripture, which eclipses the need for the gift of knowledge or prophecy, then these gifts of the early church are no longer needed. Animal sacrifices, in the Old Testament, pointed ahead to the sacrifice of our Lord. When Jesus came in the flesh and died on our behalf, becoming our sacrificial lamb and taking away the blot of ordinances against us, then there was no longer a need for animal sacrifices. They were only continued by apostate Jewish believers and Jewish unbelievers (Heb. 6 and 9). The Old Testament is filled with ceremonies and sacrifices which were all fulfilled in Christ. When the completion or the fulfillment of these things came to pass, then we no longer needed the shadow images. Now let's be specific:

The Gift of Prophecy: Paul links Apostleship with the gift of prophecy in Eph. 2:20, and calls them the foundation of the church. *This suggests that both apostles and prophets belong to the foundation period of the church rather than to the time when the superstructure is being erected. Not only was the apostle temporary in the plan of God, but it also appears that the prophet likewise did not continue.*³²⁴ Think about it—if we have the completed canon of Scripture, just exactly what do you think some prophet might add? By the very definition, what a prophet says would be inspired of God, and therefore worth writing down and giving an equivalent place to his words as to Scripture. Now, certainly, there are some who believe in that, as well as many who believe in papal inerrancy. However, concerning you, brethren, I am persuaded of better things.

Some people think that prophecy is absolutely a part of this dispensation, from beginning to end. If what your church prophet is saying is all that important, are you writing it down, word-for-word, and studying it like the Word of God? Does it contain some truth that God just happened to leave out of the Bible. If he speaks of the future, is he 100% accurate (recall the Moses taught that a prophet who was not 100% accurate was a false prophet and should be executed—Deut. 13:1–5). Does your church have this policy written into its bylaws?

³²⁴ This quote, as well as the line of reasoning, comes from Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, pp. 36–37.

In this study, since I do not have close connection to charismatic groups, there were a lot of things that I did not know apart from this research. There are many charismatic prophets, and some appear to be thrilled when they are on target 2/3^{rds} of the time. As a person who has studied the Old Testament, I found this extremely humorous. In the Old Testament, the test of a true prophet was simply, *did what he say come to pass each and every time?* That was the only test of a prophet. If they gave a prophecy that did not come to pass, they were to be put to death (Deut. 18:20). John White wrote a foreword to *Some Said It Thundered* (by David Pytches), and he spends five pages discussing true and false prophets and how to determine if someone is a false prophet. Nowhere in these five pages does he mention anything about the accuracy of the prophecies given.³²⁵ When someone claims to speak for God, accuracy and truth are not side issues, or even important issues—truth and accuracy are the only issues. How on earth do you think prophet from God could tell us anything but the truth? However, I am speaking of the true gift of prophecy, and not the current charismatic so-called gift of prophecy.

First of all, there is no reason to be concerned that there are no prophets running around at this present time (apart from false prophets). For 400 years, between the two testaments, there was no new revealed revelation and there were no prophets. There was some religious writings and some recorded history—some of which is accurate, and some of which is not—but that is the Apocrypha, which is not to be taken as God's Word. The final prophet of the Old Testament testified as to the coming of the next prophet, who was John the Baptizer (see Mal. 3:1 Matt. 11:10). The last prophet of the New Testament, the Apostle John, also foretold of the next prophets on the scene, who would be a part of the Tribulation (Rev. 11:3).³²⁶ Also, before anyone thinks that he is a prophet speaking words directly from God, may I direct you to Rev. 22:18: **I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of the book; if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book.** Maybe I am not thinking straight, but that sounds an awful like the door shutting on the canon of Scripture. Perhaps what you are able to prophesy about is only 75% inspired; however, in that case, if we were in the Old Testament, we would be forced to stone you to death. If you are 100% inspired, then it would be reasonable to add what you say to the canon of Scripture; but then, it says right here not to. Our other option, the one which is most reasonable, is to understand that the gift of prophecy ceased, as Paul said it would, and that the canon of Scripture closed, just as John said that it did. The precedent set by the silent 400 years would be in agreement with that. So far, we have two tidbits from Paul and John which would indicate that prophecy came to an end early on in the Church Age; but, have you ever read II Peter 2:1: **But false prophets also arose [aorist tense, which is generally a point in time in the past] among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will [future tense] introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift, destruction upon themselves.** We don't know when Peter wrote, although we could reasonably place this epistle near the end of his life. He speaks of false prophets in the aorist tense and he speaks of false teachers in the future tense. This would imply that prophecy was in the past and teaching would be for the future. Now, I would certainly not rest my case on this verse alone; however, combined with the previous verses quoted, it makes a very good argument.

The Gift of Knowledge: As we have previously discussed, there may not be a separate *gift of knowledge*; in fact, *knowledge* and *prophecy* may be two sides of the same coin or separate aspects of the same gift. What we will do here is assume that we can differentiate between the two gifts and draw some conclusions taking that approach. Since these gifts are no longer with us, it is difficult to distinguish between the gift of prophecy and the gift of knowledge. Let me make three suggestions, upon neither of which would I stake my theological life. The gift of prophecy was a verbal gift which presented new material; the gift of knowledge ratified this information as correct. When a letter was sent or when a new teacher came into a church, the gift of knowledge affirmed what they had to say. It would be these people with the gift of knowledge that would have become disturbed with the false teachers and would have contacted Paul concerning them, which would result in letters being written by Paul to the local church to deal with the false teaching. The second possible distinction is that the gift of prophecy dealt with strictly prophetic material and the gift of knowledge dealt more with doctrinal material. The third possibility is that prophecy is as we have always understood it—foretelling and forth-telling (I still grit my teeth to say that); and the gift of knowledge dealt with other people's motives and actions. Do you recall the first ten verses of Acts 5 when Peter accused Ananias and Sapphira of lying to the Holy Spirit? He knew that they lied via the gift of knowledge.

³²⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 68.

³²⁶ Paraphrased from B. F. Cate, *The Nine Gifts of the Spirit*; Regular Baptist Press, ©1956, ©1974, p. 15. By the way, few people tend to mention that prophets often had no fashion sense (Mark 1:6 Rev. 11:3).

If I was to stand behind any of these three distinctions, it would be the last. In any case, once the canon of Scripture was completed, we no longer need the gifts of prophecy and knowledge. They died out together. Note that in v. 8, the same verb was applied to each of those gifts.

When it comes to the gift of knowledge and the gift of prophecy, that should be easy to grasp. Whether separate gifts or the same gift, they were still both fulfilled with the completion of the canon of Scripture. Everything that we need to know is found in God's Word. Whenever we need direction for our lives, that is found in God's Word. Now, you cannot ignore His Word for years at a time, get in a jam, and think that you can open His book, drop your finger on a verse, and this is going to solve all of your problems. You might have spent five or ten years getting yourself into a mess that seems ineradicable; God is not going to get you out of it in five seconds so that you can go and do it again. However, with a regular (daily) intake of God's Word at the foot of a pastor who knows and teaches God's Word, given a few months, and you can pretty much take on whatever God gives you. When you make the wrong choice, you will be disciplined and/or guided. When you make the right choice, things will improve. Nevertheless, if I have God's Word, do I need someone with the gift of knowledge? Hell, no! I have what I need. I might need a pastor to teach it to me, but I certainly don't need someone to teach what is not in God's Word. If someone in your church claims to have the gift of knowledge or the gift of prophecy, what's the deal then? Do you write down his each and every word and obey it as though it were Scripture? What if what he says and the Bible says are in opposition to one another? What about his prophecies that do not come to pass? When this passage is properly understood and correctly interpreted, none of these things are problems. These gifts had a definite purpose, because God had made numerous, significant changes in the administration of His household (this is what *dispensation* means). Once these changes had been made known and were recorded and were understood to be authoritative, then the gifts were no longer necessary.

The Gift of Tongues: The gift of tongues would die out when it became no longer necessary. There is a different verb in v. 8 applied to this particular gift because it did not fall into disuse at the same time as the gifts of knowledge and prophecy. The purpose of the gift of tongues was to announce judgement upon Israel. A secondary purpose was to garner the attention of the unbeliever long enough to hear the gospel. All of this will be made clear midway through 1Cor. 14. Once Israel demonstrated complete and total rejection of God's plan, which would have been Acts 21–22, then there would no longer be a need for the gift of tongues.

The gift of tongues was used to evangelize the Jewish believer in Gentile languages. It was a sign gift which signified to the Jew that God was moving away from the nation Israel and to the gentiles. God spoke to the Israelite in Gentile languages. Once the New Testament of the Bible was complete, it stood as a testament to the Jew that God was speaking to them in Gentile languages—it was all written in Greek. However, the gift of tongues died out prior to that period of time when it became clear that God was working through the Gentiles (with the establishment of many gentile churches) along with the tremendous discipline which was inflicted upon the nation Israel in 70 A.D. by Titus (the siege against the Jews actually lasted for a lengthy period of time). When Titus came into Jerusalem and killed over a million Jews³²⁷, it was clear that God had abandoned the nation Israel.³²⁸ I would think that it would be safe to say that the gift of tongues was over around that time or before. Using the gift of tongues after that would be adding insult to injury.

Paul will himself interpret the gift of tongues as being a partial fulfillment of Isa. 28:9–11 in 1Cor. 14. We will exegete that passage at that time. However, the idea is that the Israelites become so far gone in apostasy that God, Who for over 2000 years has spoken to them through their own prophets in the Hebrew language, will suddenly speak to them in gentile languages. This is a tremendous insult to the Jew, the custodian of God's Word for over two millennia. Now, do you know what the original language of the New Testament was? It was written in Greek—a gentile language! God fulfilled Isa. 28:9–11 three times, the final time being the canonization of His Word, which included His New Covenant to Israel and to the Church in a gentile language. Now, that fulfills Isa. 28 and

³²⁷ This was by the estimate of Josephus, who appears to be an eyewitness to much of this siege; Tacitus estimates this to be 600,000.

³²⁸ However, do not become confused at this point. God has not abandoned the Jew and He will never abandon the Jew; however, that is a whole other topic.

that fully completes the gift of tongues. What greater, yet more terrible sign, than to have God speak to a Jew in Greek? This undeniably fulfilled and completed Isaiah's warning to Israel.

Now, you can twist this passage before us in any way that you want, just as you have 1 Cor. 13:1. However, the clear teaching is that the complete will do away with the part. When the completion of the partial comes on the scene, then there is no longer a need for the partial or the shadow of things to come. The completed canon of Scripture, ending with John's great revelation, ends our need to ferret out some wacko who claims to have the gift of prophecy. When it comes to the doctrines which guide our spiritual lives, we do not have to find some charismatic leader who claims to have the gift of knowledge—we have God's Word on which to stand and to use as the basis of our evaluation of all things. And, as for the gift of tongues—do you have any clue as to how much of an insult this would be to the Jews to continue with this gift after 70 A.D. We do not have even the slightest clue as to the incredible suffering and pain that they endured. Thousands of Jews were crucified, to the point that Rome ran out of crosses (according to Josephus). Speaking to a Jew in tongues after his homeland has been completely taken over and after the bulk of the Jewish population has been slaughtered is pouring salt on their wounds. Certainly, God rejected Israel because Israel rejected Him. However, tongues warned Israel in advance, not in retrospect. Once Israel had been warned, and once Rome began to systematically destroy the Jew, then there was no longer a need for the gift of tongues.³²⁹

[<Return to Page One>](#)

We should pause here and see if the historical witness of the church fathers bears out this notion. We also have historical documents which verify that the gift of tongue died out with the early church. From Burdick: *Chrysostom (A.D. 347–407) leaves no doubt that in his day tongues were altogether a thing of the past. Writing concerning 1 Corinthians 12, he said, "This whole place is very obscure; but the obscurity is produced by our ignorance of the facts referred to and by their cessation, being such as then used to occur, but now no longer take place."*³³⁰ We also have Augustine, a contemporary of Chrysostom living from A.D. 354 to 430, was equally definite. He said: *In the earliest times, "the Holy Ghost fell upon them that believed; and they spake with tongues," which they had not learned, "as the Spirit gave them utterance." These were signs adapted to the time. For there behooved to be that betokening of the Holy Spirit in all tongues, to show that the Gospel of God was to run through all tongues over the whole earth. That thing was done for a betokening, and it passed away.*³³¹

Augustine wrote other things which indicate the speaking in tongues belonged to the past, but these references also include the laying on of hands on infants for them to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit; as well as the spurious thought that the Holy Spirit could only be gotten from the Catholic Church. These statements open up whole new cans of worms which I do not wish to get into right now. However, they may be found in *Glossolalia* by Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, p. 52. Augustine also wrote: *For when the Catholic Church had been diffused and established through the whole world, these miracles were no longer permitted to continue in or time, lest the mind should always seek visible things. In Retractions, he writes: For those that are baptized do not now receive the Spirit on the imposition of hands, so as to speak in the tongues of all the peoples; neither are the sick healed by the shadow of the preachers of Christ falling on them as they pass; and other such things as were then done, are now manifestly ceased.*³³²

³²⁹ Of course, I am speaking of the true gift of tongues or languages; not this spouting off in so-called *angelic* gibberish, which we have already dealt with.

³³⁰ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, pp. 33–34. He took the quote from Chrysostom, "Homilies on the First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians," XXIX.

³³¹ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 34. He quoted from Augustine, "Homilies on the First Epistle of John," VI. 10.

³³² Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972 (from a series of lectures delivered at the Columbia Theological Seminary 1917–1918); pp. 40–41. The only actual citation which he provides is *Miscellaneous Works*; London, 1755, vol. I, p. xli. I should point out that Augustine did believe in miracles during his time, claimed to be a witness to some of them (although he writes of these long, long after the fact); but indicates that they were nothing like the miracles of the first century. Augustine, for all his writings, remains an enigmatic figure in Christian history.

In any case, the point I am making is that, by their witness, despite any goofy theological positions which they had, that the gift of tongues was long gone by their time. Hinson: *The combined evidence of Chrysostom and Augustine would indicate that tongue speaking had passed off the scene by the late fourth century in both East and West, Chrysostom, at one time a deacon and presbyter in Antioch (381–97) and later Patriarch of Constantinople (397–407), would probably have had direct knowledge if the phenomenon had occurred anywhere in the East. Augustine, who had resided in Rome and Milan several years (383–89) before initiating a long ministry in Hippo (391–430), would have had similar information about its occurrence in the West. Both spoke as if glossolalia had not occurred since very early times.*³³³

From that early time period, we only have two or three quotes from early church fathers which indicate that tongues may have been spoken in the second century A.D. In the introduction, we have already covered the few small, scattered movements, none of which left much behind by way of influence. We have quotes from Irenæus, from the end of the second century, for which I do not have an explanation. Then we also have Tertullian, who, in his essay *Against Marcion*, mentions tongues, visions and ecstasy. There are two reasonable explanations here: (1) he was speaking of the original church in this essay (the time frame is not clear); or, (2) he wrote this after joining the Montanists (which he did). This was a schismatic movement which began in Phrygia which believed in the continued existence of miraculous sign gifts. One of their teachings was that Jerusalem would descend from heaven and land on Phrygia (damn lucky for them to be living there and I expect they bought up a little real estate, as it was certain to appreciate when Jerusalem finally descended).³³⁴

Thomas Watson wrote in 1660: *Sure, there is as much need of ordination now as in Christ's time and in the time of the apostles, there being then extraordinary gifts in the church which are now ceased.* (Thomas Watson, *The Beatitudes*, p. 14). John Owen, in 1679, wrote: *Gifts which in their own nature exceed the whole power of all our faculties, that dispensation of the Spirit is long since ceased and where it is now pretended unto by any, it may justly be suspected as an enthusiastic delusion.* (John Owen, *Works* IV, p. 518). Matthew Henry, July 15, 1712: *The gift of tongues was one new product of the spirit of prophecy and given for a particular reason, that, the Jewish pale being taken down, all nations might be brought into the church. These and other gifts of prophecy, being a sign, have long since ceased and been laid aside, and we have no encouragement to expect the revival of them; but, on the contrary, are directed to call the scriptures the more sure word of prophecy, more sure than voices from heaven; and to them we are directed to take heed, to search them, and to hold them fast, 2 Peter 1:29.* (Matthew Henry, Preface to Vol. IV of his *Exposition of OT & NT*, vii). Jonathan Edwards, in 1738, writes that these extraordinary sign gifts were given to the early church: *in order to the founding and establishing of the Church in the world. But since the canon of the Scripture has been completed, and the Christian Church fully founded and established, these extraordinary gifts have ceased.* (Jonathan Edwards, *Charity and its Fruits*; p. 29). George Whitefield, because of his frequent testimony to the person and power of the Spirit of God, was charged with 'enthusiasm' by some Church leaders and he was credited with believing that apostolic charismata were revived. This belief Whitefield firmly denied; 'I never did pretend to these extraordinary operations of working miracles, or speaking with tongues.' For failing to distinguish the ordinary and extraordinary work of the Spirit and of considering both to have ceased, he blames the Bishop and clergy of Lichfield and Coventry, 'who reckon the indwelling, and inward witnessing of, as also praying and preaching by the Spirit, among the karismata, the miraculous gifts conferred on the primitive church, and which have long since ceased.'³³⁵ Whitefield also had friends who confirmed his distinction between the power of the Holy Spirit which he claimed to have different manifestations from the early church. Joseph Smith, the Congregational pastor in South Caroline, wrote: *[George Whitefield]...renounced all pretences to the extraordinary powers and signs of apostleship, peculiar to the age of inspiration, and extinct with them.* (Joseph Smith, in his preface to George Whitefield's *Sermons and Important Subjects*, 1825, xxv).

³³³ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 53.

³³⁴ See Kenneth S. Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, p. 126.

³³⁵ All of the quotations from this paragraph were taken directly from Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles*; ©1973 by The Banner of Truth Trust, p. 95–101. The minister of the Baptist Church in Aberystwyth, Wales, Geoffrey Thomas, supplied these quotes to him. The first one is George Whitefield, 'Answer to the Bishop of London,' *Works*, Vol. IV, p. 9 and the second one is 'Second letter to the Bishop of London,' *Works*, Vol. IV, p. 167. The rest are cited in context.

In the late 1700's, after studying in great depth all of the writings of the church fathers of the first three centuries or so, Conyers Middleton wrote: *...we have no sufficient reason to believe, upon the authority of the primitive fathers, that any such powers were continued to the church, after the days of the Apostles.*³³⁶ Apparently, Middleton had a rather harsh tone in this book, which Benjamin Warfield tells us *does not destroy its value as a solid piece of investigation.* Warfield continues: *Middleton's own view...[was] that miracles subsisted until the church had been founded in all the chief cities of the empire, which, he held, had been accomplished in the Apostolic times. It is interesting to observe thus that Middleton reached his correct conclusion as to the time of the cessation of these gifts without the help of a right understanding of the true reason of their cessation with the Apostolic age; [Middleton reaches this conclusion] purely...on empirical grounds.* That is, through his careful study of the writings of the church fathers of the first few centuries. His book *presents in full the testimony to miraculous working found in the Fathers of the first three centuries. The meagreness and indefiniteness of their witness are left to speak for themselves, with only the help of two closing remarks. The one of these presses the impossibility of believing that the gifts were first withdrawn during the first fifty years of the second century and then restored. The other contrasts the patristic miracles with those of the New Testament, with respect both to their nature and the mode of their working...[he further points out that] no known writer claims to have himself wrought miracles, or names any of his predecessors as having done so. The honor is left to unknown and obscure men, and afterward to the "rotten bones" of saints who while living did no such works.* In the fourth section of his book, Middleton examines each and every proposed miracle from outside the Apostolic era, along with every instance that it is mentioned, and questions its credibility. According to Warfield, the book was *received with a storm of criticism, reprobation, even abuse.* However, Warfield points out, *it was not refuted.*³³⁷

Chantry provides us with still more: James Buchanan, 1845: *The miraculous gifts of the Spirit have long since been withdrawn. They were used for a temporary purpose. They were the scaffolding with God employed for the erection of a spiritual temple. When it was no longer needed the scaffolding was taken down, but the temple still stands, and is occupied by his indwelling Spirit; for, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (1Cor. 3:16).* (James Buchanan, *Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*, p. 34). Charles Haddon Spurgeon, in several sermons, espoused the same position. *Although we may not expect and need not desire the miracles which came with the gift of the Holy Spirit, so far as they were physical, yet we may both desire and expect that which was intended and symbolized by them, and we may reckon to see the like spiritual wonders performed among us at this day.* (*Met. Tab. Pulpit.* 1881, Vol. 27, p. 521). Spurgeon again: *The works of the Holy Spirit which are at this time vouchsafed to the Church of God are every way as valuable as those earlier miraculous gifts which have departed from us. The work of the Holy Spirit, by which men are quickened from their death in sin, is not inferior to the power which made men speak with tongues.* (*Met. Tab. Pulpit.* 1884, Vol. 30, pp. 386–387). Robert L. Dabney, in 1876, wrote that once the early church had been established, *the same necessity for supernatural signs now no longer existed, and God, who is never wasteful in his expedients, withdrew them. Henceforward the church was to conquer the belief of the world by its example and teachings alone, energized by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Finally, miracles, if they became ordinary, would cease to be miracles, and would be referred by men to customary law.* (Robert L. Dabney, 'Prelacy a Blunder', *Discussions: Evangelical and Theological*, Vol. 2, pp. 236–237). George Smeaton, 1882: *The supernatural or extraordinary gifts were temporary, and intended to disappear when the Church should be founded and the inspired canon of Scripture closed; for they were an external proof of an internal inspiration.* (George Smeaton, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, p. 51). Abraham Kuyper, 1888: *Many of the charismata, given to the apostolic church, are not of service to the church of the present day.* (Abraham Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, English Edition, 1900, p. 182). W. G. T. Shedd, 1888: *The supernatural gifts of inspiration and miracles which the apostles possessed were not continued to their ministerial successors, because they were no longer necessary. All the doctrines of Christianity had been revealed to the apostles, and had been delivered to the church in a written form. There was no further need of an infallible inspiration. And the credentials and authority give to the first preachers of Christianity in miraculous acts, did not need continual repetition from age to age. One age of miracles well authenticated is sufficient to establish the divine origin of the gospel. In a human court, an indefinite series of witnesses is not required. "By the mouth of two or*

³³⁶ Conyers Middleton, *A Free Inquiry*; London, 1747. This was quoted by Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972 (from a series of lectures delivered at the Columbia Theological Seminary 1917–1918); p. 28.

³³⁷ Quoted and paraphrased from Benjamin Warfield; *Counterfeit Miracles*; The Banner of Truth Trust, ©1972 (from a series of lectures delivered at the Columbia Theological Seminary 1917–1918); pp. 28–31.

three witnesses," the facts are established. The case once decided is not reopened. (W. G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, Vol. 11, p. 369). Benjamin Warfield, 1918: *These gifts were not the possession of the primitive Christian as such; nor for that matter of the Apostolic Church or the Apostolic age for themselves; they were distinctively the authentication of the Apostles. They were part of the credentials of the Apostles as the authoritative agents of God in founding the church. Their function thus confined them to distinctively the Apostolic Church and they necessarily passed away with it.* (Benjamin Warfield, *Counterfeit Miracles*, p. 6). Arthur Pink, 1970: *As there were offices extraordinary (apostles and prophets) at the beginning of our dispensation, so there were gifts extraordinary; and as successors were not appointed for the former, so a continuance was never intended for the latter. The gifts were dependent upon the officers. We no longer have the apostles with us and therefore the supernatural gifts (the communication of which was an essential part of "the signs of an apostle", 2Cor. 12:12) are absent.* (Arthur W. Pink, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 179). As you see from these testimonies, that it has been the position of theologians throughout the ages that the miraculous gifts of the spirit have died out, although the power of the Holy Spirit has not.

Now let's look at some other gifts:

The Gift of Healing: Let's look at a gift not covered in 1Cor. 13: the sign gift of healing, which gave authority to the speaker, was done away with once the Apostles had fully established their authority (including Paul, of course). As has been mentioned, *healing* had little or nothing to do with the alleviation of suffering. Jesus is God—he could have healed the entire world from death, disease, pain and suffering in an instant, had He so chosen. Furthermore, Jesus did not begin healing until He began His public ministry. He healed for roughly three years, beginning His ministry around the age of 30. Cate: *...during His teens and twenties, He healed no one—He let the sick suffer and die. There was no touching of the hem of His garment for healing in those days.*³³⁸ And then, when He did begin His ministry and began to heal, He always healed in such a way that it was clear that He was the One Who was doing it through the power of the Holy Spirit—it was His credit card. It established His authority and His person. Was the Holy Spirit not active in his life until then? Certainly He was. Jesus did not use His gift of healing simply to alleviate suffering. His gift of healing told those who witnessed it that He was the Messiah, the One sent by God. Again, when John the Baptizer questioned Him by messenger, asking whether He was the One Who was sent by God, or whether they should look for another, Jesus answered John by saying, **"The blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is he who keeps from stumbling over Me."** (Matt. 11:5–6 Isa. 35:5–6 61:1). Jesus Himself offered His miracles as the proof of Who He was. John the Apostle confirmed this in John 20:30–31: **And Jesus definitely performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these [signs which were recorded] are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, you might have life through His name.**

There are a couple of facts that you should note about Jesus' healing ministry. He healed everyone who came to Him and even a couple who did not (Lazarus and the Centurion's servant) but He did not heal everyone—Jesus did not even heal everyone in Judæa. He actually only healed a small percentage of people who were ill during His first advent. Those in the faith-healing business today do not heal everyone who comes to them; they do not heal organic diseases, and still some of them claim that faith-healing is for everyone (at least, everyone who has faith). Do faith healers sound like the real thing or do they sound like counterfeits? Sir Robert Anderson: *I know that if in the days of His humiliation this poor crippled child had been brought into His presence, He would have healed it. And I am assured that His power is greater now than when He sojourned upon the earth, and that He is still as near to us as He then was. But when I bring this to a practical test, it fails. Whatever the reason, it does not seem to be true. This poor afflicted child must remain a cripple. I dare not say that He cannot heal my child, but it is clear that He will not. And why will He not? How is this mystery to be explained? The plain fact is that with all who believe the Bible the great difficulty respecting miracles is not the occurrence but their absence.*³³⁹

³³⁸ B. F. Cate, *The Nine Gifts of the Spirit*; Regular Baptist Press, ©1956, ©1974, p. 27.

³³⁹ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 149–150; taken from Sir Robert Anderson, *The Silence of God*; London; Hodder and Stoughton, 1905, pp. 27–28.

The Apostles had these gifts, and, they were used to confirm their Apostolic authority. The gift of healing was not given to the Christian community so that all believers could be well all of the time. MacArthur reasons: *Healing was a miraculous sign gift to be used for special purposes. It was not intended as a permanent way to keep the Christian community in perfect health. Yet today most charismatics teach that God wants every Christian well. If that is true, why does God allow Christians to get sick in the first place?*³⁴⁰

As we have mentioned, there was a time when Paul gives Timothy medical advice (drink a little wine, Timbo) and a time when he left behind a disciple who was ill. On the one hand, that seems pretty lame for the greatest of the Apostles; however, if you realize that he had established his authority, it was no longer necessary to have sign gifts. Now, I have heard that crap about *the person who is sick just doesn't have enough faith or it just isn't God's will*. If it was not God's will for Timothy to get over his periodic upset stomach, then why the hell does Paul suggest he drink some wine? Why doesn't he brace Timothy for not having enough faith or tell Tim that he needs to get back into fellowship so that God would stop disciplining him? Paul doesn't use that approach, because that is not the correct analysis of the situation. Timothy's stomach was in knots—he was probably suffering from ulcers—and Paul suggested that he drink a little wine to sooth his stomach and mental attitude. The intent of Paul was to medically treat the problem. The correct understanding is that their gifts of healing established their authority, their authority had been established, and that which was completed took away the necessity for that which was in part (the gift of healing). Tim was not sick because he didn't have enough faith or because he was under discipline; otherwise, it would have been stupid for Paul to offer him medical advice for a spiritual problem (Paul didn't send Timothy *prayer beads* or a *prayer cloth* either). You do not dispense medical advice when you have the gift of healing and you do not dispense medical advice if the problem is spiritual. And I have already mentioned Trophimus; however, maybe you're thinking that Paul was not present to lay hands on Timothy. Our Lord did not find it necessary to heal by placing His hands on anyone (object lesson: the Centurion's daughter). Paul was with Trophimus, but he left Trophimus behind and ill. If the problem was with Trophimus, then Paul would have used him for an object lesson (Paul, in the same context, dealt with the evil doctrine of Alexander, the coppersmith—2Tim. 4:14). Paul used people all the time, particularly to Timothy, as object lessons (e.g., 2Tim. 2:17); Trophimus would have been an excellent object lesson, had the problem been with the attitude or life of Trophimus. However, the implication is that this was a man down that Paul would have liked to have used in his ministry. Our third case history is Epaphroditus, whom Paul mentions was sick almost to the point of dying (Philip. 2:25–28). He was sick long enough for the Philippians to have heard about it from others. Therefore, he didn't get sick and Paul healed him. He didn't get sick, then get really sick, and Paul healed him. He got sick and then sicker, and he was sick long enough for the Philippians to get word of it; and then God had mercy on him, as well as on Paul, and healed Epaphroditus. There is no instantaneous healing. Paul does not write to the Philippians and tell them, *Do you recall how sick Epaphroditus was? Well, I just laid my hand upon his head, and he was healed!* We don't have any of that nonsense. These three examples occurred around 60 A.D. and later. This was when the sign gifts had begun to fade. Paul's authority had been clearly established, and therefore these gifts were no longer necessary. Maybe you want to tell me that they had too little faith? Read the short passages on these men—Paul held them in very high regard. Nowhere does he question their faith. Let me bring up another case history: Paul himself! Paul had a vision, but was left with a serious physical infirmity (the nature of which has been the subject of no little debate). Gal. 6:11 may infer that this was an eye problem (this is only speculation). Perhaps his vision led to a vision problem. In any case, Paul was also physically afflicted and God allowed him to remain that way. You see, your problem is that you equate the gift of healing with a temporary relief from suffering. They are not equivalent. That temporary relief from suffering is simply a by-product. However, do not be so short-sighted as to think that is all that the gift of healing is.

You may think that I am spending way too much time with the gift of healing. However, the gift of tongues and the gift of healing are closely bound together. Nichol: *From the very beginning of the Pentecostal movement, however, the doctrine of divine healing has remained as one of its cardinal truths—an important facet of its “full gospel” message. Healing has been preached and practiced because Pentecostals believe that deliverance from Physical sickness is provided for in the atonement and is the privilege of all believers.*³⁴¹ This is despite the fact that

³⁴⁰ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 215.

³⁴¹ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, pp. 15–16. Nichol offers a small bibliography on this subject in a footnote on p. 16.

believers in Pentecostal churches are sick in the same percentages as are people outside the Pentecostal church. This is despite the fact that 1 out of every 1 Pentecostal dies, many from illnesses. I don't want to go into case histories, as we are more or less centering this study on the gift of tongues—however, it is difficult to stay on task, as the gift of tongues pulls in with it a series of false doctrines. However, John MacArthur's book, *Charismatic Chaos*, contains a chapter delineating example after example of various faith healers (many of whom we know) who have gotten sick and were never cured of various ailments.

Now, is it possible for someone to be healed in a charismatic church? I hesitatingly answer this yes. I say hesitatingly, as some idiot will read or hear this, and then, when they get sick, and then go to a charismatic church because, *even though their doctrine is way wrong, some people do get healed there*. In his book, *How To Live 365 Days a Year*, Dr. John A. Schindler tells us that 50% of people's illnesses are psychosomatic³⁴² (how accurate that figure is and how knowledgeable Dr. Schindler is, is another question). However, most would grant that a significant number of illnesses are a result of stress. Therefore, it is reasonable that a person could go to a charismatic church and, either through hypnotic suggestion or by the placebo affect, become healed. That same person could be healed in a Christian Science meeting, or at a Unity Church, or by a psychiatrist—if their illness is stress-induced. The key here is not the means of healing, but the stress.

In any case, the healers never take the blame when a healing does not occur. It is always the fault of the person who desires healing. Hagin became frustrated with a woman who had been crippled by arthritis so badly that she could not walk. Recounting that she began to rise supernaturally out of the wheel chair and into the air, but would not let go of her wheel chair, Hagin wrote the following: *I pointed my finger at her and said, "Sister, you don't have an ounce of faith, do you?" (She was saved and baptized with the Holy Spirit, but I meant she didn't have faith for her healing.) Without thinking, she blurted out, "No, Brother Hagin, I don't! I don't believe I'll ever be healed. I'll go to my grave from this chair." She said it, and she did it. We weren't to blame.*³⁴³

Let me give you one extended quote from a Dr. William Nolen with regards to Kathryn Kuhlman, who was a faith healer of great import several decades ago: *Finally it was over. There were still long lines of people waiting to get onto the stage and claim their cures, but at five o'clock, with a hymn and final blessing, the show ended. Miss Kuhlman left the stage and the audience left the auditorium. Before going back to talk to Miss Kuhlman I spent a few minutes watching the wheelchair patients leave. All the desperately ill patients who had been in wheelchairs were still in wheelchairs. In fact, the man with the kidney cancer in his spine and hip, the man whom I had helped to the auditorium and who had his borrowed wheelchair brought to the stage and shown to the audience when he had claimed a cure, was now back in the wheelchair. His "cure," even if only a hysterical one, had been extremely short-lived. As I stood in the corridor watching the hopeless cases leave, seeing the tears of the parents as they pushed their crippled children to the elevators, I wished Miss Kuhlman had been with me. She had complained a couple of times during the service of "the responsibility, the enormous responsibility," and how her "heart aches for those that weren't cured," but I wondered how often she had really looked at them. I wondered whether she sincerely felt that the joy of those "cured" of bursitis and arthritis compensated for the anguish of those left with their withered legs, their imbecilic children, their cancers of the liver. I wondered if she really knew what damage she was doing. I couldn't believe that she did.*³⁴⁴

This same doctor asked for a list of the patients that Kathryn Kuhlman had cured of cancer; there were only eight, and only one of them consented to speak with him. And that person had both medical treatment as well as a faith healing by Miss Kuhlman. He just chose to attribute the healing to Kathryn Kuhlman. Dr. Nolen also asked for a list of people who had been simply healed, and Miss Kuhlman gave him a list of 82 names, 23 of whom agreed to meet with him. None of these people had a legitimate healing. Nolen comments: *Kathryn Kuhlman's lack of medical sophistication is a critical point. I don't believe she is a liar or a charlatan or that she is, consciously,*

³⁴² I got this from B. F. Cate, *The Nine Gifts of the Spirit*; Regular Baptist Press, ©1956, ©1974, p. 33, who gives the publishes of Dr. Schindler's book as Prentice Hall and the page number as 43. Dr. Schindler is, by the way, an M.D..

³⁴³ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 283, taken from Kenneth Hagin, "Praying to Get Results"; Tulsa, OK; Faith Library, 1983, p. 5.

³⁴⁴ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 205, taken from Dr. William Nolen, *Healing: A Doctor in Search of a Miracle*; New York, NY; Random House, 1974, p. 60.

*dishonest...I think she sincerely believes that the thousands of sick people who come to her services and claim cures are, through her ministrations, being cured of organic diseases. I also think—and my investigations confirm this—that she is wrong. The problem is—and I'm sorry this has to be so blunt—one of ignorance. Miss Kuhlman doesn't know the difference between psychogenic and organic diseases. Through she uses hypnotic techniques, she doesn't know anything about hypnotism and the power of suggestion. She doesn't know anything about the autonomic nervous system. Or, if she does know something about these things, she has certainly learned to hide her knowledge. There is one other possibility: It may be that Miss. Kuhlman doesn't want to learn that her work is not as miraculous as it seems for this reason she has trained herself to deny, emotionally and intellectually, anything that might threaten the validity of her ministry.*³⁴⁵

After giving several other examples, MacArthur concludes: *Not one of today's self-styled healers can produce irrefutable proof of the miracles they claim to have wrought. Many of them are transparently fraudulent, and the healings they display are clearly suspect. Yet thousands of intelligent people continue to go to their services. Why? Because desperation often accompanies disease. Sickness drives people to do frantic and extreme things they normally would not do. People who are ordinarily clear-minded, intelligent, and balanced become irrational. Satan knows that, which is why he said, "Skin for skin! Yes; all that a man has he will give for his life" (Job 2:4)...The tragedy is that no good is done for any of these people—no one's faith is really strengthened, no one's diseases are really healed. Multitudes go away shattered, disconsolate, feeling either that they have failed God or that he has failed them there is much confusion, built, and heartache among charismatics and non-charismatics because of what they have been told about healing. The agony of disease and illness is only intensified when people feel that they are not healed because of their sin, their lack of faith, or God's indifference of them. They reason that if healing is available and they do not get it, it is either their fault or God's. Thus faith healers have left untold wreckage in their wake.*³⁴⁶

By the way, charismatic healers constantly blame the lack of faith in believers for the fact that they are not healed. However, in the New Testament, we have several instances of people being raised from the dead. People who are dead generally lack faith as they have no brain function. Why don't charismatics raise a few certifiably dead people to give their message credence?

Now, lest there be any confusion—should we pray for the sick? Absolutely—the Apostle James so exhorts us. Will God heal some of us of illnesses? Absolutely—sometimes through medicine, sometimes through His grace, and sometimes as a combination of the two. For my entire life, I wore glasses or contacts, and, for several years, my **corrected** vision was around 20:80 to 20:120. God healed me, and my uncorrected vision today is better than my old corrected vision. I have passed a seeing test for a driver's license without glasses. God healed me by two men, in fact, who had the gift of healing, you might say. They spent many years in a medical school and were now practicing their gift with the HMO that I belonged to. Did I pray to God prior to the operation? Many times. Did I thank God after the operations? Many times—not nearly enough. Was it a miracle? For all intents and purposes, to me it was. Was it the same as the gift of healing as practiced by our Lord? Certainly not. Was their gift of healing the same as that proposed by charismatics today? Certainly not.

What the healing did was get an audience. These healings were always public, the people who were healed were generally known. A good example is the lame man who Peter healed in Acts 3. He sat out in front of the temple pretty much every day of his life and begged for sustenance. Everyone who went to the temple knew him. This was not some lame setup nor some psychological ploy. Peter healed him instantly, and as this man leaped around, and then clung to Peter and John, the others around taking note of what happened. Then Peter gives his second sermon, and 5000 believe in Christ. It was this healing which gained Peter an audience (and his speech gained him a night in jail). Without the healing, his message alone was quite repugnant to the religious types and to the crowd. Jesus had been crucified; Jesus did not free the Jews from the Roman oppression. He did not do that which they had expected. Therefore, Peter had to do more than just stand before them and proclaim Christ. He had to first vindicate the message with a showing of power. A smart unbeliever (actually, a mediocre unbeliever)

³⁴⁵ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 205, taken from Dr. William Nolen, *Healing: A Doctor in Search of a Miracle*; New York, NY; Random House, 1974, p. 107

³⁴⁶ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 209–210.

can watch divine healers today and they know it is a scam, which detracts from the gospel message. If a divine healer walked through a hospital and placed their hands on patient after patient, curing them instantly and completely of physiological ailments, then they would have an audience of family and friends, as well as doctors, nurses and orderlies. However, today, that gift does not exist and is no longer necessary. Now, when Peter and John were questioned, the validity of the healing was never called into question. Skeptics today not only call healers into question, they give evidence that the healings done were unspectacular, and often faked. What Peter did was certainly a fulfillment of Christ saying, “**And greater works will you do.**” What healers do today is not a fulfillment of that. What healers do today is they take credence from the message of the gospel from moderately perceptive unbelievers; they devastate the faith of those who already believe; and they disappoint the unbelievers who are desperate for healing. Healers today may be sincere, but they work for Satan, not for our Lord.

Let me summarize: nowhere in Scripture is healing ever presented as simply the means to decrease one’s suffering. It is never presented as a means of alleviating suffering for believers (in fact, we have several examples of where just the opposite is true). Nowhere is it presented as anything other than a sign—a sign which confirmed that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah) and to confirm that the Apostles were from God. Nowhere is there even a hint that the gift of healing was used for the purpose of healing believers (Lazarus was dead, not ailing, when he was raised from the dead). Jesus’ healing was characterized by a simple word or touch; it was instantaneous; it was complete and total; it was nonexclusive—He left no one out; and **He healed organic diseases**. The same characteristics can be said about the early healing ministry of the Apostles.³⁴⁷

Now, if you want to hold to the gift of healing as a contemporary gift, then you have the following problems: (1) Timothy; (2) Trophimus; (3) Epaphroditus; (4) Paul (recall his eye problems as well as his thorn in the flesh); (5) the fact that your pastor doesn’t go down to the local hospital and heal person after person after person; (6) the fact that your pastor asks for money, when a couple true, medically-established, miraculous healings could be used both to raise money and to spread the gospel. There are myth-debunkers out there who will pay money for a real, medically-verified healing. There are hospitals filled to overflowing with sick people and unbelievers. If you are a charismatic and you want to base what you believe upon your experiences, how do you explain that the gift of healing demonstrated by faith healers today in no way resembles the healing performed by the Apostles of the first century? What happened to **Jesus, the same today, yesterday and forever?** Now, if you take the correct viewpoint of the gift of healing, then all of these problems—each one of them individually serious—will completely and easily vanish.

In all of this, I think that I left out two important questions: can God heal and does God heal? God can and does heal. He certainly has the ability to heal through supernatural means, as well as through means that we see as natural; and He certainly heals through natural means. Whether He heals today supernaturally in isolated incidents (apart from those who claim to have the gift of healing), I would give a qualified yes. My instinct and inclination is to say, *certainly God heals today supernaturally in some isolated instances*. On the other hand, I do not personally know of any such cases. God is not any less or any more because of what He chooses to do. Jesus chose only to heal those He came in contact with; He could have, but did not, wave his hand, and cure the world of sickness entirely for any period of time that He chose. He is not any more or any less God because He chose to heal only those He came into contact with.

I should stop and deal with *natural means*. God chooses to heal and to answer many prayers through what we might see as natural means. That is, there was no lightning bolt from heaven, no cure which baffled and stumped ten of Chicago’s finest physicians, no miraculous occurrence that was spectacular to all those who witnessed it. He has chosen, in these last days (referring to about 58 A.D. and after) to do a great deal through natural means. We fail to appreciate how incredible this is and what a tremendous show of power that this is. This is because we see God as we see ourselves. A problem erupts and we do what we can to correct it, right then and there. Those prayers which God answers by natural means, He answered back in eternity past. He foresaw everything that would ever take place, and He knew exactly when you would pray and for what you would pray, and He answered these prayers before we even existed or before any of our ancestors existed. He put into motion in eternity past

³⁴⁷ I took these points from John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 211–214.

just exactly what it would take to answer that prayer by natural means. One great theme of science fiction is *what if we went back in time and changed one tiny detail?* The catch is that this detail changes everything in the future. It was God Who put all of these details into motion to begin with, Who designed the natural laws for our universe, Who foresaw every need and every prayer of every person and made provision for those things in eternity past.

Fifteen years ago, prior to computers, I could not sit down and write the way I do today. It has never been in my nature to be able to sit down and start at the beginning when I was going to write something, and end up at the end. I constantly want to go back and revise and insert. This generation that has grown up with computers takes such abilities for granted. Had I been born simply 50 years earlier, I could not do what I do in terms of writing and studying. My vision being what it is, had I been born several hundred years earlier, despite having a reasonable intellect, I would be begging in the streets as I would have been unable to see well enough to do much of anything for myself. For me personally, God, in eternity past, put all of this technology together so that it would come to pass in my lifetime. Now, I realize that sounds perhaps a little egocentric that God would do all of that for me. Sorry for how it sounds, but that is the way it is. He also did the same for you. In fact, He did the same for every single believer from the beginning of time until now. And He did all of this in eternity past. What we do **not** have it a God Who observes our lives, notices that we need an answer to prayer, and it just turns out that He hadn't thought about that in eternity past—and so the only way that He can answer that prayer is by doing a miracle. “Holy crap! I didn't know that was going to happen! I'd better send a miraculous cure pronto!” This is how we think and how we operate; this is not how God thinks and operates. We have no ability to even conceive of the complexity and compassion of God's mind when He created the world. [Does not wisdom call and understanding lift up her voice? At the head of high places by the way, between the paths she takes a stand. At the side of the gates, at the opening of the city, the entrance of the openings, she calls out aloud, “Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of man...Receive my instruction and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is better than rubies; yea, all delights are not comparable with it...Jehovah possessed in the beginning of His way, before His works and since then. From the age I was anointed, from the first, from the former states of the earth, in there being no depths, I was brought forth. In there being no fountains heavy with waters, before mountains were sunk, before heights, I was brought forth. While He had not made the earth, and the places further out and before even the first dust of the world. In His preparation of the heavens, I was there; in His decreeing a circle over the face of the deep, in His strengthening the clouds above, in His making strong fountains of the deep, in His setting for the sea its limit, and the waters transgress not beyond His command; in His decreeing the foundations of the earth; then I am near Him, a workman, and I am a delight—day by day, rejoicing before Him at all times; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth, and my delights are with the sons of men. So now, you sons, listen to me. Yea, happy are they who keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise and strengthened. Happiness of the man who listens to me, to watch at my doors day by day, to watch at the door-posts of the entrance, for whoever finds me finds life and brings out grace from Jehovah. Furthermore, who misses me wrongs his own soul; and all those who hate me love death.”](#) (Prov. 8:1–4, 10–11, 22–36). For God, it is the miracle which is easy. Solving all of our problems and answering all of our prayers in eternity past—now, that is what is difficult.

