

100. WHY PROPHECY, TONGUES and KNOWLEDGE GIFTS CEASED IN THE FIRST CENTURY AD.

Bible Reading: I Corinthians 13:8-13.

Aim: To show that tongues ceased in 70 AD with the destruction of Jerusalem.

To show that prophecy and knowledge gifts ceased in 96 AD with the completion of the New Testament.

Introduction: If these three gifts ceased in the first century, then the modern tongues movement is not of God and should be rejected as unbiblical. The following exegesis of I Corinthians 13:8-13, is intended as a springboard to understand how the entire Bible teaching on this subject fits together to show that the purpose of tongues was a warning to Israel, and hence, ceased by 70 AD. It will be shown that prophecy and knowledge gifts were God's temporary means of revelation to the early Church until the completed New Testament had been given. Today, God speaks through His Word, not through some person claiming to give a prophecy from God.

I. TEMPORARY GIFTS of PROPHECY, TONGUES and KNOWLEDGE contrasted with PERMANENT FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY for the CHURCH AGE. 1 Corinthians 13:8-13. 13:8. "Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, **they shall fail** (Greek: **Katargethesontai**); whether there be tongues, **they shall cease**³⁹⁷³ (Greek: **pausontai**), whether there be knowledge, **it shall vanish away**" (Greek: **Katargethesetai**).

Question 1: When does CHARITY (Agape love) stop? **Answer:** "Charity never faileth" (v.8). This means that love will continue on forever. It is the only one of the 6 phenomena discussed here that continues forever. This means that faith, hope, prophecy, tongues and knowledge all stop, but when?

a) I Corinthians 13:13 tells us "And **now abideth** faith, hope and charity, **these three**; but the greatest of these is charity."

We learn here that faith, hope and charity continue all through the church age.

b) This means that prophecy, tongues and knowledge are not said to continue all through the Church age, but cease sometime before the second coming (rapture) of Christ.

Question 2: When does FAITH stop?

Answer: When Christ returns at the rapture to catch the church up to heaven.

- II Corinthians 5:7 "For we walk by faith, not by sight."
When we get to heaven we will see what we had faith in, so that faith will give way to sight.
- I Peter 1:9 "Receiving the **end**⁵⁰⁵⁶ (Greek: **telos**) of **your faith**, even the salvation of your souls." This tells us that faith will end when we get to heaven, thus enjoying salvation or deliverance from the presence of sin. "Telos" means "end, result, termination, ultimate fate, completion in respect to time, or fulfillment."
- Hebrews 12:2: "Looking unto Jesus the author and **finisher**⁵⁰⁴⁷ (teleiotes) of our **faith**." Jesus Christ finishes our faith when He returns for us at His second coming, and we "reach our goal" ("teleiotes" in Greek) of heaven with our resurrected, glorified bodies. Hence faith ends for all church age believers at the second coming of Christ.

Question 3: When does HOPE stop?

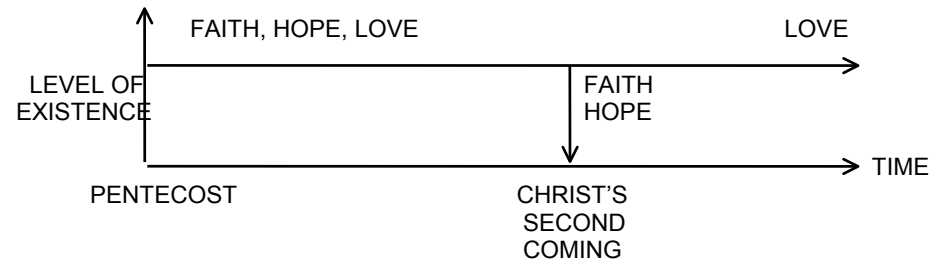
Answer: When we get what we are hoping for in heaven. For example, if you are married, you are not hoping to get married because you then possess what you hoped for. Believers are hoping for Christ's second coming (Titus 2:13), and the resurrection of the dead (Acts 23:6). When we have what we hope for, then hope finishes. "Looking for that **blessed hope** and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13.

"...of the **hope** and resurrection of the dead am I called in question." Acts 23:6 and Acts 26:6.

"...**hope that is seen is not hope**: for what a man **seeth**, why doth he yet **hope** for?" Romans 8:24.

Hope will only remain until we see Christ and receive our resurrection bodies at His second coming. Hence hope is valid only until the second coming.

Knowing that love continues forever ("charity never faileth") we can draw the following graph:



Key: Hence faith will be lost in sight; hope will be lost in reality; and love continues for all eternity.

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." I Corinth. 13:13. Because **only** faith, hope and charity are abiding throughout the church age, these three alone, then prophecy, tongues and knowledge must cease sometime **INSIDE** the church age. The time these (and the other temporary gifts) ceased had to have been before the completion of the New Testament.