Now, let me take this a step further. You cannot read God's Word apart from realizing what importance God attaches to knowledge, wisdom and understanding. I am not referring to human intellect, but to divine viewpoint. Moses encouraged the Israelites to write portions of the Law on their doorposts. Read Deut. 4:1–31 5:27–33 6:1–9. So think about this, for a moment—if God places such a premium on knowledge and upon the understanding of His Word, do you think that He wants you to engage in various activities apart from your mind being engaged? God gave us a mind; He gave us pastor-teachers; and He gave us a Bible which is longer than ten or fifteen pages (which is pretty much the sum total of spiritual knowledge of the average believer). What I am saying to you is that you have no justification in God's plan for doing anything apart from knowledge. The cults are filled with things such as automatic writing, letting your mind go blank and meditating, letting others of the spirit world take a hold of your body (as you divest yourself of your *ego*), etc. Christianity has **none** of that.

What many do not grasp—and this is especially true of the charismatics—is the real power of God's Word. When Peter and John spoke, there was no New Testament. All there was, was the Old Testament and the words of Peter and John. It was these healings which gained them their authority. Once that authority was established, once the Word of God began to be recorded, these signs and miracles were no longer necessary. When Paul was affirming his Apostleship to the Corinthians, he did not promise that when he returned to them, he would show them a few

more signs and miracles. He wrote: **The signs of a true Apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles** (2Cor. 12:12). *Performed* is in the aorist passive indicative. The aorist tense is a point of time in the past; passive means that God the Holy Spirit performed these miracles through the Apostle Paul; and indicative mood is the mood of reality. This is not being done again. Paul isn't going to return and wow their socks off to gain back their faith and approval. Who and what he is has been established. This time, he promises in this second epistle that he will return to them and he talks about what he will do, but signs and wonders aren't on that to-do list (2Cor. 12:14–21). There is a time frame which appears to be pretty consistent: in 55 or 56 A.D., the Apostles were healing and performing signs and miracles. By 58 or 59 A.D., with a few scattered exceptions (e.g., Acts 28:1–10, which is the only recorded exception that I recall) that appears to be a thing of the past. We find this in the book of Acts as well as in all of the epistles.

The Gift of Miracles: Let's just take a moment for miracles. I do not intend to give this the same time which I am giving tongues, the subject we are covering, or even healing. I have covered them in much greater detail in the books of Exodus, Deuteronomy and Joshua. Signs, healings, tongues and miracles are often lumped together, which is reasonable. As I have mentioned, I have been in several charismatic churches (before I knew any better), and I have never witnessed a miracle (or, for that matter, a healing³⁴⁸) or even relatively good magic. Most of us recall the story (not parable, but story) of Lazarus (this is not the Lazarus who was raised from the dead) and the rich man. Lazarus was a beggar and the rich man came into contact with him several times while they were alive. They died and Lazarus went into Abraham's bosom while the rich man went into torments. The rich man had two requests. He asked that Lazarus bring him just a tiny amount of water, as he was in great agony. However, it was explained to him that between he and Lazarus was a great gulf fixed. Then, the rich man requests for Lazarus to be sent to his five brothers to warn them that there really is a hell. Since Moses and Elijah were brought back for a short time to the Mount of Transfiguration and since Samuel was brought back, we know that this is not something outside of God's power or completely outside of His policy (although such a thing is exceedingly rare). However, let's hear the divine viewpoint on performing such miracles: **But Abraham said, "They have Moses and the Prophets [which is a reference to Old Testament Scripture]; let them hear them...if they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though someone rise from the dead."** (Luke 16:29, 31b).

You see, your problem is you have no concept of how degenerate man is nor how powerful the Word of God is. Perhaps you are a really nice person and most of the people in your church appear to be really nice people. You're clueless with regards to the old sin nature. Lazarus and the rich man could have both come back from the dead and talked to the five brothers of the rich man and warned them of the hell which was to come, and this would not have any affect on the five brothers. Their minds were made up. If anything could get to them, God's Word could. You might go to a holy roller church and you think there are all these miracles and healings going on, but when the average unbeliever walks into the middle of that and sees all of the chaos, he generally is looking around for the exit. It's both spooky and goofy to the unbeliever. Now, believers walk into that—believers who haven't been in fellowship for several months; believers who have no real understanding of God's Word—and they are often taken in; but rarely to unbelievers—particularly intelligent ones—fall for that. The same unbeliever might here a few verses of Scripture, spoken by you or by a pastor or by someone like Billy Graham or J. Vernon McGee (even though he has passed away), and that can cut through to their heart.

The Gift of Apostleship: The gift of Apostleship vanished. The Apostles, in their ignorance, attempted to elect an Apostle to take the place of Judas (and even quoted Scripture to boot) and elected Matthias, who was probably a very nice man. We hear of Matthias only in Acts 1 at his election—whatever later spiritual impact that he had, God the Holy Spirit chose not to record it. Please understand, man does not elect Apostles and this election was a goofy mistake. In 1Cor. 12:28, we find that God gives this gift of Apostleship. That this was a mistake, the disciples realized and they did not elect an additional Apostle when James was martyred in Acts 12:1–2. Paul recognized that his death was near when he wrote his second letter to Timothy, but he did not leave instructions as to how an Apostle should be elected nor did he leave names of those who should be elected as Apostles

³⁴⁸ My favorite incident was in this church where the pastor and several of the church members would run around the church and place their hands on someone to heal them, and then move on to someone else. They were about ready to move on from one person, and a gal suggested, "Why don't we just stay here with sister so-and-so until she is healed?" The dirty look that the pastor flashed her was priceless; so they did hang out there a little longer, and then they moved on. It was hilarious!

(2Tim. 4:6–21). Once John died at the turning of the century, we have no additional records of any Apostles beyond the original twelve and Paul (there is mention of Barnabas and another). However, in terms of a gift where a man has Apostolic authority, the highest gift of authority in the Christian Church, there are no additional records. Why was this gift withdrawn? We had the closing of the canon of Scripture. When John penned those last few words to the book of Revelation, including a warning that no one is to add or take from the words of his book, that closed out the canon of Scripture and there was no longer a need for Apostles. That gift had served its purpose. Our authority is now the Bible—the completed canon of Scripture. There is no need to appeal to another authority. Now, it would make sense that if this gift was withdrawn, that perhaps others were as well.

How about signs and miracles? Primarily, these signs and miracles identified who an Apostle was, and therefore, established his authority. Prior to this, the spiritual authority was with the office of the High Priest as well as with the prophet which God sent to the land. However, God had not sent Israel a prophet, apart from John and our Lord, for 400 years; and the High Priest had become terribly corrupt, who saw no reason to subject himself to the Law of God. Very few believers appreciate the fundamental change of structure which took place in that first century. For a Catholic, it would be as though the office of Pope had been declared null and void and that there was a new head of the Catholic church, e.g., some TV evangelist. Imagine something much more fundamental and momentous as that, and you have an idea as to what Israel was going through, the spiritual authority being taken from the High Priest, and then given to complete outsiders, some of whom aggressively evangelized the gentiles.

The authority of the Apostles had to be clearly established; their writings had to be taken not just as authoritative, but as the very Word of God. **The signs of a true Apostle were produced among you with all perseverance, by signs and powers and miracles** (2Cor. 12:12). The writer of Hebrews clearly confirms this purpose: **For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, God also bearing them witness, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will** (Heb. 2:2–4). Paul claims the power of God in him specifically in Rom. 15:17–20, again claiming the power of signs and wonders by means of God the Holy Spirit. If this primary purpose of establishing authority is given, then what about these signs? They reached their time of completion as well. Once Apostolic authority was clearly established, we go from a time prior to 57 A.D., where there are miracles and signs (Acts 1–20, 1Corinthians) to a time (after 58 A.D.) where these things are no longer mentioned as on-going (Acts 21–28 Romans the prison epistles) or mentioned only in retrospect (2Cor. 12:12 Heb. 2:2–4). Burdick: *Such things did not fade away because of the sagging spiritual life of the church, as Pentecostals claim, but rather because they had fulfilled their purpose in the divine plan for the age.*³⁴⁹

Was everything that Paul wrote Scripture? Absolutely not. There is great internal evidence that he wrote about four letters to the Corinthians. How many copies do we have of 1 and 2Corinthians (which are not his first two letters)? Hundreds and hundreds and hundreds. How many do we have of his other letters? None. Which letters were inspired? Obviously, 1 and 2Corinthians. Paul wrote this church and displayed great emotion—perhaps more than with any other church. It is easy to understand that during some of his writings to the church at Corinth (not 1 and 2Corinthians) would have been partially written while out of fellowship, meaning that they were not 100% guided by God the Holy Spirit.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

Back to the exegesis:

³⁴⁹ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 39.

When I was a young child, as a young child I spoke; as a young child I thought; as young child, I reasoned. But when I became a man, I have set aside the [things] of the young child.

1Corinthians
13:11

When I was a young child, I spoke as a child, I thought as a young child and I reasoned as a young child. However, when I became a man, I set aside the [things] of a young child.

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I thought as a child and I reasoned as a child. However, I have since become a man and have put away the things of my youth.

In this verse, we have over and over again the word masculine adjective *nēpios* (νήπιος) [pronounced *NAY-pee-os*], which means *one who cannot speak, infant, child, baby without any limitation of age*. There are three different words which are used in the Greek to refer to a child—this particular one refers to the youngest of the three—this word carries with it a sense of weakness and dependence. Strong's #3516. Paul is setting up a comparison between the use of these sign gifts with their completion. Without going into any great exegesis here, the analogy is fairly straightforward. The gifts that he has alluded to, the gifts of tongues, prophecy and knowledge, were apropos to one in their infancy. Now, he is not speaking of the believers who utilized these gifts as being immature children in a spiritual sense. The reference is to the gifts themselves—they are the ones being compared to being a child. These are the gifts of the church in its very infancy. The church will grow out of its need to utilize these gifts (as has been gone over). They find their fulfillment and are no longer necessary. These gifts will be set aside by the church as childish things somewhere between 70 and 100 A.D. At that time, these things will no longer be needed. Personally, I had army men that I could and did spend hours with. That was a big part of my growing up. However, since that time, I have put them aside and what was important to me then no longer takes up any of my time. These gifts will be that way to the church—they were designed for the church in its infancy. They were infancy things designed for an infant. When the church grows out of them, they will be set aside.

Let me give you McGee's take on this verse: *Four times he uses the word child and once childish. "When I was a child, I spoke as a child." Let me use my little grandson for an illustration again. My grandson is not only learning to talk; he is learning to talk. I have never seen a little fellow who wants more to talk. He screws up his little face and he just jabbars. Right now he is speaking in tongues—but he's a baby. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I acted like a little child, but when I grew up, I became a man, and I don't do that any more. I don't talk like I did when I was a baby. That is the point Paul is making with the Corinthians. He is saying in effect, "Now let's cut out this tongues business, cut out this little baby talk. You are acting like children. Grow up now. Put away your toys back in the box, and now act like full grown men."*³⁵⁰

McGee continues: *After I had given this message on tongues on another occasion, I received a letter from a man, who wrote in part: "...You spoke on 1Corinthians 12, 13, and 14 again, only in more depth. And I don't know if anyone else knew it, but the Lord had you do that for me, Dr. McGee. The Holy Spirit revealed the most wonderful, fantastic and complete truth concerning spiritualities, gifts of the Spirit...The notes I took were like pages of gold. I used to think I got high on tongues. Wow! All I know is that Monday night I became a man. Now I speak as a man because I've put away childish things. Praise God for His Word!"*³⁵¹

Dillow: *The transition from *nēpios* to *aner*, from infancy to manhood, involved a "shaking off" of the parental restrictions and the formerly dependent status. To become a man was to become independent, on one's own. Jesus quotes Gen. 2:24 in Matt. 19:5: "For this cause, a man will leave his father and mother and he will cleave to his wife; and the two will become one flesh." "Leave" is a strong word emphasizing a decisive severance. It spoke of a complete break with dependency upon the parents and a setting up of an independent family unit.*³⁵² The Church began in its infancy stage completely dependent upon the gifts of Apostleship, tongues, prophecy and knowledge. There will still ties to Judaism, although generally misguided ones, as Judaism had evolved into a system of works which was in opposition to God's plan in the Old and New Testaments. The Apostles often went

³⁵⁰ J. Vernon McGee; "Gifts of the Spirit"; Thru the Bible Books, ©1972, p. 29.

³⁵¹ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part I*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 29.

³⁵² Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 110.

to the synagogues to teach. When Titus came into Jerusalem and destroyed it in 70 A.D., and then after the fall of Masada, there was no real Judaism left in Judah. There was a complete and total break between Judaism and the church. It was like a man leaving his parents and cleaving to his wife. There was no longer a need for the gift of tongues at that point in time (in fact, it had faded from the scene probably 15 years before).

For we see now through a mirror in an enigma—then but face to face. Now I know from a part, then but I will [fully] know [for myself] just as also I am [fully] known.

1Corinthians
13:12

For we now see through a mirror in obscurity—but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will [fully] know [for myself] just as also I am [fully] known.

For, right now we see through a veiled mirror obscurely, but soon, we will see face to face. Right now, I know portions [of the doctrine for this age], but in the future, I will completely know for myself, just as I also am fully known by God.

I want you to have a time frame. Paul, when he writes this letter, is on his third missionary journey. He has only written 1 and 2Thessalonians and a letter to the Galatians so far (which are Scripture). This letter is actually his second to the Corinthians and it is approximately 55 or 56 A.D. The baptism of the Holy Spirit had only occurred twenty years previous; the relationship between Israel and the church (which was not understood at all) was not clear. Paul had been saved around 37 A.D. (Acts 9), he got some intense training and growth for the next three years (Gal. 1:17–19), and he had barely been around beginning a few churches. Because believers have no foundation whatsoever in the Old Testament apart from knowing a handful of Bible stories, they have no clue as to the magnitude of the change which took place from 30 A.D. to 100 A.D. In fact, this is such an incredible change and something which believers are even aware of; let alone, actually study and analyze. To give you the sparest of sketches, God had worked for one and a half millenniums through the nation Israel. He came to Abraham 2000 years previous and promised him a son, which would result in descendants who would number as the stars in the sky and the sand on the shore. The nation Israel actually began around 1400 B.C., when Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt to the eastern edge of the Jordan River, and Joshua took them across to conquer the land. From all of this was organized a very complex system of animal sacrifices and ceremonies and religious holidays, all of which pointed toward Jesus Christ. God continually worked through Israel, even when Israel was rebellious—He sent prophet after prophet to her and Israel continued in unabashed rebellion against God. When all of these things which pointed toward are Lord were fulfilled in Him, there was a sudden void. When Israel rejected her Savior, her King, her Messiah, there was a tremendous amount of confusion. Even Paul kept going to the national Jew, despite being repeatedly warned not to. Five years later, after writing 2Corinthians and the great book of Romans, Paul will still go to Israel, and cool his heels under Roman house arrest, in part under discipline, and in part as God's plan for Paul. So, if even five years later, Paul did not fully grasp the change of God's plan, obviously at this time, he did not either. Therefore, what Paul understood of the Church Age, the mystery doctrine, was quite limited even at this time. All of the Apostles, including Paul, expected our Lord to return in their lifetimes. They had no idea as to what was happening from the time of His death on the cross and His resurrection and His ascension. They did not fully grasp the point of this time in between his ascension and His return, which they expected at any time. At this time, Paul knew some of the doctrines (more than any other Apostle); but recall, even his background was steeped in Judaism, as he was a pharisee of the pharisees—so, what Paul is talking about here is not the difference between life and death—it is simply that he does not have a full grasp of God's plan at this point in time. What is Israel, what is the church; how are they related; what is going to happen with both. Several years later, he will write the book of Romans, which will clarify, in part, the relationship between these two entities. So Paul, at the writing of this letter, in this historical context, which is how we should view it in order to properly interpret it, does not have a full, 100% grasp of what is going on in terms of God's plan on earth. He writes what he can as inspired by the Holy Spirit, but that does not mean that he knows it all. Furthermore, of all the Apostles, no one understands the mystery doctrine better than Paul—and even he is shaky on it still. This does not mean that Paul's doctrine improved or changed as he wrote—God the Holy Spirit saw to it that what he wrote at any given time was completely accurate. However, we must understand Scripture in its historical context, in relationship to the author at the time he wrote. Let's approach this from a different standpoint: if you studied the book of 1Thessalonians and then studied the book of Romans, it would be like comparing a first grade primer to a college textbook. What is

found in the letters to the Thessalonians is accurate and true; but it is fluff by comparison to what Paul wrote just ten years later. Paul himself will experience spiritual growth and with that spiritual growth will come a fuller, more comprehensive understanding of the Church Age and its particular doctrines. In this verse, he speaks of his limited understanding of God's plan at this point in time. Some of you think that Paul went from a rabid, anti-Christian pharisee to a man who understood all Church Age doctrine in a period of one to three years. Do you have any clue as to how lame that kind of thinking is? He only had legalism worked out when he wrote the book to the Galatians (circa 50 A.D.). In writing the books to the Corinthians and to the Romans is when Paul began to hit his stride, and then he had a setback when he went to Jews in Jerusalem, which was not God's plan for his life. He recovered fairly quickly, however, and moved on to write the great letters of the Bible, dispensing his expert advice now to pastors, as well as to churches. Putting this letter in the historical context of its author should help to interpret what Paul is saying in this verse to the Corinthians.

Paul begins by using the present active indicative of blépō (βλέπω) [pronounced *BLEH-poh*], which means *to see*. It is often used figuratively to mean *to perceive, to discern, to understand* (Matt. 7:3 Rom. 7:23 1Cor. 1:26 10:18 Heb. 10:25). Strong's #991. This is followed by the preposition diá (διά) [pronounced *dee-AH*], which means *through*. Strong's #1223. What is being looked through is the neuter noun ésoptron (ἔσοπτρον) [pronounced *EH-sop-tron*], which was a *looking glass, a mirror*. We actually have two interpretations as to what this was in the ancient world. Some mirrors in the ancient world were made of polished metal (see Ex. 38:8 Job 37:18 James 1:23) and over these mirrors was placed a thin veil which protected the mirror from dust and dampness. Looking through this veil into such a mirror would give us a *dim, shadowy reflection, causing the beholder to see "darkly," or more literally, enigmatically*.³⁵³ Others suppose this to be Lapis specularis, which is a material out of which the ancients sometimes made their windows. When looking *through* this sort of a window, the basic outlines of things outside could be perceived, but little else. In either case, the view was indistinct and not completely recognizable. Strong's #2072. This is followed by the preposition *in* and the ainigma (αἴνιγμα) [pronounced *Ā-nig-mah*], which means *obscurity, enigma*. Zodhiates gives the synonym as mustērion, which is the key word with reference to Church Age doctrine. Strong's #135. This describes perfectly Paul's understanding at this time of the change of dispensations.

The next phrase is: *but then, face to face*. The noun is the neuter prósōpon (πρόσωπον) [pronounced *PROS-oh-pon*], which means *face*. It is more literally the portion of the face around the eyes. It is also used to mean *countenance, presence, person*. Strong's #4383. This is followed by the preposition prós (πρός) [pronounced *pros*], which means *face to face with, toward*. Strong's #4314. We could even render this as *face facing face*. Now, one can be before (or against) the face of God on earth (Luke 1:76 Acts 3:19 2Cor. 2:10 1Peter 3:12); this can refer to being right in the presence of another person (Gal. 2:11 1Thess. 2:17 3:10); or this can refer to actually being in heaven facing God (Heb. 9:24). I go into detail on this word, as this is the only portion of this passage which could be interpreted to meaning being in heaven, face to face with our Lord. However, that does not have to be the way this is taken, as the majority of the passages indicate.

The last sentence is *Now I know from a part, but then I will know just as also I was known*. The first verb for *know* is the present active indicative of ginōskō (γινώσκω) [pronounced *gih-NOH-skoh*], which means *to know*. Strong's #1097. The next two verbs are epiginōskō (ἐπιγινώσκω) [pronounced *eh-pee-gih-NOH-skoh*], which means *to fully know*. This is a more intense word than ginōskō. *It expresses a more thorough participation in the acquiring of knowledge on the part of the learner*.³⁵⁴ Strong's #1922. The first time we find this verb, it is in the *future middle*. This middle voice is quite important. The middle voice means that the subject participates in the action of the verb; the subject acts upon himself or concerning himself. Paul's full knowledge of God is something that he will take a part in. In other words, this will not be a passive experience on the part of Paul—his knowing God (or, God's Word) will involve participation on his part. In other words, Paul will not come upon this knowledge inadvertently—i.e., he will not step out in front of a bus, and then, POW, he is face to face with God. Paul will acquire this knowledge, bit by bit, until he understands fully God's plan for this age as God fully knows him. *Just as also I am fully known*; we have epiginōskō again in the present active indicative, meaning that Paul has already been fully known. Now, many exegetes have assumed that this verse means for Paul to fully understand God.

³⁵³ *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 458.

³⁵⁴ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament*; AMG Publishers; ©1992, p. 624.

However, we do not have that phrase or, necessarily, even that implication. The subject has been, in part, the gifts of knowledge and prophecy—these are gifts necessary to the Apostle who does not know the whole thing. However, Paul anticipates knowing God’s plan for this age in full; and he will participate in the acquisition of that knowledge. My point in all of this is that one could, without giving too much thought to this passage, believe that we were speaking of being *face to face with God* and that is when Paul would *fully know God as also God fully knows him*. This is the essence of the translation of the NLT and REB as well as TEV almost go that far. However, the word *theós* is not found in this passage. It is inserted by well meaning translators hoping to guide you in your understanding of this passage. However, that is not what the passage means. As we have seen, *facing God* or being *before God’s face* does not automatically mean we are in heaven (in fact, the majority of the passages were just the opposite) and the use of the future middle voice of *epiginōskō* indicates that Paul does this learning for himself—which means it does not come automatically at death when Paul is face to face with our Lord, as most people misinterpret this passage. This is Paul on earth in the future, developing a fully knowledge of God’s plan, so that, that which is in part, his gift of knowledge and prophecy, can be replaced by that which is complete—his complete knowledge of the Church Age as well as the completed canon of Scripture. Paul is **not** saying, *when we die, we will finally figure out what the hell is going on*. If God has given us so little in terms of the understanding of His plan here on earth so that we need to have the gift of knowledge and the gift of prophecy, don’t you grasp how lame that would be of God? He has finished the canon of Scripture, which, apart from the fact that it would take a lifetime to understand it all, is not really quite enough for us; and, furthermore, it will take us until we die to know what we should know. God’s plan is for us to understand right now, in our lives here on earth, what His plan is for our lives. How goofy to think you will have to die before you know what you are supposed to do in life. Fortunately for us, God is not this goofy. *epivinōskō* (ἐπινινώσκω) [pronounced eh-pee-gih-NOH-skoh], which means to fully know. This is a more intense word than *ginōskō*. It expresses a more thorough participation in the acquiring of knowledge on the part of the learner.³⁵⁵

And now remains faith, confidence, love, the three these; but the greatest of these: love.

1 Corinthians
13:13

And now remains faith, confidence, love—these three. But the greatest of these [is] love.

And now remains faith, confidence and love—but the greatest of these three is love.

In this verse, we find that this chapter is more than simply the filling of the Holy Spirit, but it also refers to the more mature manifestation of this filling of the Spirit, which is *love*. The first verb is the present active indicative of *ménō* (μένω) [pronounced MEH-noh], which means *to remain, to abide, to dwell, to live*. Strong’s #3306. The present tense is continuous action. Although, we did not have the full realm of doctrine when Paul wrote the Corinthians, believers, in their growing, would also develop their faith, confidence and love. Paul exalted *love* as it was closely tied to other believers.

I should mention that second item, because most of you think of it as *hope*. The word is *elpís* (ἐλπίς) [pronounced el-PIS]. Zodhiates defines it as *hope, desire of some good with expectation of obtaining it*; that latter phrase means *confidence*. When the Bible speaks of the *hope of the resurrection* or *our hope of salvation*; the word is obviously *confidence, expectation*. It only means *hope* in the sense of being the opposite of the Gentiles *who have no hope* or *who are hopeless*. Strong’s #1680.

Allow me to quote McGee: *Following a previous message on tongues, I received a letter from a lady who wrote: I am listening to your sermon on tongues. You are sure right. Since I have received Christ, I speak in a different tongue. I used to speak in hate—unlovely remarks, ridicule, tell shady stories, small lies, even whoppers if convenient, use the Lord’s name loosely. Now since I have the power of Christ in me, I speak so very differently. Even my supposed friends have accused me of speaking strangely. Praise His holy name! Through His Son Jesus Christ, I speak with a different and sometimes with an unknown tongue—unknown because some do not know the love of our Saviour.*

³⁵⁵ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament*; AMG Publishers; ©1992, p. 624.

*I say to you, that is the kind of a tongue that is the most excellent way.*³⁵⁶

Let me continue with McGee: *I believe that every sincere believer longs for a deeper work of God. I am sure that you long for the reality of Christ in your life and in your ministry, you want to walk close to God, you want to be filled with the Holy Spirit. But that does not mean you must speak in tongues. The unloveliest letters that I receive come from people who tell me they speak in tongues. We do not want their experience if it produces that kind of tongue—a tongue that speaks with bitterness and venom and hate.*³⁵⁷

[<Return to Page One>](#)

91. How many times have you heard a charismatic quote “Do not forbid to speak in tongues”; or “Paul spoke in tongues more than anyone else”; or, “Paul even stated that we should all speak in tongues.” The person who told you that got those thoughts from 1Cor. 14, which is one of the most misunderstood chapters in the Word of God. The first problem is that most of us approach this chapter not even knowing what the gift of tongues is; and then we allow charismatics to take verses out of context and to twist their meanings to get from this chapter what they want. Therefore, 1Corinthians 14 is a pivotal chapter. However, we will not exegese each and every verse. There are some verses which are clear enough that I will not need to go into any great detail as to where the translation came from. For most people who have studied this chapter, it deals primarily with the abuses of the use of the gift of tongues in the church assembly. Now, although 95% of all charismatic churches violate these rules, that is not a good enough argument against the validity of the gift of tongues for today. The gift of pastor teacher, the most important gift in relationship to the growth of believers, is the most abused and misused gift today. No pastor teacher seems to have even a clue as to how to conduct himself or what his job is. Almost every pastor teacher and his congregation think that his job is to be a cheap, 3rd rate personal counselor. However, there will be one or two points made in this chapter which we will emphasize. The rest of them can be read by most people in the English.

Now, interestingly enough, 1Cor. 14, is not really as relevant to this study as you might think. Here we have the one full chapter great portions of which deal with the gift of tongues, and I'm telling you that it is not really relevant. This chapter deals with the proper use of the true gift of tongues, which is, strictly speaking, not our topic. Our topic deals more with the use of the false gift of tongues, as we have no one speaking with the true gift of tongues today. However, one bit of information which is helpful is to see how tongues were supposed to be regulated and we have seen how tongues are not regulated in most charismatic churches.

Secondly, exegesing portions of this chapter will be helpful insofar as some of you are aware as to how some people have taken and distorted the meaning and intent of these verses. Because of this chapter, some people have misapplied the verses to mean that tongues is for praying, either quietly, verb audibly, in public, or however in private.

Now, prior to entering into the exegesis of much of this chapter, let me give you a quote from J. Vernon McGee: *This section is not about the use of tongues but is about the abuse of tongues. It is not instruction to speak in tongues but it is a restriction about the use of them. It is not an encouragement to exercise the gift but rather to refrain from speaking in tongues. It is not a set of rules to practice but regulations to restrain this that had broken out in the Corinthian church.*³⁵⁸

What you cannot lose in our examination of this chapter is that the spiritual gifts are given for the benefit of the church as a whole, and not for individuals (1Cor. 12:7) and that apart from love for the other members of the congregation, any gift or sacrifice is meaningless (1Cor. 13). Your love for the other members of your church is revealed in your use of your spiritual gift to edify the church as a whole. Now, two or three verses from chapter 14 may appear as though they suggest that tongues are for personal edification, but that is when you do not pay any

³⁵⁶ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part I*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 20.

³⁵⁷ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part I*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 20.

³⁵⁸ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part I*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 4.

attention to the context of the entire chapter. **The problem with the use of the gift of tongues when they are not interpreted is that they do not edify the church as a whole.** Do not confuse the purpose of the gift of tongues (covered in vv. 21–22) with results of the improper use of the gift of tongues (vv. 4, 14, 16). Charismatics seize these three verses as though they state the purpose the reason for the gift of tongues when they do not. These verses explain **why** believers should not just start speaking in tongues in the middle of a church service.

Pursue the love, and desire the spiritual [gifts]; but rather that you prophesy.

1Corinthians
14:1

Pursue love and desire the spiritual [gifts]; preferably that you prophesy.

Chase after love and desire spiritual gifts; it is preferable to desire the gift of prophesying rather than the gift of languages.

Paul is about to cover how tongues **were** to have been used and how the Corinthians had been abusing them. So that there is no misunderstanding, he sets the tone with this verse. They, as a church, are to desire the spiritual gifts. The word *gifts* is not found here, but it can be inserted. If you would rather, *spiritual things* would be a reasonable translation, as it was in 1Cor. 12:1). Each and every person in a church has a spiritual gift and perhaps several. All of these gifts are important for the building up of the church. These gifts should be desired. However, the believers at Corinth are told first to pursue after or chase after love, which is the filling of the spirit or the result of the filling of the Spirit. Like all of the characteristics of the Spirit, they improve with age—spiritual age. Spiritual growth comes via the intake of God’s Word. This is why Paul will hold up the gift of prophesying as to that which the believers of the Corinthian church should aspire.

What charismatics claim is that the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2, and the gift of tongues in this chapter as well as the previous, are two different things. Nichol himself writes: *It is necessary to underscore the fact that they make a sharp distinction between the ecstatic utterances which are recorded in Acts and the tongues phenomena related by Paul in 1Corinthians 13–14. In referring to the former, they employ the term “evidence” or “sign”; in referring to the latter, the word “gift” is used. In Pentecostal thought, the two are identical neither in purpose nor use. Tongues in Acts, they explain, are “to make manifest to recipient and onlooker that the Holy Ghost had been given. They are always the direct result of a person’s being filled with the Spirit. In the Corinthian narrative, on the other hand, the “gift” of tongues has as its sole purpose the personal edification of the speaker, or, when coupled with interpretation, the edification of the hearers.*³⁵⁹ Bear in mind that this distinction is self-serving and not based upon Scripture. Luke never differentiates between the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts (in fact, his recording of the events makes it more reasonable to assume that the gift of tongues in Acts is the same all the way through—recalled that Peter said, **“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, just as He had upon us at the beginning. And I recalled the Word of the Lord, how He had said, “John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”** (Acts 11:15–16). Most Pentecostals themselves do not make that kind of distinction, as they freely speak of their gift as the one found in Acts as often as they do as the one found in 1Corinthians. Paul nowhere distinguishes between these two as differing manifestations of the same Spirit; no writer of Scripture does. The charismatic who does so deliberately interprets Scripture based upon what he has experienced. When he realizes that his gift of tongues is certainly not that which Peter and the Apostles had at Pentecost, then he regroupes and changes the meaning. There are obviously a few instances where the word can refer to different things: baptism, sanctification, the first Adam and the last Adam, and even salvation (which word originally meant *temporal deliverance*). However, if we are going to indicate that a word means more than one thing, we had better have an abundance of Scripture to back us up. What you cannot do is take your experience and based upon your experience, give a separate, new meaning to a word which the Bible has always defined in a different way. Some people do not realize it, but even the meaning given to one or two words can be a dividing theological stance. The example which I have often given: the Catholics view *grace* as that which God has *infused* in us; we have believed in Christ and God has placed His grace within us, and now we are going to act like Christians do, because of His grace within us. Given the fact that no one lives a sinless life would indicate that this concept of grace means that God’s *infused grace* now makes us slightly better than half-assed unbelievers. God works through me **only** when I am filled with the Holy Spirit; when I am not, I imitate the unbeliever. The Protestant

³⁵⁹ John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Logos International, ©1966, pp. 12–13.

revolution saw *grace* as being something which is *imputed* to us—if anything, it is completely contrary to our inner nature. Some people may manifest that fact that they are indwelt by God the Holy Spirit, and some will not. Personally, I was brought up to believe in reincarnation, and the teachers whom I listened to often quoted the Bible in support of their heretical ideas. They took what they believed and forced them upon a few meager Scriptures which they quoted, taking these Scriptures completely out of context. Charismatics do this as well, but they are more clever about it. We have already examined 1Cor. 13:1—millions of Pentecostals have quoted 1Cor. 13:1 in support of Paul and themselves speaking in unknown, heavenly languages. When we looked at it in context, **taken with the verses which immediately follow**, we found that Paul was not saying that he spoke in angelic tongues. He was making the argument of a Greek logician. He stated a strong case and then upped the ante to something which did not even occur (like a person using their faith to move a mountain). We will find in this chapter of 1 Corinthians that the verses often quoted to support mistaken notions of tongues are taken completely out of their context.

We have already covered that the purpose of tongues was for the Jew to be evangelized in a Gentile language. Thieme gives us some historical background here: *Corinth was the Vanity Fair of the Roman Empire, the good-time city of the ancient world. Strategically situated, the city became the trade center for merchants from both the East and the West. As its wealth increased, so did its need for reliable bankers. Once the pagan temples in Corinth had been regarded as the safest depositories. It was assumed that the gods to whom these temples were dedicated guarded the riches entrusted to them. As time went on, the Corinthians lost their fear of and respect for the gods, and robberies of the temple banks became quite common. To whom could the Corinthians turn to handle their wealth? A continuous influx of Jews into the city provided the solution to the financial dilemma of Corinth; enterprising Jews captured the banking trade from the heathen priests and established banking and financing systems in the prosperous city. No doubt much of the money that swelled the coffers of Corinth came from the pockets of pleasure-seekers.*³⁶⁰ This is how Corinth came to have a substantial Jewish population, which would be evangelized by the church at Corinth.

As most people, who have even a rudimentary understanding of the New Testament, know, the church at Corinth was the most carnal of all the churches to whom Paul wrote in the New Testament. *Their sin list was long and appalling: pride, envy, jealousy, childishness, pettiness, gossip, maligning, adultery, incest, divorce, drunkenness; and general instability characterized the congregation. God also gave to this congregation a plethora of gifts. Because it was an obvious and spectacular gift, tongues was greatly coveted by these superficial Christians. Those to whom the gift was given were suddenly overcome with arrogance, and they attempted to related their ability for speaking in foreign languages to a form of super-spirituality. They had erroneously concluded that they were a special category of believer. Consequently, they flaunted their imagined superiority and lorded it over believers whom they considered to possess “lesser” gifts.*³⁶¹ It is with this background that we charge into 1Cor. 14.

Here, we have the present active subjunctive of *prophēteúō* (προφητεύω) [pronounced *pro-fay-TWO-oh*], which means *to prophesy*. This is obviously a word which was transliterated, rather than translated. This means to both foretell that which is to come as well as to speak God’s message to man. The clear intent is that the person speaking is speaking that which is divinely inspired. Strong’s #4395. This is what the members of a church should desire—they should desire that their members have the gift of prophesy so that God’s Word could be proclaimed to all of them. This is what builds up or edifies or strengthens the church. One of the areas where Satan attacks a church is through the teaching of doctrine. Sermons have often become sermonettes. Pastor’s often use the Bible to kick off teaching on other topics. I recall when I first became a believer, I began to search my city for a church where God’s Word was taught clearly and carefully verse by verse. My options at that time were to find a church where the Bible was taught or to gather around a tape recorder with a dozen other people in order to hear God’s Word taught. I just knew that the tape recorder thing just didn’t seem like a church, so I went from church to church to church for a couple months. I was interested in one thing and one thing only—did they teach the Word of God. Now, I did not attend each and every church in Sacramento; I probably went to a dozen or so. In not one of them was the Word of God proclaimed carefully from the pulpit, although one came close (the assistant pastor taught one of the Sunday’s when I was there, and he taught verse by verse; the pastor did not, however). I ended

³⁶⁰ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 28.

³⁶¹ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, pp. 28–29.

up sitting around the tape recorder for the next several years with a group of marvelous people who had a real interest in the Word of God. If a church does not teach the Word of God, you might as well nail the doors shut, as McGee has said.³⁶²

When a group of charismatics find a victim—someone who has not yet received the baptism of the spirit, or someone who has not yet been slain in the spirit, they work on him (or her) and various subtle and less-than-subtle ways. When they try to get this person to get filled with the spirit, they often make various suggestions as to how they can loosen up their vocal cords so that they can burst into tongues at the time of the baptism. Now, is there any charismatic group out there that tries to get these people to prophesy? To proclaim God's Word loudly in their midst? Did not Peter, after the filling of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, speak out in such a way to convict 3000 of the listeners? Did not the gentile believers of Acts 10 both speak with tongues and *exalt God*? Did not those who were baptized by John the Baptizer both speak with tongues and *prophesy*? Hasn't Paul here, in this verse, stated a clear preference as to what we ought to do? If we are to desire anything, it should be to prophesy. If, in three of the four historic cases of the baptism of the Spirit included the gift of prophetic speaking, then should not those encouraging people to loosen up their vocal cords in anticipation of the spirit do so in such a way that maybe they would prophesy instead? I hesitate to say this, as, no doubt, someone will now take this and encourage their disciples to begin speaking prophecies when first getting the baptism; however, that is not the point. The point is that, if a group purports to attempt to copy what has occurred historically, then obviously they have been doing it incorrectly since the inception of the tongues movement, as their encouragement has always been to speak in tongues rather than to prophesy, when Paul encourages just the exact opposite. Therefore, even if someone decides today to do it *Paul's way*, this does not excuse over a century of charismatic believers who have had an emphasis which is clearly in opposition to Paul's stated preference here. What you cannot do is simultaneously hold this tongues business out as a deeper stage of obedience to God and yet move further and further from clear statements of God's Word. When the Holy Spirit fills us, He does not then regulate and guide our behavior in such a way as to be in opposition to God's will as stated in God's Word.

Throughout this chapter, we have a contrast between speaking in tongues and prophesying. Thieme: *Whereas the gift of prophecy entailed the dissemination of vital doctrinal truths to the whole assembly of believers, the gift of tongues was directed to the occasional unsaved visitor in some local congregation. To all others in the church, this torrent of information was a complete mystery (1Cor. 14:4)...while the gift of prophecy edified and therefore matured, exhorted and comforted the believer, the gift of tongues accomplished but one objective—the declaration of the Gospel in Gentile languages as a sign of warning.* Keep in mind, it is not as though there was no other way to reach the Jewish believers—they could be evangelized in Greek or Aramaic; but **tongues were for a sign**. Being evangelized in Greek or Latin also fulfills Isa. 28, even if it is given by someone who knows these languages. Thieme again: *...it would be stimulating to conduct evangelistic campaigns under such circumstances as the early churches experienced. The operation of this particular gift led to both animation and ecstasies...[the use of the gift of tongues] resulted in the eloquent presentation of the Gospel in a foreign language unknown to the one who spoke it. Animation and ecstasies were absolutely necessary in order that the proper emphasis and persuasiveness as well as the sense of urgency might be conveyed. In turn, the stimulation of the believer so gifted led to his self-edification.*³⁶³

Something like the gift of tongues would impress the Corinthian believers. It required no preparation; the person who spoke in tongues became animated, got in their half minute of fame, and then sat down, speaking eloquently in some language that they did not know. It was obvious to all present that God was working through them. Therefore, for the Corinthians, this was a pretty cool gift. Paul himself possessed the gift (1Cor. 14:5, 18) and even he desired for them all to have this gift as this meant more evangelization of Jews, a matter about which Paul was zealous (Rom. 10:1). However, speaking the gospel in a foreign language which only one or two unbelievers (at most) in the congregation understood provided no spiritual benefit for the congregation as a whole (unless that Jew believed in Christ and became a member). Other than that, the speaking in a foreign language was of absolutely no benefit to the other members of the congregation (1Cor. 14:7–11, 16–17) and if there were not any unevangelized Jews there, then the speaker spoke only to himself and to God (1Cor. 14:4, 28).

³⁶² J. Vernon McGee; "Gifts of the Spirit"; Thru the Bible Books, ©1972, p. 31.

³⁶³ Both quotes from R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 35.

What I need to add is **this understanding of the function and use of the gift of tongues is NOT simply a matter of personal interpretation.** Luke made is abundantly clear what tongues were. They communicated God's truth to Jews in Gentile languages that the persons speaking these languages did not actually know. Even a precursory glance at Acts 2 gives us that information from any English translation. **Making them out to be anything else, e.g. ecstatic babbling, is a matter of reading into Scripture something which is NOT EXPLICITLY THERE!** When you do that, you interpret Scripture based upon your own experience. Many hippies used to think that Jesus was some unemployed, long-haired hippie wandering around aimlessly dissing the establishment. Jesus was not unemployed (Mark 6:3); He did not wander around aimlessly (Matt. 10:5 Luke 2:49); He did not have long hair (1Cor. 11:14); and He did not always dis the establishment (Luke 20:24–25). **You do not get to superimpose your experience upon Scripture!** That is completely wrong. Oh, by the way, just because you are really, really sincere, and you really, really, really feel that speaking in tongues refers to angelic languages, of which you have a command; and even though you just know they are from God because you really, really, really feel holy when you speak in tongues—**this is NOT enough!** You do not get to read into the Bible what is not there. **Nowhere in Scripture is it explicitly stated that tongues are ecstatic babbling! Nowhere!** You can only get that by reading into Scripture what is **not** there.

It is obvious that not everyone in a church will have the gift of teaching. However, as McGee also points out, there are hundreds of ways that you can help your pastor to get the Word of God out. He needs to have his time freed up so that he can study. He doesn't need to be counseling, he doesn't need to be attending meetings, he doesn't need you to call him in the middle of the damn night because you're sad, confused or distraught. He needs to spend his time studying. I could walk into any college and teach, for instance, College Algebra cold. From day one to day last without opening a book, without referring to notes. I would never consider doing that in a church. God's Word requires careful and patient and continual study. As we have seen with this study of the gift of tongues, sincere people, particularly when they only look at their *proof* texts (and they do not look very carefully at them), misinterpret God's Word. This is, in some respects, a difficult book. One of the most clearly taught doctrines in the Bible is salvation, and very few people can get that right. God designed His Word so that it would last you a lifetime. There won't come a time in your life where you think, *I've got it; I understand all of the Bible; what's next, God?* I will personally stop studying when I am no longer able to study. My understanding in football is that there is a quarterback who runs with the ball, and running in the correct direction for any contiguous period of time is thought to be a good thing. He is not out there all by himself. Without the linemen to block and protect him, the best quarterback in the world is no better than the worst. In fact, without men to block for him, he is the worst quarterback in the world. A congregation should function in this way—a congregation should free up the pastor's time so that he can run with the ball. This requires praying on his behalf, first and foremost; and it also requires giving, keeping out of his hair, taking care of the church details so that the pastor does not have to be concerned about those things. When you don't block for your pastor, you might as well be playing for the other team. When you undermine his authority, when you undermine his teaching, when you waste his time, you are not acting in his best interests and therefore you are not acting in the best interests of the church. You might as well don the other team's jersey, because that is for whom you are playing.

In short, what is first and foremost in the building up of a church is the teaching of the Word of God. On the other hand, we have the use of the gift of tongues in church.

For the [one] speaking in a tongue not to men he speaks but to God, for no one hears. But in Spirit, he speaks mysteries.

1Corinthians
14:2

For the one speaking in a language does not speak to men, but to God, for no one understands [him]. But in the Spirit, he speaks mysteries.

For you see, the one who speaks in a foreign language does not speak to me, but to God, for no one in the congregation understands him. So, in the Spirit, he speaks mysteries.

Okay, first the word *to speak*; there are actually two words in the Greek which mean *to speak*: légō (λέγω) [pronounced *LEH-goh*] and laleō (λαλέω) [pronounced *lah-LEH-oh*]. They are synonyms and can be used interchangeably sometimes. The former is used for communication; and the latter is used also for the making of

a noise. The former concentrates upon what is said and the latter concentrates upon the vocal cords or the apparatus of the speech. Légô = Strong's #3004. Laléô = Strong's #2980. Laléô is found three times in this verse; the first time in the present active participle, and the second two times in the present active indicative.

Now, whereas *speaking to God* sounds very holy and all, Paul will straighten that out in the next couple of verses. The next verb is the present active indicative of akoúô (ἀκούω) [pronounced *ah-KOO-oh*], which means *to hear*. Now, like many Greek words, there are shades of meaning which context determines. This word can (1) simply mean *to hear* (Matt. 2:3, 9); (2) *to hear and pay attention to, to hearken to, to listen to* (Mark 4:3 Acts 2:22); (3) *to have the faculty of hearing* (used of the deaf: Matt. 11:5 Mark 7:37); (4) *to hear and to obey* (Luke 10:10 16:29); (5) *to learn by hearing, to be informed, to know* (Matt. 2:3 John 14:28); (6) *to hear [in a forensic sense] as a judge or magistrate* (John 7:51 Acts 25:22); and finally, (7) *to hear and understand* (Mark 4:33 Gal. 1:13). The latter use is probably the most common of the seven. Strong's #191. Now, I would like you to *hear and understand* this: when someone began to use the proper gift of tongues and would speak in a foreign language, if there were no Jews around who spoke with Gentile languages, it was pretty much a waste of time. No one in the congregation would know what is being said. It is kind of like a pastor going out and preaching his very best sermon to a rock or to a chair. So what. It is meaningless. It is worthless. It is a waste of speech. That gift had a specific use, and spouting out in the gift of tongues for no reason was a waste of that gift. Now, God understands the language which is spoken just as God would understand the sermon delivered to a rock or to a chair. Now, the person speaking tongues in the midst of a congregation, and no one understands what he is saying—that is a complete waste of time.