Question 4: When do PROPHECY and KNOWLEDGE gifts cease?

Answer: "Whether there be prophecies, **they shall fail** (Greek (2673): **Katargethesontai**);.....

whether there be knowledge, **it shall vanish away** (Greek (2673): **Katargethesetai**)."

Meaning: "Katargeo" means to render inoperative, to make inactive, to be done away, to supercede, put an end to. With Paul it always denotes a complete cessation, not a temporary or partial ceasing.

Every occurrence of "Katargeo" in I Cor. 13:8,10 is in the passive voice, indicating that something shall make prophecy and knowledge inactive.

Question 5: What are prophecy and knowledge?

1. The gift of **prophecy** in the apostolic church was speaking new revelation from God, to instruct and edify. Prophecy has a secondary meaning of forthtelling God's Word to teach and comfort the Church. This is Bible teaching of today. Teaching replaced first century prophecy. A person knew, then prophesied. They were twin gifts.
2. The gift of **knowledge** in the apostolic Church was the ability to understand and know the mind and will of God. It was revealed truth, not learned. It is seeing as the Holy spirit sees. It was used to teach believers certain doctrines which had not as yet been written as part of the New Testament.eg:

Peter knew who Jesus really was. Matthew 16:17.

Agabus knew and then prophesied about Paul being bound at Jerusalem. Acts 21:10-12.

Paul knew the demonised damsel's message to be false. Acts 16:18.

Such knowledge, like prophecy, was as authoritative as the scriptures in the early church.

Each of these gifts can refer to either:

- a) an **action** - the exercising of the gifts in the church where he prophesies or gives a word of knowledge.
 - b) **content** - in Matthew 13:14,15 Christ quotes what Isaiah said 750 years earlier, which was now part of Scripture. When prophecy or knowledge became codified as scripture, they stood alone, no longer as the "act" of prophecy and knowledge, but as the "content" of prophecy and knowledge, now become written scripture.
3. The gift of **tongues** (or unlearned languages), was similar yet inferior to prophecy and knowledge in that the tongues speaker needed to be translated. Paul said in I Corinthians 14:18,19 "Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."
Speaking in a tongue and having it translated only allows the speaker to say half as much in a given time, as could a prophecy or word of knowledge in the common tongue. Tongues were cumbersome verbage. Prophecy, tongues and knowledge form the subject of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13. Something is going to happen to each of them. None of them are to abide during the Church age, as will faith, hope and love. They are transient gifts.

13:8 "Whether there be tongues, **they shall cease** ³⁹⁷³" (Greek (3973): pausontai).

Here "pausontai is used in an absolute sense, to cease, to come to an end."

["The Complete N.T. Word Study Dictionary", S. Zhodiatos, p.1132.]

"Pausontai" is in the middle voice, indicative mood, meaning that the action of ceasing will come from within, rather than from outside.

"Cease" means that tongues would fulfil their function (of warning Jews of coming Judgment), and render themselves obsolete, unneeded, ended. Literally it means "tongues shall make themselves to cease, or automatically cease of themselves." [A.T. Robertson Vol.IV, p.179.]

13:9 "For we know in part, and we prophecy in part." Since v.9 omits tongues, it would appear that tongues would cease before the removal of prophecy and knowledge. "In part" defines quantity, and the word "perfect" meaning "complete" is the opposite to "in part."

Knowledge of doctrine in the pre-canon period of the Church Age was fragmentary. The 14 mystery doctrines of this dispensation had not yet been completely given in New Testament Scripture. They could only teach from the Old Testament and by direct revelation from God via prophecy and knowledge. They knew in part, and consequently, they prophesied in part.

13:10 "But when **that** which is **perfect** (Greek: "teleion" meaning complete) is come, then that which is **in part** shall **be done away**." (Greek: "Katargetheseta" meaning to render inoperative).

Prophecy and knowledge, both being "in part", will be **done away with** when the perfect shall come.

Question 6: When does the PERFECT come?

- a) If it is the second coming of Christ, then prophecy, tongues and knowledge are allowable today.
- b) If it is the completed New Testament Scriptures of 96 AD then prophecy, tongues and knowledge have all ceased in the first century and are not for today.

Question 7: To answer Question 6, we must ask another question: What is 'that which is perfect'?

Answer: Several opinions are:

1. Jesus Christ at His second coming.
2. The perfected state of the believer at Christ's return.
3. After the millennium in the new **heaven** and new **earth**.
4. The completed New Testament Scriptures.