MacArthur comments: *Paul was not commending the use of tongues for self-edification, but condemning people who were using the gift in violation of its purpose and in disregard of the principle of love (“[Love] does not seek its own.”—1Cor. 13:5). The word “edify” in 14:4 means “to build up.” It might carry either a positive or a negative connotation, depending on the context (in 1Corinthians 8:10, for example, the same Greek work is used to speak of “strengthening” someone’s conscience to do evil). The Corinthians were using tongues to build themselves up in a selfish sense. Their motives were not wholesome but egocentric. Their passion for tongues grew out of a desire to exercise the most spectacular, showy gifts in front of other believers. Paul’s point was that no one profits from such an exhibition except the person speaking in tongues—and the chief value he gets out of it is the building of his own ego. In 1Corinthians 10:24 Paul had already made clear this principle: “Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor.”³⁶⁴*

MacArthur also mentions a counterfeit gift of tongues extant at that time among the heathen gentiles. In my studies, I have not come across that. Although I grant that it is possible that this counterfeit gift had found its way into the Corinthian church and was a part of the problem at Corinth, I do not find enough in the context of this chapter. That possibility could be read into this chapter, and it could be an issue that Paul was not addressing directly, assuming that all the languages spoken during church services at Corinth were legitimate, whether they were or not. While MacArthur presents an interesting point of view, I don't know that I subscribe to it.

But the [one] prophesying to men speaks for edification and exhortation and comfort.

1Corinthians
14:3

But the one prophesying speaks to men for edification and exhortation [or, encouragement] and comfort.

But the person who prophesies in a congregation does so with the result of edifying, exhorting and comforting the believers in the congregation.

As most of you no doubt realize, Paul spends a great deal of time in 1Cor. 12–14 contrasting the gifts of prophecy and speaking in foreign languages. The only reason that I mention this verse is to keep the context up.

Prophesying is proclaiming God's perfect truth. There are three things which that does for a church. The first is oikodomē (οικοδομή) [pronounced *oy-kod-om-AY*], which means *building up, edifying, spiritual profit or growth*.

³⁶⁴ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 228–229.

Strong's #3619. The second is *paráklêsis* (παράκλησις) [pronounced *par-AK-lay-sis*], which means *to exhort, to encourage, to comfort*. Strong's #3874. The third thing which proclaiming God's Word does is *paramuthía* (παράμυθία) [pronounced *par-am-oo-THEE-ah*], which means *to console, to comfort, to encourage*; it specifically means *to comfort through speech*. Strong's #3889. When God's Word is proclaimed, there are three things which it does. Paul contrasts this with the speaking in a foreign language in this next verse.

Those who speak in tongues give the purpose of tongues as *personal edification*.³⁶⁵ They find this purpose given in 1Cor. 14:4 as well as in their personal experience with tongues. Here is a news flash: *purpose* does not equal *result*. I might teach a verse really well, and someone might comment to me, *that really makes sense to me for the first time*; and I might feel pretty damn good about that. The purpose behind my explaining the verse was not that I would feel pretty damn good—the purpose was to explain the word of God to build up the body of Christ. When I exercise my spiritual gift, I might feel good about the final result. That was not the purpose of exercising the spiritual gift—that was a result. Most believers, when they exercise the spiritual gift (or gifts) which God gave to them, they are generally going to have a feeling of accomplishment which will generally accompany the use of the gift. God has a purpose for each of us in this world and when we begin to accomplish some of that purpose, we will feel built up ourselves; we will often have a feeling of accomplishment ourselves. This was not *why* God gave us this spiritual gift—this was not the *purpose* of having that spiritual gift—this is simply a result of having and using the spiritual gift that God has given us. Bear that in mind as we examine this next verse:

The [one] speaking in a tongue himself edifies; but the one prophesying [the] church edifies.

1Corinthians
14:4

The one speaking in a language builds up himself, but the one prophesying builds up the church.

The one who speaks in a foreign language builds up himself; however, the one who prophesies builds up the church.

We have the verb *edify*, which is twice found in the present active indicative. The Greek word is *oikodoméō* (οικοδομέω) [pronounced *oi-koh-doh-MEH-oh*], which means *to build [a house], to construct, to erect, to rebuild*; it is used metaphorically *to build up, to establish, to confirm, to edify*. The latter word is a bit too King James English for most people to understand. The purpose of a church gathering is for the members of the assembly to be built up and strengthened. Some people point to this passage as proof positive that tongues were to be used in prayer. Our problem is that we are dealing with the abuse of the gift of tongues here, not its proper use. Paul will spend much of the chapter delineating how tongues should be used properly and that they were not using them correctly in Corinth. Up until this time, you had several people during every church service speaking out abruptly in foreign languages. Why? Maybe this will help you to understand: haven't you ever been with a member of the opposite sex who spoke a different language and you would cajole them to say something in this different language because it sounded cool? Here, they did not have to ask someone else to speak with a foreign tongue—they could do it themselves; however, they spoke in tongues indiscriminately apart from the any sort of real guidance. It was their abuse of this gift that edified only themselves (they were filled with the Holy Spirit at the time of speaking in tongues) and this did not edify the church as a whole. If used properly, the gift was an evangelistic tool, as per Acts 2. The person who speaks in a foreign language does not take part in any of this. If a church allows its members to burst out in tongues, why not bring in a Biblical exegete who speaks in Russian or in Arabic or in Hebrew and let him exegete a passage of Scripture for an hour or so in his native language? *Yeah, you say, that'd be way stupid* And you'd be right. I only mention this, not as a reason that speaking in foreign languages is no longer a gift of the church, but to illustrate that even those who believe in this today completely abuse what they believe to be a valid gift.

Paul has already given the purpose of spiritual gifts: **But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good** (1Cor. 12:7). Paul, for the next few verses in chapter 12 delineates the manifestations of the Spirit

³⁶⁵ They also use tongues to pray for things that they don't know anything about. That is, they don't know what they are praying, nor would anyone listening other than God, who has given them a holy language to pray in for things that they know nothing about.

as the various gifts. The Corinthians were confused about the spiritual gifts that they had, whose was the best and whose wasn't; when they should and shouldn't be used, etc. etc. We are all aware of these problems. Some did not feel as though they were a valuable part of the body of Christ because whatever gift they had been given was not very spectacular. Let's say your gift is emptying out the trash from the auditorium and someone else's gift was the ability to evangelize in a foreign language that they did not know at will. Which appears to be the most important and spectacular? Both gifts are absolutely necessary and you are both a part of the body of Christ. This is a team effort! The exercise of one's spiritual gift is on behalf of the body of Christ—on behalf of a team. When someone who speaks in tongues tells you about the experience, it has nothing to do with the body of Christ. It has nothing to do with building up the body of Christ. It is nearly always tied to them and them alone. "I felt closer to God!" "This gave me the strength to live without sin!" "I spoke to the Holy Spirit in His language!" You do not find how the use of the false gift of tongues today builds up those around the user. The use of the gift is always centered on the user.

Then we have the famous *love* chapter and Paul shows the Corinthians *the more excellent way*. Let me remind you a portion of one verse: **Love does not seek its own** (1Cor. 13:5b). When you put this together with the previous chapter, this makes a great deal of sense: spiritual gifts are for the building up of the others in the congregation and they are not the means by which you do things to help yourself. Furthermore, this does not mean that you are always in the spotlight or you are doing things which are in front of other believers. Spiros Zodhiates (whom I do not know) has put together tremendous reference materials. His training to do this involved countless hours alone studying. When he wrote these books, and put together the material for them, he did this primarily while alone. He did not do this because it made him feel good and certainly he did not do this for the money, as there is limited money in writing resource books for believers. He did not seek his own; what he did was exercise his spiritual gift for the common good. When he finished putting together a Lexicon for the New Testament Greek, a daunting task which few believers would have any interest in doing, I am certain he had a feeling of accomplishment and purpose—but these were certainly not the reasons that he wrote this reference book. He exercised his spiritual gift for the common good. His books have edified untold thousands of pastor-teachers who have gone on to teach untold millions of believers.

Ephesians 4:11–12 also is a reference to spiritual gifts and do you know what the purpose of spiritual gifts is in that passage, according to Paul? **And He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastor-teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ** (Eph. 4:11–12). So, now do you get it? Your spiritual gift is not given to you in order for you to build yourself up. It is not a gift given to you by God so that you can feel good about your spiritual life and your place in this world. Your spiritual gift is given to you so that you can build up other believers. This is the common thread running through these three chapters, if not the thrust of these three chapters.

Some believers completely miss the tenor of this passage (and this is mainly because they already have the interpretation in mind before they read it). Paul is not writing to the Corinthian believers who speak in tongues in order to tell them that they are doing a fine job and that everyone else in their church is all screwed up. He is not telling them that they should be using this gift of tongues to build themselves up and that they should do this as often as possible. The whole tenor of this passage is that they are **misusing** the legitimate gift of tongues, which, obviously, many of them possess, and that they need to dial it back a notch. If someone just blurts out something in tongues (i.e., a foreign language), and there is no one there to be evangelized who speaks that language, and no one understands what he has just said, then he has misused his gift. The exercise of the gift is of no benefit to anyone when so applied. Paul is **not** telling anyone in the congregation to speak in tongues whenever they feel a lull in the church service in order to edify **themselves**. The purpose of spiritual gifts is to edify **others**. **The purpose of spiritual gifts is to build up [edify] the Church**. The Church is a group of believers; the Church is not an individual. The purpose of exercising any spiritual gift is to build up the Church, whether it helps some to grow, gives comfort to others, or simply increases the size of the Church via evangelism. **No one in the New Testament is ever given a spiritual gift for the purpose of building up themselves**. The function of your spiritual gift is in relationship to the rest of the body of Christ—it is given to you to build up the rest of the body of Christ.

Some of you may recognize that Paul has not directly stated that this misuse of the gift of tongues is bad. He does not have to do that, because the tenor of the passage tells the Corinthians that. You may recall that there were problems with the Eucharist. **For in your eating, each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk** (1Cor. 11:21).³⁶⁶ Paul does not add *and this is a bad thing*. He does not have to. The tenor of the passage makes that clear in 1Cor. 11:21, just as it makes that clear in 1Cor. 14:4. Come on now, you don't really believe that Paul is commending those who were speaking in tongues, saying that this was great that they were edifying their own selves by speaking in tongues? Now, of course, if your examination of 1Cor. 14 goes something like this: *I speak with tongues because Paul says that it will edify me* (1Cor. 14:4); *Paul wants everyone to speak in tongues* (1Cor. 14:5); *I often pray with tongues because it is praying in the Spirit* (1Cor. 14:14–16); *Paul spends more time speaking in tongues than anyone else* (1Cor. 14:18); *and Paul specifically has said that no one should forbid speaking in tongues* (1Cor. 14:39).³⁶⁷ Now if this is your kind of reasoning, you could make any chapter of the Bible say whatever you want it to. However, if you take each verse in order and listen to Paul's reasoning and not try to make a few verses out of their complete context, and force them to mean what you want them to mean, then you will begin to understand the concepts of context and tenor.

Every cult, no matter how large or small, operates the same way. They have some peculiar doctrines. They *prove* these doctrines by jumping from Scripture to Scripture for their *proof* verses. These verses are generally taken out of context, taken completely out of the environment of the tenor and intent of the chapter within which they are. Apart from what I am teaching you about tongues, you should learn two things: (1) you do not approach a passage with a preconceived notion; and (2) you do not quote a passage out of context, completely apart from the intent and spirit of the passage. When you ignore these two principals of interpretation, you can prove pretty much anything you want to from Scripture.

Now let's move to another of the most misunderstood verses in the realm of charismatics:

But, I wish all of you to speak in tongues; but even more that you would prophesy, for greater the one prophesying than the one speaking in tongues without if not he interprets, that the church edification may receive.

1Corinthians
14:5

Now, I wish all of you to speak in foreign languages, but even more that you would prophesy, for the one prophesying [is] greater than the one speaking in foreign languages, unless he [or, someone] translates, that the church may receive building up.

Now, I would like for you all to speak with the gift of foreign languages, but I would prefer that you prophesy, because the one who prophesies is greater than the one speaking in a language, unless someone translates, so that the church receive some real benefit.

Now, there is a contrast that I would like you to observe. If you are familiar with charismatics, then you know once someone expresses some interest, they can become quite pushy with regards to *getting the baptism* and speaking in tongues. However, of all of the verses in 1Corinthians, this is the **only** verse where one could (incorrectly) interpret as Paul encouraging the believers at Corinth to speak in foreign languages. Actually, Paul is really stating a preference, rather than indicating that he thinks everyone should speak in tongues. The thinking here is, *sure, it would be great if you could crawl; but better that you can walk; or, it would be great if you could speak in baby talk but even better if you could speak like an adult*. Even if you want to take this as Paul's encouragement to speak in tongues, keep in mind this is it—no where else in all of Scripture do we find Paul or any other Apostle encouraging people to speak in tongues. Does this sound like the Pentecostal Church that you have attended?

Furthermore, in expressing this wish—I would that all of you spoke in a foreign language—we need to compare that to something which Paul said a little earlier in this epistle: **I would that all men were even as I myself am** (1Cor. 7:7).

³⁶⁶ This illustration is courtesy of Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 24.

³⁶⁷ This is, in a nutshell, what the charismatic interpretation of 1Cor. 14 is.

Go back and read that context—Paul was talking about being celibate. If you really want to interpret 1Cor. 14:5 as Paul's earnest desire that everyone can and should speak in tongues; then you have to take 1Cor. 7:7 in the same way as it is the same vocabulary and morphology. Paul is simply saying that it is good to have a spiritual gift; tongues are fine, and prophesying is better. You know why everyone in a Pentecostal church is **not** encouraged to prophesy, don't you? If there were 100 people in the congregation, then 100 people would be giving differing and/or false prophecies. Furthermore, 95 of these people really wouldn't want to speak out God's Word as it comes to their minds in a crowd—but speaking out in a holy language that no one understands? Well, no one can criticize that. That is an automatic group acceptance.

The meaning of this verse is fairly clear. I will cover the present active subjunctive of *diermêneúō* (διερμηνεύω) [pronounced *dee-ehr-may-NEW-oh*], which means *to translate [from one language to another], to interpret, to explain clearly and exactly*. It is used when Jesus explains clearly the Scriptures to the two men going to Emmaus in Luke 24:27. This word is used to translate a Jewish name into its Greek equivalent (Acts 9:36). The rest of the time, we find this word in 1Cor. 12:30 14:5, 13, 27. According to Robert Gundry: *Although the verb might refer to the explaining of mysterious utterances, its usage in biblical Greek militates against this understanding. Out of 21 uses of ermêneúō (apart from the uses in 1Cor. 12–14) in the LXX and in the New Testament, 18 refer to translation, 2 to explanation, and 1 to satire or figurative saying.*³⁶⁸ Strong's #1329. This word has a synonym: *methermêneúō* (μεθερμηνεύω) [pronounced *meth-er-may-NEW-oh*], which also means *to interpret, to translate [from one language to another]*. We find this word in Matt. 1:23 Mark 5:41 15:22, 34 John 1:41 Acts 4:36 13:8. We find this word used most often when translating from one language to another (in most, but not all the passages, a person's name is translated into what it means). Strong's #3177. Both words come from the same base word, which is preceded by different prepositions. They are both based upon the word *hermêneúō* (ἐρμηνεύω) [pronounced *hair-may-NEW-oh*], which means *to translate [from one language to another]*. It is found in John 1:38, 42 9:7 Heb. 7:2 Ezra 4:7.³⁶⁹ It also is used to translate a person's name from one language to another. Strong's #2059. I was hoping that I could clearly differentiate between which of these words is used for a general translation (which I suspect is *diermêneúō* because of its use in Luke 24:27), but there was not enough Scripture to differentiate. These words are not even found in Trench's *Synonyms of the New Testament*. In any case, the verb under our examination is a simple word for *translate*.

Now, I have pointed out that hiring a preacher to come in and exegete a few verses in Italian or Latin or Portuguese would have limited benefits (roughly none, in most churches). This is how much speaking in tongues does for any given church, which is the point of 1Cor. 14:6–17, 19, 23.³⁷⁰ We should deal with the statement of Paul's.

There is certainly nothing wrong with having the gift of tongues—this is Paul speaking to the Corinthians around 55 or 56 A.D.—but it would be even better if they had the gift of prophesying. In this verse, it appears as though, if a person spoke in a foreign language, and that was interpreted, then that would be equivalent to a person prophesying. It appears as though the early church would have snippets of things done by a variety of people—not all at once, but in some semblance of order. Recall that the church was in its infancy at this time and the doctrines relative to the Church Age had not yet been completely fleshed out. Still, the focus is upon the growth, benefit or edification of the church. Paul will spend much of this chapter pointing out that blabbering in a foreign language in church, without what you say translated into what the congregation could understand, is worthless.

In every pro and con and neutral treatment of the gift of tongues, I have never seen the ancient old world parallel which needs to be drawn—a parallel with which all 1st century believers were familiar. In almost every synagogue, one would stand up and read from the Holy Scriptures (the Old Testament) in Hebrew. Since no one understood what was being said, someone else would stand up and translate into the dialect of that congregation. I am not aware of any documentation which confirms this, but I assume that this also took place in some Christian churches as well. The Christian Church spread throughout the ancient world—a world where Latin, Greek and Aramaic were

³⁶⁸ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 22, taken from Robert Gundry, "Ecstatic Utterance (N.E.B.)?" *Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. 17, 1966, p. 300.

³⁶⁹ Whenever I throw in an Old Testament passage, that means that this word is found in the Septuagint.

³⁷⁰ Since tongues is not a gift for the present day, the primary purpose the 1Cor. 14 is to stress the concept of order in a local church.

the primary languages, but where there were perhaps hundreds of local dialects which might be based upon one of those languages. It would make complete sense for existing letters (epistles) to be read aloud in the koine Greek that they were written in; and, in some areas, for someone else to give a running translation of same. The Targums, the Old Latin, the Syriac and Aramaic versions of Scripture all contain copious amounts of paraphrase. What is most likely is that Scripture would be given a side-by-side translation, often paraphrase, to its being read; and that this was eventually committed to writing. Being able to stand up and give a running translation was a gift, just like any other gift. In some cases, certainly it may have been miraculous; however, in many cases, we are simply referring to someone who spoke more than one language and used this ability to edify the body of Christ in the congregation where he fellowshiped.

But now, brothers, if I come face to face with you in tongues speaking, what you will I profit, if not to you I speak either with a revelation or with knowledge or with a prophecy or with a teaching?

1Corinthians
14:6

But now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in foreign languages, what will I profit you unless I speak either with a revelation or with knowledge or with a prophecy or with a teaching?

But, really, know, family of God, if I come to you speaking in foreign languages, what will I profit you unless I speak to you by way of a revelation, or with the gift of knowledge, or with a prophetic uttering or with simple Bible teaching?

What the Corinthians were doing, apparently, is several people would speak in tongues, exercising their spiritual gift indiscriminately, sometimes several at the same time, and often several throughout the service. So Paul reasons with them. "Let's say I showed up to teach and spoke in foreign languages? That would be worthless to you all. Unless I impart some divine viewpoint in a language that you understand, my visit would be worthless." This is easily understood by those reading his letter. It would make no sense for Paul, the greatest Bible teacher of that day, the greatest of the Apostles, to just show up and start speaking in foreign languages. The entire congregation could agree that would be worthless.

Likewise, the lifeless [things] a sound giving—whether flute or harp—if a distinction in the tones not, they do give, how will it be known the thing being piped or the thing being harped?

1Corinthians
14:7

Likewise, the things without life giving sound—whether a flute or a harp—if they do not give a distinction in sounds, how will [it] be known what is being played [on the flute] or what is being played [on a harp]?

Similarly, if musical instruments, such as flutes or harps, are not played correctly or are played without any training, then no one will recognize the song which is being attempted.

Surely, you have heard someone pick up a musical instrument for the first time and attempt to make a note. It is horrendous and you want to move away from this person. The first time someone attempts to run a bow across the strings of a violin, the first time someone strums a chord on the guitar, the first time someone attempts to blow a note from a trumpet—these sounds are irritating, anti-musical, and severely unpleasant to the listener. This is the analogy which Paul is making with someone else just standing up in the middle of a church service and spouting off in tongues (even when they speak the language perfectly). The entire thrust of this passage is that it is worthless for the church to have people speaking in foreign languages which are not understood. If someone picks up a flute for the first time and attempts to play it, obviously, what he attempts to play will be unclear to those around him—just like that person who speaks in tongues. Speaking in tongues, at that time, in and of itself, was worthless.

For also if an indistinct sound a trumpet gives, who will prepare for battle? 1Corinthians 14:8

For if also a trumpet blares with an indistinct sound, who would prepare for battle?

Another illustration: if a trumpet does not sound a distinct battle cry, then no one would prepare for war.

Paul, again and again, gives the same sort of illustration. There is nothing more worthless than blowing a trumpet, which is designed to prepare an army to go to war (various sequences of notes gave various marching orders), and blowing it in such a way that no one recognizes what the marching orders are. When someone stands up and starts speaking in tongues, the congregation is nonplussed. “And your point is...?” they wonder concerning the person speaking in tongues.

Let me give you an analogy. Walk into any church anywhere—charismatic, conservative, Catholic, Mormon, whatever. Take with you an instrument that you have never played before. Then, when the choir or the congregation begins to sing, then join right in by playing your instrument. It’ll be great!

So also you by the tongue, if not clear a word do give, how will it be know the thing being spoken? For you will be into the air speaking. 1Corinthians 14:9

So also, if through the tongue you do don give easily understood speech, how will that which is spoken be understood? For you will be speaking into the air.

Similarly, if you do not clearly give easily-understood speech with your tongue, then how will anyone know what you are saying? You will be speaking into the air.

Paul has given illustration after illustration as to how worthless it is to speak in church without saying things which may be understood. In this verse, he is not, in some bizarre fashion, saying, *go ahead, just speak in tongues all you want*. He has explained that communication is key here, and if nothing is communicated, then this person speaking in a foreign language is wasting everyone’s time. The most persuasive and dynamic speaker in the world is worthless if his hearers speak a different language.

So many, if it should be, kinds of sounds [or, voices] there are in [the] world, and none of them without sound. If then I do not know the power of the sound, I will be to the speaking one, a barbarian and the one speaking in me a barbarian. 1Corinthians 14:10–11

There are so many, if it should be, kinds of voices in the world, and none of them [are] without meaning. If I do not know the power [or, meaning] of the voice, I will be to the speaking one, a barbarian, and to one speaking a barbarian to me.

There are, you will concede, many sounds and languages in this world, and none or them are without meaning. However, if I do not understand the language, then to the speaker, I am a barbarian, and the person speaking is a barbarian to me.

This might be a good time to see what others have done, as we may not do a whole lot of exegesis on these two verses:

Interlinear word-for-word There are, if it should be, so many kinds of sounds in the world, and none of them without sound. If then, I do not know the power of the sound, I will be to the *one* speaking as a barbarian and the *one* speaking *will be* with me *as* a barbarian.

NASB There are, perhaps, a great many kinds of languages in the world, and no *kind* is without meaning. If then I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be to the one who speaks a barbarian, and the one who speaks will be a barbarian to me.

NLT There are so many different languages in the world, and all are excellent for those who understand them, but to me they mean nothing. I will not understand people who speak those languages, and they will not understand me.

Young's Lit. Translation There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is unmeaning. If, then, I do not know the power of the voice, I shall be to him who is speaking a foreigner, and he who is speaking, is to me a foreigner;...

There are is actually found part way through the sentence, rather than at the beginning, and it is in the present active indicative, meaning that *there keeps on being*. As you can tell by the diverse renderings of the second phrase, that it is a bit tougher to flesh out. It begins with the conditional conjunction *ei* (εἰ) [pronounced /i/], and which means *if*. With the optative mood, *the thing in question is possible, [albeit] uncertain and problematic, but nonetheless assumed as probable*.³⁷¹ Strong's #1487. With this is the aorist active optative of *tugchánō* (τυγχάνω) [pronounced *toog-KHAHN-oh*], which means, with *if, if it so happens, it may be, perchance, perhaps*. Strong's #5177.

What there are so many of are *génos* (γένος) [pronounced *GEHN-oss*], which means *offspring, posterity, family, lineage, nation, people, kind, sort, species*. Strong's #1085. What there are *kinds of* is *phônē* (φωνή) [pronounced *foh-NAY*], which means *sound, voice*; there are places both in and out of the Bible where it refers to *languages*. What this is, is a nice, logical segue of a term, going from vv. 7–8 where we have the sound of a bugle and the sound of a harp; so this is a word which picks up where they left off, yet allows us to move into discussing languages. In the previous verses, these were simply sounds that Paul discussed—but they were sounds which had meaning and which made sense *to the hearer*. Then, Paul uses this word which can refer both to *sounds* and to *languages* to segue from *sounds* to *languages*. The references to *barbarians* and *speaking* make this clear that we are now speaking about languages. Arndt and Gingrich provide at least one example where *phônē* and *glōssa* refer to the same thing in an extra-Biblical papyri. In other words, this is a word which generally means just *voice* or *sound*; but here it means *language*, and it is used that way in order to logically move from non-linguistic sounds to language. Strong's #5456. When Paul uses the phrases *in the world* and refers to *barbarian*, then the strongest implication is toward *real, human languages which are unknown to the hearer*. It might be stretched and pulled to mean something else, but that would be a reach which would be outside the immediate context of the usage of these words in this verse. Unless you have some pressing reason to do so, you go with the most common usage of a word. Here, the most common usage of *phônē* is *sound* or *voice*; but, since the usage of this word elsewhere allows for it to be used to mean *language*, and since the words around it point to a *known, human language*; and since it is a brilliant word to use to segue from *sounds* to *language* (and Paul is nothing, if not brilliant), then *language* is the most reasonable translation in this context. In terms of looking upon this is some *angelic language*; there is no contextual justification for that at all.

Where are these sounds or languages locating? We then have the prepositional phrase *en kósmō*, which means *in the world*. *kósmos* (κόσμος) [pronounced *KOSS-moss*], which means *world, world order, arrangement, order, organized world system*. Although Zodhiates says this can refer to the entire universe, and gives verses to substantiate that, none of the verses clearly refer to anything outside our solar system, if even that. The verses he quotes refer to the *foundation of the world*, which is the creation, of course, of planet earth, and the system of physical and moral laws to which it is subject. This use always has a specific modifier like *the foundation of*. By far, most of the uses of *kósmos* are to simply this world which we inhabit. Strong's #2889.

Then we have the phrase *and none of them [is]* and we have Paul using the word *áphōnos* (ἄφωνος) [pronounced *AHF-oh-noss*], which combines the alpha privative with the word *phônē*; you would think it would mean *without sound, silent*—just the opposite of *sound*; and this is its general meaning. It also has a metaphoric meaning which is more difficult to ascertain, as we do not find it used in this manner (i.e., as we find it here in 1 Corinthians) anywhere else in Scripture or in extra-Biblical literature. Balz and Schneider give it the meaning *without a clear meaning* here.³⁷² That is why most translators render this as *and none of them without meaning* or *without significance*. Strong's #880.

³⁷¹ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament*; AMG Publishers; ©1992, p. 505.

³⁷² Balz and Schneider's *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*; ©1978–1980; Eerdmans Publishing Company; Vol. I, p. 185.

In this immediate context, Paul uses a lot of words with sort of a twist of the meaning. In v. 11, we have *if, then, I do not know, the — of the voice [or, language]*; what goes in the blank is the feminine noun *dúnamis* (δύναμις) [pronounced *DOO-nahm-iss*], which generally means *power, ability, able, capable*. In fact, to give you an idea how Paul's mind works, he is speaking here of signs and wonders and miracles; this is a word which is occasionally rendered *mighty deeds, miracles*. Here, it is used metaphorically of language, and it means *the meaning or significance of the voice or language*. Balz and Schneider devote almost four pages to this word alone. Arndt and Gingrich give it a full page. So that you can grasp what Paul is saying, take the most persuasive, dynamic speaker that you have ever heard—this speaker made you cry, he made you mad, he made you think. There was power in his words, his voice, his inflection, his use of the language.³⁷³ However, had he spoke to you in a language that you did not know—Polish, for instance—his words would be *without power*; you would not be moved, you would not be affected. You would be bored. That is how Paul is using this. We would translate this *meaning*; but we must understand that Paul means that when words are spoken in a different language, even by the most persuasive speaker in the world, they are completely without *power*. Strong's #1411. This understanding of the noun is confirmed by Paul referring to two people which speak different languages seem like *barbarians* to one another. Their language loses its power over the other. Now, in the greater context, we are speaking of foreign languages being spoken in a church by those with the gift. Paul is simply explaining why you don't burst out in a foreign language in the middle of church. The words have *no power*; you appear to be a *barbarian* to those around you. That is not to say that the language is without significance or meaning, but it is *without power*. Are you beginning to grasp what Paul is saying and how much different this is from your misunderstanding of this verse and this chapter in general?

One thing that you need to understand is that there are no *real* internal contradictions in Scripture. God is not confused and God does not contradict Himself. We may not fully grasp some points of theology, but that is not to say that the fault is with God. Your pastor should take each verse of a book, beginning with verse one and ending with verse last and explain painstakingly what each and every verse means in its linguistic and historic context—and this explanation should be without contradiction to all of Scripture. Most people never get beyond *computational mathematics*, so the illustration I would like to use is not going to be within your frame of reference. However, when a new mathematics is developed,³⁷⁴ it is essentially a new language which (1) goes somewhere, and (2) has no internal contradictions. For me, Paul is one of the most entertaining writers of Scripture because of his phenomenal use of logic and language. In this passage, he is completely enjoying the use of the Greek language, using nuances and meanings which fall barely within the realm of the understanding of his readers, in part, to make a point. As long as he speaks in their language, with sounds that they understand, then his voice has power—even if he stretches the use of the language somewhat. As soon as he starts speaking to them in a foreign language, his words no longer have meaning, and his voice is without power.

So also you, since zealous you are of spiritual [things], toward the edification of the church seek that you may abound.

1Corinthians
14:12

So also, you, since you are zealous of spiritual [gifts], seek that you may have in excess [spiritual gifts] to the building up of the church.

So also, since you earnestly desire spiritual gifts, then seek that you may have an excessive number of spiritual gifts which will benefit your local church.

The Corinthians are those who would like to express themselves. They may not have much to say, but they want to have their say. Therefore, since some of them had the gift of foreign languages, they wanted to use those gifts during every local meeting. Speaking in a foreign language that no one understands does not do anything on behalf of the church. Paul tells them since they have a strong desire to have and use spiritual gifts, then desire to have an overabundance of spiritual gifts which would build up or benefit the church. The Greek word is the present active subjunctive of *perisseúō* (περισεύω) [pronounced *per-iss-SU-oh*], which means *to have in abundance, to have in excess, to exceed in number or measure, to have or to be more than enough*. Strong's #4052. What Paul says

³⁷³ Paradoxically, I am thinking of a female speaker right now.

³⁷⁴ Which is required of Ph.D. candidates in mathematics.

that the Corinthians should seek to have in excess is not actually stated—he only states the purpose of having something in excess. That is the preposition *prós* (πρός) [pronounced *pros*], which means, with the accusative, *toward, to*. It marks the object toward or to which something moves or is directed. Strong's #4314.

You must follow Paul's reasoning here. This is different than prophesy vs. tongues—there, Paul stated a preference—if you are going to have any gift, he writes to the Corinthians, then pray that God gives you the gift of prophesy. Here, Paul is not stating a preference—pray that you get in excess whatever will benefit the whole church. He does not use the word *spiritual gifts*; and when it comes to what the Corinthians should desire, he uses no substantive—he simply states the aim of what they should desire in excess, that aim being the building up of the church. In other words, Paul's words are chosen so carefully here that, in the Greek, you cannot even infer that there are spiritual gifts which build up the church and spiritual gifts which do not build up the church. He doesn't say that nor is it even inferred. He says that since the Corinthians are so desirous of that which is spiritual, then they should desire in excess that which builds up their local church.

Therefore, the one speaking in a tongue, let him pray that he [or, one] may interpret. 1Corinthians 14:13

Therefore, the one who speaks in a foreign language, let him pray that one might translate.

Therefore, the one who speaks in a foreign language should also pray that someone might translate what he is saying.

Obviously, without a translation of what is being said, the person who speaks in tongues has nothing to say to the congregation. He is speaking to the air. What he should desire is that someone (even himself) be able to translate what it is that he is saying.

One of the parallels which exists here, but I have never seen a mention of, is what occurred in the Jewish synagogues. In the final centuries before the incarnation of our Lord, there were fewer and fewer Jews who spoke Hebrew. The average Jew could no more pick up a copy of the Old Testament and tell you what was there any more than the average Catholic could pick up a copy of the Latin Vulgate and tell you what he was reading. So, in the synagogue, when it came to reading the Scripture in Hebrew, also, immediately afterward, a *methurgeman* (i.e., *a translator, an interpreter*) would stand up and explain what was read in the more common language, Aramaic. The Jews recognized that the speaking of Hebrew in their synagogues was not helpful to the average Jew; therefore, they would have an interpreter stand up as well and give an immediate Aramaic paraphrase (this is the actual origin of the Old Testament targums, or paraphrases into the Aramaic language).

For if I pray in a tongue, the spirit of mine prays, but the mind of mine unfruitful is. 1Corinthians 14:14

For, suppose I pray in a foreign language—my spirit prays, but my mind is unproductive.

For, let's suppose for the sake of argument that I pray in a foreign language, my human spirit prays, but my mind is on hold.

Many people who speak in tongues rip this verse from its context and say that Paul prays in tongues. They take this as encouragement to pray in tongues. They've heard the illustration of praying an indistinct sound with the trumpet prior for battle, and do not think that Paul is suggesting that this should really be done prior to a battle. They have read how Paul mentions playing without a tune or melody a harp or a flute, but do not think that is what should be done—they don't think that someone should pick up a harp or flute and pursue some tuneless musical destiny. However, after several illustrations where there is no encouragement whatsoever to do any of the illustrations which Paul gives, suddenly, they want to turn the whole thrust of this passage around and somehow allege that Paul is suggesting that they do pray in tongues. If you are one of these, do you have no concept of context? Have you never heard an argument or a debate which was over two sentences long? Have you never followed a geometric proof for more than two steps? Paul is giving another illustration which is parallel to vv. 7 and 8 and 9. In order for you to think that Paul is suggesting that people pray in tongues, you have to take this verse completely out of its

context. Cults do not carefully teach verse by verse because those who listened would realize that half of what was being said contradicted the doctrine of the cult.

We begin with the postpositive explanatory conjunction γάρ (γάρ) [pronounced *gahr*], which means *for, for you see*. Strong's #1063. We have the subordinating conjunction εάν (ἐάν) [pronounced *eh-AHN*], which is actually a combination of the conditional particle *if* and the particle of supposition. *Ei*, by itself, simply expresses a condition which is hypothetical—contracted with *an*, together, they refer to a condition which experience must determine, an objective possibility, however, something which is always future.³⁷⁵ With the subjunctive mood, as we have here, this forms what is known as a 3rd class condition; *if*, and maybe it's true and maybe not. More specifically, this kind of construction *simply projects some action or event for hypothetical consideration*.³⁷⁶ Strong's #1437. The verb is the present subjunctive of προσεύχομαι (προσεύχομαι) [pronounced *pros-YOU-khoh-mai*], which means *to pray face to face with, to pray to God*. Strong's #4336. Paul is not saying that he prays in tongues to God. There is the Greek 1st class condition for that—*if, and it is true*; that is not what we have here. What we have here is a hypothetical consideration—*let's suppose, for the sake of argument*. The present tense intensifies the supposition—suppose that I pray to God in tongues and I just keep on doing it. Under those circumstances, his human spirit would pray—present (deponent) middle indicative. Paul's human spirit would continue to pray; he would be in fellowship, and his human spirit would be functioning in fellowship with God. However, the joint result would be that his mind would be (present active indicative of *to be*) and then we have the adjective άκαρπος (άκαρπος) [pronounced *AHK-ahr-pos*], which is the alpha privative plus the word for *fruit* or *production*; so together they mean *unfruitful, unproductive, unprofitable, and even producing bad fruit*. Strong's #175.

In other words, Paul is not saying that he prays in tongues. He is using the subjunctive mood—just suppose for a moment that I prayed in a foreign language. What would happen is that his spirit would be praying but his mind would be a blank. Now, I know that those who speak in tongues want to run with this verse and say, *that is all I am doing; I am praying with my spirit—my mind is unfruitful; certainly, I can agree to that; but it is my spirit which is praying, and that is all that is important to me*. What you are ignoring is Paul's conclusion, which is the next verse: he concludes that he will pray with his human spirit **and** with his mind. He only uses the subjunctive to set up a *what if*; to suggest a possibility—*let's just assume for the moment that I pray in a tongue without knowing what I am praying—certainly, my human spirit is praying, but my mind is unfruitful. Therefore, I will pray with my human spirit but I will also pray with my mind*. One of the negatives of the division of the Bible into chapters and verses is that too often a verse is looked at apart from its context. V. 14 does not exist in a vacuum—it is simply a supposition to which Paul will immediately post an answer or a conclusion.

What then is it? I will pray with the spirit, but I will pray also with the mind. I will sing with the spirit, but I will also sing with the mind.

1 Corinthians
14:15

What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, but I will also pray with the mind. I will sing with the spirit, but I will also sing with the mind.

What will I do therefore? I will both pray with my human spirit as well as with my mind; I will sing with my human spirit as well as with my mind.

A good place to start with this verse is with some other translations:

Interlinear word-for-word	What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, but I will also pray with the mind. I will sing with the spirit, but I will also sing with the mind.
NASB	What is <i>the outcome</i> then? I shall pray with the spirit and I shall pray with the mind also; I shall sing with the spirit and I shall sing with the mind also.
NLT	Well then, what shall I do? I will do both. I will pray in the spirit, and I will pray in words I understand. I will sing in the spirit, and I will sing in words I understand.

³⁷⁵ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament*; AMG Publishers; ©1992, p. 492.

³⁷⁶ Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*; JSOT Press, ©1992, p. 262.

Weymouth How then does the matter stand? I will pray in spirit, and I will pray with my understanding also. I will praise God in spirit, and I will praise Him with my understanding also.

Young's Lit. Translation What then is it? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray also with the understanding; I will sing psalms with the spirit, and I will sing psalms also with the understanding;...

Pretty much all of the translations were in agreement, apart from the CEV, which took far too many unwarranted liberties with the language (*Then what should I do? There are times when I should pray with my spirit, and times when i should pray with my mind. Sometimes I should sing with my spirit, and at other times I should sing with my mind.*). I have over 20 translations, and only the CEV of these takes this position, which is in opposition to the original Greek (in fact, almost all 20 read almost the same, word for word). Paul is not saying that sometimes he will pray in the spirit, but not with his mind engaged, and other times he will pray with his mind engaged, but not in the spirit. He is not saying that sometimes he will sing with his human spirit, but not in a language that he knows; and other times he will sing in Koine Greek, but he will not be in the spirit of fellowship at the time. Now, anyone, and I mean, anyone knows that Paul is not suggesting that sometimes we should pray or sing so that we understand what it is we are praying or singing about, but to make damn certain that we are not involving our human spirit in this interaction, meaning that we do not have any fellowship with God during the praying and/or singing. Not even an idiot would suggest that Paul is telling us to occasionally sing and pray in our own language but to make certain that we are simultaneously out of fellowship. Contextually, we know that would be ridiculous because the entire thrust of 1Cor. 13 is to perform whatever actions as guided by the Holy Spirit. In fact, our function outside the Holy Spirit is worthless (when Paul speaks of the *spirit* here, he is referring to the human spirit, which is the portion of man which has fellowship with God (animals lack this *spirit*). Now, even though no one would suggest that we pray and sing apart from our human spirit being engaged, they will turn right around and suggest that we pray in tongues and sing in tongues (actually, I haven't heard much about charismatic groups doing this, but a congregation of charismatics all singing in various tongues would be pretty trippy). Paul has just spent verse after verse after verse giving illustrations as to why we would not speak in tongues apart from an interpreter. When Paul mentions the idea of *praying in tongues*, he does it as an hypothetic supposition in the Greek (he does not begin, *if, and this is what I actually do*—which can be accomplished in the Greek and Paul uses that often in other contexts); in other words, in the previous verse, he is not saying that he prays in tongues—he is giving another hypothetical illustration. Here, he draws things to a conclusion—he will pray both in the spirit and with his full understanding.

Let me try this again: if you want to interpret this verse as does the CEV—that sometimes Paul will pray in tongues in the spirit without his understanding of what he is saying, then you must be willing to concede that he is teaching the opposite as well—that he will sometimes pray and understand that which he is praying for, but pray outside the realm of his human spirit (or, outside the realm of the Holy Spirit). Obviously, the opposite tact is goofy. Paul is not going to pray outside of his human spirit nor will he pray apart from the Holy Spirit.

To begin with, there are no subjunctives in this verse. The verb *to pray* is found twice and in the future indicative middle each time. Future indicates what will definitely occur in the future; indicative is the mood of reality; and the verb is a deponent middle—it is middle/passive in form, and active in meaning. You noted in the previous verse, the verb *to pray* had a different morphology. This because Paul was making a point in the previous verse, which required a supposition. Here, there are no suppositions. These verbs will take play simultaneously. Paul uses the same verb twice in a row with the same morphology; that alone would make us think that we are speaking of concurrent events. He begins the second phrase with the conjunction *dé* (δέ) [pronounced *deh*], which indicates a simple transition from one thought to another. It can be opposed to the previous thought, or simply continuative or explanatory. It is generally rendered *but, and, or also, namely*. Strong's #1161. Right next to *dé*, we have the conjunction *kaí* (Καί) [pronounced *kih*], and *kaí* is a conjunction which can mean *and, even, also*. Strong's #2532. Now, syntactically, we cannot say without a doubt that this refers to doing the same thing at the same time, as the Granville Sharp rule does not apply here. However, given that Paul forbids the use of tongues apart from them being interpreted (vv. 13, 27), given that he has related how useless it is to speak in a foreign language when the person listening to you does not understand it (v. 11), given that he has illustrated that in several ways (vv. 6–9), and given that Paul makes an illustrative supposition about praying in tongues (not even setting this up from the standpoint of reality), I think that we can pretty safely say that Paul is saying that a person should pray with their

human spirit **and at the same time** pray with their mind; they should sing with their human spirit **and at the same time** sing with their mind. Furthermore, had Paul wanted to indicate that sometimes a person would pray in the spirit apart from understanding and sometimes he would pray with understanding, then he would simply leave out the *kaí*. We might stumble over this somewhat in the English (that is, if we force *dé* to mean *or*), but in the Greek, it would make perfect sense. *I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind. I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind.* This, apart from the context, would allow for Paul to sometimes pray in tongues and sometimes not to pray in tongues—that little additional conjunction *kaí*. Paul does not use *kaí* in its simple, copulative use—that is what the *dé* is there for. Paul uses *kaí* as an emphatic, implying increase, addition, something more. And, **it is always used this way in conjunction with *dé*.**³⁷⁷

Now, let me stop for a moment. There are those who allege that some exegetes too often refer to the Greek or to the Hebrew and such references confuse them, or are used to intimidate them or to try to *prove* something that really isn't true. Now, certainly, someone with no personal integrity might use the Greek in just that way. However, how the hell do you think we got any English translations in the first place? They came from people who knew the Greek and attempted to put together the best translation they could based upon the original language. This is where English translations come from. They don't drop out of the sky. People don't put on special spiritual glasses, look at the Greek text, and then write a perfect English translation. Translating from the Greek to English is the function of a spiritual gift. The translator cannot give you every nuance of the original language; at best, they can sometimes make mention of some of them in the liner notes. However, this is the job of a pastor-teacher. When there are nuances (and this is a rather important one) which must be uncovered, that is what a pastor-teacher should do. That way, when you later read this passage in the English, you know exactly what Paul was saying. Paul was saying that he would pray in the spirit and, at the same time, he would pray using his mind. In other words, Paul would **not** pray in tongues.

So that no one gets this confused, even though we have a plethora of reasons so far why Paul is saying that both should be done at the same time, Paul takes this a step further with the next verse:

Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, the one filling the place of the uninformed, how will he say the “Amen” upon the your thanksgiving, since what you are saying not he knows?

1Corinthians
14:16

Otherwise, suppose you bless with the spirit, how will the one occupying the place of the uninformed, say, “Amen” upon your thanksgiving, since he does not understand what you are saying?

Otherwise, suppose, for the sake of argument, that you bless with the human spirit alone—how on earth will the uninformed say an *Amen* to your thanksgiving since they do not know what you are saying?

Now, the literal translation is probably quite close to what you have in your Bible. However, since this whole passage is distorted to make it mean something which it does not, I will give you a range of translations:

CEV	Suppose some strangers are in your worship service, when you are praising God with your spirit. If they don't understand you, how will they know to say, “Amen”? You may be worshiping God in a wonderful way, but no one else will be helped.
<i>Complete Jewish Bible</i>	Otherwise, if you are giving thanks with your spirit, how will someone who has not yet received much instruction be able to say, “Amen,” when you have finished giving thanks, since he doesn't know what you are saying?
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Else, if thou be blessing in a spirit, He that filleth up the place of the ungifted person How shall he say the Amen upon thy thanksgiving [or, offering praise]? Since indeed what thou art saying he knoweth not.

³⁷⁷ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament*; AMG Publishers; ©1992, p. 803. I use Zodhiates's Greek dictionary continually, and rarely reference it; however, I am referencing it here for those who want to check.

Interlinear idiomatic	Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will the one sitting in the place of the uninformed say “Amen” when you give thanks, since he does not know what you are saying?
NASB	Otherwise if you bless in the spirit <i>only</i> , how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the “Amen” at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying?
NIV	If you are praising God with your spirit, how can one who finds himself among those who do not understand say “Amen” to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying?
Weymouth	Otherwise, if you bless God in spirit only, how shall he who is in the position of an ungifted man say the ‘Amen’ to your giving of thanks, when he does not know what your words mean?
Young's Lit. Translation	...since, if thou mayest bless with the spirit he who is filling the place of the unlearned, how shall he say the Amen at thy giving of thanks, since what thou dost say he hath not known?

As you can see, there is very little difference in terms of the translation from the most literal to the least literal of the translations. They all say essentially the same thing. Let's hit some of the grammatical nuances now: we begin with the preposition *epeí* (ἐπεῖ) [pronounced *ehp-IH*], which means *as, when, after that* when followed by an aorist indicative, but *before questions implying a negative answer and before similar hypothetical clauses, it stands in the sense of “for,” by implication meaning for then, for else, for otherwise, otherwise* and our passage is quoted by way of illustration of this.³⁷⁸ Strong's #1893. This is followed by *eán* (ἐάν) [pronounced *eh-AHN*] again, which generally means, when followed by a subjunctive, *suppose, let's suppose for the sake of argument*. Strong's #1437. The verb which follows is in the aorist active subjunctive.

Now note the apodosis: it begins with the conjunction *epeidē* (ἐπειδὴ) [pronounced *ep-ih-DAY*], which is always in the apodosis of an *if...then* statement, and it means *since, since indeed, because now, inasmuch as, indeed*. We are no longer dealing with a supposition but with reality. Strong's #1894. This is followed by the present active indicative; the present tense means this continues to occur, and the indicative mood is the mood of reality. It is a flat out reality that they do not have a clue as to what it is that you are saying. Now you can twist and turn Scripture all that you want, but realize that nowhere in the past several verses is Paul suggesting that anyone ever pray *in the spirit apart from the mind*. That is a fanciful notion which is not supported by the Greek nor by context; it is supported 100% by your experience. You want it to mean that, so you, in your mind, make it mean that.

For you indeed give thanks, but the other person not edified. 1Corinthians 14:17 **For, you certainly give thanks, however the other person is not built up.**

For, you certainly are giving thanks, but the other person is not benefitted.

We begin with the postpositive explanatory conjunction *for*, which actually follows the 2nd person singular pronoun *you*. Then we have the conjunction *mén* (μέν) [pronounced *men*], which implies affirmation or concession, and it means *indeed, verily* while, at the same time, pointing forward to something other than the thing or the one affirmed which is in opposition to it. It marks the protasis when there is another particle or conjunction up ahead to mark the apodosis. Strong's #3303. *Giving thanks* is a present active indicative—when you are operating in your human spirit in fellowship with God, you certainly are giving thanks in all reality. Now, I know a charismatic will grab at this piece of syntax and run with it, in clear opposition to context, but what can you do? The apodosis is marked by the strong adversative conjunction *allá*. The verb which follows is the present passive indicative. They are definitely **not** receiving any benefit or building up.

Now, I realize that a charismatic can grab the indicative mood, the mood of reality from the first verb of this verse, say that what is being spoken of here is *public* prayer (which is correct) and then claim that they may pray in tongues, with the human spirit, privately. Sorry, no, you cannot. That is not what this is saying nor is that what this

³⁷⁸ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament*; AMG Publishers; ©1992, p. 615.

is inferring. Nowhere in Scripture do we have a person praying alone in tongues. This is not dealt with in Scripture because it was a *non-issue* then (we will get to v. 28 of this chapter). *Tongues* were a sign gift to the Jews; using it as a private prayer device was not at all a part of its use. It makes no sense to use a sign gift in private. That is an aberration and a deliberate twisting of Scripture.

Let's go to another of the verses from this chapter which is taken out of context and made to say what it does not:

I thank God of mine all you more with tongues speaking. 1Corinthians 14:18 **I thank my God with tongues speaking more than all of you.**

I thank my God that I speak in tongues more than you all.

Obviously, in the literal, word-for-word Greek, this is a mess to our English minds. However, its general meaning is quite simple. Let's go with the verb first: the present active participle of our buddy *laléō* (λαλέω) [pronounced *lah-LEH-oh*], which means *to speak*. Strong's #2980. In this verse, it is in the masculine, singular nominative case (there is no person in the participle), so that it refers to Paul. Why does Paul speak in tongues more often than the Corinthians? Paul was a missionary. He went to Jews and Gentiles all over the Mediterranean area. He spoke to both Jews and Gentiles. When it came to evangelization, his ability to speak in tongues was crucial. Tongues were a sign to the unbelieving Jew, and he used the gift properly. Paul did not babble to himself or in the middle of a church service, but he spoke in a foreign language when facing Jews who spoke a different dialect (they would have Greek and Aramaic in common; however, he could also speak with the dialect in which they were raised). Paul was an Apostle. Because he was chosen in private by Christ Jesus after the resurrection, and because he expressed great animosity toward believers in the past, and because Paul was specifically the Apostle to the gentile as well as the source of 95% of all Church Age doctrine, Paul **needed** all the sign gifts. No one would face more natural opposition from the early Christian church than a man who persecuted believers, went primarily to the gentiles, and taught some things differently than what we have in the Old Testament. That is a pretty hard sell, so Paul had to have all the sign gifts, which he did. He several times alludes to having these sign gifts and the historical document that we have, the book of Acts, confirms this. Of all the Apostles, Paul was required to display his sign gifts to establish his authority. It is upon his writings primarily that Church Age doctrine stands. If his authority was not continually confirmed by these sign gifts, then the mechanics and the dispensation of the Church Age would still today be a mystery (and, unfortunately, for some lunkheads, it still is).

Thieme: Never once did Paul succumb to spiritual superiority because he possessed the gift of tongues. He saw the gift in its proper perspective and thanked God not only for the gift, but also that he had occasion to use the gift to a greater extent than all the Christians in Corinth put together. Maximum contact with Jews throughout the Roman world and the linguistic barriers he encountered made tongues a necessity. Since he had made extensive use of his gift, Paul was well-qualified to speak on that subject. His observations and instructions bore the mark of authority and made a great impact on the recipients of the epistles. Yet he refused to use the gift of tongues inside the church. It is the purpose of the local church to further the growth of believers. This can be accomplished only by the teaching of Bible doctrine. The sheepfold is designed to feed the sheep. This requires the gift of pastor-teacher, not the gift of tongues! On the other hand, evangelism should be conducted outside the local church. Therefore, Paul advocated restraint in the use of tongues within the church.³⁷⁹ Paul used the gift of tongues out in the world to evangelize, but he would not use it in the church (apart from his words being translated) as he indicates in the next verse.

But in the church I desire five words by the mind of mine to speak that also others I may instruct, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue. 1Corinthians 14:19 **But in the assembly, I would [rather] speak five words through my understanding that I may instruct others, rather than myriads of words in a foreign language.**

³⁷⁹ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 35–36.

While in church, it would be preferable to speak just five words in a language which all understood so that I may instruct those present, rather than speaking ten thousand words in a foreign language.

Paul just sets up the comparison in public worship between speaking in a language that everyone understands as opposed to speaking in a language that no one understands. He is not saying that most of the time he will speak in the Koine Greek and just once in a great while he will burst out in tongues—he is saying that he would rather just say five words in three seconds than spends hours upon hours speaking ten thousand words in a foreign language that no one understands. It makes sense in a local assembly to teach some doctrine; it makes little sense in a local church to speak in, what would seem to be to others, gibberish.

Burdick writes: *The desire to show off one's prestige gift in the assembly, even though it benefitted no one present, [and] was in contradiction to the principle of love for the brethren. The situation which result was one of confusion and disorder...in which many were speaking in tongues and prophesying at the same time...There was no concern that anyone be able to understand what was spoken.*³⁸⁰

I know that the popular saying is that, before you are about to do something, just ask yourself, *what would Jesus do?* Next time you think about speaking in tongues in church, stop for a moment and ask yourself, *what would Paul do?* Paul would rather give five words of instruction rather than 10,000 words in a foreign language.

Brothers, do not children become in the restraints [of thinking], rather in the evil be infants, but in the restraints [of thinking] adults become.

1Corinthians
14:20

Brothers, do not become children in self-control, rather be infants in malice, but become mature in self-control.

Family of God, do not become children in your self-control, but rather be child-like in depravity and in self-control, be mature.

It is in verses like this that one realizes how much Paul enjoys using the Koine Greek language. He uses the verb *to become* twice in this verse—the first time in the present middle imperative with a negative. This is an order: *do not become children in the understanding*. He ends the verse with the exact same verb in the exact same morphology; however, this time, there is no negative. Therefore, that is a positive command concerning what they should become.

We have the plural of the feminine noun *phrēn* (φρήν) [pronounced *FRAYN*], which literally means *diaphragm, that which curbs or restrains*. It is often rendered *mind, intellect, disposition, feelings*. It is actually a word for *self-control* which Paul adapted to the realm of spiritual activity. It not only involves thinking but the ability to control one's thinking and attitudes. Strong's #5424. I am thinking that the plural matches the congregation that Paul is writing to.

Then Paul gives a weird order. He uses the present active imperative of *nēpiázō* (νηπιάζω) [pronounced *nay-pee-ODD-zoh*], which means *to be a babe, infant, child, to be one who cannot speak, to be as a child, to be child-like*. Strong's #3515. If you Corinthians are going to be childish about anything, let it be in the realm of evil. The word which is used is the dative/locative feminine singular of *kakía* (κακία) [pronounced *kahk-EE-ah*], which means *malice, depravity, wickedness as habitual, doing evil*. Strong's #2549.

In the last line, we have the present middle indicative of *become* and the predicate nominative *τέλειος* (τέλειος) [pronounced *TEH-lie-os*], which means *complete, mature, finished*; with reference to people, it means *a full age, fully grown, mature, adulthood*. Strong's #5046. It is here in the masculine plural around several words which refer to age, so it therefore means *mature, adult*. These Corinthians had control over their gift. They could choose to speak in tongues or not. It was obvious from the tenor of this chapter that, when church was in session, they began

³⁸⁰ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, pp. 46–47.

babbling in foreign languages. Paul tells them to have some self-control in general. Be adult in the way that they exhibit self control.

Some churches teach that the purpose of the gift of tongues is to stand as evidence to all that a person has been baptized by the Holy Spirit. This is not based upon any direct statement of Scripture (like most charismatic doctrines, but upon the implication which they derive from the book of Acts. It might be more instructive to see what Paul gives as the reason and purpose for the gift of tongues: we will get this by direct statement rather than from inference.

In the Law it is written that: “With other tongues and with lips other, I will speak to people this and not even thus will they hear Me,” says [the] Lord.

1 Corinthians
14:21

In the Law, it stands written that: “I will speak to this people with other languages and with other lips and [even in] this, they will not listen to Me!” says the Lord.

In the Law, it stands written: “I will speak to this people in other languages and with other lips, and yet, even in this, they will not listen to Me!” says the Lord.

The main problem with speaking in tongues today is that (1) there is no such thing as speaking with the languages of angels; and, (2) no one who speaks in tongues has even a clue as to its original purpose, which Paul gives here in this verse and the next. These were foreign languages spoken to Jews which both evangelized them and, by their very use, warned them of divine discipline to come. When God begins to speak to the Jew in a gentile language means that Israel is due for some horrible discipline. What was to happen to the Jews living in Jerusalem and in Judah over the next forty years following the second chapter of Acts was every bit as gruesome and horrible as the holocaust.

The first verb is the perfect passive indicative of *gráphō* (γράφω) [pronounced *GRAH-foh*], which means *to write*. The perfect tense means that this was written in the past with results that continue into the future; the indicative mood is the mood of reality; the passive voice means that the subject received the action of the verb. Thieme used to render this very common NT phrase as *it stands written* or *it stands written [in the past with results which continue into the future]*. We begin the quote with the preposition *en* and the adjective *heteróglōssos* (ἑτερόγλωσσος) [pronounced *heh-ter-OH-gloh-s-sahs*], which is a combination of two words: *other* and *tongues*. We have these two words together in Acts 2:4 when the Apostles began to speak with *other tongues*.³⁸¹ This could be rendered *in other tongues, with other tongues* or *by means of other tongues*. Strong's #2084. *With other lips* is a metonymy for *other languages* as well.³⁸² For nearly three thousand years, God has spoken directly to the Hebrews in the Hebrew language. They have been the custodians of His Word. The heathen were the gentiles, with their rough sounding speech. For God to tell the Jew that He would speak to them in a foreign language—in a gentile language—was a terrific insult.

The result of God speaking to the Jew is then given. The phrase begins with *and not* and then we have the demonstrative adverb *houtō* (οὕτω) [pronounced *HOO-toh*], which means *this one, in this manner*. It can refer to all that has preceded, taking it all in with one word. With the negative, it can mean *not even thus*. Strong's #3779. The verb is the future middle indicative of *eisakoúō* (εἰσακούω) [pronounced *ice-ahk-OO-oh*], which means *to hear and obey, to hear and give heed to, to listen to*. Strong's #1522. With this verb is the negative (which could also stand with the demonstrative adverb).

Now, here, as well as in Acts 2, tongues are tied directly to foreign languages, as well as to God's people, the Jews. God speaks to His people in gentile tongues, and, even in this, they would not listen to Him. Paul clearly explains the purpose of speaking in tongues right here. This stands in perfect agreement with Acts 2. The other passages

³⁸¹ In the original Greek, there were no spaces between the letters, so the way we differentiate between the two words in Acts 2:4, and the one word here, is that, in Acts 2:4, the two words agree in case, gender, and number (which is found at the end of each word). In this passage, *héteros* does not have an ending to match it up with *glōssa*, meaning it is one word.

³⁸² Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament*; AMG Publishers; ©1992, p. 1472.

in Acts, where tongues is mentioned, do not go into the same detail; however, simply because they lack detail does not mean that they contradict the clearly stated purpose given in this verse.

92. In the next verse, it will become apparent how self-serving the charismatics are. They will take the clear meaning of this passage and they will distort it, just as any cult would do, to justify their own actions. The next verse (which we will exegete) says, that *tongues are for those who do not believe*; which is clear by v. 21—they are a sign to the unbelieving Jew. Charismatics have twisted this verse to mean that tongues are designed for those whose faith is weak, and speaking in tongues helps to bolster that faith. How should I put this, so that I do not offend the brethren? Oh, I know: that's just wrong. It is a deliberate misconstruing of a passage which is clear and easy to understand. Peter knew that what Paul wrote was being twisted and distorted. He wrote: *...just as our beloved brother, Paul, on the basis of the wisdom given to him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things which are difficult to understand, which the untaught and the unstable distort, as they do also to the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction* (II Peter 3:15b–16). You do not get to give whatever interpretation to Scripture that you would like. You do not get to justify your behavior, your actions or your doctrine by twisting what the Bible clearly says. Peter tells you that you do so to your own destruction. Now, you may wonder, how does the charismatic risk his own destruction? They are evangelical and Christian, are they not? Very few charismatics believe in eternal security. This means that they are helping God keep them saved with their mediocre or better *Christian* life. Anyone who brings anything to the table of salvation by way of works is not saved. If you repent from your sins (that is, believe that regret for what you've done, as well as a determination not to continue in your sins) is a necessary component of salvation, then you are not saved. What you intend to do is neither here nor there, but if it is brought to the table of salvation as your contribution, then you are not saved! Jesus did everything necessary on our behalf on the cross. Now, we might feel badly about what we have done with our lives and we might feel great about it. We may even give a serious thought to cleaning up our act. That is all well and good. What you cannot do is think that this contributes even an iota to your salvation. Now, don't get me wrong: sin is obviously wrong and evil, and sinning out of control after salvation is not really prudent. However, placing your commitment to follow Christ, to avoid sin, to do whatever is not a part of salvation proper. Your salvation is based 100% upon what Christ did on the cross, and, if you are uncertain as to whether your faith is in Christ or in your repentance, then what you need to do, right now, is to place your faith 100% upon our Lord, apart from anything you have done and apart from anything that you intend to do—just in case.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

93. Quite obviously, we need to go to Isaiah 28, which is what Paul is quoting from right here, and find the Old Testament reference to this gift of tongues.

However, before we jump into this exegesis, I want you to be aware that in the Old Testament, there are many prophecies which have a double fulfillment (and some are fulfilled even more often, e.g., Lev. 26). Isa. 28 speaks of the impending dispersion of Israel under the Assyrians. However, it also looks further ahead to the end of the nation Israel when they are defeated, destroyed and/or dispersed by the Roman armies under Titus.

In re-reading this, I am thinking that for many of you, you probably need some further background. From R. B. Thieme: *Grace always precedes judgment. Since the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was a maximum disaster, God provided a prelude of intensive evangelism. All who would accept the gift of salvation during that interim would escape the curse of the fifth cycle of discipline.*³⁸³ *Those who would recognize the sign would know what it portended; therefore, they would flee to safety in accordance with divine instructions.*

But while the time of the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy was the year A.D. 70, the prophecy itself was voiced before the Babylonian Captivity. Thus, under the principle of the near and far fulfillment of prophecy, Isaiah admonished

³⁸³ FIFTH CYCLE OF DISCIPLINE: Destruction of a nation due to maximum rejection of Biblical principles (Lev. 26:27–31); five cycles—verses 14–39).

both is contemporaries concerning the impending Assyrian invasion and the Jews of the future that their nation would be destroyed.

Isaiah's long and faithful ministry occurred during a crucial time in Israel's history. A revolt against divine authority had split the nation into two entities (circa 926 B.C., shortly after the death of Solomon). The Northern Kingdom (the ten tribes), called "Israel" or "Ephraim," had its capital at Samaria; the southern Kingdom (the tribes of Judah and Benjamin), called "Judah," made Jerusalem its chief city. Isaiah foretold the doom of both entities. In 721 B.C., twenty years after Isaiah's warning, the Northern Kingdom, apostate and degenerate, went into the fifth cycle of discipline, administered by Assyria (Isa. 28:1–4). Yet Ephraim had accomplished its own destruction internally long before it was conquered by the Assyrian invaders. The internal stability and health of any nation depend on the spiritual factors resident within that nation. Such spiritual factors include the evangelism and subsequent regeneration of unbelievers and the dissemination and application of Bible doctrine among believers! In the absence of these factors, hostile pressures from other nations merely finish the work which decadence has begun!

Israel's fate should have been a lesson to Judah. God commissioned Isaiah to issue a stern admonition to the Southern Kingdom: if she persisted in the same idolatrous practices for which her sister to the north had gone into slavery, calamity would befall her people (Isa. 28:14–23). While the impact of Isaiah's message and the response of the believing remnant prolonged the life of the Southern Kingdom for 135 years, they Jews eventually reverted to apostasy. They failed from the standpoint of their spiritual, economic, social and military life; they continued to ignore the principles of freedom by which a national entity functions to the glory of God. Thus they forfeited their place in the Plan of God. The first administration of the fifth cycle of discipline to Judah came in 586 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar conquered the Southern Kingdom and led its people into captivity to Babylon. Seventy years would elapse before the Jews were to be restored to their own Land.³⁸⁴

**[Unto] whom will he teach knowledge
and [unto] whom will He cause to
understand a report?
—those weaned from milk, taken from
breasts.**

Isaiah
28:9

**[To] whom will He teach knowledge
and [to] whom will He cause to understand
the message?
Those weaned from milk and taken from the
breasts.**

**To whom will He teach knowledge and to whom will he make understand His message?
Those who are no longer helpless infants.**

In the Hebrew, there is an untranslated word which occurs here twice—it is the sign of a direct object. This is followed by the interrogative *mîy* (מִי) [pronounced *mee*], which means *who* or *whom*. Strong's #4310 BDB #566. This is followed by the 3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect of *yârâh* (יָרָא) [pronounced *yaw-RAWH*], which means *to throw, to shoot*. In the Hiphil, this is almost a different word. It is generally translated *teach, instruct, enumerate* (Ex. 24:12 Deut. 33:10 Judges 13:8). Strong's #3384 BDB #434. What He (God) will teach is the feminine singular of *da'ath* (דַּאֲת) [pronounced *DAH-gahth*] means *knowledge*. Strong's #1847 BDB #395.

The next verb is the Hiphil imperfect of *bîyn* (בִּיַן) [pronounced *bean*], which means *discern, perceive, consider*. The Hiphil is the causative stem, meaning that the question being asked is *Who will God cause to understand, cause to discern?* Strong's #995 BDB #106. The answer is rather cryptic—we have references to children who have just been weaned from breast milk. The understanding of God's Word is of utmost importance in the Christian life as well as in the life of Israel. Believers are taught the most fundamental truths and then truth is built upon that. This will be made more clear in the next verse.

³⁸⁴ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, pp. 9–10.

**For a precept to a precept, a precept to a
precept;
a line to a line, a line to a line;
a little here, a little there.**

Isaiah
28:10

**For a precept, for a precept, a precept for a
precept;
a line for a line, a line for a line;
a little here, a little there.**

**For a precept to a precept; a precept to a precept;
a line for a line, a line for a line;
here a little, a little there.**

This verse begins with the conjunction *kîy* (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*], which means *when, that, for, because*. Strong's #3588 BDB #471. It is very similar to the Greek explanatory conjunction *gar* (γάρ). Then we have the masculine singular noun *tsav* (צַו) [pronounced *tsahv*], which means *precept, command, commandment*. This word only occurs in this passage and in Hosea 5:11, so its meaning is uncertain. Strong's #6673 BDB #846. I would love to launch into a sermon here about the importance of doctrine and of building doctrine upon doctrine (which is a true statement); however, we are not completely certain that is what is meant here. What is certainly being done is that the drunkards referred to in the previous few verses (vv. 7–8) are being mocked. We have in this verse a series of very short, one syllable words, which at once sound both like a drunk as well as a barbarian. Have you ever heard someone attempting to make fun of another's language? They use the same sounds over and over again. The Greeks nicknamed the Barbarians after their language, which sounded like *bar bar bar*. We have the language of a drunk and at the same time the language of a gentile side-by-side. They sound the same. Suddenly, Isaiah warns these drunken Ephraimites (as well as all of Israel):

**For in stammerings of lips and with a
tongue—another
He will speak unto the people the this**

Isaiah
28:11

**For in mocking, stammering lips and with
another tongue,
He will speak unto this people.**

He will speak to this people with mocking, scorning, stammering lips and with a foreign tongue.

After the conjunction *kîy* again, we have the masculine plural construct of *la 'êg* (לַעֲגִי) [pronounced *LAH-gayg*], which can mean *mocking, scorning* or *stammering*. Actually, it is unclear as to which is correct (and it is even unclear here as to which word this is, although the possibilities vary only by a vowel point). The Hebrew tends to be a little less precise in both the language but more so in the manuscript evidence. Our Hebrew manuscripts date only to around 800 or 900 A.D.³⁸⁵ Strong's #3933 BDB #541. However, it is reasonable to infer all three meanings here. The previous verse obviously mocked the speech of the drunks (the nation Ephraim had become a nation of alcoholics); yet, God also speaks to them with scorn and with speech which sounds to them as stammering. I mentioned that this is a construct. The Hebrew is filled with constructs. What that means is that this is closely associated with the following noun; we properly render a construct followed by a noun as ___ of ___.

Thieme explains it this way: *The words LA-EG and SAPHAH, translated "stammering lips," actually imply a guttural or staccato-type language. The phrase is descriptive of the languages spoken by the people who surrounded Israel. The classical Hebrew is a smooth and flowing language filled with vivid imagery and poetic idioms. This language should have been employed in the evangelization of the Gentiles. When the Jews failed to do that, the tables were turned, and God replaced Israel with another missionary agency—the Church. In the new dispensation, the Gentiles would evangelize the Jews—not in the melodious Hebrew, but in foreign words harsh to the sensitive Jewish ear. Poetic justice? Perhaps! Yet more than that; the Gentile languages, which the Jews despised, would be a poignant reminder of approaching judgement!*³⁸⁶

The verb rendered *speaks* is the Piel imperfect of *dâ^bvar* (דַּבַּר) [pronounced *daw^b-VAHR*], which means *to speak, to declare, to proclaim, to announce*. The Piel is the intensive stem and the imperfect tense indicates continuous

³⁸⁵ That is a whole other story. However, in the original manuscripts, there were no vowel points. They were added millennia later.

³⁸⁶ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 11.

action. God speaks to His people with great intensity throughout the ministry of the prophets to the time of our Lord and for several decades after. Strong's #1696 BDB #180. God also speaks to His people with the feminine singular noun *tongue* (which is *glóssa* in the Septuagint, by the way), which is modified by the adjective *ʿachêr* (אַחֵר) [pronounced *ah-KHEHR*], which means *another* as well as *foreign, alien, strange*. Strong's #312 BDB #29.

What we have predicted here in Isa. 28:11 is the nightmare of the religious Jew. God, the God of the Universe, came to the Jew and has worked through the Jew for over 2000 years. Now, suddenly, God will speak to the Jew in another tongue? In another language? And that language will seem to them to be the language of drunks (recall Acts 2:13)? This is unthinkable that God would approach the Jew in this way. Thieme: *While this prophetic sign may not seem of great significance to us today, it was offensive and insulting to the Jews of Isaiah's era. "Think of that!" they must have said. "Imagine Gentiles coming to US with God's Word! WE are the custodians of Scripture; WE were given the Law; WE are to evangelize the world! How dare Isaiah tell US that these Gentiles will bring US the message of salvation in their coarse, cacophonous languages!" To Jewish thinking, the announcement of Gentile evangelism of Jewry was a totally foreign concept; they could not believe that such a thing could happen. Surely God would not set aside His privileged people...*³⁸⁷

So that you are not led astray, God promised national discipline to the Jews over and over again. Even before they ever stepped foot into the Land of Promise, God warned them of the discipline that they would face when they would desert Him (Lev. 26). God would culminate this discipline by scattering the Jews out among all the Gentile nations as the wind scatters a pile of leaves. This promise by God to speak to the Israelites in gentile languages is not found in one isolated area of Scripture. Moses warned the Israelites of the consequences of their disobedience on several occasions, one of them being Deut. 28:15–68; and in v. 49, he warns: *"Jehovah will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you do not understand."* We find similar language in Jer. 5:15—God spoke to Israel in Hebrew. Whenever He spoke to Israel in a gentile language, that was a sign that Israel was being judged and judged severely.

In 70 A.D., the relations between the Jews and Rome had broken down completely. Rome advance on Jerusalem in the spring of A.D. 70. Titus, the son of Vespasian, used starvation as a weapon against the Jews who were held up in Jerusalem. Most of the Jews were civilians, but they had been encouraged not to surrender by the Jewish Zealots, who would not have peace with Rome. Titus because he did not get a full surrender, would not allow anyone to leave the city, so that the people inside would starve. Titus had the choicest of the Roman army and he had all of the tools of war. The Romans systematically breached the outer three walls surrounding Jerusalem, and fought against the brave zealots who held out. The remaining Jews retreated to the temple, where they held out an additional three weeks, until it caught fire. After a five month siege, Rome took Jerusalem. There were still pockets of Zealots who held various fortresses along the banks of the Jordan. These were systematically attacked and taken until all that remained was Masada, a fortress originally constructed by Herod the Great, to protect himself from the Jews, if they ever rebelled against him; and to protect himself from Cleopatra, if she ever decided to take Judæa. It was a tremendous fortress which 1000 remaining Jews had taken as their last hold out against Rome. Many of this 1000 were women and children. For most of the standoff, the Jews inside could only watch as the Roman troops on the outside built a ramp and a 90 foot high siege-tower. Their weapons were just a few stones that they could throw down upon the Roman soldiers as they built the ramp. In April of 73, they had completed the ramp and began the siege. The Romans battered down the outside walls and caused a breach in the walls, and then set fire to a wooden wall which the Jews had built as their last defense. On the other side of the wall were the dead bodies of the Jews. All 1000 of them had agreed to die by their own hands, as opposed to dying at the hands of the Romans. They drew lots and ten men were chosen to slaughter the remaining people. Every man lay by his wife and children, bared their throats, and one of these ten would come by a slit their throats. Then of the ten, one slit the throats of the other nine, and then killed himself. The Romans found nothing but their dead bodies on the other side of the hastily-built wooden barrier. God had warned the Jews of great discipline that was going to come and He warned them using the gift of tongues. This was not some happy gift that a person used to get their jollies with—this gift was a sign which promised the Jews in Jerusalem of the first century severe discipline at the hands of the gentiles. There are some charismatics who tell jokes and laugh in tongues. They are a shame and an embarrassment to believers everywhere. Tongues were for a sign, and a very solemn one at that.

³⁸⁷ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 11.

Now God would speak to His people with Gentile tongues—what would be the content of that message? Quite obviously, the gospel. What else do you say to the unbeliever? Therefore, that is what we should expect in the next line:

**Which He has said unto them,
“This [is] the rest; give rest to the weary
and this [is] the repose,
and they would not to hear!”**

Judges
28:12

**Whom He has said to them,
“This [is] the rest—give rest to the weary.
And this [is] the repose.
And they would not hear!”**

**To whom He has said, “This is the rest; give rest to those in need of rest;
this is the repose. And they would not listen to Me!”**

There are some minor difficulties of translating the first line which we will skip and go to the demonstrative feminine singular adjective *zeh* (זֶה) [pronounced *zeh*], which means *here, this*. Strong’s #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260. Both the Greek and Hebrew do a lot by way of syntax, and the syntax here demands the verb *to be* (which is not found in the original). This is followed by the definite article and the feminine singular noun *m^onûwchâh* (מנוחה) [pronounced *m^o-noo-KHAH*], which means *rest, resting place, place of rest, quietness*. Strong’s #4496 BDB #629.

Then we have the 2nd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperative of *nûwach* (נִוַּח) [pronounced *NOO-ahkh*], which means *rest, cause to rest, to be at rest, set down, lay down, deposit, leave*. Strong’s #5117 (and #3240) BDB #628. God orders that rest be given to the masculine singular adjective (which, here, with the definite article, acts as a substantive) *‘âyêph* (אֵיֶפֶט) [pronounced *aw-YAYF* or *gaw-YAYF*], which means *tired, weary, faint, worn out, exhausted*. Strong’s #5889 BDB #746. God is telling the Israelite to *give rest to the weary*. It is the Jew who should be evangelizing the world. Instead, God is speaking to the Jew offering them rest from their works.

We also have in this verse the feminine singular noun meaning *rest* or *repose*. This noun is found only here. We know its meaning because it is the cognate of a verb which means *to be at rest, to repose*. Paul skipped a portion of this and then quoted the last line: **“And they would not hear.”** This is a repeated theme of the Old and New Testaments. Recall when our Lord spoke of Jerusalem in Matt. 23:37: **“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you would not!”** People who speak in tongues are so egocentric that they have no clue as to the big picture and what it is all about. They barely even know that there is such thing as Israel, and they are often confused as to God’s plan for Israel (many subscribe to that evil covenant theology, and have relegated Israel to long-forgotten history—yeah, that’s why there are Jews in every nation and that’s why we know they’re Jews and they know they’re Jews). Tongues is not all about *you*—tongues is all about the nation Israel and God speaking—pleading, if you will—to Israel. If you learn nothing else from reading this, learn this: **tongues are not about you**. Had you not been so quick to loosely and sloppily justify your emotional gibberish with Scripture, you would have understood early on that God promised Israel that He would speak to her with Gentile languages, offering first to her the rest which is found in Jesus.

Thieme: *The fulfillment of the principle of cursing turned to blessing is evident today. Many Jews have accepted Christ as Savior, yet few of them have heard the Gospel in Hebrew. Until it was recovered by theologians for the purpose of scrutinizing Old Testament Scriptures, Hebrew had become a dead language. Apart from the reading of Old Testament portions in their synagogue services, the Jews seldom hear the Word of God in their own language. Even by the time of the First Advent of Christ, classical Hebrew was almost extinct, except among the Jewish priests. The language generally spoken was Aramaic, a combination of Chaldean and Hebrew, the pure Hebrew had all but disappeared.*³⁸⁸

O. Palmer Robertson explains: *Tongues served well to show that Christianity, though begun in the cradle of Judaism, was not to be distinctively Jewish...Now that the transition [between Old and New Covenants] Holy Spirit been made, the sign of transition has no abiding value in the life of the church. Today there is no need for a sign*

³⁸⁸ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, pp. 14–15.

*to show that God is moving from the single nation of Israel to all the nations. That movement has become an accomplished fact. As in the case of the founding office of apostle, so the covenantal sign for the Old and New Covenant people of God. Once having fulfilled that role, it has no further function among the people of God.*³⁸⁹

I want to again tell you the final fulfillment of this passage. God, for over two millennia, spoke to the Jew in the Hebrew language. In fact, as the Jew began to adopt other languages—Aramaic and Greek—God stopped speaking to Israel (not *for* that reason; they two things just happened coterminously). For 400 years, apart from his Holy Scriptures, God was silent. Then, when He spoke to Israel again, it was in the Greek language—the New Testament was written in Greek—God’s last recorded Word, to the Jew first, but also to the gentile, was in Greek, not Hebrew. The New Testament Bible also is a fulfillment of this verse—in fact, it is the ultimate fulfillment of this verse. God speaks to Israel in His Word, in a gentile language, and that stands for all eternity.

Now, I need to stop and explain something which has stuck in the craw of some of you reading this. When I first became a believer, and had studied for about a year, I thought that pretty much everyone was a dispensationalist. I have since found out differently, although I can prove to just about anyone that, in reality, regardless of what they say, is a dispensationalist. If you believe that there are differences between the way things were done in the Old Testament and the New, then you are a dispensationalist (that is, as God directed; I’m not speaking of cultural differences). A dispensationalist is going to justifiably have trouble with the use of this verse as being a fulfilled prophecy in the Church Age. The Church Age falls outside of Old Testament prophecy, so what is going on here? Paul is quoting from this verse as though tongues are the fulfillment of it. There are several prophecies in the Old Testament which have a double fulfillment. Isaiah, in Isa. 28, is warning Israel of the impending judgment by God in handing them over to the Assyrians. However, this is continued to be fulfilled as time progresses—when Jews are evangelized today, 99.9% of the time, it is in a gentile language (or, it is in a local, gentilic bastardization of Hebrew). In any case, Paul is taking this verse, which had been fulfilled once, and is saying that it is also fulfilled when Jews are evangelized in Gentile languages in the Church Age. Now, no matter how you classify yourself, whether you think you are a dispensationalist or not, you cannot get away from the fact that we are speaking of known, gentile languages.

Now, I want you to notice something else. We were in 1Cor. 14 and we are returning to 1Cor. 14; we are not in Acts 2. There are some teachers who incorrectly teach that the gift of tongues found in Acts 2 and the gift of tongues found in 1Cor. 14 are two different gifts. In the first instance we have human languages and in the second, we have heavenly, angelic languages (which sounds so holy). Notice in 1Corinthians the way that Paul interprets this. It is the act of God speaking to the Jews, His people, in Gentile tongues. This is not my interpretation of the proper use of the gift of tongues at Corinth; this is Paul’s interpretation! Argue with my all you want—you’ll be wrong most of the time; argue with Paul, and you will be wrong all of the time.

Finally, the use of the gift of tongues did not guarantee that the Israelites would come to Christ in droves. On the day of Pentecost, we have 3000 who believed in Christ, most of whom would be Jewish. Soon thereafter, we have another 5000; and after that, we do not have any more large groups of Israelites believing in Christ. There were about 7.5 million Jews worldwide at that time, 2.5 million that lived in Judæa and surrounding areas. If we say that 10,000 or 20,000 Jews were evangelized, that is still less than 1% of the Jews in the Judæan area. Robertson and Plummer explain: *Tongues have a further use, as a sign to unbelievers; not a convincing, saving sign, but a judicial sign. Just as the disobedient Jews who refused to listen to the clear intelligible message which God frequently sent to them through His prophets, were chastised by being made to listen to the unintelligible language of a foreign invader, so those who now fail to believe the Gospel are chastised by hearing wonderful sounds which they cannot understand. If this is correct, we may compare Christ’s use of parables to veil His meaning from those who could not or would not receive it.*³⁹⁰

³⁸⁹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 232, taken from O. Palmer Robertson, “Tongues: Sign of Covenantal Curse and Blessing,” *The Westminster Theological Journal* 38 (Fall 1975–Spring 1976), p. 53.

³⁹⁰ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 31; taken from Robertson and Plummer, *The International Critical Commentary, 1Corinthians*; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1914, p. 316.

In the book of Acts, we are not told the purpose of the gift of tongues. They just happened—sort of a reverse Babel. However, shouldn't there be some indication that the use of this gift was a sign of judgement? Now recall Acts 2:3 **And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributed, and He rested on every one of them.** *Fire* represents judgement in Scripture and this was a judgement of those religious Jews who had gathered for the Pentecost feast. Now recall what Peter said to this crowd of unbelievers: **Therefore, let all Israel be assure of this: God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Messiah** (Acts 2:36).

Now, what about Acts 8 and 10? Here, God calls the Samaritans and gentiles into the plan of God. This historical record of Luke's would stand for all eternity that God had rejected the Jews and had gone to the gentiles. As Dillow points out, the theology behind this is presented in Romans 9–11, when Paul explains to the gentiles that they are the wild branch which God grafted in instead of the Jews. Acts 8 and 10 simply stand as a testimonial to this. Finally, Acts 19: this passage deal with Israelites who were positive toward God, although it does not appear as though they believed in Christ Jesus. They were a long ways off from Jerusalem, which, for a long time, was the spiritual capital of the world. Salvation was brought to them, far outside of the spiritual capital of Jerusalem, as Israel as a nation was going under judgement.

<Return to Page One>

94. Now, let's return to 1Cor. 14:

Bob Thieme gives us the condensed exegesis and interpretation of vv. 21–22a from 1Corinthians along with the correcting interpretation:

In the law [the *Old Testament—i.e., Isa. 28:11*] **it is written, With men of other tongues** [*Gentile languages*] **and other lips will I speak to this people** [*the Jews*]; **and yet for all that** [*the bona fide use of the gift of tongues*] **they will not hear me** [*negative volition*] **saith the Lord.** **Wherefore tongues are for a SIGN** [*a warning to Jewish unbelievers of the proximity of the dispersion*], **not to them that believe, but to them that believe not...**(1Cor. 21, 22)³⁹¹

Therefore, the tongues for a sign are—not to the believing but to the unbelieving. But, the prophesy [is] not for the unbelieving but for the believing.

1Corinthians
14:22

Therefore, the [exercise of the gift of] languages is for [the purpose of] a sign, not to the believing [ones] but to the unbelieving [ones]. On the other hand, [the exercise of the gift of] prophecy [is] not for the unbelieving [ones] but for the believing [ones].

We may conclude, from Isaiah 28, that the gift of tongues functions as a sign for unbelieving Jews; it is not a sign for believers. Prophecy, on the other hand, is a gift designed for the edification of believers rather than unbelievers.

Let's first of all get some linguistic points out of the way. *hōste* (ὥστε) [pronounced *HOH-steh*] serves to connect more closely the phrase which follows with the preceding phrase (or phrases). It generally means *so that, accordingly, thus*. When beginning the sentence and followed by the indicative mood (as we have here), it acts as an emphatic inferential particle and therefore means *therefore, wherefore*. Strong's #5620. Next we have, literally, *the tongues*. Again, this means *languages*, and both the immediate context and the previous verses would indicate that we are referring to *the gift of [foreign] languages*, or, better, *the exercise of the gift of [foreign] languages*. The verb is the present active indicative of *to be*; and prior to that we have the preposition *eis* (εἰς) [pronounced *ICE*], which means *into, to, toward*. *Eis* can also be used for an intention, purpose, aim or end. It could therefore be rendered *unto, in order to, for, for the purpose of, for the sake of, on account of*. Strong's #1519.

³⁹¹ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 9.

Its purpose is for *sêmeion* (σημεῖον) [pronounced *say-MY-on*], which means *sign, mark, token, miracle*. Strong's #4592. We have this same phrase used in the Septuagint ten times. In each case, the author is making a distinct statement of purpose (Gen. 1:14 9:13 Ex. 13:16 20:12, 20 Num. 17:3 Joshua 4:6 Isa. 8:18 19:20 55:13). Therefore, Paul here is making a definite statement of purpose for the gift of tongues. It is a gift which is for unbelievers.³⁹²

I want to approach this carefully. Paul did perform signs among the Gentiles on his first missionary journey (Acts 14:3 15:12); however, for the second half of the book of Acts (for Paul's second and third missionary journeys, as well as his trip to Rome) we do not find this word used even once. This word is used in the gospels over 40 times; in the epistles, fewer than ten. The Apostle John recorded the signs performed by Jesus for a very particular purpose: **Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name** (John 20:30–31). In this epistle, *sêmeion* is mentioned here and in 1Cor. 1:22: **For indeed, Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom**. My point is that (1) signs are for the unbeliever, not for the believer (I do realize that some charismatics distort 1Cor. 14:22, considering themselves lacking or weak in faith, and therefore need the bolstering of experiencing tongues, and therefore call themselves *unbelieving*; a bit of a stretch). (2) As the Church Age progressed, signs became less and less important; and, (3) signs were first and foremost for the Jews (although they were a part of the first missionary journey, which included Gentiles). Let me add, (4) Paul does not perform signs and wonders before the upper echelon of Roman government. Now, this does not mean that Paul did not perform miracles for the Gentiles nor does it mean that he did not perform miracles on his second or third missionary journey (Acts 19:11–15 indicates that he did). The point is that preponderance and focus of signs, wonders and miracles were done for the sake of the Jew. And again, we find this word forty times in the gospels. The focus of Paul was upon doctrine; it was upon the Word of God; signs and wonders simply opened the door and gave him the authority to teach. It is the Word of God which is alive and powerful (by the way, one mention of *signs and wonders* is a warning that the *lawless one* of Satan will come with mighty signs and wonders—1Thess. 2:9).

In the context of this passage, the gift of tongues (or, foreign languages) is for a sign. Who it is for is the plural, present active participle of *pisteúō* (πιστεύω) [pronounced *pis-TOO-oh*], which means *to believe*. Strong's #4100. It is preceded by the definite article. Therefore, we may render this as *the believing ones*. In opposition to this, we have the adjective *áπιστος* (ἄπιστος) [pronounced *AH-pis-tos*], which means *unbelieving, not worth of confidence, untrustworthy, something not to be believed*. It appears to be used most often to indicate an unbeliever. With the definite article and in the plural, it means *the unbelieving [ones]*. Strong's #571. Now, charismatics try to get around this by saying, *well, my faith isn't so strong; I need to be bolstered now and again*. *Ápistos* is used for those who *do not believe in Jesus Christ*; this word is used for *infidels*—not for believers who are weak in faith; not for Christians (1Cor. 6:6 7:12–15 10:27 14:22–24 2Cor. 4:4 6:14, 15 1Tim. 5:8 Titus 1:15 Rev. 21:8 Isa. 17:10). I know that you have been to various Bible groups on Tuesday nights, and everyone gives how they feel about a verse, and you get to have your say, and everyone gets to put their own spin on a verse. However, in reality, the Word of God means one thing—any given verse does not mean something to John, but something different to Mary, despite your special Bible groups. You do not get to give your own special interpretation to Scripture. For you to apply the word *áπιστος* to doubting believers would do damage to the traditional interpretation of every one of those verses cited (and some of them, like 2Cor. 4:4, would no longer make sense). Just look at how Paul has used that word throughout his letters to the Corinthians. If you are a charismatic who is also a believer in Jesus Christ, you **cannot**, in good conscience, apply that word to yourself.

When Paul first went to Corinth, he spoke at the synagogue until he was thrown out. From this synagogue and from the city, he amassed a few Jewish and a few gentile believers who were the core of the Corinthian church. There were still Jewish unbelievers in the city of Corinth and God still spoke to them, and called to them. There would be an occasion for a Jew to stumble into the church at Corinth and that would be the time for a believer with the gift of tongues to speak in that Jew's native language—which was no longer Hebrew. Most knew Greek, Aramaic, and the dialect spoken where they were raised. Some might know Latin or Hebrew as well. If a person evangelized them in their native dialect, which was a gentile language, this caught their attention. This was God

³⁹² This reasoning is from Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 26.

speaking to them. This was obviously a very specialized gift designed for specific times and places. *Tongues*, or the gift of languages, was God's last call to Israel. God had spoken to and worked through the people and the nation Israel for over 2000 years; and they had become more and more negative toward Him. Open up the book of Matthew to chapter 21 and read vv. 33–45, which is the parable about the owner of a vineyard, who left on a journey, but leased out this vineyard to some farmers. When he sent his slaves for payment, these farmers, who represented the Jews, killed the slaves (God's prophets). Then He sent His Son, and the vine-growers took Him and threw Him out of the vineyard and murdered Him. This is not a difficult parable to understand. Israel had rejected and murdered the prophets (Matt. 23:37) and God had sent to her His Son, and she rejected and murdered Him as well. The gift of tongues are God's final words to Israel—God calls to Israel in a gentile tongue, and pleads with Israel to return to Him. Tongues aren't about you. This gift was God's last call to Israel. Please understand what this passage, and what the quotation of Isaiah, and what Acts 2 are all about: this is God speaking to unbelieving Jews in Gentile languages as He has promised to do in the Old Testament. This is not you falling into some psychological babbling fit at the end of a church service because your faith is weak and you need a sign from God to indicate to you that things between you and God are still copacetic. That is a deliberate distortion of this verse and all of the words in this verse in order to give credence to your view.