II. 12 REASONS WHY THE "PERFECT" IN V.10 REFERS TO THE COMPLETED NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES:

1. "When **that** (Greek: **To** Teleion) which is **perfect** is come."
The pronoun "THAT" in Greek, describing the perfect, is **neuter**. Christ however is masculine, not neuter, so "that which is perfect" cannot refer to Christ or His return. The Bible is neuter. This fits the context perfectly.
2. "**Perfect**" in Greek means "**complete, finished**". The N.T. by 96 AD was completed and finished as God's revelation for this Church age. The completed N.T. canon of Scripture would serve the same purpose that prophecy, tongues, knowledge, apostleship, healing, miracles and other temporary spiritual gifts had once performed. Christ is never called the complete or finished one.
3. "Perfect" cannot mean Christ's return, because Christ's second coming is **foreign to the context** of I Corinthians 12,13,14 being mentioned nowhere in these 3 chapters. The subject of I Corinthians 12,13,14 is spiritual gifts to the church in the church age. To extend prophecy, tongues and knowledge into the millenium or after the millenium is to miss the focus and context of the passage.
4. **James 1:25 describes the perfect as the Bible, the perfect law of liberty.**
The meaning of "perfect" in scripture can be determined by it's use in other passages of scripture. "Teleion", the "perfect" or "completed" was already in the New Testament when Paul wrote. James had already referred to the Word of God as the "**perfect law of liberty**" in James 1:25.
"But be ye doers of the **word**, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."
"But whoso looketh into the **perfect law of liberty**, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." James 1:22,25.
"Perfect" in James 1:25 in Greek is "teleion" the same as "perfect" in 1 Corinthians 13:10.

In James 1:25 "perfect" clearly refers to the soon to be completed Bible, and this must be the same meaning in I Corinthians 13:10.

In James 1:22-25 the perfect law of liberty is the Bible.

Therefore, in I Corinthians 13:10 the perfect is the Bible.

Summary question: If James 1:22-25 says, **Perfect** (v.25) = **Mirror** (v.23,24) = **Bible** (v.22,23,25)

then what is 'perfect' in I Corinthians 13:8-13, **Perfect** (v.10) = **Mirror** (v.12) = ?

5. **James 1:23 and 1 Corinthians 13:12 both describe the Bible as a mirror/glass that we see our reflection in.**

"For if any be a hearer of the **word**, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a **glass**." James 1:23.

"For now we see through a **glass** darkly; but then (when the perfect, completed Bible has come) face to face." 1 Corinthians 13:12.

As we look into a **mirror** to see the true **physical** condition of **our face**, so we look into the **Bible** as a mirror to see the true **spiritual** condition of our heart and life.

Some people look into a mirror and forget their physical appearance.

Some people look into the Bible mirror and forget their spiritual appearance.

Therefore, GLASS MIRROR = PERFECT = the WORD OF GOD.

Therefore, 1 Corinthians 13:12 describes the "perfect" as a glass mirror, just as James 1:23 does.

6. **II Corinthians 3:18 also shows the glass, and hence the perfect to be the Word of God, which transforms us.**

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a **glass** the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

The mirror/glass is a symbol of the Word of God. (James 1:22,25).

As we look into God's Word and we see Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit transforms us into the very image of Jesus Christ. "We all" means all believers, seeing in the Bible/glass, the glory of the Lord. "Open face" means that we can hide nothing from God; We must be open and honest with Him.

We can be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ ("He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son...". Romans 8:29) and go from glory to glory, by the Holy Spirit changing us as we saturate ourselves in the Word of God.

"are **changed** (**Greek**: metamorphoumetha) into the same image from glory to glory."

The Greek word "changed" gives us the word "metamorphosis" which describes the process of an insect changing from an ugly worm into a mature beautiful butterfly. The changes come from within. So it is when we meditate on God's Word and in it see Jesus Christ, then the Holy Spirit transforms us into the image of Jesus Christ.

In the Bible we see the glory of Christ and are changed into His image.

13:12. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part;...."

In I Corinthians 13:12, only a few New Testament books were completed. The glory of the Lord revealed in the word was not complete. First century believers could neither see Christ, nor themselves, in the full light of God's revelation. They could only see darkly or dimly. However with the completion of Scripture, not only would the glory of Christ be revealed in greater fullness, but so would the believer's own reflection become clearer.

Why? Because the believer after 96 AD has more Scripture to transform him into Christ's image. The "perfect" is the **opposite** of that which is "in part."

Paul viewed his own writings as Scripture (1 Thessalonians 2:13). He knew that new revelation was being given and that one day it would cease. In the same way that God had completed the Old Testament, God would also complete the New Testament. Paul's use of the phrases "we know **in part** and we prophesy in **part**" (13:9) show that he is dealing with a partially completed Bible that was being added to by the Apostle's revelations from God.