Now, in the next couple of verses, Paul, if you are not careful to understand what he is saying, appears to contradict himself and say that prophecy is designed for unbelievers. So, although we have essentially finished with the exegetical portion of this doctrine, we need to cover just a couple more verses. Thieme: *Language is used to communicate thought. Communication breaks down when persons do not speak each other's language, and words become meaningless sounds. According to ancient Greek and Latin usage, the word "barbarian" was ascribed to an outlander, a foreigner, and was always used in a deprecatory sense. It is a coined word, based on how all other languages sounded to the Greek ear: "bar-bar-bar-bar"! Surely, this was the impression which the gift of tongues must have made on strangers and worshipers in some local congregations. Tongues must be regulated or else bedlam would disrupt every church service! To drive home his point, Paul set up a hypothetical case that involves a church full of believers with but one gift—the gift of tongues. The prospect is a veritable nightmare.*³⁹³

If then comes together the church whole upon the same [place] and all in tongues speak, but come in uninformed [ones] or unbelieving [ones], not will they say that you are insane?

1Corinthians
14:23

Suppose then the entire church assembles together and all speak with tongues and enter in [those who are] uninstructed or [those who are] unbelievers—will they not say that you are insane?

Suppose, then, that the entire church is assembled and everyone is speaking in tongues, and either unbelievers or those unfamiliar with your church walk in—will they not say you are loons?

We begin this verse with the conditional conjunction εάν (ἐάν) [pronounced *eh-AHN*], with the subjunctive mood, is the 3rd class condition, meaning *if*, and maybe it's true and maybe it's not. More specifically, this kind of construction *simply projects some action or event for hypothetical consideration*.³⁹⁴ The best one-word rendering for this is *suppose*. Strong's #1437. This is followed by the conjunction ούν (οὖν) [pronounced *oon*], which means *then, accordingly, thereupon, now, certainly*.

The main verb is the aorist active subjunctive of *sunérchomai* (συνέρχομαι) [pronounced *soon-EHR-khoh-my*], which means *to come together, to gather together, to convene, to assemble*. Strong's #4905. Then we have a phrase which seemed to me, at first, to be superfluous (obviously, it is not). It begins with the preposition ἐπί (ἐπί) [pronounced *eh-PEE*], which means *on, upon*. This is a word which can denote, at once, motion and rest. Strong's #1909. This is followed by the personal pronoun αὐτός (αὐτός) [pronounced *ow-TOSS*], which means *the same* when preceded by the definite article). Strong's #846. Most of the translations which I looked at interpreted

³⁹³ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 38.

³⁹⁴ Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*; JSOT Press, ©1992, p. 262.

this as being *in the same place*. These three words are commonly found together and mean, literally, *upon the same place*, but act more as an adverb to mean *together* (Luke 17:35 Acts 1:15).

To speak is in the present active subjunctive; the present tense is continuous action, the subjunctive mood goes with the supposition that Paul is making; and the active voice means that the assembly performs the action of the verb. They have actively chosen to speak in tongues. Now, as I exegete this verse, I would find this as being the most compelling reason to believe that tongues are for today—what Paul describes here appears to mirror what occurs in most every charismatic church I've been in. A charismatic could reason that, if it occurred in Paul's time and now, then the gift of tongues must be valid.

Now, who should enter into the church but *idiots*. This is the plural masculine noun *idiōtês* (ἰδιώτης) [pronounced *ih-dee-OH-tace*], which means *a common man* (as opposed to one with rank or education or skill). This is often refers to one who is *uninstructed, unskilled*. This word originally was used of a person who did not take part in the Athenian democracy. Although this could indicate that these are lacking in speech and knowledge, this word is not found in the New Testament or in secular literature to refer to someone who lacks the ability to learn. In other words, it doesn't really mean *idiot*. Strong's #2399.

What these say is simply the 2nd person plural, present middle indicative of *maínomai* (μαίνομαι) [pronounced *MY-noh-my*], which means *to be mad, to rave, to act as if you out of your mind*. It is actually found in several passages of Scripture: John 10:20 Acts 12:15 26:24, 25 Jer. 36:26). It is from this word that we derive *maniac*. Strong's #3105.

Now, here Paul takes an interesting tact. Paul has just made it clear that tongues are a sign to unbelievers—principally to unbelieving Jews. Further understand that we are herein dealing with the legitimate gift of tongues. The church is gathered, there have assembled with them some unbelievers and those who have no idea what is going on—and suddenly, everyone begins speaking in a foreign language. Those who just stepped into the church are either uninformed or unbelievers, and suddenly, all around them, people are speaking in foreign languages. Suddenly, you are dead smack in the middle of Nutville. It is hilarious that most contemporary charismatic churches, whose members do not have the valid gift of tongues, yet break into babbling throughout the service, have no clue that they have this affect on unbelievers.

Now, I am hoping that you grasp in this exegesis how the gift of languages was for the unbeliever, but yet it could also be very disconcerting to the unbeliever. When the unbeliever walks into the congregation and people give him the gospel in his own language, that is the true gift of tongues. However, if he walks into a congregation and everyone in the church is speaking in two dozen different languages, then he thinks he's on Psycho Street, and looks for the nearest exit. Now Paul gives the reason why prophesying is the superior gift:

But if all prophesy, and comes in someone unbelieving, he is reproved by all, he is [accurately] judged by all.

1 Corinthians
14:24

Now suppose all are prophesying and someone, an unbeliever, enters in—he is [both] admonished and he is [accurately and perceptively] judged by all.

Now suppose that all use the gift of prophesy, and the unbeliever walks in—immediately, he is admonished and convicted by all.

The first verb is the present active subjunctive of *prophēteúō* (προφητεύω) [pronounced *pro-fay-TWO-oh*], which means *to prophesy*. This means to both foretell that which is to come as well as to speak God's message to man. The person speaking is proclaiming that which is divinely inspired. Strong's #4395.

Now, the unbeliever walks in and those who are speaking are speaking according to God's will. The affect is the present passive indicative of *elégchō* (ἐλέγχω) [pronounced *eh-LEG-khoh*], which means *to shame, to disgrace* in classical Greek, but in the koine, it means *to convict, to prove that someone is in the wrong, to shame; by implication, it means to reprove, to rebuke, to admonish, to correct, to morally chastise*. Strong's #1651. The

present tense means this continues throughout the speaking; the passive voice means that the subject receives the action of the verb; and the indicative mood is the mood of reality—given these circumstances, this would occur.

The next verb is the present passive indicative of *anakrínô* (ἀνακρίνω) [pronounced *aw-nah-KREE-noh*], which means *to examine in order to pass a judicial sentence, to examine accurately or carefully, to inquire, to ask questions*. Strong's #350.

Quite obviously, we do not have everyone speaking at once as we do with tongues. Obviously, if no one understands the language, then it doesn't make much difference whether one person speaks or many; however, with the gift of prophecy, only one person would speak at a time (this is further confirmed in 1Cor. 14:31).

Before we move on, I need to re-emphasize that all of this took place at the infancy of the church. This all occurred before anyone fully understood what was going to happen with Israel and what this gentile assembly thing was all about. There was no complete canon of Scripture, so even if a pastor who studied the Old Testament, they would not have a full grasp of what was going on (recall the concept of intercalation). Therefore, additional understanding of God's plan for the Church Age was necessary, and that came through the gifts of prophecy and knowledge. Let us move forward to v. 27 (the purpose of this study is not to examine the abuses of tongues in the first century, nor is it to exegete this passage completely, but to just deal with the gift of tongues and its relation to us in the 21st century).

And so the hidden [things] of the heart, his, manifest become, and so falling upon a face he will worship the God, reporting that "The God truly in you is!"

1Corinthians
14:25

And so the hidden things of his heart become apparent, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God, reporting that, "God is really in you!"

And so the hidden things of his heart become obvious, and he will fall upon his face and he will worship God, declaring that God is truly in you.

Even though tongues are for those that do not believe, when self-control is exhibited in the church and those with the proper gifts speak at the proper times, the unbeliever and the ungifted are convicted of the Holy Spirit, and they fall on their faces in worship. What the hidden things of the heart become is the neuter plural of *phanerós* (φανερός) [pronounced *fahn-er-OSS*], which means *apparent, manifest, plain, known, publically known, eminent*. Strong's #5318.

In the last line, we have the preposition *en* and the locative of *you*, followed by the present active indicative of *to be*; since *God* is the subject of the sentence, it reads *The God is in you [all]*. This phrase begins with the adverb *óntós* (ὄντως) [pronounced *ON-tohs*], which means *really, truly*. Strong's #3689.

What then is it, brothers? Whenever you come together, each of you a song has, a teaching has, a tongue has, a revelation has, an interpretation has. All things for edification let be.

1Corinthians
14:26

What is it, then, brothers? Whenever you assemble, each of you has a song, has a teaching, has a foreign language, has a revelation, has a translation. Let all things be for a building up.

What should we then conclude, brothers? Whenever you gather, each of you has a song, or a teaching, or a foreign language, or a revelation or a translation. Let all things be done for the benefit of the body.

This letter was written during the infancy of the church. The gift of pastor-teacher was in existence, but this gift was placed after the gift of Apostleship and after the gift of prophecy. Church Age doctrine had not been completely developed at that time. Paul begins to mention the *mystery*, Church Age doctrine, much more often in the prison epistles, which were to come about five years later. Although there was study and preparation at that time, most of the study centered around the Old Testament. Those who taught Church Age doctrine did it by the gift of Apostleship, knowledge or prophecy. Exactly how that was developed is unclear. Many times in the Old

Testament, we have God speaking in what appears to be an audible voice to the listener; and there are a few times in the New Testament where this occurs. However, when it comes to the doctrine of the Church Age, Paul seems to be the greatest authority and it is not clear how he actually accessed this knowledge. It appears more that he wrote in the power of the Holy Spirit, and that he developed Church Age doctrine in that way. There was no automatic writing involved—his mind was always fully engaged. Paul had a great and full understanding of the Old Testament, which became much more clarified when he was saved. I believe that a great deal of Church Age doctrine became developed more from logical alternatives than from any other source (the ultimate source, obviously, was the Holy Spirit). Paul knew what the Old Testament said, he knew what had happened with regards to the incarnation of our Lord, and he knew that life continued on as they awaited the Lord's return and he knew that gentiles had become a major part of God's working since His being taken up into the heavens. He also knew that the new church had the power of the Holy Spirit, which was only given in rare instances in the Old Testament. Given all of this information, Paul put together the theology which was the doctrine of the Church Age, which is also called the mystery doctrine. The local church, at this time, was a growing, changing entity. What Paul says to the Corinthians here and what he says to Timothy several years later sounds as though the local church went through several changes. In the very beginning, it seemed to make more sense that since the Holy Spirit was given to everyone, that almost everyone have a verbal participation—and, from the sound of this verse, that appeared to be the case for awhile. However, along with this came apostles of deceit who would infiltrate the local church and teach false doctrine (which Paul constantly had to deal with in his epistles). In his letters to pastors Timothy and Titus, there appears that a more authoritative structure evolved.

Now, I do not want to go out on a tangent here, but I should point out that the exact structure of a church is never set in stone in the New Testament. There are some who believe that a church should be run only by one church; others believe that it should be under the control of a group of elders; and others believe that there should be a plurality of elders (meaning, pastors). In all actuality, there are apparently several different structures for the local church, none of which is exalted as favorable over another. The church I was grown in had one pastor who ran the show, and that seemed fine to me. The church I first attended had a head pastor, and several teaching pastors under him. This seems to be fine. The key was in really the teaching of the pastor teacher in charge. If his teaching is clear, consistent, verse-by-verse, and done multiple times per week (and three times a week is far too little teaching), the congregation grew (and I don't mean in numbers but in maturity). My point here, is that there is no specific structure outlined in God's Word for a local church. What is crucial, however, is teaching. If all your church does is give the gospel every week, there is a problem. If your pastor only teaches two or three times a week, there is a problem. If your pastor never carefully goes through a book of the Bible covering each and every verse in detail, there is a problem. You will note that most important gifts named in 1Cor. 12:28–30 are teaching gifts. That remains a constant in the local church.

The problem in Corinth was that those who spoke in foreign languages did not fully understand the purpose of their gift, nor did they grasp when it was appropriate to use the gift. Therefore, Paul becomes specific in v. 27:

If in a tongue anyone speaks, according two or the most three, and in turn, and he will interpret.

1 Corinthians
14:27

If anyone speaks in a [foreign] language, accordingly, two or, at the most, three, and alternately, and one will translate.

If anyone speaks using his gift of foreign language, then this should max out at two or three, they will not speak all at once, and someone else must translate.

Primarily what we need in this verse is the correct translation. After *tongue*, we have the preposition *katá* (κατά) [pronounced *kaw-TAW*], which means *down, down from, down upon, according to, after*. Strong's #2596. Here, we will go with *accordingly*.

Next we have the preposition *aná* (ἀνά) [pronounced *aw-NAW*], which means *on, upon*. With *méros*, it means *by turns, alternately, in turn*. *Aná* = Strong's #303. *Méros* = Strong's #3313.

The final verb is the 3rd person singular, present active imperative of *diermêneúô* again, which is, in the Greek *διερμηνεύω* [pronounced *dee-ehr-may-NEW-oh*], which means *to translate [from one language to another], to interpret, to explain clearly and exactly*. Strong's #1329. The imperative mood means that this is a requirement, not an option.

Given the nature of the gift of tongues—to speak in a foreign language in order to evangelize the Jew—Paul certainly would not forbid the use of tongues, as who knows when a Jew might walk into a congregation and need to hear this judgement from God. Since this is a very specialized gift, and fairly focused in its purpose, Paul also required that someone translate what was said, so that the congregation benefit from what was said. Without a translator, then the gift of tongues for the congregation in general is of no benefit.

Now, note here, just as with the prophets in v. 30, those who had the gift of tongues were to speak one by one. This should not be several dozen people in the church all speaking in tongues all at once.

But if [there] is no interpreter, he will be silent in church—but to himself he will speak and to the God.

1Corinthians
14:28

But if there is not translating, [then] he will keep silent in church—he will speak to himself and to God.

If there is no one translating, then he will keep silent in church, speaking only to himself and to God.

This is the verse which I wanted to get to. We have two imperatives in this verse, which are harder to translate, as we are used to imperatives being in the 2nd person. However, the Greek allowed for the imperative mood in the 3rd person as well, as we have here. The first imperative is the present active imperative of *sigáô* (*σιγάω*) [pronounced *see-GAW-oh*], which means *to be silent, to be still, to keep silence*. It appears to involve a complete cessation of talking (Acts 15:12, 13 1Cor. 14:30, 31). Strong's #4601. We have the exact same verb and morphology used of women in v. 34, and they are told to, if they have any questions, to ask their husbands at home (v. 35).³⁹⁵ Paul is not telling the people to *keep silent* but then also *to speak*. Paul is not telling people that they need to talk to themselves out loud in the church. This is silent prayer to God. If they feel that they must say something, then they are to say it either to themselves or to God. The intention is not that they mumble quietly but that they do this *talking* in silence (this, by the way, is called *thinking*; I thought that I should mention that to the uninitiated). In any case, a charismatic cannot take this verse to mean that he should speak in tongues quietly. Now I hope that you fully grasp what Paul is saying here: the use of the gift of tongues in a church is worthless apart from their being translated—and therefore, apart from being translated, the gift of tongues is not to be exercised in a church.

Oh, by the way, you cannot get around this one by meeting at someone's home and all speak at once in tongues. That is a distortion as well. The early church met in homes and, when people gather for Christian fellowship, the rules of this chapter essentially apply. Furthermore, when two or three are gathered in Christ's name, there He is in their midst (Matt. 18:10)—so you cannot even violate these rules when you are with a couple of other believers.

For those who are confused about remaining silent in the church, and think that they may ignore that portion of the verse and speak quietly to God in tongues, let's stop for a moment and go back to Matt. 6:7, where Jesus is instructing his disciples on a mountain (Matt. 5:1).

“But—praying—do not babble just like the heathen; for they think that by [means of] their much speaking they will be heard.”

Matthew
6:7

“But, [when] praying, do not speak without thinking just as the heathen; for they think that by means of their much speaking they will be heard.”

³⁹⁵ This is a whole different subject, which is not a part of this study. However, if a woman charismatic keeps quoting 1Cor. 14:39 (“**Forbid not to speak in tongues**”) out of context, then you may quote 1Cor. 14:35 right back at her.

“However, when you pray, do not babble on and on like the heathen do; for they presume that they will be heard by their many words.”

In the English, we begin this verse with the postpositive conjunction *but*, which would then be followed by the 2nd person masculine plural, present passive participle of *proseúchomai* (προσεύχομαι) [pronounced *pros-YOU-khoh-mai*], which means *to pray face to face with, to pray to God*. Strong's #4336. Even though we do not have the word *when* (or, *while*) in this verse, we may insert either one of them to indicate the temporal nature of the participle.

What Jesus instructs His disciples **not** to do is, and then we a compound word made into a verb. The first word is *báttos* (βάπτος) [pronounced *BAHT-toss*], which refers to a *stammerer*. The second word is *lógos* (λόγος) [pronounced *LOG-oss*], which means *word*. Together, they make up the 2nd person plural, aorist active subjunctive, but used as an imperative, of *battalogéō* (βαππαλογέω) [pronounced *baht-tahl-ohg-EH-oh*], which means *to babble, to speak without thinking, to speak foolishly*. Although Strong's gives the meaning as *to stammer, to use vain repetitions*; Arndt and Gingrich do not and Zodhiates specifically states that it does not mean *to stammer*; and gives the correct Greek word for that (one which is not used in Scripture). It is possible that this refers as well to *repeating something over and over again*. **In either case, it is praying without your mind being engaged**. Strong's #945. *Praying without your mind engaged...hmmm, wouldn't that be something like praying in tongues?* The Greeks and the Hebrews (and pretty much everyone else) uses words which are onomatopoeic. That is what we have here. Joseph Dillow suggests: *“Don't batta, batta, batta, batta when you pray.”*³⁹⁶

Those guilty of this are the *ethnikós* (ἔθνικός) [pronounced *eth-NEE-koss*], which refers to the *nations, the heathen*; it is primarily a word of separation between the people of God, the Jews, and those who are not the people of God. This is an adjective used as a substantive. Paul uses the same word as a synonym for *Gentiles* in Rom. 2:9 and 1Cor. 12:13). Strong's #1482.

Then we have the these heathen do—the present active indicative of *dokéō* (δοκέω) [pronounced *dohk-EH-oh*], which means *to think, to imagine, to consider, to appear*. This word expresses the subjective mental estimate or opinion formed by a man concerning a matter. *Presume* or *assume* are a good translations. Strong's #1380.

What do they *think* or *presume*? They think that *by means of* and then we have the dative/locative/instrumental feminine singular of *polulogía* (πολυλογία) [pronounced *pol-oo-log-EE-ah*], which means *much speaking*. Strong's #4180. You know this is going to be a feminine noun. This means that they are presuming that, through their much speaking—and then we have the future passive indicative of *eisakoúō* (ἑισακούω) [pronounced *ice-ahk-OO-oh*], which means *to give heed to, to listen to, to hear favorably*. Strong's #1522. These gentiles presume that through their continual speaking to God that He will hear them (the obvious implication is that He will not). Now, whether you would like to interpret this as just saying the same thing over and over or whether you want to interpret it as the Hellenistic heathen cult babbling in tongues—in either case, God will not hear these people. So, now do you *think* or *presume* that God will listen to your babbling? Does it make sense that Jesus would condemn prayers that are simply repetitions of words or syllables which have lost their meaning for the speaker (or never had meaning for the speaker) and yet the Holy Spirit would, just a few years later, cause believers to utter syllables over and over again which are meaningless to them? Don't tell me that God doesn't make sense, because most of the time He does. There are certain difficulties which arise where our finite minds have difficulty understanding the infinite—but this does not mean that God does not make sense.

In this passage recorded by Matthew, our Lord teaches the disciples to pray. He does not suggest that they pray in tongues nor does He suggest that they pray apart from their intellect and understanding. In fact, nowhere in the Bible is there any verse which teaches us to pray apart from our understanding. We have already covered 1Cor. 14:14–15, where Paul says that he will pray both in the Spirit and, at the same time, with his intellect. And, Paul is not teaching that here either. In v. 28, Paul tells those who would speak in tongues apart from a translator, to be silent. When you are silent and you speak to God, I hope you fully understand that means praying silently to God. However, let me give you this allowance: if you want to pray silently to God in tongues, then go right ahead.

³⁹⁶ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 22

Just think those tongues in your mind and pray up a silent tongues fury to God. *No*, you're thinking, *that's way stupid!* So, if you do it aloud, then it suddenly becomes *not-stupid?*

Now let's jump ahead a bit to a rather controversial verse:

The women of yours in the churches—they will be silent, for [it is] not permitted for them to speak, but to be in subjection just as also the Law says. 1Corinthians 14:34

Your women in the churches—they will be silent, for [it is] not permitted for them to speak, but to be in subjection, just as also the Law says.

Let your women keep silence in the church, because they are not permitted to speak, but they are to be in subjection to the men, just as the Law says.

Let's just take up some of the vocabulary here. The first verb is the 3rd person plural, present active imperative of *sigáō* (σιγάω) [pronounced *see-GAW-oh*], which means *to be silent, to be still*. We find this word throughout the New Testament (Luke 9:36 20:26 Acts 12:17 15:12–13 1Cor. 14:28, 30, 34) and in the Septuagint (Ex. 14:14 Eccles. 3:7). Strong's #4601. One of the things which is found in the Greek and the Hebrew is the imperative mood can be used with the 3rd person; we are used to it occurring only with the 2nd person.

The next phrase has the explanatory conjunction *gár*, a negative, and then the 3rd person singular, present passive indicative of *epitrépō* (ἐπιτρέπω) [pronounced *ep-ee-TREP-oh*], which means, in the New Testament *to permit, to allow, to entrust to*. Strong's #2010. You may be curious as to why this is in the singular and not the plural. That means that it is proper to render this verb as *it is not permitted*. This is followed by the dative 3rd person feminine plural of *they*, which would be the dative of disadvantage (to them). It means *for them*. And then the present active infinitive of the very common verb *to speak*. No matter what your views are, it is pretty difficult to get around this verse. Paul tells the Corinthians that the women in their church need to be absolutely quiet.

And if anything to learn they wish, at home, the their own husbands they will ask. For a shameful thing it is for women in church to speak. 1Corinthians 14:35

And if they desire to learn anything, they will question their own husbands at home. For it is a shameful thing for women to speak in church.

For, if a woman wants to learn anything, then they may ask their own husbands at home, for it is inappropriate for women to speak in church.

I will not exegete much of this verse—just the neuter form of the adjective *aischrón* (αἰσχρόν) [pronounced *ahēe-skhrón*], which means *a shameful thing*. Here, it is used as a predicate nominative. The feminine form of this adjective means *indecent, inappropriate, dishonorable*. Strong's #149.

Now, I do not want to go off on a tangent here, nor do I want to go off the topic with this verse. However, whatever your view, note the context. The context is the use of the gift of tongues and the gift of prophecy. With regards to this context, and keeping in mind the out of control situation in the Corinthian church, Paul tells the women to be quiet. Let's try to interpret this in the most contextually-sensitive and most constrictive way possible: let's assume that this applied **only** to the Corinthian Church and **only** because things had gotten way out of hand with tongues. So, what this means is that, if speaking in tongues in your church has gotten out of hand—i.e., more than two or three are speaking in tongues during the entire service, several are speaking in tongues simultaneously, people are quietly mumbling in tongues, no one is interpreting tongues,³⁹⁷ then from that point on, at least until things get under control, the women must be absolutely quiet in church, even to the point of not being able to ask questions aloud. They must wait until they get home and then ask their husbands. So, if you interpret this verse in the most context-

³⁹⁷ By the way, isn't it amazing that in the typical charismatic church almost everyone has the gift of tongues but only two or three have the gift of interpretation of tongues? What is God the Holy Spirit thinking when He distributed gifts in those proportions? Unless, of course, He did not distribute those gifts.

sensitive way possible (which I think is apropos, although I believe there are applications, which we will not go into), then practically every charismatic church would have to, starting right this moment, shut their women up entirely during church services. Obviously, that is not going to happen—however, if they had any interest at all in obeying the Word of God...

Now, anytime you lay down a law like that, you know it is going to be immediately challenged. *But, what if this or what if that?* Paul will then say, “I don’t even care if you have a question; you ask your husband at home.” Now, I don’t care where you stand as to what the woman’s function is in church and I realize that there is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, slave nor free in the body of Christ. Paul wrote that and here he writes for women to be silent in church—at the very least, with regards to tongues and prophecy. Now, a church where there is speaking in tongues is not going to follow this rule. Much of the tongues movement is fueled by women; cut them off, and they will either leave the church, or the enthusiasm for tongues will die out. Very few if any charismatic churches follow this particular law laid down by Paul; however, Paul will even end this chapter with a word about prophecy and tongues, meaning that is undeniably the context of this remark. So, you have some personal objections to this concept; you would rather think that Paul was perhaps over-stepping his bounds or being too tough on the women. Let’s jump ahead to v. 37:

If anyone thinks a prophet to be or spiritual, he will recognize the [things] I am writing to you that from [the] Lord they are commandments. 1 Corinthians 14:37

If anyone thinks he is a prophet or a spiritual [person], he will acknowledge the [things] that I write to you are commandments of the Lord.

And if anyone presumes himself to be a prophet or to be spiritual, then he will acknowledge that these things which I write to you are commandments from the Lord.

We will not exegete this verse, but I throw it in just in case some of you want to ignore any verses that you find in 1Cor. 14—if you consider yourself to be spiritual at all, then you will recognize that these words are not simply Paul’s esteemed opinion, but these are commandments from the Lord of Glory, Christ Jesus, your Savior.

Now, one of the main reasons people give for being baptized in the spirit and speaking in tongues is that they are giving themselves over more fully in obedience to God. They are subjugating their will to the will of the Holy Spirit. They are manifesting in a highest a new understanding and dedication to the Lordship of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Now, if you have attended any church where speaking in tongues is done, you will notice that most, if not all of these laws laid down by Paul are broken. Doesn’t this strike you as somewhat ironic that when a person gives himself more and more fully to the Holy Spirit, that the Holy Spirit has him break many of the regulations which Paul has laid down? Okay, maybe *ironic* wasn’t the word I was after—doesn’t it strike you as being rather *blasphemous* to attributing behavior which is clearly in opposition to God’s Word to the leading and control of God the Holy Spirit? Whenever a person does that which is in opposition to the clear regulations of God’s Word and then tries to pass this off as his deeper obedience to the Spirit, could we not reasonably determine that to be a bucket of crap?

Since we are not exegeting the entire chapter, but focusing in primarily on the gift of foreign languages, we will move to the final two verses of this chapter:

Therefore, brothers, seek to prophesy, and to speak in tongues, do not forbid. 1 Corinthians 14:39

Therefore, brothers, seek [first] to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak in languages.

Therefore, family of God, seek first to prophesy, but do not forbid the speaking of foreign languages as a gift.

We’ve gone over in great detail what the gift of tongues was and what its function in the early church was. These are commands for the Corinthians at that time. The gift of prophecy still was in existence, as was the gift of tongues. God gave these gifts for specific reasons, and, in 55 or 56 A.D., when Paul wrote this to the Corinthians,

these gifts still had a purpose. Not everything in the Word of God is written to you nor is everything in the Word of God about you. Even though David prayed for God not to take the Holy Spirit from him; we don't pray that prayer—not ever. We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and, although we periodically quench the Holy Spirit, He continues to indwell us. Tongues, at that time, had a purpose—they were a sign to the unbelieving Jew (primarily) that God was speaking to them in Gentile languages. Although it is never stated directly, I think that it would be safe to assume that, in the same manner, God used tongues to get the attention of gentiles as well. However, we have gone over in great, and sometimes painful detail, that tongues were not the gibberish language of angels; nor were tongues for prayers (or singing). During the time period when they were a part of the local church, they were to be used sparingly—two or three at the most, at one service, and only if translated. Since, when Paul wrote this, the gift of tongues was still in existence and had a purpose, obviously no one in the local church was to forbid their use. However, no one stands in front of the local church and spouts prophetic information (apart from that gotten from God's Word), nor does anyone stand in front of the church today and speak in a foreign language. What this verse does not say is that believers can suddenly begin speaking all at once in gibberish and that no one is supposed to stop them. This was written to the Corinthians almost 2000 years ago and you must recognize that.

McGee makes the same point: *Many have come to me, especially these dear folk who are involved in the tongues movement, and they say, "Brother McGee, it does say, 'Forbid not to speak with tongues.'" Yes, it does. Now let's look at it in its context. To whom is Paul writing? He is writing to the Corinthians. When did he write this? Before A.D. 70 When A.D. 70 came, Titus, the Roman, took the city of Jerusalem, and destroyed it. The Jews went back into slavery. That great coliseum in Rome (the ruins of it are there today) was built by Jewish slave labor. And for that day on tongues were no longer a sign to Israel as a nation. Tongues had ceased.*³⁹⁸

All [things] properly and according to order let [them] be done. 1Corinthians 14:40

Let all things be done properly and according to the norm or standard of order.

Let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner.

Now, this final verse is for our time, as well as for the time of the Corinthians. Even during that time when there was more participation from the congregation, still the church was not to degenerate into a three-ring circus. Everything was to be done properly (as Paul has prescribed) and in an orderly fashion. When several dozen people began speaking all at once in gibberish in the middle or at the end of a church service—that is the antithesis of this verse.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

95. Let's summarize the rules which Paul laid down for the Corinthians, and, whenever possible, give a modern-day application of same:
- Believers were to desire the superior gifts (1Cor. 12:31 14:1).
 - Believers were not to act out apart from the filling of the Holy Spirit (which is represented by the characteristic of the Spirit—agape love). 1Cor. 13.
 - Seek those gifts and seek to use gifts in such a way to benefit the body of Christ in the local church (1Cor. 14:12).
 - One should not speak in a foreign language unless there is one there to translate (1Cor. 14:13).
 - At the most, two or three should speak in tongues, and only when what they say is translated (1Cor. 14:27).
 - When there is no one to interpret, the person who has the gift of tongues is to sit in complete silence; he is not to pray quietly in tongues (1Cor. 14:28 cp 14:34).
 - Only one person should speak at a time in a local church (1Cor. 14:27, 30, 40).
 - Our God is a God of order; not of confusion (v. 33).

³⁹⁸ J. Vernon McGee; "Gifts of the Spirit"; Thru the Bible Books, ©1972, pp. 35–36.

- i. Paul warned the Corinthians not to forbid the use of speaking in tongues. Although this gift no longer exists, we are not to forbid the use of any of the spiritual gifts today. 1Cor. 14:39.
- j. So there is no misunderstanding—these were rules for the Corinthian church in 55–56 A.D., when there was the proper gift of speaking in tongues (or, foreign languages). This does not mean that a charismatic church is okay if they follow these rules for their counterfeit gifts.

Let's summarize this in a table:

The Original Gift of Tongues	How the Gift of Tongues is Presented Today
The pertinent Scripture has already been quoted throughout this study, and gone into with great detail. There is no reason to quote it again below.	
Tongues is presented no where in the Bible except as foreign languages unknown to the speaker, but known to some of the listeners. It is never expressly presented as gibberish, angelic languages, or as a part of prayer.	Tongues is presented as a prayer language; as praying for something, but you don't know what it is; as simply speaking to God in the language of angels.
Tongues (and other gifts) were designed to build up the church as a whole. Or, as 1Cor. 13:5b reads: Love does not seek its own.	Tongues are used for strictly self-edification, something which is never explicitly stated as a purpose for spiritual gifts.
Only two or three, at the most , during the entire church service are to speak in tongues.	Many speak in tongues, sometimes all at the end; sometimes throughout.
Love is patient (1Cor. 13:4a).	Some charismatics can hardly wait to start speaking in tongues and burst in at the first possible moment.
Love is not envious (1Cor. 13:4b). There is no need for us to personally desire any particular gift, as this is God the Holy Spirit's sovereign decision.	Believers without the spirit are told to desire to speak in tongues and are helped along in this regard.
Those who spoke in tongues were to do so in an orderly fashion, one at a time.	Most churches allow for speaking with tongues as a group. In all of the charismatic churches that I have attended, there would be several speaking in tongues all at once.
Love does not behave unseemly (1Cor. 13:5a). If unbelievers enter [your church], will they not say that you are mad? Let all things be done properly and in an orderly fashion (1Cor. 14:23b, 40).	There are charismatics who fall to the ground, make scary noises, and behave in such a manner that, if they did this in their neighborhood store, the manager would call for paramedics. Do charismatics have no idea how unbelievers view them?
If anyone speaks in tongues, an interpreter should be present who translates the language.	Rarely are tongues translated. When they are, the translation does not correspond with the structure of what is said. At one time, most interpretations were given in King James English.
Not all receive the gift of tongues. The implication of 1Cor. 12–14 is that very few do.	Most people who receive the post-salvation baptism of the spirit speak in tongues.
While Paul did not forbid speaking in tongues, he certainly did not encourage it one whit.	Most who attend a charismatic church are encouraged to speak with tongues; some are given hints as to how to loosen up their vocal cords to prime the pump, so to speak.

The Original Gift of Tongues	How the Gift of Tongues is Presented Today
The Bible says that women are not to speak in church, not even to ask questions—this is in the context of the chapter on speaking in tongues.	Often, those who speak in tongues the most are women. Many Pentecostal churches have women pastors.
Tongues are designed primarily for the unbeliever—specifically, the unbelieving Jew.	Tongues are presented as a faith-booster to believers with weak faith.
Speaking in tongues was presented as a sign, as prophesied in Isa. 28; and signs are primarily for Israel.	Speaking in tongues are presented as a different sort of sign which is primarily for the church members and for those with weaker faith (although they keep speaking in tongues, which would indicate that either their faith is never bolstered, or, if their faith is, they still keep on speaking in tongues).
Apart from the Day of Pentecost, the historical conferring of the Holy Spirit is never done by anyone other than an Apostle. We even have an instance where Apostles had to be brought in, in order to confer the Holy Spirit.	A variety of methods are given: tarrying, the laying on of hands by clergy or laymen, praying, loosening up the vocal cords, asking God, yielding, etc.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

96. I had promised you a bonus Scripture, and it is Rom. 8:26–27, very often quoted by charismatics to help substantiate that, when they have a burden and need to pray, but they have no idea what it is that they need to pray for, the Holy Spirit speaks through them in an angelic language, and prays for whatever needs praying for. Now, as was mentioned earlier, one cannot explicitly take this stance from any single passage in Scripture. This viewpoint can be taken, at best, by inference. “This is what I think the passage is hinting at, and this is how it appears to work in my life, so therefore, this *is* what the passage means.” Quite often, as I exegete various passages, I look at the inference of the passage, and sometimes makes relevant comments—however, I would be damned careful before basing a fundamental tenet of my spiritual life upon an inference. When I began to get a grasp of what salvation meant, I combed the Scriptures (**no one** clearly witnessed to me; I was witnessed to, but **no one** ever made the gospel clear). Now, I would believe in Christ, then I would read and compare; I would put my faith in Him again, and read some more. I wanted to make certain that I was not looking at just one verse, or one interpretation. I put my faith in Jesus several times, just to make certain it stuck and I studied and read and reread to make certain that I was getting it right. One of the short studies which is at my web site is salvation where i have simply strung together dozens and dozens of verses which make salvation clear. This was the foundation of my spiritual existence and I didn’t want to get it wrong. For the Pentecostal, the most important part of their lives, many times, beyond salvation, is this gift of tongues. For me, I’d want a lot more than a spine-tingling experience and the *inference* of Scripture.

And likewise, also, the Spirit helps the weakness of ours, for the what we should pray according as it is necessary, not we knew, but He the Spirit intercedes on behalf of us with groanings unspoken.

Romans
8:26

And, in like manner, the Spirit also assists with our weakness, for we have not known what we should pray, according as it keeps on being necessary, but rather, He, the Spirit, intercedes on our behalf with unspoken groanings.

And, in like manner, the Spirit also assists us with our own weakness, for we are unaware of that for which we should pray as is necessary, so, rather, He, the Spirit, pleads on our behalf with inaudible groanings.

Many of you have heard the charismatic interpretation of this verse. Some great burden is placed on your heart, and you don't know who it is for, but you just start praying up a storm in tongues, and you will have prayed for this person or situation directly to God through the Holy Spirit in a heavenly language. And this is what this verse is all about. Kenneth Hagin wrote: *P. C. Nelson, a scholar of the Greek, said that the Greek literally reads here, "The Holy Ghost maketh intercession for us in groanings that cannot be uttered in articulate speech." Articulate speech means our regular kind of speech. He went on to point out how the Greek stresses that this not only includes groanings escaping our lips in prayer, but also praying in other tongues.*³⁹⁹ MacArthur responds: *That is a tortured interpretation of the passage and an unscholarly handling of the Greek text. Nothing in the Greek suggests the idea of praying in tongues; Nelson and Hagin are reading it in. Even if inarticulate speech could be read into this term, that does not correspond to the New Testament description of the gift of tongues. "Groanings," however, is accurate. The word is stenazō. A standard New Testament dictionary says, "Paul uses the term exclusively in the sense of sighing in the sense of longing for something."*⁴⁰⁰

Before we exegete this verse carefully, let's discuss something—what was the major problem with the ancient Jewish people? I know you want to say that they were disobedient, they did not correctly obey the Law, they did not recognize the Lord Who bought them., they were legalistic, etc. Let me give you the real underlying problem: they were negative toward God's revealed truth and they distorted God's Word. You do not get to take a verse like this and read meaning into it which is not there. Let me give you Thieme's take on this: *Even the Jews of old had to be warned about the consequences of disobedience to God's Plan, so we must be cautioned about this distortion of Scriptural teaching. It is evil and false because IT IS NOT OF GOD! Consider the claims of the tongues crowd! They ascribe their gibberish to the Holy Spirit. They stand on Romans 8:26, which says that "the Spirit itself maketh intercession FOR [not THROUGH] us with groanings"; but they blissfully ignore the fact stated in Scripture that these groanings "CANNOT BE UTTERED." They admit that the tongues phenomenon of Pentecost involved legitimate foreign languages, but they claim to speak a mysterious angelic language and refer back to Paul who [they mistakenly claim] had done the same (1Cor. 13:1). However, since the gift was canceled after A.D. 70, one can hardly classify such frenzied outburst as heavenly speech!*⁴⁰¹ There are few things more evil than taking God's Word and forcing it to mean what you want it to mean. Now, I realize, if you are a charismatic, you stand unconvinced—however, once we are through with taking this verse apart, word by word, you will see that your position that this has something to do with your speaking in tongues has no basis in fact whatsoever. You have purposely taken God's Holy Word and you have cheapened it by making it mean something that it does not. Do not ever use God's Word frivolously.

Certainly, we need to see how others have rendered this passage:

CEV	In certain ways we are weak, but the Spirit is here to help us. For example, when we don't know what to pray for, the Spirit prays for us in ways that cannot be put into words.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	In the selfsame way moreover, even the Spirit helpeth together in our weakness,— For what we should pray for as we ought we know not, ut the Spirit itself maketh intercession with sighings unutterable,...
Interlinear word-for-word	Likewise and also the Spirit helps in weaknesses our. For what we shall pray as it is necessary, we do not know, but the Spirit Himself intercedes on behalf of us with groanings inexpressible.
NASB	And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not now how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;...

³⁹⁹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 224, taken from Kenneth E. Hagin, "Why Tongues" Tulsa, OK; Faith Library, 1975, p. 19.

⁴⁰⁰ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 224; definition of stenazō from Thomas McComiskey, "Stenazō," Colin Brown, ed., *Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Vol. 2; Grand Rapids, MI; Zondervan, 197, p. 425..

⁴⁰¹ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, pp. 52–53.

NJB	And as well as this, the Spirit too comes to help us in our weakness, for, when we do not know how to pray properly, then the Spirit personally makes our petitions for us in groans that cannot be put into words;...
NLT	And the Holy Spirit helps us in our distress. For we don't even know what we should pray for, nor how we should pray. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.
Weymouth	In the same way the Spirit also helps us in our weakness; for we do not know what prayers to offer nor in what way to offer them. But the Spirit Himself pleads for us in yearnings that can find no words,...
Young's Lit. Translation	And, in like manner also, the Spirit doth help our weaknesses; for, what we may pray for, as it behoveth us, we have not known, but the Spirit himself doth make intercession for us with groanings unutterable,...

The way to charismatic chooses to interpret this passage is that there is some burden on his heart, but he doesn't know what it is—perhaps a needed prayer for someone that they know or don't know or perhaps for themselves—and they just don't really know what it is, so they begin praying and the Holy Spirit takes over and prays in an angelic tongue for whatever this thing is. Or, similarly, we may not know just how to express ourselves about a problem, so we launch into tongues in prayer, and the Holy Spirit prays through us. Now, I will certainly grant that this passage, if unexamined, could be taken this way. It's a stretch, but not completely out of bounds. I personally would not take it this way. Personally, I would see this as the Holy Spirit praying on our behalf for personal needs that we have or for protection that we need that we are unaware of. This is not channeled through our own vocal cords nor does this passage, in any translation, explicitly state that it is. At best, we can get that through inference—at best. Now, let's properly exegete this verse:

We begin with two conjunctions and the adverb *hōsaútōs* (ὡσαύτως) [pronounced *hoh-SOW-tohs*], which means *likewise, the same, in the same or like manner*. Strong's #5615. With two conjunctions and the word *likewise*, I don't want you to somehow get the impression that this verse just stands here all by itself. Paul is making a point and it is clearly related to what he has already said. So, what is the connection?

The thrust of this chapter is the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Salvation is dealt with in vv. 1 and 3, and almost every other verse has the Holy Spirit in it. This chapter deals with what we are, with what we are, and with what we will be. What we are is flesh—we are weak, we are of this world, condemned by the Law and subject to death (vv. 2–8, 20–21). However, what we are by faith in Christ is a member of the family of God, although we may not feel like it at times (vv. 1–4, 18). God has given us the Holy Spirit as a witness and as a help to us during our time here on earth (vv. 9–11, 14–16, 23). Furthermore, what we see and what we are is nothing compared to what we will be (v. 18, 21–22). However, it is the witness of the Spirit with out Spirit that we are a part of the family of God with an eternal destiny (vv. 9, 14–16, 23). And the sufferings that we bear now cannot be compared to the glory which is to come (v. 18). In fact, all of creation groans as if giving birth, just as a woman experiences terrific pain during childbirth, but pain cannot be compared to the child who is produced (vv. 22–23). **But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance, we wait eagerly for it** (Rom. 8:25). And then we launch into our verse. So the keys here are the fact that we are still in this body of corruption in a world of pain; but we have the Holy Spirit which bears witness and helps us in our infirmities, as well as gives us confidence in the world and the body which is to come. *In like manner* means that Paul is going to give another example as to how the Spirit works on our behalf as we live on this cursed earth.

What the Spirit does is the 3rd person singular, present middle indicative of *sunantilambánomai* (συναντιλαμβάνομαι) [pronounced *soon-ahn-tee-lahm-BAHN-oh-my*], which is obviously a compound verb. It is the combination of *with* and *to take hold of by the hand, to assist, to support*. It means *to assist someone, to give support and aide to someone*. In the New Testament, this is only found in Luke 10:40; however, it is also used in Ex. 18:22 where Moses' father-in-law suggests that he set up a system of authorities under him to administer justice and *to help him out*. Strong's #4878. The present tense indicates continual action (an aorist tense would indicate a point or various points of time); the indicative mood is the mood of reality; and the verb is a deponent verb—middle or passive in form, but active in meaning.

What the Holy Spirit assists us with is the feminine singular dative noun *asthénēia* (ἀσθένεια) [pronounced *ahs-THEH-nigh-ah*], which means *weakness, sickness, infirmity*. Strong's #769. This is modified by the pronoun *our*. This gives us: **And likewise, the Spirit also assists with our weakness...**

We then have the postpositive explanatory particle *gár* (γάρ) [pronounced *gahr*], which means *for, for you see*. Strong's #1063. It is called postpositive, because it does not begin a phrase or a sentence. What precedes this is the definite article. Then we have the interrogative particle which means *who, what, which*. Strong's #5101. This is followed by the 1st person Plural, aorist subjunctive of *proseúchomai* (προσεύχομαι) [pronounced *pros-YOU-khoh-mai*], which means *to pray face to face with, to pray to God*. Strong's #4336. ...*for the what we should pray* is how this should be literally rendered.

The adverb which follows is *kathó* (καθό) [pronounced *kah-THOH*], which means *according, to that which, according to, inasmuch as*. Strong's #2526. Now, the KJV tells us that what follows is *as we ought*; there is no *we ought* in this verse. The verb is the 3rd person singular, present active indicative of *deí* (δεῖ) [pronounced *digh*], which is an impersonal verb that means *needs, is necessary, has need of, is inevitable in the nature of things*. As an impersonal verb, the subject is not *we* nor is it *God* or *God, the Holy Spirit*. Our subject is *it*. See Matt. 26:35 Mark 14:31 1Cor. 11:19, where Zodhiates tells us this should be rendered *it is inevitable* rather than *it is necessary*. This is where *it is necessary from the standpoint of duty*. It has a second use which speaks of *that which is right and proper in itself, or right and correct as prescribed by the Law*. For this to make any sense, as well as it to fall within the boundaries of the definition, this phrase should be rendered *according as it is necessary*. Strong's #1163. In other words, this verse is often made out as though there is something for which we ought to pray; that is, God lays some mysterious burden on our hearts to pray for some situation that we are not aware of or for some person that we do not know about—there is something which we ought to be praying about, but, for whatever reason, we are not. That is not exactly the case here. First of all, I don't know about you, but the only reason my prayer life suffers inadequacy is because of me. I have a butt load of things for which I can pray. I know a lot of people—a lot of unbelievers, as well as a lot of believers who are off the track—and I guarantee you that I can always find something or someone for whom I could pray. And if I throw my own needs into the mix, then I can double that time. So we are not talking here about prayers about someone else that we don't know or some circumstance of someone else's that we are unaware of. There are things which have to do with our own lives—in fact, a great many unseen things—for which it is necessary to pray. You no doubt recall that the Holy Spirit is called our great Intercessor. This is part of His work. He intercedes on our behalf. Now, for this whole recent *oneness of God* doctrine,⁴⁰² that some charismatics are so fond of, this makes less sense. However, God the Holy Spirit, Who is with us always, Who can see the unseen, who knows where protection for us is necessary, intercedes on our behalf with God the Father. This is what is going on here.

This is all followed by *we don't know* (the verb is in the imperfect tense, which refers to continuous past time activity). This verb actually goes further up front, in the English sense—*we are unaware, we do not know that for which we should pray, according to that which is necessary*. As you notice, we are looking at almost every single word here.

We finally begin a new phrase, still a part of the previous sentence; it begins with the adversative conjunction *allá* (ἀλλά) [pronounced *ahl-LAH*], which serves to mark opposition, antithesis or transition. After a full negative, *allá* is used as a rather emphatic antithesis, and can be rendered *but, but rather, but on the contrary*. Strong's #235. There is a great unseen world out there—the reality of which far exceeds the reality of that which we can see and touch—and, with regards to that world, there are things for which it is absolutely necessary that are prayed for. For the growing believer, he has demons on every side desiring to trip him up. For the person who speaks in tongue, he has with him at least one demon (not indwelling him, of course); and possibly a ventriloquist demon, guiding him carefully into that which is false (and keep in mind, the worst lie has a great deal of truth mixed with it). It is absolutely necessary that these things be prayed for, and the Holy Spirit does that on our behalf. This is followed by *He, the Spirit* and then our verb, which is the 3rd person singular, present active indicative of *huperentunkánō* (ὑπερεντυγχάνω) [pronounced *hoop-air-en-toong-KHAHN-oh*], which means *to intercede for or in behalf of someone, to plead*. It is a compound verb made up of *for, on behalf of* (Strong's #5228) and *to turn to, to appeal*

⁴⁰² They distort *oneness of essence* to mean *oneness of person*.

to (Strong's #1793). While this word is found in Greek literature, it is only found this once in the Bible. Strong's #5241. This is followed by the prepositional phrase *on behalf of us*. The preposition here is *hupér* (ὑπέρ) [pronounced *hoop-AIR*], which means *for, on behalf of, for the sake of, in favor of, because of, on account of*. It does not mean *through*. It does not mean *by means of*. We have very common Greek prepositions which means those things. God the Holy Spirit did not use those prepositions here—God the Holy Spirit used the preposition *hupér*. And not only did God the Holy Spirit use this preposition, but He prefixed it to the verb which preceded this preposition—that doubles the strength of the meaning *on behalf of us*. Strong's #5228. So, this is not some burden placed on our hearts for someone else that we know nothing about and God the Holy Spirit prays *in us* or *through us* or *with us*—this is **for** us; this is on our behalf. And *hupér* is built into the verb as well as added on as a preposition. It is almost like saying *on our behalf* twice. If these are the words chosen by the Holy Spirit, and if you are such a big fan of the Holy Spirit, then do not distort what the Spirit expressly says.

Then we have the dative/locative/instrumental masculine plural noun *stenagmós* (στεναγμός) [pronounced *sten-ag-MOSS*], which means *groaning, sighing*, as of the oppressed (Acts 7:34 looks back at the Israelites under Egyptian slavery in Ex. 2:24). Strong's #4726. The reason that this word is used is that it ties us to v. 23, where we groan within ourselves, awaiting the redemption of our bodies. Then *groanings* is modified by the adjective *alálētos* (ἀλάλητος) [pronounced *ah-LAH-lay-toss*], which combines the alpha privative along with the verb *to speak*. The alpha privative *negates* or *takes away* from what it is affixed to. This means *that which is not spoken, unspeakable, unutterable, unspoken, not uttered*. How can I make this clear? **There are no audible sounds!** We don't have some special language here, or some unusual speech—what we have is that which is unspoken; what is *said*, no one hears but God the Father. Strong's #215. There is no garbled language here. In other words, no one is speaking in tongues here. Obviously, what we should now expect is a reference to the mind or to the heart of the Spirit or of God, as we have communication here apart from the spoken word. So, now that we have finished that which is difficult; now we can do the next verse:

...and the One searching the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit [is], because, according to [the norm or standard of] God, He intercedes on behalf of saints.

Romans
8:27

...and the One [who] searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit [is], because, according to [the norm or standard of] God, He intercedes on behalf of the saints.

...and the One who searches the hearts of man also knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because the Holy Spirit intercedes on behalf of the saints according to the will of God.

We will look at a couple of other translations here:

Interlinear word-for-word	And the One searching the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit <i>is</i> , because according to God He intercedes on behalf of the saints
NASB	...and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to <i>the will of God</i> .
Weymouth	...and the Searcher of hearts knows what the Spirit's meaning is, because His intercessions for God's people are in harmony with God's will.
Williams	...and He who searches our hearts knows what the Spirit thinks, for He pleads for His people in accordance with God's will.
Young's Lit. Translation	...and He who is searching the hearts hath known what <i>is</i> the mind of the Spirit, because according to God he doth intercede for saints.

The One searching the hearts is God the Father. He knows—imperfect active indicative—the **mind** of the Holy Spirit. Note, we have nothing spoken of in this verse; there is nothing which is audible. God the Father, Who searches our hearts; He also *knows the mind* of the Spirit. Then we have the causal conjunction *hóti* (ὅτι) [pronounced *HOH-teh*], which means *this which, for this reason, that, because*. Strong's #3753. Then we have the preposition *katá* (κατά) [pronounced *kah-TAH*], which means *according to a norm or standard*. Strong's #2596.

It is from this preposition that some translators slip in *the will of God*; as this refers to *the norm or standard of God*. *The One interceding on behalf of the saints*, is, of course, God the Holy Spirit.

You see, there are no audible voices here. You cannot take this verse and say that God has placed some pressing burden on your heart for someone that you do not know or a situation of which you are not aware, and that you just get all fired up in the Holy Spirit and pray and pray in tongues, speaking in *an unutterable language* (which has always been a contradiction in terms, unless you understand it as *thinking*) for this person or situation. You cannot get that from this passage. This explains that there are situations affecting **us**, of which we are not aware, and God the Holy Spirit speaks directly to God the Father on our behalf. If you take this verse word-by-word, and dissect it, and analyze it, you cannot bend it to mean something that it does not.

The two verses together have God the Holy Spirit interceding on our behalf before God, with unspoken groanings, as we do not know for what we should pray that is right and proper according to what is necessary. God the Holy Spirit does know what to pray for, and we know that God the Father hears Him, because God the Father searches our hearts and He knows the mind of the Spirit—and the Spirit makes intercession on our behalf according to the norms and standards of God. One only finds tongues in this passage because they want to find tongues there, not because it is there.

Now that you know what these verses actually say, the segue into the next verse—the verse that everybody knows—makes sense.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

97. Most charismatics are under the impression that the only verse in the Bible and the only argument that tongues ceased is the passage surrounding 1Cor. 13:10 that we studied, and that v. 10 is subject to any interpretation. This is patently untrue. Herein is a list of over 20 reasons why the gift of tongues ceased with the Age of the Apostles:⁴⁰³

- a. First, I need to state that just because a gift ends, does not mean that there will not be isolated instances of miraculous occurrences. That is, although we no longer have the gift of healing, there may be some isolated instances where God has healed a person miraculously, apart from any natural causes. This does not mean that the gift of healing has returned nor does it mean that from thereon, we should expect a rash of miraculous healings. I would admit that it is possible for a person, under certain circumstances, to speak the gospel of God in a language other than his own, as an isolated instance. This would not mean that person had the gift of tongues and could do it a second time. Now for the reasons the gift of tongues ceased:
- b. The correct exegesis of 1Cor. 13:8–10, which we have already covered, teaches that when tongues have been completed or fulfilled, that they will end. The purpose of tongues was to serve as a warning of severe judgment and discipline to Israel.
- c. Furthermore, we covered in great detail why the typical charismatic interpretation (that these various gifts would disappear when Christ returned or when we die) was a self-serving interpretation and not one based upon careful exegesis. Interpreting 1Cor. 13:8–10 to mean that these gifts would cease during the Church Age when they reached their fulfillment or their completion fits completely with the meaning of the original Greek and with the context of the passage as well as with the chronology of the New Testament.
- d. Interpreting that these various gifts would disappear at our death or at the second coming of our Lord causes logical problems with 1Cor. 13:13. Christ is our *hope*, both as our Savior and as the One Who will return (Rom. 8:23–25). Therefore, our *hope* (or, more properly, *our confidence*) has a necessary permanence in the Church Age, as 1Cor. 13:13 seems to state. The importance of hope, confidence, faith and love as temporal gifts or qualities make perfect sense in time during the entirety of the Church Age. Its importance of hope or confidence or faith in eternity, *after* our Lord has returned or *after* we have

⁴⁰³ This point was inspired by the last several chapters of Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975. A few points were paraphrased (which will be noted) and many embellished. Dillow listed 14 reasons; I will list about 20.

passed from this life into eternity and are face to face with the Lord, is uncertain. In other words, the typical charismatic views of this passage dredge up more theological problems than they solve.⁴⁰⁴ See the exegesis of **1Cor. 13:8–10** for more details.

- e. The historical witness. We have gone into great detail to show that the gift tongues in church history after the first century almost completely died out. It was found here and there in isolated instances throughout history and it was always associated with goofy and heretical movements. We covered this in **The History of Tongues and the Charismatic Movement**.
- f. Early church fathers whose writings are with us today, whose writings are viewed as orthodox, testify to the disappearance of the gift of tongues. Some did not even know what this gift was. This was covered in **The Witness of the Church Fathers**.
- g. Between the second and 19th centuries, the scattered use of the gift of tongues is never associated with an important theologian or movement (Wesley was explained). Again, see **The History of Tongues and the Charismatic Movement**.
- h. Many people, because they are only familiar with a handful of Bible stories, think of the Bible is a book of incredible miracles from cover to cover. This is a mistaken impression which we dealt with in great detail in **The Historical Perspective of Signs and Miracles in the Bible**. We find many miracles during three period of time: (1) during the time of Moses and Joshua, when the nation Israel is separated from Egypt and moved into the Land of Promise; (2) during the time of Elijah and Elisha, when the office of prophet is established to communicate information from God to man; and (3) when our Lord walked this earth into the period of time that the Apostles established the churches. The signs and miracles testified to our Lord being from God, and, in the case of the Apostles, testified that they represented God's change in the program (and God moving from the nation Israel and the temple to gentiles and to the church represents an incredible change). Other than that, we find hundreds of years here and there without miracles; and relatively few scattered incidents here and there of God's direct contact with man by way of miracle or by way of actually speaking to man.
- i. The sign gifts had a purpose, that purpose was fulfilled when they were used, and now the sign gifts have also ceased. These sign gifts gave authority to those who had the gifts during a transitional period of time. We have already covered this in great detail in **The Sign Gifts**.
- j. Miracles and signs ushered in new authorities and signified new revelation from God. With Moses and Joshua, we have the five of the first six books of the Bible. With the Elijah and Elisha, the signs and wonders performed by them ushered in not only their writings (Elijah is probably responsible for much of Kings), but the writings of the other prophets of God as well. With our Lord and the Apostles, we again have a great deal of writing which becomes the New Testament canon. There is not found in the Bible the idea of continuous ongoing miracles, signs and revelations. This is historically documented by the Bible. Therefore, there is no reason to think that we have signs, powers and revelations going on in the present time. Furthermore, as stated, all three great waves of signs and wonders were also accompanied by God's written Word to man. We have had a century of supposed signs and wonders, but no true written revelation. Throw out the so-called miracles and signs of our times and tongues goes with it.
- k. Paul makes the argument that his Apostolic authority rests upon the fact that he performed signs and wonders among the Corinthians (2Cor. 12:12). If such signs and wonders were performed by all kinds of different believers, then his argument is without merit. If Paul's argument, found in the Word of God, is without merit, then the Bible is not God's Word. Therefore, signs and wonders would belong to those of the first century, primarily Apostles, who brought the original message of Christ crucified to the Jew and gentile.
- l. Miracles and signs also ushered in a significant change of God's program. With Moses and Joshua came the nation Israel, through whom God worked. With Elijah and Elisha came the recognized office and authority of the prophet. With our Lord came the announcement that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and with the Apostles, since our Lord was rejected by His own, came the Church Age, which is significantly different from the Age of Israel. With this past century's supposed wave of miracles and

⁴⁰⁴ Joseph Dillow comes to the same conclusion, but approaches it differently. See Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 119–124.

signs we have no ushering in of some new program of God. Again, when you throw out the supposed signs and miracles of the past century, you also throw out the gift of tongues.

- m. The writer of Hebrews clearly sets up a series of events in Heb. 2:3–4: The gospel is first spoken by our Lord. Then, this message was delivered to the writer of Hebrews (a second generation believer) through those who heard the Lord, and this message was confirmed by signs and wonders **bearing them witness**. The operative word is *them*; (which word is actually not found in 4th verse, but in the genitive masculine plural participle of *akoúō* in v. 3) the writer of Hebrews is not claiming that any signs or wonders were done by him (another reason Paul is not the author of this book) but by them, those who heard our Lord, who Himself had first proclaimed the good news of salvation. This again places signs and wonders with the Apostles and not as some continuous witness throughout time. See **Heb. 2:3–4** for a more complete analysis. Such a careful progression tells us that signs and wonders were not used to confirm every generation of pastors.
- n. As Dillow said, in the 20th century we have no new messenger, no new age, no new revelation. Signs and wonders are always found in the Bible to usher in a new age, new messengers and a new revelation.⁴⁰⁵ As has been shown, there is really nothing new in the present-day tongues movement, thus signifying is falsity. For the charismatic who thinks that we are in a new age of new messengers with a new message, not only does such thinking belie a terrible lack of understanding of God's Word and the history presented in His Word, but you obviously do not fully grasp Gal. 1:8–9: **For even though we, or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to that which we have proclaimed to you, let him stand accursed. As we have said on a previous occasion, so I say again now: if any man is proclaiming to you a gospel contrary to that which you have received, let him be accursed.** Again, no new age, no new message, no new revelation means no signs and wonders which means no tongues.
- o. The credentials of the Apostles, and of those who wrote the New Testament were well-testified to, first by signs and wonders, but then simply by close association with an Apostle. There is no indication in the Word of God that the authority of those who proclaim God's Word should depend upon performing signs and wonders. Dillow: *...the credentials and authority of the first preachers of Christianity did not need continual repetition from age to age. One age of miracles, well authenticated, is sufficient to establish the divine origin of the message. This is true in a human court of law. We do not require an indefinite series of witnesses to receive testimony as valid. "By the mouth of two or three witnesses" the facts are established.*⁴⁰⁶ Again, this is per the historical and Biblical witness. If there is no continual requirement of signs and wonders, there is no continual requirement of tongues.
- p. Does the Bible indicate that all believers or most believers require miracles and signs and wonders in order to function in the Christian life? As we saw, apart from the several dozen charismatics who wash dishes in the physical presence of our Lord or watch *Laverne and Shirley* with out Lord, most believers do not see in this lifetime Christ Jesus come in the flesh. The Apostle Thomas was quite skeptical when told of Christ being resurrected. When our Lord appeared to him, and he placed his hand in the nail holes of our Lord's hand, Philip fell to his knees. **Jesus then said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."** (John 20:29). Paul later tells us, **We walk by faith, not by sight** (2Cor. 5:7). The writer of Hebrews devotes a chapter to faith, introducing it with: **Now faith is the reality of that which is hoped for, the conviction of things not seen** (Heb. 11:1). What we do not find in the New Testament writings is those who are weak in faith being urged to seek out some great signs or experience in order to bolster their faith and deepen their walk with God. Instead, we read: **Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ** (Rom. 10:17). Throw out the so-called signs, miracles and wonders, supposedly needed to bolster faith, and out goes tongues as well. If you are a charismatic and you think that you are dependent upon the gift of tongues in order to strengthen your faith, then go to the concordance of your Bible or the topical index of your study Bible and read about faith.
- q. We have also examined with great care the **Gift of Healing** and saw that it ceased as well.
- r. The gift of tongues was given for a reason—it was given to signify that Israel was under judgment and would suffer great discipline. This we covered in **Isa. 28:9–12** which was exegeted in the middle of 1Cor. 14. Once the Jewish people were judged and scattered (which it was in A.D. 70 with the destruction of the temple and soon thereafter with the fall of Masada), then the gift of tongues no longer served a

⁴⁰⁵ Paraphrased from Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 141

⁴⁰⁶ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 141–142.

purpose. The sign of coming judgement should be just that—it precedes judgement; it does not continue on after judgement. The charred rubble of the ancient temple and the fallen walls of Jerusalem are the sign that judgement has taken place. Our Lord taught some of this by parable. In Matt. 21:33–45, our Lord teaches this parable: “Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard and put a wall around it and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and rented it out to vine-growers, and went on a journey. And when harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce. And the vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third [God is the landowner and the slaves are His prophets]. Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them. But afterward he sent his son to them saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and seize his inheritance.’ And they took him and case him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?” They said to Him, “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and He will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers, who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons (Matt. 21:33–41 Psalm 80:8). Then Jesus said to them, “Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and it will be given to a nation producing fruit in it.” (Matt. 21:43). And the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them (Matt. 21:45). We have a similar parable in the following chapter, which ends: “And the rest seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them. But the king was enraged and sent his armies, and he destroyed those murderers and set their city on fire.” (Matt. 22:6–7). There is no need for a sign of judgement *after* the judgment has come to pass.

- s. The *gifts* purported to be had by the charismatic movement today are sorry counterfeits of the *gifts* of the Age of the Apostles.
 - i. Today, healing is incomplete, often very temporary, rarely instantaneous, and is rarely if ever applied to measurable physical ailments. In the first century, healing was complete, instantaneous, permanent, and was given to those with easily observed physical ailments e.g. leprosy. In the first century, the successful healing was dependent upon the one who healed; today, lack of healing is often blamed on the person to be healed and his lack of faith. If you are a charismatic, does the following describe your church? **And also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits; and they were all being healed** (Acts 5:16).
 - ii. The gift of tongues in the first century was a language known by some of the listeners and unknown to the speaker of the language. Today, these are heavenly languages unknown to all except perhaps an *interpreter of tongues*. The languages spoken now are repetitive, inane, without any linguistic structure; and the interpretation seems to have little in common with the words spoken. Tongues spoken now are shown to be easily learned and faked (as if all tongues today are not faked).
 - iii. Tongues were taught to be the lowest gift in 1Cor. 12:28; therefore, it would seem rather incongruous that the use of tongues in the charismatic movement would occupy such a position of importance. If this gift is only for a few; only to be used two or three times at most during a church service, and only if translated; and a gift of such low importance, then how did it achieve such an elevated status in the charismatic movement? This further indicates that the gift of tongues today is a counterfeit of the real gift of 50 A.D.
 - iv. Charismatics state all the wrong reasons for the gift of tongues. Paul clearly states the purpose of the gift of tongues in 1Cor. 14:20–22. In 1Cor. 14, Paul explains why the gift of prophecy is superior to the gift of tongues and restricts the use of the gift of tongues. In vv. 4, 13–14, and 16, Paul states **why** the gift of tongues is inferior to the gift of prophecy. Charismatics choose these verses to justify their use of the gift of tongues. This again indicates that the gift of tongues today is a counterfeit of the gift of tongues from Paul’s day.
 - v. Even to an impartial observer, the gifts purported as accompanying the charismatic church today are not the same gifts of the first century. At best, they are psychologically induced; at worst, they are Satanic counterfeits. This would cause us to conclude that the gift of tongues which we see today is not a manifestation of God the Holy Spirit.
- t. The epistles written prior to 56–57 A.D. and the portion of the book of Acts which takes place prior to 56–57 A.D. contain references to signs, gifts and wonders. For instance, 1Cor. 12–14, written circa 55 A.D., mentions several miraculous gifts; yet 2Corinthians, circa 57 A.D., mentions sign gifts once as

a past reference (2Cor. 12:12). The book of Hebrews also mentions sign gifts, but in the past tense (**Heb. 2:3–4**).⁴⁰⁷ The book of Romans, written circa 58 A.D. mentions several gifts of the church, none of which, apart from the gift of prophecy, are necessarily miraculous (Rom. 12:4–11 is the parallel passage to 1Cor. 12). The list of spiritual gifts in Eph. 4:11–12, written in 60 A.D., does not contain any miraculous spiritual gifts, apart from Apostleship and prophecy. The gift of tongues as well as other miraculous gifts are found in Acts 1–19 (30–55 A.D.); after that, we have almost no mention of spectacular gifts, although there are several instances which would have called for these (e.g., Paul at Jerusalem; Paul before the various Roman government officials). One of the few exceptions is Paul and Luke in Malta in Acts 28:1–10. The epistles written after this point in time mention several instances where various illnesses are left untreated by Paul (this was covered in detail in **The Gift of Healing**).

- u. With the cessation of the miraculous gifts also came the cessation of sudden judgments. Recall in Acts 5 when Ananias and Sapphira misrepresented their gift to the church. They died instantly for lying to the Holy Spirit (this would have been A.D. 32). Herod was also judged, being struck dead by an angel (Acts 12:20–24 in 44 A.D.) and Paul himself delivered a believer over to judgment (1Cor. 5:1–5; circa 56 A.D.). However, after this time period, Paul turns Alexander, a blasphemer, over to Satan, yet three years later, he has not yet been judged (1Tim. 1:19–20 2Tim. 4:14–15). Today, any blasphemer can blaspheme and suffer no immediate judgment from God.
- v. One of the interesting and often unexplored areas of Scripture is the miraculous prison breaks. The high priest and the Sadducees placed the Apostles in jail, and an angel of God opened the gates of this prison and let them out (Acts 5:17–20). Later, Peter was arrested by Herod (after he had executed James, the brother of John), and he was placed in prison with four squads of soldiers who had been detailed to guard him. He had been chained and was sleeping between two soldiers. An angel of God had come and took Peter out of there, his chains simply falling off of him (Acts 12:1–11). However, tradition has that all of the Apostles, apart from John, eventually died martyr's deaths. Peter and Paul were both imprisoned by Nero and beheaded. Paul spent that last several chapters of Acts under Roman house arrest without being miraculously sprung from jail. Again, this is a pattern of the beginning of the Church Age. It began with a great many signs, wonders and miracles; however, these things eventually died out.
- w. This reason is going to sound like a repeat, but it deals with the general tenor of 1Cor. 13. In 1Cor. 13, we have three gifts, prophecy, knowledge and tongues, which would pass away or be done away with. The key is growing from childhood to adulthood, to which Paul alludes in v. 11. The church, during this time, was in its infancy, being about 25 years old. There was no canon of Scripture for the New Testament with the exception of a few letters. The churches had just begun to get organized. The gifts mentioned were for the infancy of the Church. The result of the gift of tongues was to evangelize Jewish unbelievers; the gifts of prophecy and knowledge began to fill in the gaps and differences between the old and new economies—the change from God working through Israel and working through the local church. Once the local church reached its adult stage, before the end of the first century, it put away its childish things—the gifts required at the very beginning were no longer needed. Therefore, they disappeared off the scene, no longer needed by the adult church.
- x. Paul did not list each and every temporary gift in 1Corinthians 13. He listed the gifts that the Corinthians could expect to see disappear in their church. The gift of Apostleship no longer exists—however, it ended with the death of the Apostles. That is, this gift did not die out until John died on the Island of Patmos around 100 A.D. If Paul is going to list the gifts which would fade away or die out, then it makes sense for him to list gifts that those Corinthians to whom he wrote would see these gifts disappear from the church. Many of those believers would die before the Apostle John. Almost all of them would see the disappearance of the gifts mentioned in 1Cor. 13.
- y. We have examined some of the modern-day *revelations* of various charismatics who allegedly *have the gift of knowledge or prophecy*—their prophecies are wrong and their *new* doctrines contradict orthodoxy. If these *gifts* produce that which is false, that would indicate that these gifts are false; and since these three gifts are taken together in the charismatic movement, this would make the gift of tongues false.

⁴⁰⁷ This involved a great deal of Greek, and you can either read it clearly in your own translation (most of the translations which I examined were pretty good, although they differed a great deal), or you can go back to where I have exegeted this verse to see how the Greek presents this as a past event.

- z. One of the great evils of the past several centuries is *covenant theology*. This is a doctrine developed by those who, on occasion, read a few verses here and there in the Old Testament and concentrate primarily on the New. Now, our doctrine is taken from the New Testament; however, this does not mean that we can dispense with the Old Testament or interpret it with a few pat phrases. There was really an Israel and it was a complete and separate entity from the church. What we do not appreciate is how fundamental this change was when God stopped working through the nation Israel and began to function through the church. Dillow: *Every Jew knew by heart Amos 3:2: "You only have I chosen among all the families of the earth."* (Amos 3:2a). They knew Ex. 19:5–6a: *"If you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you will be My own prized possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine. And you will be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."* *Even the pagan nations surrounding Israel knew all about their uniqueness in religious matters. So when an insignificant group of Gentiles in Corinth had the nerve to assert, "We are the people of God," the response of the Jews who heard this was, "You've got to be kidding!" Now what was god going to do for His infant church in the face of the overwhelming size and age of His former vehicle, Judaism? Israel had been established for 1500 years as the center of religious worship. God gave the church the sign gift of tongues as a condemnatory sign against Israel, signifying that God was through with her in this era. Therefore, the childhood of the church ended when the existence of Israel as a nation ended. Then there was no longer any need for a sign to authenticate the insignificant church, nor for a sign against the extinct Jewish nation.*⁴⁰⁸
- aa. Tongues were associated with two gifts in 1Cor. 13: prophecy and knowledge; Paul wrote that all three gifts would disappear from the scene and they did. Try to find in the charismatic literature a consistent definition of the *gift of knowledge*. In fact, find anywhere in charismatic literature a reference to that gift. If such a gift exists today, which the charismatic should insist upon, then what is it and why has charismatic literature, for all intents and purposes, ignored it up until this time? Even if tomorrow, all charismatic churches defined this gift and recognized it in some consistent manner, we still have a century where it is not defined, not examined, and not given a consistent definition. If the charismatic church has the gift of tongues and the gift of prophecy, how can they ignore the gift of knowledge? The answer is simple: the gift of knowledge faded from the church, as did the gift of prophecy. Therefore, the gift of tongues disappeared by association.
- bb. If tongues were still extant, then the gift or gifts of knowledge and prophecy would also be for our time. If these things were for our time, then we would have men who would teach directly from God. Now, this did occur in the past and, when the information was written down, it was called Scripture and recognized as inspired. The charismatic church does have prophets, but their doctrines are not in agreement with one another, their revelations are not in agreement with one another, and their prophecies often turn out to be false. None of this makes sense. If these are legitimate prophets, then everything that they say should come to pass; none of their doctrines should be in conflict; and what they say should be written down and recognized as Scripture and studied as coming directly from God. Few of these so-called prophets want what they say scrutinized and studied as Scripture; none of them predict the future with complete accuracy; and these *prophets* do not agree in all of their doctrines. What this means is that their *gift* is phoney; and if their gift is phoney, then we have to throw tongues out as well. They are either extant together or extinct together—you can't throw out one without throwing out the other.
- cc. There are several passages of Scripture which seem to indicate that God is no longer speaking directly through men (apart from their study of His Word). Heb. 1:1–2: *God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many times and in many ways, in these last days, He has spoken to us in His Son, Whom He appointed heir of all things, through Whom He also made the ages.* Jude 3: *Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was **once for all delivered** to the saints.* Rev. 22:18–19: *I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of the prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.* Personally, I don't think that I will submit any of my writings or thoughts for entry into the canon, even though some of them are damn good. Again, the gift of tongues either stands with prophecy or it ceases with prophecy. Scripture seems to indicate that we have closed the

⁴⁰⁸ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 111–112.

canon—that we have all of the divine revelation there is. Therefore, it would not make sense for there still to be the gift of prophecy. If prophecy goes, then tongues go.

- dd. Let's approach the same point from a different somewhat different slant: Paul contrasts the infant with the adult in 1Cor. 13:11 in the context of the spiritual gifts knowledge, tongues and prophecy (we find this contrast between infancy and adulthood in places in Paul's writings—1Cor. 2:6 and 3:1 Eph. 4:13–14). Associated with this infancy is knowing and prophesying in part. Our knowing in full is the completion of the canon of Scripture, which would be a part of the adult phrase of the Church. Again, the result would be that which is associated with infancy (knowing in part, prophesying in part, via that gift or gifts) would pass away when infancy gave way to adulthood—and the completed canon of Scripture (the *complete* as contrasted with the *in part*), the gifts of infancy—tongues, knowledge and prophecy—would pass away as a child puts away his childish things. Notice the parallel: when Paul was a child, he talked like a child (tongues), thought like a child (prophecy) and reasoned like a child (knowledge)—when he became an adult, when he became complete, he put these childish things away (1Cor. 13:11).
- ee. The charismatics go to Acts for their example—however, they carefully pick and choose that which they will follow. The primary distinctive of the charismatic is they believe in a post-salvation work of the spirit which often includes the gift of tongues (for most charismatics, it always includes the gift of tongues). What they fail to notice is that we only find a post-salvation baptism of the spirit occurring in the presence of an Apostle in the book of Acts. We have one clear instance where the baptism of the spirit was not given through a trusted disciple; Peter and John had to come to bestow the Spirit (Acts 8). You do not get to selectively choose what portions of these experiences you will follow and what portions you can ignore. Take away the Apostles, then we must take away the post-salvation baptism of the Spirit; take away that post-salvation experience, and that takes away the gift of tongues.
- ff. The example in the book of Acts of gentiles coming into the body of Christ has them receiving the Spirit as they listened to the gospel spoken by Peter (Acts 10:44). If we should pattern our spiritual life after any group in the Bible, it should be the gentiles receiving Christ. Again, if you take away the post-salvation experience of the spirit, you take away the gift of tongues, as, experientially, they occur together in the charismatic movement.
- gg. Scripture indicates that we have all been baptized by means of the Spirit into the body of Christ (1Cor. 12:13)—a passage, by the way, located right in the context of the only chapters of the epistles which deal with the gift of tongues. Again, take away the post-salvation experience with the spirit and you take away the gift of tongues, as the two are closely associated in the charismatic movement.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

- 98. There are a couple of questions which must be dealt with regarding tongues: first of all, although Acts 2 appears to have a missionary force, the subsequent instances in Acts do not. What's the deal? The gift of tongues, as Paul tells us much later, is a partial fulfillment of Isa. 28. However, the use of the gift of tongues really required no preparation or study. A person spoke in a foreign language with which they were not familiar. The guidance that they needed was provided by 1Cor. 12–14 (which cover other topics as well). Therefore, a person with the gift of tongues knew how to properly use his gift in about five minutes. That a person had the gift of tongues was apparently known either at salvation or at the giving of the Holy Spirit (for those who were saved prior to Pentecost), and it appeared as though this occurred immediately after a person was saved and/or received the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we have the receiving of the Holy Spirit by believers in three other instances in the book of Acts which was immediately followed by speaking in tongues.
- 99. Why was the gift of tongues, or foreign languages, the least of all spiritual gifts? This particular gift required the least amount of preparation and training. At the receiving of the Holy Spirit, a person with that gift could use it. After all, he had no idea what he was saying—he just spoke as the Holy Spirit gave utterance. A person with the gift of prophecy, on the other hand, needed to know some doctrine. A person with the gift of pastor-teacher required a great deal of training.
- 100. If the Church Age is a mystery, why do we have a prediction of it in the book of Isaiah? Throughout the Old Testament, God warned Israel and warned Israel again. It is a consistent theme of the Old Testament. The prophets were specifically sent to Israel to warn them concerning their leanings and behavior. In this warning, there were several things which God promised Israel. He promised that Israel

would be scattered throughout the gentile world and gentile nations (Lev. 26:31–33) and that He would finally speak to them in Gentile languages (Isa. 28). The gift of tongues was only a partial fulfillment of Isa. 28. The fact that the Bible (the Old Testament) was translated into Greek is a partial fulfillment of that. When a Jew walks into a church in the United States, he hears God speaking to him in a gentile language. When a Jew walks into a church in France, he hears God speaking to him in a gentile language; when a Jew walks into a church in Poland, he hears God speaking to him in a gentile language. Jesus and the apostles apparently spoke in Greek most, if not all of the time. All of these things fulfill Isaiah's prophecy—it just so happens that existence of the church is concurrent with the fulfillment of Isa. 28.

101. If what I have told you is accurate (and it was all based upon careful exegesis of Scripture, so it therefore is accurate), then we should, in the history of the early church, see a dying out of the use of the gift of tongues (as well as the gift of miracles, healings, etc.). We have seen two instances of Paul not being able to utilize his gift of healing (in fact, it is not even mentioned in conjunction with those two instances) and we do have a mention by Irenæus of the gift of tongues, as well as Origen, who believed that they had not completely vanished, but the implication is that his time was not as fruitful in that regard.⁴⁰⁹ The gift of tongues is not mentioned again in the subsequent volumes of Sheldon's *History of the Early Church*. In fact, earlier in this study, I gave you a couple pages of testimony of many church fathers whose lives and ministries have spanned several centuries, that this gift of tongues died out in the first century. The fact that *tongues* are mentioned, albeit rarely, by a couple ancient authors—this does not mean that we are dealing with the legitimate gift of tongues.
102. Let me add this: just because the phrase *latter rain* occurs in Scripture, that does not mean that it has anything to do with the gift of tongues. Just because a charismatic tells us that the pouring out of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues is a *latter rain* event and that the words *latter rain* is found in the Bible—this is not careful enough exegesis to warrant the assumption that the gift of tongues has returned to us along with a better, more sufficient power of the Holy Spirit than our forefathers had. In order for Israel's harvest to be reasonable, they needed the early rain and the latter rain. Therefore, rain was always seen by Israel as being a very tangible blessing from God. We covered Acts 2 where Peter quotes from Joel 2. Earlier in that passage, before Peter begins to quote, we have the phrase *latter rain*. The reference is to the restoration of Israel (see Joel 2:21–27).

[<Return to Page One>](#)

103. Many believers are uncertain about their lives and their faith. They don't feel as though they measure up. They don't feel that God is acting in their lives. They feel as though they didn't get the whole package. Why do some believers feel as though they are lacking something? There are a whole host of reasons:
- a. You might never be filled with the Spirit or this may be a rare occurrence in your life. You are filled with the Holy Spirit (also known as *walking in light*) when you name your sins privately to God (1Cor. 11:31 1John 1:9). This must be done minute by minute, hour by hour; as often as you sin, you must name those sins to God.
 - b. Very few believers ever grow spiritually. You can listen to hours of Christian radio, to hundreds of speakers, to hours of *Christian music*, and not grow at all. We grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord Christ Jesus. This means we grow in the Word of God. Herein lies the main problem with Christianity today—very, very few churches teach God's Word verse-by-verse today. In the better churches, chapters are simply summarized and put into three points; believers are encouraged to read their own Bibles and to form their own study groups. Then there are the churches who make their doctrinal points and substantiate these points by reading a few passages of Scripture. Then there are the churches where a verse or two is quoted, and that is the jumping off point for a pastor. Now, there is nothing wrong with exploring God's Word topically—that's what is being done here. However, that should not be the exclusive thrust of anyone's teaching ministry.
 - c. Personal Bible study does not cut it. That is like giving a novice the tools and complete instructions to invasive surgery and having him perform this surgery on someone else. One obvious evidence of the

⁴⁰⁹ Henry C. Sheldon, *History of the Early Church*; reprinted by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. from the original published in 1895; Vol. I, pp. 116–117.

inadequacy of personal study is found on the Internet. The Internet is filled with sites which purport to be Christian, yet tout one legalistic method of salvation after another. If you can't get salvation right, you can't get anything else right.

104. Joseph Dillow gives evidences of being filled with the Holy Spirit, which I will enumerate below:⁴¹⁰ It should be pointed out that not every believer experiences every one of these evidences in full immediately.
- a. You will pray to God the Father concerning your needs and wants. **And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Father!"** (Gal. 4:6). **For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God** (Rom. 8:15–16). Dillow: *The first evidence is that you are able to pray to God as your Father. This is Christian prayer. It's not very flashy but its biblical!*⁴¹¹
 - b. For most people when they have believed in Christ, they begin to develop a great appreciation for God's graciousness and God's justice. No one knows better than we how wrong our hearts can be and how wrongly motivated that we can be—no one knows better than we every wrong act, word and thought that we have had, and how repulsive we might be to a just and righteous God. The fact that He came and took our punishment upon Himself, the just for the unjust, the obedient on behalf of the rebel—this is a cause for a tremendous awareness for all that He has done on our behalf. **Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit Who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God** (1Cor. 2:12). It is the spirit of the world which makes us believe that we must earn everything; it is a Spirit of God that makes us cognizant that the greatest thing in this life is free to us.
 - c. Dillow: *One of the things you sense for the first time after you receive the Spirit is that God loves you. I don't mean a vague, misty feeling that Someone somewhere cares about the human race, but an undeniable conviction that a personal God actually loves you, on a one-to one basis.*⁴¹² **And confidence does not disappoint us because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Whom He has given to us** (Rom. 5:5).
 - d. You develop a confidence in your salvation. This is often a result of doctrine plus the Holy Spirit. **[Christ] also placed His seal of ownership on us and gave the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge [or, down payment]** (2Cor. 1:22).
 - e. **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control—against such things, there is no law** (Gal. 5:22–23). This, like the other points, is an outgrowth of both being filled with the Spirit and growing in grace and doctrine. The more you have grown spiritually, the greater the manifestation.
 - f. Your attitude toward other believers improves—you develop what Thieme calls a relaxed mental attitude toward other believers. That is, you are not jealous of them, you do not become petty with them, you do not place yourself into competition with them—these are all characteristics of love toward the brethren, which is not some mushy feeling that you get way deep in your stomach when you see another believer. **If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given [this] to us by means of His Spirit** (1John 1:4b–5).
 - g. Dillow concludes: *There is an emphasis on the normal and the practical and the simple in the New Testament that is often lacking in the charismatic movement.*⁴¹³ There is nothing wrong with desiring some evidence of your salvation and the baptism of the Spirit—the New Testament writers of Scripture were also concerned with this evidence. However, nowhere do they list the gift of tongues as being this evidence.⁴¹⁴

[<Return to Page One>](#)

⁴¹⁰ Taken from Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 50–56.

⁴¹¹ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 50.

⁴¹² Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 51.

⁴¹³ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 55.

⁴¹⁴ Do not become confused with the book of Acts, which is an historical record (and which has been twisted by charismatics to fit their experience) and the epistles, wherein our doctrine is to be found.

105. Obviously, one of the most important considerations of this study is, *if speaking in tongues is not a gift for today, then what is going on in these charismatic churches?* As I have stressed over and over, we are **not** dealing with a problem of abuse of a proper gift, as occurred with the Corinthians—we are dealing with a gift that no longer exists. In other words, no lone legitimately speaks in tongues today.⁴¹⁵ Therefore, just what the heck is going on?
- a. Burdick: *We are personally aware that many of those who use tongues are deeply committed to our Lord and that their desire is to know Him as fully as possible. In no way are the following pages intended as a depreciation of such devotion and desire.*⁴¹⁶ Anyone who has written anything on this subject has friends who are in the Pentecostal or charismatic movement. I have friends in that movement whom I love and respect. I also have Catholic and Mormon friends. My intention is to treat this topic fairly and from the standpoint of God's Word, and let the chips fall where they may. I hope not to lose any friendships over this, but I cannot, at the same time, condone their speaking in tongues as a glorification of God. I do not doubt that a large portion of a charismatic congregation as well as some of their pastors can be very sincere and earnest in their views. The charismatics which I know have always appeared to be sincere in what they believe. However, recall what our Lord said in Matt. 7:21–22: **“Not every one who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father Who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’”** (and Psalm 6:8). I quote this not to indicate that Pentecostals are going to hell, but to indicate that there are many who are working their way to heaven who will be quite surprised at the end of their lives. Regardless of your religious predisposition, if you have fully placed your faith in Jesus Christ, the absolute worst that could happen to you at death is eternal fellowship with God apart from special rewards. We are going to approach the present-day phenomenon of tongues from several different perspectives.
 - b. First off, let's go with *What if people who speak in tongues are speaking in a foreign language?* Obviously, such a view would set aside a great deal of the careful exegesis that we have covered, and it sets aside the stated purpose of tongues, but let's approach it from that stand point anyway. After all, almost every person who speaks in tongues *knows* someone who *knows* someone who has spoken in a real foreign language that they did not know. Here are observations which have been made of the tongues phenomenon:
 - i. Burdick (who researched this quite well): *To the author's knowledge no taped utterance has ever been identified by qualified linguists as a specific language. Some may object that not all of the three thousand or more languages in use are known by linguists, and for this reason the taped speeches may not have been recognized.*⁴¹⁷
 - ii. William Samarin, a professor of linguistics at the University of Toronto made the following observations: *Over a period of five years I have taken part in meetings in Italy, Holland, Jamaica, Canada, and the United States. I have observed old-fashioned Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals; I have been in small meetings at private homes as well as in mammoth public meetings; I have seen such different cultural settings as are found among the Puerto Ricans of the Bronx, the snake handlers of the Appalachians [and] Russian Molakans in Los Angeles...Glossolalia is indeed like a language in some ways, but this is only because the speaker (unconsciously) wants it to be like language. Yet in spite of superficial similarities, glossolalia is fundamentally **not** language...It is extremely doubtful that the alleged cases of xenoglossia [real languages] among charismatics are real. Any time one attempts to verify them he finds that the stories have been greatly distorted or that the ‘witnesses’ turn out to be incompetent or unreliable from a linguistic point of view.*⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁵ Now, I will certainly admit that it is possible that a person could suddenly speak in the language of another person if such an action was necessary to God's plan. That this has ever really occurred, I have no idea (almost every Pentecostal *knows* someone who *knows* someone who legitimately spoke in a foreign language); however, I would not put it out of the realm of possibility.

⁴¹⁶ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, pp. 59–60.

⁴¹⁷ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, pp. 60–61.

⁴¹⁸ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 227–228; taken from William J. Samarin, *Tongues of Men and Angels*; New York, NY; Macmillan, 1972, pp. xii, 227, 112–113. Samarin

- iii. William E. Welmers, a Professor of African Languages at the University of California wrote this in a letter to *Christianity Today*: *We do know something about representative languages of every known language family in the world. I am by no means unique among descriptive linguists in having had direct, personal contact with well over a hundred languages representing a majority of the world's language families, and in having studied descriptions of languages of virtually every reported type. If a glossolalic were speaking in any of the thousand languages of Africa, there is about a 90 per cent change that I would now it in a minute.*⁴¹⁹
- iv. Frank Farrell, in another article in *Christianity Today*, reports that a tape of tongues-speech was provided by the Reverend Harald Bredesen, chairman of the board of the Blessed Trinity Society, and that this tape was listened to and studied by a group of government linguists. None of the linguists recognized the language, although one thought it might resemble the structure of a language.⁴²⁰
- v. To this date, we have no recorded samples of glossolalia which has been recognized as a unlearned, nonnative language.⁴²¹
- vi. E. Glen Hinson: *When examined by expert linguists, longer speeches, recorded on tape, have turned out to be mixtures of glossolalia [i.e., not a known language], with no more than a genuine foreign word thrown in here or there, giving clear proof that the person had not really received the ability to speak another language.*⁴²²
- vii. From a layman's view, I have listened to many people speak in tongues, and most of the time, it sounds like they are English-speaking people with a very limited vocabulary babbling almost the same thing over and over again (I realize that they are not; but the sound is extremely similar). There is a great deal of alliteration and repetition.⁴²³ It is repetitive and bears little resemblance to listening to someone else speak in a foreign language.
- viii. In studying samples of people speaking in tongues, William Welmers, somewhat more of an expert than me, made the following observations:
 - (1) There were "no more than two contrasting vowel sounds."
 - (2) There was "a most peculiarly restricted set of consonant sounds."
 - (3) These made up "a very few syllable clusters which recur many times in various orders."
 - (4) The "intonation patterns" are "completely American English." Welmer's conclusion is that the sample "does *not* sound like a language structurally."⁴²⁴
- ix. Walter Wolfram made a study of the texts of eight different people speaking in tongues *from the viewpoint of structural linguistics. His study reveals the following characteristics:*⁴²⁵
 - (1) The texts were clearly related to the language backgrounds of the speakers. They had obviously drawn phonemes (speech sounds) from languages with which they were familiar.
 - (2) There are similarities among the speakers which would not be present if they were speaking different languages. These included excessive use of the vowel *a*, a high frequency of open syllables, and a tendency to end breath groups in vowels and often the same vowel.
 - (3) There is a high frequency of repetition of certain words or clauses. On informant repeated the same clause "more than ten times in succession." Some glossolalia is largely made up of a clause repeated over and over. Words, also, are repeated in numerous alternant forms. Two informants employed as many as twenty alternants for one term.

goes into much greater detail in his book, of course.

⁴¹⁹ William E. Welmers, letter to *Christianity Today*, VIII (Nov. 8, 1963, p. 127 taken from Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 61.

⁴²⁰ Frank Farrell, "Outburst of Tongues: The New Penetration," *Christianity Today*; VII (Sept. 13, 1963), 1166.

⁴²¹ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 65.

⁴²² Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 15.

⁴²³ This observation is made by everyone who has studied tongues.

⁴²⁴ I quoted directly from Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 61–62, and Burdick took this from William E. Welmers, letter to *Christianity Today*, VIII (Nov. 8, 1963, p. 127.

⁴²⁵ This and what follows were taken directly from Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 62. Burdick took it from Walter A. Wolfram, "The Sociolinguistics of Glossolalia" (unpublished Master's thesis) pp. 91–92 presented to the Hartford Seminary Foundation.

- x. When tongues are interpreted, there seems to be no real correspondence between the person speaking in tongues and the interpretation thereof. Welmer's observed: *At the most generous estimate, the glossolalic utterance includes ten or eleven "sentences" or stretches of possible meaningful speech. But the "interpretation" involves no less than fourteen distinct and independent ideas. There simply can be no match between the "tongue" and the "interpretation."*⁴²⁶ Burdick also observes that we hear the person speaking in tongues repeat the same clauses over and over, but the interpretation of the same include many very different ideas. Whereas, the speaking in tongues never sounds creative, whereas the interpretation is often couched in King James English, as though this is how God speaks (this may have changed in recent decades).
- c. Tongues outside the realm of Christianity:⁴²⁷
- i. L. Carlyle May records the use of tongues outside the Christian experience in connection with the shaman of the Eskimos (i.e., the priest/medicine man). She gives several examples in "A Survey of Glossolalia and Related Phenomena in Non-Christian Religions," *American Anthropologist*, LVIII (Feb. 1956).
 - ii. Probably result of demon-possession: D. C. Graham gives examples a girl in the Szechwan province of China; Edward Langston gives examples of various peoples in East Africa tribes, and Junod gives examples from the Thongs people in Africa, all references cited in Burdick's book.
 - iii. Peter Freuchen observed it once among the Eskimos.
 - iv. Burdick: *Without making any attempt to explain these cases of so-called glossolalia, we may at least be sure that, for one reason or another, people in various places and at various times have had experiences similar to glossolalia as found among some Christians today. Attempted explanations must take into consideration such possibilities as ecstatic production, self-hypnosis, demonic origin and playacting. Whatever the explanation, it is clear that pagans as well as Christians have their glossolalic experiences.*⁴²⁸
 - v. Thieme gives two examples: *The peeping and muttering of the talking demons is not limited to accounts from Scripture. A missionary once described a demon-possessed Indian from Arizona. Ordinarily, this Indian had a deep and resonant voice. Under demon-domination, he made strange statements in a high falsetto voice. Many cases are on record which state that demon-possessed persons have actually spoken in some foreign language they had never known. Of all the modern-day accounts of this phenomenon, the best documented is the case of Helene Smith in Switzerland who spoke in an ancient language of India. At first everyone thought that she had the gift of tongues, particularly when it was discovered that she was indeed speaking in an ancient language. Of course, knowledge of doctrine would have ruled out such an assumption from the very beginning! Helene Smith's "gift" proved to be a clear case of demon possession, for when the demon would leave her (demons can come and go at will: Luke 11:24, 25), she had no recollection of what had happened. In the tribulation, Satan will employ to the maximum these same phenomena in order to deceive many and will thus induce the situation described in 2 Thessalonians as "strong delusion."*⁴²⁹
- d. Explanations as to what tongues might be: we actually have only three or four general explanations: (1) tongues can be faked; (2) they can be psychological in origin; (3) they can be learned behavior, which is a combination of the first two; or, (4) could be demonic in origin.
- i. The tongues movement has been a study of various psychologists and psychiatrists. One doctor told McGee that it was some sort of self-hypnosis. One man who left the tongues movement told McGee, "The thing that caused me to come out was that the folk in this particular meeting were actually in a trance." McGee: *It has been quite interesting to watch the psychological side of this movement. It gets you into an appropriate circumstance, gets you with a group that is doing this thing, and who wants to help you. I believe that many sincere people are in it and actually think they are talking in tongues. Why? Because they wanted something, and it was very easy, psychologically, to move into this kind of environment and have this experience. Many intelligent*

⁴²⁶ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 64 quoting from William E. Welmers, letter to *Christianity Today*, VIII (Nov. 8, 1963, p. 128.

⁴²⁷ This also comes primarily from Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, pp. 66–67.

⁴²⁸ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 67.

⁴²⁹ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, pp. 50–51.

folk who have gotten into it are becoming a little bit embarrassed as they begin to look at the psychological element.⁴³⁰ One person I know who no longer speaks in tongues, told me that he was always uneasy as to how much of it was him and how much was actually the Holy Spirit.

- ii. The psychological explanation into several groups (I took much of this from Burdick):
 - (1) *One more possibility has been suggested: tongues can be psychologically induced. Some of the strangest cases of tongues have been explained as psychological aberrations. The tongues-speaker goes into motor automatism, which is clinically described as radical inward detachment from one's conscious surroundings. Motor automatism results in disassociation of nearly all voluntary muscles from conscious control.*⁴³¹ MacArthur gives the example of girls at a rock concert. Those of us who are old enough recall the Beatles in concert. You couldn't hear a note that they played. Many of the girls at the concert screamed for nearly an hour straight in this ecstatic release (if I recall correctly, their concerts were relatively short—45 minutes or so).
 - (2) MacArthur: *After extensive study of tongues-speakers, Kildahl and Qualben concluded that people who were submissive, suggestible, and dependent on a leader were those most likely to speak in tongues...Watch almost any charismatic program on television. The people in the audiences nod and amen everything that is said from the platform even novel and bizarre teachings. They submit easily to the power of suggestion and so whatever is being suggested.*⁴³²
 - (3) *One of the oldest and most common explanations describes glossolalia as the result of ecstasy.*⁴³³ George Cutten: *In ecstasy, there is a condition of emotional exaltation, in which the one who experiences it is more or less oblivious of the external world, and loses to some extent his self-consciousness and his power of rational thought and self control.*⁴³⁴ Burdick: *According to this theory, speaking in tongues is the result of a highly emotional state which lifts a person out of his ordinary frame of mind and causes him to pour out "impassioned utterances."*⁴³⁵ Burdick adds that this cannot be the full explanation, as some charismatics do not exhibit a high pitched emotional state when speaking in tongues. What he does not mention, which is important, is that drug addicts, when first experiencing a drug, experiences an acute wave of euphoria and/or ecstasy, which eventually lessens and lessens as he continues using drugs. After awhile, he takes the drugs *just to stay even; just to stay in the game, period*. There is no reason to think that such might be the case with some glossolalics. What began as an ecstatic experience becomes to the charismatic much like the fix does to the drug addict. It doesn't quite pump them up as it used to, but they still need to have it.
 - (4) A second psychological explanation is the concept of hypnosis. You are surrounded by a crowd of people who speak in tongues on a regular basis. They have surrounded you for you to get the experience; the victim, so-to-speak, allows his mind to go blank and he yields to the suggestions of the hypnotist, which, in some circumstances, is actually a crowd or a very strong, dominant personality. A person may respond then and the suggestion may take root later and they can respond when in private.
 - (5) The experience of tongues could also be a result of auto-suggestion or self-hypnosis. The person can set him or herself up. He essentially yields himself up to what he has presupposed the experience to be. *The experience may only come after days and nights of prayer and seeking which magnify the original suggestion until it produces a kind of self-hypnosis result in glossolalia.*⁴³⁶

⁴³⁰ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part II*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 24.

⁴³¹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 242.

⁴³² John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 242–243.

⁴³³ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 68.

⁴³⁴ George B. Cutten, *Speaking with Tongues Historically and Psychologically Considered*, p. 157; taken from Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 69.

⁴³⁵ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 69.

⁴³⁶ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 70.

- (6) *Ira Jay Martin has explained tongues as a “psychic catharsis.” According to this view, a person seeks for maturity and self-fulfillment and fails to find it in any of the natural avenues of life. The result is frustration and conflict. When the light finally dawns and he sees that true personal maturity comes by faith and that righteousness is the product of forgiveness, the result is a sense of release and cleansing or catharsis. In many people this release produces a deep feeling of inner joy which is expressed in singing and testimony. In others whose temperament is of a different nature the result is spontaneous joy which can neither be contained nor expressed. The result is ecstatic utterance or glossolalia. This type of tongues, Martin calls “genuine,” but later repetitions by the same individual which come frequently and almost at will are classified as “synthetic” and viewed as having a self-hypnotic character. This person has become so taken up with tongues, the external by-product of his conversion, that this becomes an end in itself which he is able to reproduce at will. Martin says that “genuine” glossolalia may reoccur in the same person unexpectedly until his personality has been fully integrated and adjusted.⁴³⁷ Now, I fully realize that this is a human viewpoint position, but, in some cases, it is going to be right. As has been discussed, not everyone in the tongues movement is a believer in Jesus Christ. Many of them depend upon their repudiation of sin and their works as proof and therefore as an integral part of their conversion. This explanation is also weak in that it does not explain why speaking in tongues generally comes sometime after conversion in the charismatic conversion.*
- (7) *Lapsley and Simpson suggest that tongues is an escape from conflict. They suggest that a person regresses to an age before their emotional conflict of loving their parents and hating them for their fear of them. They regress to a language state prior to the emotional realization of these dual feelings. Now, a person does not fall into this because of his parents, but as a way to temporarily reduce emotional conflict, regressing back to a state of *infantile babble*. They suggest that this is not so much mental illness as a preventative measure against mental illness. *This is in keeping with findings which tend to show that persons who speak in tongues are people who come from problem homes and who find life filled with tension and conflict almost beyond their ability to bear.*⁴³⁸ They further write that tongues are a form of dissociation within the personality, in which a set of voluntary muscles respond to control centers other than those associated with consciousness.⁴³⁹ What happens is that the voluntary muscles reach a state of excitement coterminous with tension, and are relaxed considerably. Oates compares this to the yelling and screaming of a crowd at a football game. There apparently is the mob influence which is also a part of this. People involved in riots experience similar manifestations. *Here, conscious control is turned over to a mass activity, and one “throws his mind out of gear and lets himself go where he is pushed.”*⁴⁴⁰ This I think is closer to a nearly universal explanation (although I do not believe that there is a true universal explanation).*
- (8) *Now, obviously, there have been psychological studies of true Christian conversion and explanations thereof. One must realize that in many cases, this would be accurate, as most true believers experience little or no Christian growth (they do not take in God’s Word correctly nor do they confess their sins regularly); and many of these psychological explanations were further apply to the many *believers* who are actually not fully dependent upon Christ Jesus for their conversion and are actually not believers (these may be cult members or even members of mainstream churches, as there are a lot of churches where the gospel is not taught or poorly*

⁴³⁷ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 70–71, who in turn takes this from Ira Jay Martin, *Glossolalia in the Apostolic Church*, pp. 50–52, 54–55, 61, 100..

⁴³⁸ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, pp. 73–74; he got this from James N. Lapsley and John H. Simpson, “Speaking in Tongues: Infantile Babble or Song of the self?” *Pastoral Psychology*, XV (Sept. 1964), pp. 16–24. Burdick cites two other references besides for comparison.

⁴³⁹ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 93, who took it from James Lapsley and John H. Simpson, “Speaking in Tongues,” *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, LVIII, February 1966, p. 6.

⁴⁴⁰ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 94.

- taught). Burdick: *In the attempt to understand current glossolalia, we are by no means confined to the view that it must be of divine origin.*⁴⁴¹
- (9) A very interesting explanation to those who actually speak in a language atypical of charismatic tongues is called exalted memory. A foreign language has been impressed upon the mind of a person, and resides in that person's memory, although he is unable to draw upon it at will. Given the right stimulus, and the person can suddenly begin reciting a foreign language. There was the example of the illiterate servant who would begin speaking in Latin, Hebrew or Greek. It was found by careful investigation that this servant had worked for a clergyman who would recite long passages in those languages. The servant could not recall any of this at will, but, under certain mental states, speak these languages (obviously unaware of what he was saying).⁴⁴²
- (10) Bergsma, a psychiatrist, suggests: *The speaker takes the shortcut of a reflex action, bringing a dissociation upon himself, by which words do not go before the rational cerebral cortex for inspection, reflection and judgment as to whether they make sense, but are sent out directly via the efferent nerves as speech.*⁴⁴³
- (11) Dr. E. Mansell Pattison, a member of the Christian Association for Psychological Studies and an instructor at the University of Washington School of Medicine said, "*The product of our analysis is the demonstration of the very natural mechanisms that produce glossolalia. As a psychological phenomenon, glossolalia is easy to produce and readily understandable...I can add my own observation from clinical experiences with neurological and psychiatric patients. In certain types of brain disorders resulting from strokes, brain tumors, etc., the patient is left with disruptions in his automatic physical speech circuit patterns. If we study these 'aphasic' patients we can observe the same decomposition of speech that occurs in glossolalia. Similar decomposition of speech occurs in schizophrenic thought and speech patterns, which are structurally the same as glossolalia. This data can be understood to demonstrate that the same stereotypes of speech will result whenever conscious, willful control of speech is interfered with, whether by injury to the brain, by psychosis, or by passive renunciation of willful control. This corroborates our previous assessment that glossolalia is a stereotyped pattern of unconsciously controlled vocal behavior which appears under specific emotional conditions.*⁴⁴⁴ Pattison essentially concludes that glossolalia can occur whenever conscious willful control of the brain is interfered with, and that in its present-day form it is usually a psychological accompaniment of intense or ecstatic emotional experiences.⁴⁴⁵
- (12) Wayne Oates tried to give one overall psychological explanation for the explosion of tongues in our time. He explains that during the formative years of our language, we are simultaneously taught in the public school system to not speak of anything religious (I even had a student who seriously asked me, seeing a Bible in my classroom, whether it was legal to have one there). He adds to this that we have become a nation of *watchers*, more due to television than anything else, and we tend to *watch* one another more than interact with one another. Had this book been written more recently, they might have pointed to teens, whose conversation is sometimes *And I was [either a pause, a look or an inarticulate sound] and she was all [again, a pause, a look, or an inarticulate sound]*. Since our religion holds our deepest feelings, our greatest hopes and fears, and since we are, in essence, taught to be inarticulate about it, the natural response is speaking in tongues.⁴⁴⁶ I don't know that I buy any of that, but I present it here by way of one possible psychological explanation.

⁴⁴¹ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 75.

⁴⁴² Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, pp. 74–75; who took his information from George b. Cutten, *Speaking with Tongues Historically and Psychologically Considered*, p. 176ff.

⁴⁴³ Stuart Bergama, *Speaking with Tongues*, p. 11; taken from Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 78.

⁴⁴⁴ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 175; taken from E. Mansell Pattison, "Speaking in Tongues and About tongues," *Christian Standard*; Feb. 15, 1964, p. 2..

⁴⁴⁵ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 175.

⁴⁴⁶ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, pp. 76ff.

- (13) Oates also parallels speaking in tongues with the language of a child who has just begun to speak.⁴⁴⁷ The child is not speaking to communicate; he is not concerned whether he influences the hearer or not; he does not place himself in the shoes of the hearer;⁴⁴⁸ he simply prattles on for the pleasure of hearing himself speak. More than likely, what he says means nothing to him either. Whether it does or not, still his speech is entirely ego-centric. Oates compares one speaking in tongues to this child, which is probably the closest to the Biblical perspective of the original use and abuse of tongues (see 1Cor. 13:11–12). *If religious experience is profound, if it does plumb the depth and not just scratch the surface of human experience, it is little wonder that persons whose deepest religious strivings have been repressed through sophistication, intellectualization, institutionalization, and the superficial overlay of social behavior will break forth into highly distorted and seemingly meaningless babblings of the sort described by glossolalics.*⁴⁴⁹
- (14) Dillow, while writing his book, started banging away at the typewriter and produced *Shon dai amma bon de kai santi santi alla hambra*. Then he concludes: *What I just wrote is linguistically no different than hundreds of transcribed illustrations of tongues speaking from all over the world. Thus, I just spoke in tongues!*⁴⁵⁰
- (15) Obviously, none of these explanations individually explain the tongues movement, but taken together, they may explain most of the speaking in tongues found in and out of Christianity. More importantly, they explain why two people in the Pentecostal movement, a believer and an unbeliever, can have a side-by-side similar experience. Being a believer does not automatically exempt a person from mental illness. In fact, a case could be easily made that many believers who do not get properly grounded in the Word experience various classifications of mental illnesses (this would apply to those in and not in the tongues movement).
- (16) Burdick suggests that some people will be psychologically constructed in such a way as to better lend themselves to the charismatic movement. It could be a combination of heredity and environment conditioning, combined with the fragile mental state when one comes to Christ (or participates in a conversion-like experience). This can give a person a *longed-for sense of security and acceptance*. This can begin with what is seemingly an innocent desire—to desire to receive all that God has for us. Add to this that the experience is supposedly supernatural or miraculous. Who would not want to become a part of something as miraculous and wonderful as experienced by the Apostles during that first century?⁴⁵¹
- (17) We should never underestimate the strongly influential environmental factors at or near the time of conversion (I've observed a church where the members would essentially *pounce* as a group upon certain individuals). One cannot deny the strength of that psychological attack, particularly when one would like to belong or fit in. Psychology is filled with studies of people entering into abnormal behavior as a result of a herding instinct. They do what the herd does, even if it lies outside the realm of their own normal behavior. Their speaking in tongues provides immediate group acceptance as well as perceived divine commendation and confirmation. *Joy and peace come because the glossolalic feels that the gift of tongues is an evidence of God's acceptance and favor, the hallmark of spiritual attainment.*⁴⁵²
- (18) Burdick concludes: *Present-day glossolalia is deceptive. It often is a psychological attempt to recreate the supernatural gift of the first century. Because of the complexity of human nature, when the proper conditions are present, man is able to work himself into an experience which he thinks to be the same as New Testament glossolalia. Careful examination, however, has shown us how different such experiences seem to be from the phenomenon clearly described in Acts 2. This is not to impugn the sincerity of our tongues-speaking brethren. It is simply to*

⁴⁴⁷ See Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, pp. 84ff.

⁴⁴⁸ They'd be too big.

⁴⁴⁹ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia*; Abingdon Press, ©1967, p. 92.

⁴⁵⁰ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, p. 176.

⁴⁵¹ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 76.

⁴⁵² Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 75.

*insist that in their sincerity they have often allowed themselves to be deceived by a counterfeit experience which does not measure up to the biblical standard.*⁴⁵³

- (19) The continuance of this behavior also deserves some explanation. If a person was to repudiate speaking in tongues, this could result in the breakup of that person's family or the fellowship with people that they love (there are people that I know who speak in tongues whose friendship I would not want to lose). How much more powerful would that be if all of your Christian friends upon whose friendship you had come to depend over many years spoke in tongues?
- (20) I should add that I am not trying to assert that everyone who speaks in tongues is psychologically unfit. Although I can name some charismatic people whom I've know who were less than self-actualized, I can name several who are psychologically very stable and well-grounded. I also can point to several people from my own church who are, as Ann Landers put it, *a couple sandwiches short of a picnic*.
- iii. Generally speaking, today, most charismatic speaking in tongues is probably learned behavior:
- (1) Tongues are generally practiced, at least at first, in a group. Although there are certainly instances of people going off on their own and praying and praying until they speak in tongues (although I don't recall reading of any), most are initiated through a group pressure in group situations. The very instructions of telling a person to put their head back, to disengage their mind, to give themselves over, to being making noise—this is *teaching* a person how to speak in tongues. It is making tongues a *learned* behavior. *Charles and Frances Hunter hold seminars to instruct people about how to receive the gift of tongues...The Hunters jump-start people emotionally by getting them to shout prayers and praise; they suggest sample syllables to prime the pump; and they encourage people to repeat "funny little sounds."*⁴⁵⁴
- (2) MacArthur names two sources who have done studies on tongues. John Kildahl, a clinical psychologist, and Dr. Paul Qualben, a psychiatrist, did a study commissioned by, of all institutions, the American Lutheran Church and the national Institute of Mental Health. Their conclusion was that tongues was simply a *learned behavior*.⁴⁵⁵ Kildahl and Qualben wrote: *Our study produced conclusive evidence that the benefits reported by tong-speakers which are subjectively real and continuous are dependent upon acceptance by the leader and other members of the group rather than upon the actual experience of saying the sounds. Whenever a tongue-speaker broke off the relationship with the leader of the group, or felt rejected by the group, the experience of glossolalia was no longer so subjectively meaningful.*⁴⁵⁶
- (3) a second more recent study was done at the Carleton University in Ottawa, and it showed that virtually anyone could be taught to speak in tongues with minimum instruction and modeling. The subjects were given two brief training sessions which included audio and videotaped examples of speaking in tongues. Then the subjects were asked to attempt to speak in tongues for 30 seconds. All of them could speak what would easily pass for glossolalia for the 30 seconds and 70% of them were able to speak their language fluently.⁴⁵⁷
- (4) MacArthur: *I overheard a zealous charismatic trying to teach a new believer to speak in tongues. It struck me as odd that this man felt he needed to labor so industriously to help this baby Christian receive the gift of tongues. Why a person would have to learn how to receive a gift from the Holy Spirit is baffling. Nonetheless the charismatic movement is full of people who will gladly "teach" you how to speak in tongues.*⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵³ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 83.

⁴⁵⁴ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 240; and Charles Hunter, "Receiving the Baptism with the Holy Spirit," *Charisma*; July 1989, p. 54.

⁴⁵⁵ John Kildahl, *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues*; New York, NY; Harper and Row, 1972, p. 74.

⁴⁵⁶ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 241–242; taken from John Kildahl, *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues*; New York, NY; Harper and Row, 1972, p. 74.

⁴⁵⁷ Paraphrased from John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 240–241; Nicolas P. Spanos, Wendy P. Cross, Mark Lepage, and Marjorie Cristine, "Glossolalia as Learned Behavior: An Experimental Demonstration," *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*; 95:1, 1987, pp. 21–23.

⁴⁵⁸ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 241.

- iv. MacArthur gives a summative list of psychological reasons why people may choose to speak in tongues, even though it is clearly not Scriptural:
- (1) Believers have a spiritual hunger which is not really being fed by the average church. When they are told of a wonderful experience which will strengthen and improve their spiritual lives, they are both susceptible and interested.
 - (2) Speaking in tongues allows a person to express himself (or, herself) in a *spiritual* way. A member of a church congregation may feel as though they have sat on the sidelines for too many years, and speaking in tongues gives them the chance to participate.
 - (3) There is an unconditional acceptance which often accompanies those who speak in tongues. What you believe is often secondary to the fact that you have spoken in tongues. Once you have spoken in tongues, you *are one of them*. There is a connection and an acceptance.
 - (4) Speaking in tongues is a step away from the dry, academic and impersonal considerations of your life and church to that which is more emotionally fulfilling (or stimulating). It is a tangible experience which feels supernatural, therefore giving you a feeling as though you have connected more closely with God.⁴⁵⁹
 - (5) Let me add, the main reason people can be pulled away from their church into the tongues movement is that God's Word is rarely taught in any church. At best, a few verses are used as a spring board to launch into more topical concerns. Without God's Word, there is no spiritual growth. Without spiritual growth, one has no discernment, spiritual strength, or spiritual direction. A secondary reason, but extremely important, is that mechanics are not taught in church. Getting back into fellowship by naming your sins directly to God—there are very, very few churches which teach that. If you are not in fellowship, your spiritual life reeks. Speaking in tongues offers a false spirituality.
- v. Another likely explanation is that the speaking in tongues today are from Satan.
- (1) Some of you are very confused as to where Satan and his demonic armies strike. They don't concentrate themselves in India or in Pakistan, or in any other area where heathen religions abound. Satan will concentrate his forces on the Church of God. Every Sunday, demons infiltrate churches and do whatever they can to disrupt the teaching of God's Word. In a tongues movement, you will actually have men and women who are demon-possessed (obviously, not believers, as a believer cannot be demon-possessed).
 - (2) Many do not understand Satan's role in this world, often because they lack the Bible doctrine to discern his function. When the gentiles offered sacrifices to idols, these sacrifices were offered to demons (1Cor. 10:20). By application, any worship which does not line up with Scripture would be worship directed toward demons. When various men came in after Paul and attempted to lead the Corinthians astray from the truth, Paul wrote: **For such men are false apostles, fraudulent artisans, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end will be according to their deeds** (2Cor. 11:13–15). These people who attempted to lead the Corinthians astray *appeared* to be ministers of light; they *appeared* to come in the name of Jesus. You do not distinguish between the true and the false by the way you feel about it. **The Spirit expressly says that in later times that some will fall away from the faith, giving heed to deceitful spirits and to the doctrines of demons** (1Tim. 4:1). What is pathetic is that people who speak in tongues think they have some special way of discerning the spirits, which boils down to: *if it feels bad, it's bad; if it feels good, it's good*. Apart from God's Word, we are easy taking for demonic spirits. **If someone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, then do not receive him into your house [church], and do not make him welcome** (2John 10).
 - (3) One example of speaking in tongues which was obviously demonic in origin was from Cate, was quoting the late Dr. A. C. Gabelein: *A godly and reliable brother told us, that in one of those 'Gift of Tongues' meetings, not very far from New York, a woman arose and 'jibbered' away in strange sounds. A missionary from the south of China happened to be in the service. When*

⁴⁵⁹ These points were all taken from John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 244.

that woman gave her utterances this missionary became very agitated, and then went to the woman and asked her if she knew what language she had spoken. She said she did not know. He told her that she spoke in a Chinese dialect with which he was familiar, but he added, 'It was so vile and obscene—what you said—that I dare not repeat it in English.'⁴⁶⁰ I offer this example only with a grain of salt, as Cate quotes Gabelein who quotes an unnamed source—that is a bit of a stretch.

- (4) Along with this are stories that there are demon possessed people in East Africa who will speak in English or Swahili, although they do not know those languages.⁴⁶¹ Other religions and groups also practice speaking in tongues. MacArthur gives such diverse examples as Eskimos, Muslims, occult members and Tibetan monks.
 - (5) Victor Budgen explains why Satan would do this: *The devil wants to substitute his word for that of God. Sometimes we clearly see that Satan is doing this, for it all seems so obvious. Most Christians recognize the deception. Moses David of the Children of God claimed, "I was prophesied over many times by many prophets of God, as having been filled with the Holy ghost from my mother's womb, and many great things were foretold that I would do...that I would be like Moses, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and even David."* [Quoted in "Crusade" magazine, April 1973, p. 5]. *Christians reject this claim, especially in light of the group's heretical teaching. A little booklet on the rise of Sun Myung Moon and the Moonies related that "Among some Pentecostal Christians in the underground church in Pyongyang, there had recent been prophecy of a Korean messiah. So the local populace was fertile ground for this idea."* [J. Isamu Yamamoto, "The Moon Doctrine," *Intervarsity (USA)*, 1980, p. 4]. Yet, extreme though such groups may seem, it must not be forgotten that there are those today who compare themselves with biblical prophets, who believe in new "revelations" and who are engendering a climate where all kinds of false teachings could easily be accepted...A writer on this theme can always be accused of taking extreme examples, but many palpably false movements drew in genuine Christians at first. Many temporarily entangled in the Jonestown cult, with its healings, revelations and eventual mass suicide, seems to have been earnest and genuine Christians who were deluded and led astray by the evil one. Firm biblical moorings and a belief that God had furnished a final and all-sufficient Word in Scripture alone is the only real protection and safe guidance that God has provided against deception.⁴⁶²
 - (6) So that you do not think Budgen's warning too far out, recall that Kenneth Copeland, a charismatic speaker with a very large following, has, through *direct conversation with Jesus Christ*, taught that our Lord is **not** God and that He did not teach that He was God. You do not get more apostate than that.
- vi. What about those who actually speak in a foreign language?
- (1) Dillow gives an example: *One man told me that while he was singing in the shower in tongues, a Polish man overheard him and asked him when he had learned Polish. Of course he never had and this constituted proof that his gift of tongues involved the ability to speak in Polish. I personally have had many stories similar to this. How is this to be explained? First, I have had frequent occasion to question the objectivity of the report. The man who was singing in the shower wanted to believe he was speaking in a miraculous language. The Polish man actually overheard a few syllables and some words that remembered Polish. My shower singing friend desired so much that his "miracle" be reinforced by another person, that he convinced himself that the man's offhand comment implied a whole song in Polish when actually all that was involved were a few similar sounding syllables.*⁴⁶³

⁴⁶⁰ B. F. Cate, *The Nine Gifts of the Spirit*; Regular Baptist Press, ©1956, ©1974, p. 59. Unfortunately, like all instances where speaking in tongues appears to be a real language, we do not have independent confirmation.

⁴⁶¹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 239.

⁴⁶² John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, pp. 119–120, who took it from Victor Budgen, *The Charismatics and the Word of God*, Durham, England; Evangelical Press, 1989, pp. 143–244.

⁴⁶³ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 178–179.

- (2) Dillow typed in tongues and I personally recognized three of the words as being Greek (actually, one was misspelled, but had it been spoken, it would have sounded like the Greek word). So, it is reasonable that, when a person strings together a whole batch of syllables that some of the words or syllables will actually be words in a different language.
- (3) A third explanation is something called Cryptomnesia or which is a type of exalted memory. Somewhere, lurking in the memory of a person, is a language which they have heard or learned, but cannot recall with their own conscious mind. With the right psychological conditions, portions of this language are unearthed and spoken. Hypnosis has brought this out in several instances. A similar autohypnotic state is induced in the person who desires to speak in tongues.
- e. Another explanation is that there are ventriloquist demons who speak through the mouths of believers. Recall Isa. 8:19:

And when they say unto you [all], “Consult unto the mediums and unto the wizards, the chirping ones and the muttering ones.” Should not a people unto their God consult? On behalf of the living, [should they consult] the dead?

Isaiah
8:19

And when they say to you, “Consult the ventriloquists and demon-possessed, the chirping ones and the muttering ones.” Should not a people consult their God? On behalf of the living, [should they consult] the dead?

And when they say to you, “Take advice from the ventriloquists and the demon-possessed, the ones who speak with high voices or in a low register.” Shouldn’t this people go to their God instead? Should they consult the living rather than the dead?

What we will first do is look at some other translations of this verse:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	But when they say to you— Seek ye unto the necromancers and unto the wizards, who chirp and who mutter Should not a people seek unto its God? In behalf of the living should it seek unto the dead?
NASB	And when they say to you, “Consult the mediums and the spiritists who whisper and mutter,” should not a people consult their God? <i>Should they consult</i> the dead on behalf of the living?
REB	People will say to you, ‘Seek guidance from ghosts and familiar spirits which squeak and gibber; a nation may surely consult its gods, consult its dead on behalf of the living...
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	And when they say unto you, ‘Seek unto those having familiar spirits, And unto wizards, who chatter and mutter, Doth not a people seek unto its God? —For the living unto the dead!

The noun often rendered *familiar spirits* is the masculine plural of םִוֹנִים (אֵוֹנִים) [pronounced *ow^hv*], which means two things: a *water bottle* or a *skin-bottle*; and, *medium, familiar spirit, ventriloquist demon, or one who speaks through a person* (it is often translated *medium* for that reason). You may wonder *what’s the connection?* The connection is that one thing is filled up with another. A wine skin is filled with wine; a medium is filled with a demonic spirit. Now, you may wonder about this ventriloquist demon thing, so let me quote directly from Gesenius:⁴⁶⁴ [the] *LXX almost always render by ἐγγαστριμῦθοι, ventriloquists, and correctly; because ventriloquists amongst the ancients commonly abused this art of inward speaking for magical purposes.*⁴⁶⁵ Strong’s #178 BDB #15.

⁴⁶⁴ For those who do not know, Gesenius assembled pretty much the definitive Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon for the Old Testament. Although my version was printed in 1997, he did this in the mid-1800’s (surprisingly without the use of the gift of tongues).

⁴⁶⁵ H.W.F. Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*; ©1979 by Baker Books; p. 177.

In this verse we have two verbs, both of which are preceded by the definite article and are masculine plurals. This means that they should be rendered as nouns and not as verbs. The first of these is the Pilpel participle of tsâp̄hēph (צַפְפִּי) [pronounced *tsaw-FAHF*], which means *to chirp, to peep*. This onomatopoeic word is used of birds (Isa. 10:14) and of the ventriloquist demon (Isa. 8:19–29:4). Here, it should be rendered *the chirpers* or *the chirping ones*. Thieme says that this means *speaking in a high, falsetto voice*.⁴⁶⁶ Strong's #6850 BDB #861.

The next verb is the masculine plural, Hiphil participle of hâgâh (הִגָּה) [pronounced *haw-GAW*], which means *to moan, to growl, to utter, to speak, to mutter, to muse*. We find it used with the growl of a lion over his prey (Isa. 31:4); of the sound of low thunder (Job 37:2); of the muttering of enchanters (Isa. 8:19—in the Hiphil); of the sound of a harp when struck (Psalm 9:17–92:4); of the cooing of doves (Isa. 38:14); and of the groaning and sighing of men (Isa. 16:7–Jer. 48:31). The Hiphil is the causal stem—the ones spoken of here are causing themselves to *mutter and growl* by going into a trance state. Thieme calls this *deep, hollow tones*, and speaks of Eggathrimuthos demons as projecting their voices so as to sound as though they are coming from the ground.⁴⁶⁷ Strong's #1897 BDB #211.

Thieme gives an example of this: *The peeping and muttering of the talking demons is not limited to accounts from Scripture. A missionary once described a demon-possessed Indian from Arizona. Ordinarily the Indian had a deep and resonant voice. Under demon-domination, he made strange statements in a high falsetto voice. Many cases are on record which state that demon-possessed person have actually spoken in some foreign language they had never known. Of all the modern-day accounts of this phenomenon, the best documented is the case of Helene Smith in Switzerland, who spoke in an ancient language of India. At first everyone thought that she had the gift of tongues, particularly when it was discovered that she was indeed speaking in an ancient language. Of course, knowledge of doctrine would have ruled out such an assumption from the very beginning! Helene Smith's "gift" proved to be a clear case of demon possession, for when the demon would leave her (demons can come and go at will: Luke 11:24, 25), she had no recollection of what had happened. In the Tribulation, Satan will employ to the maximum these same phenomena in order to deceive many and will thus induce the situation described in 2 Thessalonians as "strong delusion."*⁴⁶⁸

Paul warned Timothy: **But the Spirit specifically states that in the later times** [i.e., near the end of the Church Age] **some will fall away from the faith** [the body of doctrine which is believed], **paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons** (1Tim. 4:1). And Paul warned the Thessalonians: **For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will continue to do so until he is taken out of the way. Then that lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and will bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth** so as to be delivered. And for this reason, God will send upon them a deluding influence so that **they might believe the lie** (2Thess. 2:6–10). Listen to me carefully, here: **you do not guard yourself against false doctrine, false signs and false wonders by picking out a verse here or there in the Bible which appears, if you don't examine it too carefully, to support what you want to believe.** You must be willing to take God at His Word, as we find it in Scripture, in its linguistic and historical context. You do not get to approach God's Word in some willy-nilly, sloppy fashion, touting a few words here and there which you like, and ignoring the actual thrust of the passage in which these words are found.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

106. What should our attitude toward the charismatic be? How should we behave toward the charismatic? This is one of the tougher questions.
- a. First of all, the teaching of charismatics is not a harmless variation of orthodoxy. It is a religious system which moves the believer away from God's Word, from a correct understanding of salvation, and from

⁴⁶⁶ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 50.

⁴⁶⁷ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, p. 50.

⁴⁶⁸ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *Tongues*; ©1974, pp. 50–51.

spirituality. This is not harmless. People may disagree about modes of baptism—whether it should dipping or sprinkling or immersion. And those who do may not realize that it is not that big of a deal. However, when it comes to charismatic doctrine, it is a big deal. Anything which makes us search for something beyond the fullness of Christ is heretical. Dillow: *In charismatic groups there is an observed...tendency to place an emphasis on the miraculous gifts at the expense of the grace of God. Speaking in tongues, healings, and demon exorcisms are more important to many within this movement than speaking of salvation in Christ. Their burden is often to introduce others into the Holy Spirit baptism rather than to introduce the lost into the grace of God. This was illustrated to me forcefully several weeks ago while attending a meeting featuring a well-known faith healer in Pittsburgh. After the service I talked to several people, trying to gather information as to why they were there. My first question was, "When did you come to know Christ personally?" All of them began to relate to me various healings they had seen or experienced. I asked for their definition of the Gospel. They defined it as more faith healings, and were terribly unclear and confused. Interestingly enough, when asked how they were going to get to heaven, all of them replied that they would make it on the basis of their sincerity and good works.*⁴⁶⁹

- b. As I mentioned earlier, I have quizzed several charismatics who were involved in evangelism about the gospel and I always ask them *how would you explain the gospel to an unbeliever?* Although some were close, not a single charismatic represented salvation as absolutely free to the one who believes in Christ Jesus. Those who were closest to the correct understanding of salvation generally added repentance from sin to faith in Christ, not realizing that is a work.⁴⁷⁰
- c. As I have mentioned, I have known many charismatics, as have most of us. Most were very sincere and earnest in their faith. I mentioned at the beginning, if it were up to me, apart from Bible doctrine, I would consider them fellow heirs to the kingdom of God, and simply regard our differences as those who believe water baptism can be done by dipping and those who require immersion.
- d. First of all, we do not get to persecute them. There were heresies in the Old Testament which Israel was to separate from. False prophets were to be executed and a false prophet was defined as anyone who prophesied in God's name and it did not come to pass. If we were in the Old Testament, in Israel, and any of these charismatic prophets came along with their 70% prophetic accuracy rate, we would have to execute them. We are not in Israel; we are not under the old covenant. There was a lot of religious persecution which occurred during the Dark Ages, and a lot which led to the original influx of European peoples into the United States—and all of this persecution was based upon religious intolerance and religious persecution. The problem is that they did not understand dispensations; they did not understand that God's plan under the economy of Israel was different than God's plan under the economy of the Church. **We are not enjoined in any New Testament passage to persecute those who believe different than us in any matter of doctrine—no matter how heretical the view, we do not get to persecute anyone.**
- e. What believers are to do in the New Testament is to separate. Now this doctrine has been distorted horribly over the years. When I use the word *separation*, most believers think that they are separating from the world and from unbelievers. Not so. New Testament separation is primarily directed toward other believers. There is a separation from unbelievers who continually practice those things for which you have a personal weakness. Generally speaking, if you have a weakness for excessive alcohol consumption (or any other sin or sin group), and you have been saved, then you do not want to hand out where there is a lot of drinking.
- f. Now, the mechanics of separation are confused today. You're in the lunch room or at a restaurant, and a heretic sits down at your table—you do not get up and sit at another table. You are going to run out of tables. In the work place, in your social life, in your family, you should treat a charismatic no differently than you would a Catholic, a person who disagrees with you on the mode of baptism, or someone who agrees with your every doctrinal nuance.
- g. However, separation is applied to believers, and the charismatic would be one from whom you would separate in spiritual matters and spiritual activity. Any charismatic who is overtly or covertly evangelistic with regards to this spirit baptism should be removed from the church. It does not matter how much they

⁴⁶⁹ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 84–85.

⁴⁷⁰ Changing one's lifestyle, intending to change one's own lifestyle or rejecting one's lifestyle is not a part of salvation—this may occur after salvation but it is not a prerequisite to salvation.

give, what committees they are on, the great and marvelous works that they have done in the church—these things are not issues. This person is a spiritual cancer and should be removed from the church.

- h. Let's say a person is a charismatic and they attend your church, but do not attempt to evangelize anyone with regards to their point of view. Obviously, they stay. A church is not made up of people who agree 100% on everything right down the line. It might take years of doctrine to bring some people from a false position to a true position. If a charismatic has positive volition, we are not to interfere with that positive volition. Some charismatics are evangelized by this movement at a very early age. I know at least one person who had a charismatic experience at age seven. As long as a charismatic does not disrupt the service with speaking in tongues and as long as the charismatic does not attempt to *help* others get the baptism, they could enter into your church as a charismatic and die in your church as a charismatic. My thinking is that one warning should suffice.
- i. I would hope that it is obvious that if you are in a charismatic church, then you need to quietly come out of it. You don't need to evangelize them the other way nor do you need to disrupt any of their activities—you simply quietly leave.
- j. Bringing together a noncharismatic and a charismatic into some sort of union, such as marriage, such as an opposite sex relationship, such as a business partnership is not a good idea. We are not to be unequally yoked, and that is what this is. I have, on one occasion, entered into a business relationship with a charismatic, and I regretted that. A charismatic will not do that which is right and moral unless they *feel* it is right and moral. A believer with character will do (or, should do) that which is right and moral whether they feel like it or not.
- k. Most of the Scripture pertaining to the doctrine of separation has already been quoted. For further study, please examine John 17:14–15 1Cor. 5:1–13 6:14–18 9:19–23 10:27 Gal. 1:7–8 6:1 2Tim. 2:16–23 2John 7–11.
- l. There is a special class of charismatics to which Dillow refers—those who are doctrinally correct apart from the gift of tongues. Dillow: *To argue from the abuses of a few that the whole movement is wrong is unjustified. I have many friends within the charismatic movement who decidedly have not let their tongues speaking get out of focus. For them the issue is the Gospel; tongues speaking is a secondary and incidental "plus" to them, and they wouldn't dream of making it an issue with anyone else. They are as against these buses as the New Testament is. But it's still true that, as shown through history, a special focus often does become a substitute, and that has happened in the lives of thousands within the modern charismatic movement. What I'm saying is that the abuse follows logically from the theology. For the thousands who have not abused the gift, I suggest that it is not because of their theology but in spite of it. They have developed a real and genuine walk with Christ that brings the needed balance and overrides the unbiblical viewpoint on tongues.*⁴⁷¹

<Return to Page One>

- 107. The reason *why* have modern-day tongues in the Church of God is twofold: (1) with all of the Bibles and commentaries that we have, we have very little knowledge of the Word of God. Most people go to the Bible to support whatever it is that they believe. This, in fact, is one of the problems with personal Bible study. Personal Bible study, at most, should be supplementary to what we get in church. The problem is that we do not get it in church. (2) The second problem is that people *feel* spiritually stagnated. It is actually an accurate appraisal of their lives, and it is a matter of not knowing God's Word and not getting back into fellowship by confessing their sins. These conditions are going to produce what McGee termed *heart hunger*.
- 108. People who speak in tongues have give several reasons for the use of this gift. Now that we know what Scripture says in each and every passage used and abused by charismatics, let's look at their stated purpose and examine these in the light of Scripture:⁴⁷²

⁴⁷¹ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 85–86.

⁴⁷² I am indebted to Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, pp. 23–31 for this point.

- a. **One reason** given for the gift of tongues was to break down the language barrier. This allowed the Apostles to more quickly and efficiently evangelize the world. And, if this gift were in place today, a great deal of time and effort would be bypassed, so that more could be saved.
- b. Given Acts 2, this at first seems plausible, but it is incorrect understanding of tongues. Even though the Apostles communicated the gospel to Jews in the language of their youth (the gentile dialect with which they were raised), there were two almost universal languages in use in the ancient world in the first century A.D.: Greek and Aramaic. During the time of Alexander the Great's early years, there were several types of Greek languages in existence. He saw to it that a universal Greek language was developed (called Koine, or common Greek), Koine Greek was the language spoken in most of countries named in Acts 2. Furthermore, *the nations of the Fertile Crescent stretching from Egypt through Palestine and down into Mesopotamia knew and used Aramaic as an international language of commerce and diplomacy. Consequently it was not necessary to use the native languages or the people gathered at Pentecost in order to reach them.*⁴⁷³ On the day of Pentecost, the Apostles could have evangelized the crowd in either of those two languages and they would have understood the message completely.
- c. A **second reason** given for the use of tongues is that it is a prayerful language which allows us to worship God more fully and deeply. They cite 1Cor. 14:14: **For if I pray in a tongue [i.e., a foreign language], my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful;** as well as 1Cor. 14:28b: **“Let him speak to himself and to God.”** They also refer back to Rom. 8:26, where the Spirit prays on our behalf with groanings that are unutterable. Some even quote other Scriptures which have nothing whatsoever to do with the gift of foreign languages, e.g., Eph. 5:18–20 and Col. 3:16.
- d. Now, we have covered all of these passages already, so this will be summing up point. No where in the Bible does any writer of Scripture suggest that tongues ever to be used in prayer. Paul gives an example in 1Cor. 14:13–15; in the overall context, he is speaking of using tongues aloud during a worship service and setting up the ground rules, as the Corinthians abused the gift. He gives an illustration which is easily understood by one who does not speak in tongues. Paul says, *suppose I pray in tongues; my spirit is engaged, but my mind is not.* Therefore, Paul will pray with the spirit and with his mind as well, just as he would sing with the spirit and with his mind. Paul is not saying that the Corinthians are praying in tongues nor is he saying that he prays in tongues; nor is he suggesting that they sing in tongues. He is giving an easy-to-grasp illustration that *you wouldn't pray in tongues because you wouldn't know what you were saying.* You pray so that your human spirit (that which has fellowship with God) is functioning but you also pray so that your mind is engaged as well—i.e., so that you understand what it is you are saying. *You wouldn't sing in tongues, because you wouldn't know what you were singing about.* His point is easy to understand unless you choose to distort it. It is, *you wouldn't pray or sing in tongues—duh! Therefore, you don't speak aloud in tongues in church without a translator.* You take the entire passage of Scripture and allow Paul to say what it is he is saying. Paul's overall argument is that public utterances in the church should be things which may be understood. He takes two things that the Corinthians probably weren't doing (praying or singing in tongues) and uses them as illustrations as to why you wouldn't speak in tongues aloud at church without an interpreter.
- e. In 1Cor. 14:28b; let us not forget v. 28a, where the person is told to keep silent in the church.
- f. We have also covered Rom. 8:26 properly in context. It boils down to the fact that what is being prayed for is us; we are not doing the praying; the Holy Spirit is praying to God the Father. And, most importantly of all, no words are being spoken.
- g. A **third reason** given is that one speaks aloud in church in tongues to praise God.
- h. Like prayer, such a purpose is also never given in Scripture—in fact there are fewer verses in Scripture which can be distorted to this use. Several times, Paul, in 1Cor. 14, tells people to be silent in church. Tongues were only to be spoken in a church service when they could be interpreted, and then two or three tops. We've just reviewed 1Cor. 14:13–15, where Paul uses the illustrations that you wouldn't pray or sing in tongues, because you wouldn't have any clue as to what you were praying for or singing about; therefore, why on earth would you praise in tongues? Allow me to quote J. Vernon McGee once again: *What is wrong with the book of Psalms? The Holy Spirit gave that. Is it not better to use the books of Psalms to praise God than some gibberish? I can think of nothing better than this: O Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so [say it*

⁴⁷³ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 24.

*plainly, too] whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy (Psalm 107:1, 2). Can you think of anything better to say than that? However, if you are not satisfied with the Psalms, why not go over and get the latest—in fact, the song you are going to sing in heaven, **And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worth to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and has made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth.** (Rev. 5:9, 10).⁴⁷⁴ You can pretty much open the book of Psalms to any page that you want and begin reading—then you can praise with your Spirit and with your mind both.*

- i. The **true purpose** of speaking with foreign languages is clearly given in Scripture:
- j. It was a sign to the Jews that God was placing them under discipline (Isa. 28:9–13 1Cor. 14:20–23). When Jesus began His public ministry, he kept the disciples focused on the Jew. He came to the Jew first (Matt. 10:5 Luke 24:47 Acts 13:46). At Pentecost, this sign of the Apostles speaking in gentile languages was to awaken the Jews to their deplorable spiritual state. Many did respond, but this was still a small percentage of the Jews. Peter used this sign, which caught everyone’s attention, to give them the gospel plainly and clearly in Koine Greek (Acts 2:14–41). When the Jews did not respond as a whole—and in fact, were antagonistic to the gospel, then Paul turned to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15 Gal. 2:7–8). The tongues were pretty much unnecessary after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. to Titus.
- k. Signs, essentially, point to something. **May other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God; and that believing, you may have life in His name** (John 20:30–31). Tongues fall into that category: **In the Law, it stands written, “By men of strange tongues and by lips the strangers will I speak to this people, and even so, they will not listen to Me,” says the Lord. So, then, tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to unbelievers** (1Cor. 14:21–22a; Isa. 28:11).
- l. And a secondary purpose of tongues, which we have covered primarily in Acts 10, is that it was evidentiary—i.e., it provided Peter and his Jewish friends clear evidence that God would work in the gentiles just as He works in the Jew.

<Return to Page One>

109. Conclusion: Problems with the charismatic experience:⁴⁷⁵
- a. The historical examination of the charismatic movement is quite revealing. First of all, there has never been a large charismatic movement until this past century. For 1800 years there were scattered instances of speaking in tongues, which we examined; but nothing even close to mainstream.
 - b. If charismatics knew more about their historical brethren, they would not claim to have any relationship with them at all. However, more importantly than that is the way that the charismata progressed or evolved. The breakthrough of 1900 was that the baptism of the Spirit was associated with the gift of tongues, which had never been the case before. Does this mean that no one was filled or baptized with the Spirit for 1800 or so years? How does a doctrine so fundamental to a believer’s life stay hidden for 1800 years? Why do we not have similar doctrines in the writings of the church fathers from the first and second centuries?
 - c. Not only did the church never associate the gift of tongues with the baptism of the Holy Spirit until 1900, but their view of what tongues was changed. Flower and Parham both expected that speaking in tongues was originally normal human languages. Parham thought that this would revolutionize missionary work (he read his Bible more closely than most charismatics read theirs nowadays, but not carefully enough). Recall, he identified the speaking of tongues by Agnes Ozman as Chinese. For a long time, charismatics would try to pass off their speaking in tongues as being a foreign language (as that would be more in keeping with Scripture). When their *languages* were more carefully scrutinized, they were found not to be foreign languages. So they regrouped again and decided that they must be speaking in angelic tongues. The tendency in this movement in general is to reason from experience back to the Scriptures. If the experience can’t be this, then it must be that. Then that viewpoint is justified from a few threadbare

⁴⁷⁴ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part II*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 16.

⁴⁷⁵ Again, most of this comes from Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, pp. 83–89.

passages. No matter what your viewpoint or what your stance is on anything, recall that every so-called Christian cult uses the Bible in this way. They state a position and then justify it with a few Scriptures taken out of context. No church should be taught this way (primarily) and no pastor should ever depend upon this approach to the Bible. The Bible must be taken as a whole and generally taught in large chunks, in context and without inner contradictions. Organizing material topically is certainly important and apropos; but that should never be the focus of a ministry.

- d. As we have studied several times, one of the greatest negatives of charismatic doctrine is that they offer a false system of spirituality with mechanics which are abstruse and contradictory, even though the final results are often similar. Their criteria for evaluating the result is the experience itself.
- e. Given the sloppy approach to salvation, it is very conceivable that there are many religious unbelievers in the charismatic movement who have had the charismatic experience. They might love the Lord Jesus with all their hearts, but the basis of their salvation is not 100% Christ, 0% them. Many, many times they are maintaining their salvation or they are intent on showing the grace of God manifested in themselves or they are partially dependent upon their personal repudiation of sin. Given the several possible psychological explanations, there are certainly unbelievers in the charismatic movement who have had the Holy Ghost experience.
- f. In keeping with their experience-first and justification later approach, then group under Parham assumed that they were in the last days, because they had the gift of tongues and were therefore living in the era described by Joel in Joel 2.
- g. In keeping with the charismatic's emphasis upon experience over God's Word, Dillow recorded the following: *...[A] lady expressed interest and invited me to come see her...From the moment I walked in the door, she never asked me about my work, but apparently had wanted me to come down so she could tell me about the baptism of the Spirit. We talked for several hours. Finally, after listening politely for a long time, I began to share some passages of Scripture with her to evaluate whether or not her tongues experience was really what the New Testament talked about. We discussed the ten criteria of valid New Testament tongues speaking and then I asked her to compare her experience with the Word on each point. To her amazement, there wasn't one point of similarity except the tongue itself. I asked her to seriously evaluate her experience after I left, by going back through the Scriptures and making up her own mind. Four hours later I drove back home. Several days passed and I received a phone call. She told me on the phone how much she appreciated our discussion but the Lord had showed her that she didn't need to study the Bible to find out if her gift was from God. She said right after I left, she turned and walked toward the refrigerator of her house. Halfway there she had some kind of experience and the Lord told her that her gift was truly from Him and that she now had peace. Thus, the desire to believe she was experiencing something supernatural was so strong that she avoided subjecting her experience to the test of Scripture for fear that it might prove invalid. She lived her life on feelings. My four hours with her revealed a woman struggling with depression because of a husband who greatly resented her mystical spiritual experiences.*⁴⁷⁶
- h. The psychological experience of the charismatic is abnormal and it is a form of dissociation within a person's mental being. The rational function of the brain is short-circuited or cut off for a period of time, not unlike some of the Catholic mystics or other religious mystics. *Temporarily the tongues speaker has entered a pathological condition which is a perversion of the god-intended function of the brain. It is toying with this delicate precision instrument with which God has gifted us. It is transforming the seat of rationality into an irrational machine. In so doing a person contravenes God's purpose for man as a rational being.*⁴⁷⁷
- i. Glossolalia acts as a temporary release or an escape mechanism. However, it acts directly upon the symptoms rather than upon the problems that one escapes from. *It covers up rather than eradicates the problems which often provide the fertile ground from which tongues spring.*⁴⁷⁸
- j. When charismatics begin expanding within a non-charismatic church, they hold together like a clique, exhibiting a certain amount of spiritual pride as their experience has taken them a few steps closer to God than the others in that congregation.

⁴⁷⁶ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 187–188.

⁴⁷⁷ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, pp. 84–85.

⁴⁷⁸ Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, p. 85.

- k. One of the great problems of the charismatic experience are the schisms which it causes within a church. This has occurred over and over again (some of my more liberal brethren say that the fault is equally with the noncharismatics). The charismatic experience is a cancer which will spread if left unchecked. For those who speak in tongues and intend to do so during church assemblies; and for those who will actively evangelize other members of the church to have their experience—they must be removed from the local church. Now, if a person is a quiet charismatic—he does not burst out into tongues during church, he does not evangelize others with his experience, subtly or overtly—then we are not to engage in some sort of a witch hunt to ferret that person out. Similarly, a prostitute or a homosexual or a Lothario or a person who commits many mental sins would be allowed to stay within a local church. It is not our job to remove those whose sins we don't particularly like unless they happen to be practiced so overtly that they entire church knows (e.g., 1Cor. 5:1–5). This of course does not apply to those who are the objects of rumors (those spreading the rumors might be removed, however).
- l. We are to walk by faith and not by sight. The charismatic walks based upon their experience, which is their sight. It is not faith if you depend upon an experience to pump you up spiritually. This personal requirement for tangible evidence is in opposition to walking by faith rather than walking by sight.
- m. Many of the advantages claimed by charismatics are very subjective and self-serving. They make claims of holier lives, a closer walk with God, and just all around better inner feelings. However, what we do not find in the Bible is a similar sort of subjective approach to the Christian walk.
- n. We do not easily grow to maturity as people, and we certainly do not easily grow to maturity as spiritual beings. It is a long, sometimes arduous process with many missteps along the way (we all possess and old sin nature). King David is a good example of this. There is no shortcut in the Christian life, and this charismatic experience offers a shortcut to Christian growth. Examine the testimonies of many charismatics—they have gone from dry, despondent believers to vibrant Christians almost overnight, and this is done apart from the Word. That we are all dependent upon the Holy Spirit for our spiritual life is absolutely dead-on correct. That a questionable experience with the Holy Spirit can take us from lukewarm Christianity to Christian maturity is unlikely.
- o. The charismatic experience is so akin to that of an addict that it is eerie. Whereas a charismatic may talk about the marvelous experience of praising God, what they really are talking about is the marvelous experience of speaking in tongues and not really knowing what is being said, if anything. God has given us the whole book of Psalms with which to praise Him. We are foolish to think that we can go Him one better.
- p. One of the advantages claimed by charismatics is that this second blessing experience is a mark of greater dedication and subjugation to Christ Jesus. MacArthur: *Wold anyone seriously argue that today's tongues-speakers live holier, more consistent lives for Christ than believers who do not speak in tongues? What about all the charismatic leaders in recent years whose lives have proved to be morally and spiritually bankrupt? And does the evidence show that charismatic churches are, on the whole, spiritually stronger and more solid than Bible-believing churches that do not advocate the gifts? The truth is, one must look long and diligently to find a charismatic fellowship where spiritual growth and biblical understanding are genuinely the focus. If the movement does not produce more spiritual Christians or believers who are better informed theologically, what fruit is it producing after all? And what of the many former tongues-speakers who testify that they did not experience genuine peace, satisfaction, power, and joy until they came out of the tongues movement? What does the charismatic experience often culminate in disillusionment as the emotional high from initiatory ecstatic experiences becomes hard and harder to duplicate?*⁴⁷⁹ Of the charismatics that I know, some live exemplary lives and others, not so much. Personally, I would never hold myself up as the model believer with some great secret of success—I say, think and do the wrong things, and luckily have a forgiving God Who has allowed me to live a few more years on this earth despite my inherent rebellion against Him. I rely heavily upon 1Cor. 11:31 and 1John 1:9.
- q. Another problem is that many charismatics are evangelistic in their approach—I'm not talking about charismatic with reference to Christ, but charismatic with reference to the charismatic experience. Although the Bible is clear that our evangelism is to center on Christ, their second wave of evangelism centers on the Holy Spirit. They will often infiltrate churches and cause a great schism between those

⁴⁷⁹ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992, p. 238.

who have had the second blessing and those who have not. This is obviously not all charismatics; but it is especially true of those who are led to a charismatic experience while attending a non-charismatic church.

- r. Whereas, Paul went for 14 years without speaking of an extraordinary experience (an experience we he mentions only briefly), it is the norm for charismatics who have had some sort of an experience to describe it in detail to almost anyone who will listen. I have cited various authors who describe their experiences with Jesus. Dillow writes: *What a stark contrast to many recitals of spiritual experiences today. I personally have sat by while a person in the charismatic movement described in long and ecstatic detail every aspect of some spiritual experience for a long period of time...recently I talked to a lady after a charismatic meeting who went on and on about how this has happened to her. This was her "conversion experience."*⁴⁸⁰ Now this is not all charismatics, as I have known several for years and not once have they described in detail some incredible experience, e.g., watching *Laverne and Shirley* with Jesus sitting next to them on the couch (I'm sorry; this is one of my favorites of the experiences of the charismatics).
 - s. Finally, the worse: tongues are being used by Satan to move people away from correct spirituality and even away from the gospel.⁴⁸¹
110. What about my holy life? A question that has been bothering you, as you covered these passages is this: in examining my exegesis of these passages and double-checking my Greek either on the web or in Strong's, you have come to the grudging point of admitting that I have given the most logical, reasonable interpretation of the Scriptures which were examined. But here is your problem: you have been a charismatic for 6 months, or two years, or five years, or twenty years, and God has blessed you and you have felt as though you have had a viable spiritual life—so (1) why change? And (2) why has my life been generally pretty good?
- a. There are people from all sorts of different cults and religions who would respond the exact same way. This has worked for me for years—why should I change? And what about the validity of my previous life?
 - b. The first obvious answer is *because it is the truth*—we should follow truth and not error. It does not matter that error has seemingly worked for us for several decades—how we feel about it and what seems to work or doesn't work is not the issue—God's truth is the issue.
 - c. But, more importantly, what about this victorious Christian life that you have been leading—how do I explain that? Simple:
 - i. There were times in your Christian life when you did study the Bible and got truths from it apart from the study of the gift of tongues; you were blessed by this truth.
 - ii. There were times in your Christian life when you named your sins to God and God forgave you and filled you with the Spirit, and, for the next 20 minutes or several hours, you were filled with the Holy Spirit and you accomplished divine good during that period of time (until you sinned again).
 - iii. As a believer, even one who spoke in tongues, you were probably concerned with sin and, after salvation, attempted to sin less. This works even for the unbeliever. In fact, you might even be an unbeliever. You may have added works to your faith (i.e., you promised to dedicate your life to Christ, you promised to cut way, way back on sinning, etc., simultaneous with your faith and as a part of your faith in Christ), and so you are not saved. However, your life has improved considerably—why? Simple, anyone who cuts back on sin and attempts to lead a life apart from sin will experience a better life than the person who pursues his own lusts. These are simple laws of our universe. Just like when you touch a hot stove, you burn your hand; when you sin, you also burn your hand. However, when you reduce the amount of sinning in your life, you improve the quality of your life considerably. Why are some Jews enormously successful and moderately happy? They follow the Law, God's design for this life (there are limitations to this, of course).
 - iv. Now, what about all of your enthusiastic witnessing? Listen carefully, if you did not teach the gospel of God correctly—that is, if you implied or outright stated that in order to be saved, you must both believe, but then you must also clean up your life, or get baptized, or you must repent (meaning, you must regret the sins you have committed and vow to stop sinning)—in other words, you were not

⁴⁸⁰ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues*; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; ©1975, pp. 185–186.

⁴⁸¹ Again, a majority of these points were paraphrased from Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969, pp. 82–89.

evangelizing for Christ Jesus. When you added works to faith in evangelization, you muddy up the water. This is why most believers need to keep their mouths shut for the first year or two of salvation (and, in many cases, for the first two decades); whereas, there is nothing wrong with exuberant enthusiasm for Christ Jesus; there is something terribly wrong with teaching that which is false with great enthusiasm.

- v. Two of my favorite examples—Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses—lead, generally speaking, exemplary lives; in fact, they often put the believer to shame in their adherence to a life apart from sin (obviously, they sin, but not so often). Furthermore, Jehovah’s Witnesses can often run circles around the average Protestant in the Bible, as they know what they believe and why they believe it. By definition, these people, if they weren’t saved before, are unbelievers and will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. They will approach Jesus at the great Judgment Seat and say, “**Have we not cast out demons in your name?**” And Jesus will say, “**Go away—I never knew you.**” But their life on earth isn’t half bad. It is simply the fact that they have, to a reasonable extent, attempted to follow God’s laws and precepts, an approach which would improve the quality of anyone’s life. It would have been so much better for them to place the trust of their salvation upon Jesus and upon His death on our behalf on the cross and, if you are a charismatic, it will be so much better for you to leave this tongues/baptism of the spirit crowd. It is good to live a life as free from sin as possible; it is better to lead a life exploiting God’s grace, having been first saved for all eternity.

111. **Summary** (this is for those who need to see the forest through the trees):

- a. There is no legitimate basis for someone claiming to be able to speak with the tongues of angels today. This is a total misunderstanding of 1Cor. 13:1. Charismatics who have taken this passage to heart, have simply taken the words *tongues of angels* and have wrenched that particular phrase completely out of its context. Paul uses a very similar phrase in Gal. 1:8, saying if he or any of his associates should preach a different gospel, **or even an angel from heaven**, then let them be accursed. He is using a Greek debater’s technique—he is not, in any way, stating that most believers when baptized by the Spirit will speak in angelic languages. In fact, there is no Scriptural justification anywhere for believers ever speaking in anything other than known human languages. Even 1Cor. 14, where the KJV makes the mistake of translating a word which means *foreign language* by the unfortunate *unknown tongue* (and *unknown* is in italics in the KJV, meaning that it is not there in the original languages)—even in 1Corinthians 14, this is identified with Isa. 28, where God will speak to the Jew in gentile languages.
- b. In all of my conversations with charismatics (and I have had many), they all eventually will fall back upon their experience with the baptism of the Spirit. I can’t tell you how many have expressed to me the general sentiment: “I know what I experienced was real and it was from God!” Friend, what you know by experience is never the basis of truth. What you know by Scripture is the basis of truth. **Let God be found truthful, though every man be found a liar, as it stands written: That You might be justified in Your words** (Rom. 3:4b–5a Psalm 51:4).
- c. One of the characteristics of a cult is that they evangelize primarily believers. Charismatic infiltrate churches and spread their doctrine as well as recruit believers from other denominations. Unbelievers, I am sorry to say, are often more discerning than believers, and are put off by the behavior observed in charismatic churches. Their reaction to people randomly screaming out in alleged *angelic tongues*, either as a group or individually, is quite different than the reaction of the unbelievers on the day of Pentecost when the Apostles spoke in foreign languages.
- d. The charismatic movement incorrectly portrays the baptism of the Holy Spirit. All believers have been baptized by the Holy Spirit. **For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greek, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit** (1Cor. 12:13). If you think there are two classes of believers out there—those who have experienced what you to believe is the baptism of the Holy Spirit and those who have not—then you think this in opposition to God’s Word.
- e. Charismatics are completely confused as to the use of the sign gifts and what they present as the manifestation of the Holy Spirit is an anemic counterfeit of the gifts that we saw in the Apostles. I’ve been in churches where healings and miracles were supposedly performed—a good magician does much better work. Any unbeliever with an IQ above room temperature can see through the phoniness of a charismatic church during a healing session.
- f. Charismatics distort the historical record of Acts in order to perpetuate their doctrine. In the book of Acts, there are two instances where the Holy Spirit is given separate from salvation, one instance where the

Holy Spirit is given when the people believe, and one instance where it is unclear. When people received the Holy Spirit, some spoke with tongues and some prophesied. Tongues are always presented as human languages unknown to the speaker; not once in the book of Acts are tongues stated or implied to be anything other than normal, human languages. **At no time in the book of Acts is the Holy Spirit ever given apart from an Apostle being present.** At no time in the book of Acts are believers ever told to seek for the Spirit or to yield to the Spirit or to open their mouths and begin making sounds. What occurred in the book of Acts is tremendously different from the experience which charismatic ministers encourage their parishioners to have.

- g. Now, it is certainly possible that some have been healed in charismatic churches. This can have several explanations:
 - i. Mind over matter.
 - ii. A demon indwells a person and leaves when another demon casts him out.
 - iii. A demon inflicts a believer with pain or illness, and stops inflicting him when *healed* by a charismatic healer.
- h. One must also bear in mind that Catholics claim healings by Mary at her shrines and several cults practice faith healings.
- i. Charismatics completely misunderstand the use of tongues in the early church. They have taken a gift which was speaking in known human foreign languages, which had the purpose of speaking to the Jew in gentile languages in order to both evangelize and warn him. They have distorted tongues into the gift of yelling in gibberish (which they call the *tongues of angels*) and they see the purpose of tongues is to bolster the faith of the person speaking in tongues or to pray for something, but they don't know what it is.
- j. There is no clear passage in all of the New Testament where tongues are stated to be anything other than the ability to evangelize Jews in a foreign language not known by the speaker. This is clearly stated in Acts 2 and it is never one in even a single, clear passage, modified, changed or appended. A believer who holds to tongues as being something other than what we find in Acts 2 must interpret various Scriptures, e.g. Rom. 8:26 1Cor. 13:1 14:4, 39, in the light of their personal experiences, taking these passages completely out of context and loosely interpreting them apart from a careful exegesis. For instance, a believer in tongues might point to Rom. 8:26 and say that the Holy Spirit helps them pray in tongues; or they might point to 1Cor. 13:1, and claim that they and Paul speak with the tongues of angels. In all of these instances, the Scripture is taken completely out of context and given a meaning which is not there. Whereas Acts 2 is clear that the Apostles spoke in foreign languages that they did not know to the crowd who gathered; there is no such correspondingly clear passage which gives any other understanding of the gift of tongues. Once a doctrine is covered, e.g., the gift of tongues, and clearly explained, then subsequent writers of Scripture do not have to re-explain what it is.
- k. In all of Scripture, there is but one passage which can arguably be used to justify salvation occurring at a separate interval from the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is Acts 19. However, these were either believers under John the baptizer's ministry, who became believers prior to the giving of the Holy Spirit; or, these men did not fully grasp the gospel, and Paul did present it in that passage, and they were saved and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. You do not base your entire theology upon a passage which can be interpreted in two different ways.
- l. The last chapter of Mark, to which many charismatics go to for justification, was inserted sometime later. It was not a part of original Scripture. However, those who continue to hold to that chapter as God's Word rarely drink poisons and handle poisonous snakes (although there are those cults out there as well).
- m. In every passage used by charismatics to justify their position, a calm, careful exegesis of the passage reveals that they have taken what they want from the passage completely out of context. The most blatant examples of this are: *tongues of angels* (1Cor. 13:1); Paul saying, *I thank my God that I speak with tongues more than you all* (1Cor. 14:18); and *do not forbid to speak in tongues* (1Cor. 14:39). Every passage misinterpreted by the charismatics has been correctly interpreted previously in accordance with (1) the original Greek (and Hebrew, in the case of Isa. 28); (2) its historical context; and (3) its Scriptural context.
- n. The purpose of the gift of tongues (and every other spiritual gift) is **not** a personal building up. That is a misunderstanding and misapplication of 1Cor. 14:4. The purpose of any spiritual gift is to build up the

other believers of the church (1Cor. 12:7 Eph. 4:12); and one is not properly exercising his spiritual gift when *he seeks his own* (1Cor. 13:5).

- o. At no time does Paul or Luke ever indicate that there is a change in the use of the gift of tongues or a shift from evangelizing Israelites in gentile languages (in language unknown to the speaker of the language) to believers praying or speaking in angelic tongues. In fact, in every mention of the gift of tongues, there are generally an abundance of clues to indicate that we are speaking of the exact same gift the Apostles exhibited on the day of Pentecost. Paul and Luke were both closely associated with one another and no doubt their spiritual vocabulary became a shared one. Therefore, there is no reason to think that Luke used the term *tongues* in one way, and Paul in another. Further, bear in mind, a charismatic could not resort to this argument anyway, as they believe that some of their justification for speaking in tongues comes from the book of Acts.
- p. Let's assume for just a moment that tongues did cease in the 1st century; we would then expect the following:
 - i. One of the Apostles would suggest that there would be a cessation of this gift. Paul, in fact, does.
 - ii. There would be an end to the mentioning of tongues in the early canon of Scripture. Well, in fact, the book of Acts no longer mentions them after Acts 19 and none of the epistles written after 1Corinthians, including 2Corinthians, mentions the gift of tongues. These would include 12 epistles of Paul and the epistles of Peter, James, John and Jude, as well as the epistle to the Hebrews.
 - iii. We would have a noted historical absence of this gift of tongues, which is what, in fact, we have. We have the testimony of several church fathers that this gift had ceased; and some were even moderately perplexed by it, as they had not witnessed anything like it.
 - iv. If a counterfeit gift of tongues were to ever crop up, we would expect it to be:
 - (1) Substantially different the gift found in Scripture, which it is.
 - (2) Such a gift would lead people away from salvation, which it does.
 - (3) Such a gift would lead believers away from Bible doctrine, which it does.
 - (4) And such a gift should distort clearly understood doctrines and often come in direct conflict with clearly understood doctrines—and today's gift of tongues fits that bill.
- q. Satan attacks man principally in two ways: (1) he keeps them from the gospel often by presenting it incorrectly (I have **never** heard the gospel presented correctly by a charismatic, which includes a woman who claimed to be a missionary and by the daughter of a missionary) nor have I heard the gospel given correctly in any charismatic church (and I've been to several). (2) Secondly, Satan attacks the believer's spiritual life and tries to neutralize it. If the believer is searching after phoney emotional experiences and never learns correctly how to be filled with the Holy Spirit, then their life is worthless in the divine realm. I have **never** had a charismatic able to tell me correctly how to be filled with the Spirit or how to get into fellowship with God. Talking about Jesus with great evangelistic enthusiasm does not a Christian make. There are hundreds of thousands of Catholics who will spend eternity in hell⁴⁸² and they are emotionally and intellectually tied to a Church which preaches Jesus Christ and salvation through grace. The Corinthians were more than willing to listen to one preach another Jesus, or to receive another spirit, or to listen to another gospel (2Cor. 11:4); however, we are not to have Christian fellowship with those who preach another Jesus and push upon us another spirit.
- r. Because the charismatic teaching on salvation, eternal security, and spirituality is incorrect, then these are not people with whom we should fellowship as fellow Christians with the same goals. If they incorrectly present or obfuscate salvation and spirituality, then they are not our brothers in Christ.
- s. Anytime a church teaches that you can lose your salvation, then it is teaching that you are not saved by Christ alone, but that you are participating in the work of salvation. If you never place your full dependence upon Christ Jesus for your salvation, then you are not saved. If every time you go to believe in Christ's efficacious work on the cross, you add in your promise to do better, your repentance from sins, your emotional regret over your life as your part, then you are not saved.
- t. Some Pentecostals are believers, just as many Catholics are believers. However, they are trapped in a cult just as Catholics are trapped in a cult, and the teachings of their respective cults contain a mixture of truth and error—and the error is with salvation and spirituality. You don't get more fundamentally different than that.

⁴⁸² Not all of them; just those who never place their eternal destiny in the hands of Christ Jesus.

- u. If there come to you any man who does not bring this doctrine, then do not receive him into your house [i.e., church]; neither bid him God speed (2John 10). The key is not, does he have the Holy Spirit? Does he speak in tongues? Has he been baptized with the Holy Ghost? The key is, does he bring this doctrine?
 - v. Shibley warns against a pastor teaching against *tongues*, saying that such a tact will, if anything, cause an outbreak of tongues-speaking in the church. Poppycock. He suggests instead to *seek not; forbid not. Encourage the gifts of the Spirit*, but do not emphasize the gifts of the Spirit. Nonsense! A pastor should teach the entire realm of doctrine.⁴⁸³ Teaching what tongues are and what the baptism of the Holy Spirit is will not cause the members to read every single charismatic book that is out and suddenly talk to charismatic friends that they had not spoken to before. Teaching the truth does not automatically mean that people will go out and seek error.
 - w. Personally, I don't have Christian fellowship with Mormons or with Jehovah's Witnesses. I've known several from those cults, and they are often very, very nice people. One person that I liked very well who had somewhat of a go-nowhere life, became a Mormon and cleaned up his act and became very self-sufficient (prior to that, he leached off some people). Occasionally, I do visit and talk with these people, have lunch with them, etc. Some of them, I like better than many Christians that I know; some of them, I would rather spend time with them than with certain believers. However, we do not have, *Christian* fellowship. I do not go to their churches. I feel the same way about charismatics—they bring with them another gospel. I've gone over, early on in this study, what is wrong with what they believe in, and have shown, at their very core and foundation, that they are not of the faith. Now, they are close—even closer to the truth than Catholics, but, nevertheless, they are only close. What is extremely unfortunate is that some Christian movements and some evangelists knowingly accept the support of people who speak in tongues. We should not walk hand-in-hand with charismatics on Christian endeavors of any kind. The New Testament doctrine of separation is one applied to believers shunning other believers; it rarely refers to believers not associating with unbelievers. There are lines to be drawn, and this is one place where the non-charismatic believer must draw the line.
 - x. Shibley speaks of being hurt, when he heard one evangelist say that "This tongues thing is ninety-five percent of the devil." I'm a little shocked that the evangelist was 5% off the mark myself. What the charismatics are, despite their ample enthusiasm and missionary work, are a cancer. They are an undisciplined growing group of cells which must be cut out of the body. In the various books I read, David Shibley, for instance, appears to be a very nice, intelligent and level-headed charismatic, who I would probably like as a person. One of my best friends early on as a believer was charismatic. Drawing a line here is rather difficult, and I must admit to being prejudiced in this area—I would certainly enjoy the company of these who believe differently than I; but I would not have Christian fellowship with them nor would we embark on joint Christian ventures together.
 - y. Finally, tongues are not for prayer, not for praise, and not specifically for the believer; they are for a sign to the unbelieving Jew.
112. McGee makes a final point, and I have always liked J. Vernon McGee because he is able to take the most complex things and make them appear simple. With his folksy approach to the study of God's Word, he appears to be a simple-minded southern preacher; however, that belies his deep spiritual understanding of most things theological. He says: *Some folk seem to think that they need to be all pepped up or hepped up—then zoop, up they go. But, my friend, you do not go into orbit living the Christian life, you walk on solid earth. The Christian life is not an occasional flight into space, it is a day by day walk—down in the streets of our cities, in our neighborhoods, in our places of business, in our homes.*⁴⁸⁴

[<Return to Page One>](#)

113. Let me make a final point as well. Throughout this study, we have looked at each verse related to speaking in tongues, as well as its historical and literary context, to the point of sometimes examining

⁴⁸³ David Shibley, *A Charismatic Truce*; Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers, ©1978, p. 65.

⁴⁸⁴ J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part II*; a sermon by McGee printed in June 1970; p. 29.

almost each and every word in some verses as well as their morphology. I realize that the charismatic who reads this (I honestly cannot imagine *any* charismatic coming this far, reading each and every line) may still want to say, *Well, you've got your interpretation and I've got mine; I have experienced tongues and I know that they are from God.* To you, let me give you some of the final words of the Apostle Peter. Three Apostles accompanied our Lord to the Mount of Transfiguration—Peter, James and John. They saw our Lord in a glorified body and they heard God speak to them from heaven. Peter heard God's voice and saw the glorified Messiah; so, near the end of his life, he tells us what is even more real and more certain than what he saw that day: God's Word is more real and more certain than anything that we see or hear.

For not having been craftily devised fables we followed, we made known to you the Lord, our Jesus Christ, power and coming, but rather eyewitnesses having become of the that one majesty.

|| Peter
1:17

For, we have not followed craftily devised fables [when] we made known to you the power and coming of the Lord, our Jesus Christ, but rather, we had become eyewitnesses of the majesty of That One.

For you see, when we made known to you the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, we had not followed cleverly devised tales, but rather we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

I don't know exactly what happened to Peter in this second epistle. His Greek became much more difficult than it was in his first epistle. Whether he became more literate or whether we are just dealing with bad Greek, I honestly don't know. However, we are going to employ several other translations to help us here:

<i>Complete Jewish Bible</i>	For when we made known to you the power and the coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, we did not rely on cunningly contrived myths. On the contrary, we saw his majesty with our own eyes.
Interlinear idiomatic	For we did not follow craftily devised fables when we made know to you the power and coming of Jesus Christ our Lord, but rather, became eyewitnesses of His majesty.
NASB	For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.
Weymouth	For when we made known to you the power and Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ we were not eagerly following cleverly devised legends, but we had been eye-witnesses of His majesty.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	For, skilfully devised fables not having followed out, we did make known to you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but eye-witnesses having become of his majesty—

To coordinate the first two clauses, the first one in the Greek is governed by the aorist active participle of *followed*, while the second one is dictated by the aorist active indicative of *made known*. There is no word for *when* in this verse, however the aorist participle precedes or is coterminous with the action of the main verb. This verbal construction sets up a temporal parallelism between the two phrases, allowing for the insertion of the word *when*. Peter and the other Apostles witnessed to the entire world, Jews and gentiles alike, as to Who and What Jesus Christ is. Now, they did not gather together and develop some cleverly devised stories about our Lord, making up things about His death and resurrection, but they (Peter, James and John) actually saw the glorified person of Jesus Christ. When they were on the Mount of Transfiguration, our Lord appeared to them in His glorified body. Why all three of them? Because, in the mouths of two or three witnesses, a fact is confirmed.

For, having received from God the Father honor and glory, a voice was being brought to Him such as this by the Magnificent Glory, “This is the Son of My the Beloved in Whom I was well-pleased.”

II Peter
1:17

For, having received honor and glory from God the Father, a voice, having been brought to Him such as by the Magnificent Glory [or, Shekinah Glory], “This is My Son, the Beloved in Whom I am pleased.”

For, after He received both honor and glory from God the Father, there was a voice from heaven, spoken by the Shekinah Glory of God, saying, “This is My Son, my Most Beloved, with Whom I am well-pleased.”

Peter now describes what happened on the Mount of Transfiguration. We'll take in a couple of other translations to get us going:

<i>Complete Jewish Bible</i>	For we were there when he received honor and glory from God the Father; and the voice came to him from the grandeur of the Sh'khinah, saying, “This is my son, whom I love; I am well Pleased with Him!”
Interlinear idiomatic	For He, having received from God the Father honor and glory, when a voice was brought to Him such as this by the Magnificent Glory, “This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.”
NASB	For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased”—
Weymouth	He received honour and glory from God the Father, and out of the wondrous glory words such as these were spoken to Him, “This is My dearly-loved Son, in whom I take delight.”
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>for having received from God the Father honour and glory, such a voice being borne to him by the excellent glory: ‘This is My Son—the beloved, in whom I was well-pleased;’

In this verse, Peter continues to subordinate the verbs to the main verb of the previous verse (*made known*). *Having received* is an aorist active participle and *came* is an aorist passive participle—what Peter is doing is setting up things which had occurred in the past with what the Apostles had done of recent—witnessed to the glory of Jesus Christ.

The *Magnificent Glory* is a reference to the *Shekinah Glory*, which once indwelt the tent of God. The tent, or tabernacle, of God, was a two roomed tent which spoke of the coming of Christ Jesus. God gave Moses precise directions as to what the tent should look like and what it should contain and in the hidden portion of the tent, where no one save the High Priest could go but once a year, in the Holy of Holies, there was the Ark of the Covenant which spoke of Jesus. It was wood (speaking of His humanity) overlaid with gold (speaking of His deity). In it was the Book of the Law, which spoke of the perfection and holiness of God, as well as His perfect Law. In it was also the pot of manna, the bread from heaven, speaking of God's provision. And also in it was Aaron's rod that budded, speaking of the resurrection from the dead. These were all shadows of the Messiah Who was to come. In the Holy of Holies dwelt the Shekinah Glory, the Presence of God and there were times when the entire tent was filled with the Glory of God, during which time even Moses was unable to enter in (Ex. 40:34–35). When Solomon had built the temple, to replace the tent, God also filled it with His Glory, making it impossible for any man to enter in (1Kings 8:11 2Chron. 7:1–3). This is why David Stern, the translator of the *Complete Jewish Bible*, renders this one phrase as Sh'khinah Glory. Peter and the others were witnesses to the transformation of our Lord Jesus Christ—they heard the voice of God the Father being brought down to them, glorifying His Son. Many of us have had a variety of spiritual experiences in our lives; or experiences which we felt were spiritual; however, no one has had an experience as tremendous as this. They were all three there, so they did not imagine it. This was something unlike anyone had ever experienced. This was the peak of spiritual experience to be in the presence of the Gloried Christ and hearing the voice of God.

—and this, the voice we heard from heaven being brought with Him, we kept on being on the mountain the holy.

II Peter
1:18

—and this [was] the voice we heard being brought down from heaven [when] we were with Him on the holy mountain.

—and this was the voice we had heard which was spoken from heaven while we were with Him on the holy mountain.

Peter makes it clear that they heard this voice from heaven while they stood before the glorified Christ. Then Peter writes something which should completely blow you away:

And we keep having a more certain the prophetic Word, which well you would do paying attention to (as a lamp shining in a dark place until which day dawns and a morning star rises) in the hearts of yours,

II Peter
1:19

And we keep on having a more certain Word of prophecy, which you would do will paying attention to in your hearts, as a lamp shining in a dismal place until the day dawns and a morning star arises.

In fact, we have a more sure Word of prophecy to which you would do well to continue paying attention in your hearts, as you would to a bright light shining in a dismal place until the day dawns and a morning star arises.

We will look at a couple of other translations, and then partially exegete this.

Interlinear idiomatic

And we have confirmed the prophetic word, which you do well to receive, as a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, And so we have the prophetic word *made* more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts

NASB

The 20th Century NT

And still stronger is the assurance that we have in the teaching of the Prophets; to which you will do well to pay attention, as you would to the light of a lamp in a gloomy place, until the Day dawns and the Morning Star rises in your hearts.

Weymouth

And in the written word of prophecy we have something more permanent; to which you do well to pay attention—as to a lamp shining in a dimly-lighted place—until day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

Young's Lit. Translation

And we have more firm the prophetic word, to which we do well giving heed, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, till day may dawn, and a morning start may arise—in your hearts;

Now Peter leaves the subordinate verbs and begins with the present active indicative of *we have*, which means that this is something which *they keep on having*. This is followed by the **comparative** adjective βέβαιος (βέβαιος) [pronounced *BEB-ah-yoss*], which means *fixed, sure, certain*. It is used figuratively from that upon one may build, rely or trust. It is a word not used for people but for things which do not fail, waver, or are immovable, or things upon people may rely. Here, this word means *more certain, more fixed, more sure*. Strong's #949. This is followed by *the prophetic word*, which should be rendered *the word of prophecy*. This gives us: **And we keep on having a more certain [and reliable] Word of prophecy...** Now, the comparative should immediately point us to the context and ask first, about what is Peter speaking, and, secondly, what is it more certain or reliable than? What Peter is speaking of is the *Word of God*, called here the *Word of Prophecy*. We know by II Peter 3:16 that he includes the writings of Paul among the Scriptures, as he refers to people distorting the writings of Paul as *they do other Scriptures*. Insofar as we are concerned, he is speaking of the entire Word of God, although it had not been completed when Peter wrote. More importantly, what is Peter comparing this to? What is God's Word more certain than or greater than or more reliable than? It is greater than his experience on the Mount of Transfiguration when he saw the glorified Christ and he heard God speaking from heaven. Few believers have any grasp of how important God's Word is. It supercedes every experience and every philosophy and every viewpoint that you have

ever had. It does not matter how tremendous the experience—and no one reading or hearing this can even come close to experiencing on earth what Peter experienced—God’s Word is more reliable, more certain, more sure. You may depend upon God’s Word above any and every experience that you have ever had and ever will have.

The only portion of this verse which is confused is the final phrase *in your hearts*—the morning star is not arising in anyone’s heart; the verb which goes with *in your heart* is the present active participle of *proséchō* (προσέχω) [pronounced *pros-EHKH-oh*], which means *to hold the mind or ear toward someone, to pay attention*; it is a nautical term used to hold a ship in a direction and to sail towards something. Strong’s #4337.

This first knowing that every prophecy of Scripture of one’s own interpretation, not becomes. For not by the will of man was brought ever prophecy, but rather by the Spirit Holy being moved spoke holy of God men

II Peter
1:20–21

First know this, that every prophecy of Scripture does not become one’s own interpretation. For prophecy was not brought by the will of men, but rather set apart men of God spoke by the Holy Spirit.

Above all, realize that every prophetic Scripture came not by way of a human origin, for prophecy did not come by the will of man, but holy men of God, carried along by the Holy Spirit, as they spoke.

Let’s see what others have done with this:

Interlinear idiomatic	...Knowing this first that no prophecy of Scripture occurs not of one’s own interpretation,. For prophecy was not ever brought by the will of man, but rather holy men of God spoke moved by the Holy Spirit.
NIV	Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
The 20 th Century NT	First be clear o this point:—There is no prophetic teaching in Scripture that can be interpreted by man’s unaided reason; Prophets were moved by the holy Spirit, and wo spoke at the prompting of God, mere men though they were.
Wuest	But, above all, remember that no prophecy in Scripture will be found to have come from the prophet’s own prompting; for never did any prophecy come by human will, but men sent by God spoke as they were impelled by the Holy Spirit.
Young’s Lit. Translation	...this first knowing that no prophecy of the Writing doth come of private exposition, for not by will of man did ever prophecy come, but by the Holy Spirit borne on holy men of God spake.

There is only one word that I should mention here and that is the feminine noun *epílusis* (ἐπίλυσις) [pronounced *ep-EEL-oo-sis*], which occurs only here and means *exposition, interpretation*. It is given two fairly different interpretations here: the most popular one being that no man can give any given Scripture his own personal interpretation; and the more likely one, that no Scripture has originated from the personal source or from a personal theological viewpoint. In other words, the focus is on the prophet and what he wrote rather than upon our interpretation of what he wrote. Strong’s #1955. Both things are true.

What these last couple of verses do is simply explain why Scripture is more important than anything that we see or think or feel—all Scripture is of divine origin. There is nothing greater in this world than the Word of God—it is greater and more important than any experience that you have ever had. In the charismatic world, man men are coming forward with all kinds of, what they seem to believe are, *words of prophecy*, and they think that they are being borne along by the Holy Spirit (because, certainly, **no one** in the tongues movement could every possibly be fooled by their own experience). What they have come up with contradicts other charismatic leaders and most of it contradicts Holy Scripture. Furthermore, why on earth would God the Holy Spirit prompt John to close the canon of Scripture (Rev. 22:18–19) if prophets could still add to it? You are allowed to examine your own experiences with one rule and one rule only, and that is the Word of God. The standard of measure is not how you feel about the

experience; your guide is not how it has transformed you into a vibrant, dedicated servant of God—the standard of measure is the Word of God. If you have stayed with me throughout these 100+ pages, you have seen that every Scripture which is commonly interpreted by glossolalics to support the notion of tongues being some holy, angelic language does not really teach that—there are times you must pick and choose individual words from the context of sometimes even a single verse in order to get that interpretation. You have seen that nowhere in Scripture does Paul or any other writer urge us to seek after the Holy Spirit and after an experience such as being *baptized* or *slain in the Spirit*. You have seen by careful examination that there is no reason, apart from Pentecostal doctrine based upon experience, to suppose that there were two or three different gifts of languages given to men as gifts. If you are a charismatic, then you must decide which is more accurate—a series of experiences which you have had or the Word of God.

[<Return to Page One>](#)

For additional reading, let me strongly suggest the following:

Charismatic authors:

John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*; Plainfield, NJ; Logos International, ©1966.

David Shibley, *A Charismatic Truce*; Nashville, TN; Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers; ©1978.

Noncharismatic authors:

Donald Burdick, *Tongues—To Speak or Not To Speak*; Moody Press, ©1969.

John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1992.

1. The name Pentecost comes from the Greek translation of *fifty days*.

J. Vernon McGee, *Talking in Tongues! Part I; Talking in Tongues! Part II*; sermons by McGee printed in June 1970.

2. *The New Scofield Reference Bible*; Dr. C.I. Scofield; ©1967 New York-Oxford University Press; p. 157.