7. The **Second Coming is never called "perfect" in the New Testament**, but the **Bible** is called the perfect law of liberty in James 1:25. 'The law of the Lord is **perfect**, converting the soul.' Psalm 19:7

8. The **completed New Testament fulfilled the same job as did the temporary gifts of prophecy and knowledge**. Once prophecy and knowledge were codified (written down) as the New Testament, then prophecy and knowledge ceased. ie. New revelation of prophecy and knowledge ceased when the full N.T. revelation for this age was completed.

9. **Christ's second coming is neither complete nor morally perfect**. In the millennium, the sinner will die 100 years old (Isaiah 65:20). The millennium ends with satan's release from the pit and some nations rebelling to attack Christ at Jerusalem. This is not a perfect or complete situation at all.

10. **Faith and Hope finish at the second coming** (13:13).

Therefore, prophecy, knowledge and tongues, each **not abiding** during the church age, **must end well before faith and hope ends** (compare 1 Corinthians 13:8 with 1 Corinthians 13:13).

Prophecy, knowledge and tongues end well before the second coming.

Prophecy and knowledge end by the coming of the perfect, completed Word of God in 96 AD.

Tongues ended by 70 AD, with Titus destroying Jerusalem and the judgment predicted coming on the Jews for rejecting Christ's gospel. You don't warn people after the punishment has fallen.

11. **The completed Bible is able to make believers complete by giving us all things that pertain to life and godliness.** (II Peter 1:3,4). We don't need new revelation.

"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto **life and godliness**, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory (in heaven) and virtue (now on earth).

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious **promises** (in the perfect Bible) that by these ye might be partakers of the **divine nature** (changed from glory to glory)." II Peter 1:3,4.

This is obtained through:

1) the knowledge of Christ found in the Bible, and

2) by claiming the exceeding great and precious promises in the Bible.

Everything that we need today for life and Godliness to make us mature, completely equipped Christians is found in the Bible. Hence, the Bible is appropriately called the "complete Completer" for us today, the exact meaning of "teleion" in I Corinthians 13:10.

12. The **completed Bible** (all Scripture) **can make the man of God "perfect"** (Greek: "artios"⁷³⁹ meaning "complete, sufficient, completely qualified; a synonym of "teleion"), thoroughly furnished unto **all good works**." II Timothy 3:16,17.

Here again, "all Scripture" making the man of God perfect, supports "perfect" in I Corinthians 13:10 as meaning the Bible, and not the second coming of Christ. Therefore, when the perfected, completed Bible comes, then the "in part" prophecy and knowledge shall be done away. This happened in 96AD when John finished writing Revelation 22:21.

Question 8: Why is tongues not mentioned in I Corinthians 13:9,10 as being done away with by the perfect?

Answer: It is because tongues had already ceased in 70 AD with the destruction of Jerusalem, being the judgment on the Jews that tongues pointed to (I Corinthians 14:21,22). After 70 AD, there was no more purpose for tongues, so the tongues gift ceased forever by 70 AD. Tongues were not in existence to be done away with by “the perfect.” Tongues had ceased 26 years earlier.

Those who think that the “perfect” is Christ’s return and reject it as meaning the completed New Testament Scripture, do so because:

1. They have not studied every word, phrase, or verse of I Corinthians 13 in its context, **or**
2. They are mentally influenced by someone with leaning towards Pentecostalism, **or**
3. They are influenced by some interdenominational teacher whose decision about this scripture is non-committal so as to retain his popularity with both charismatic and non charismatic groups.
4. No scripture is ever produced in proof that the Holy Spirit did **not** mean the complete N. Testament.

If knowledge ended at Christ’s return, and if knowledge meant normal knowledge, then all Christians would be imbeciles in heaven.

Note: It is not good to say that God spoke to you and told you to do something, because if you are wrong, you lose your credibility. Instead, say “I felt led or burdened by the Lord to.....”.

13:11“When I was a child, I **spake** as a child (tongues), I **understood** as a child (knowledge), I **thought** as a child (prophecy is verbalised thoughts): but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

Question 9: What have childish things got to do with temporary gifts of prophecy, tongues and knowledge?

Answer: Paul is comparing a **human** advancing from childhood to adulthood, with the **church** passing from infancy in the first century marked by prophecy, tongues and knowledge gifts, to maturity marked by believers depending on the Bible, faith, hope and charity from 96 AD to the rapture. By 96 AD the childish gifts of prophecy, tongues and knowledge had ceased, and church manhood had been reached.

So Paul used **2 illustrations** to show the passing of prophecy, tongues and knowledge, and the permanence of the completed Bible, along with faith, hope and charity for the church age:

a) A **person** growing from **childhood** to **adulthood** and putting away the childish temporary things of prophecy, tongues and knowledge in I Corinthians 13:11.

Paul is here saying to the Corinthian believers “put away the childish things of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge, because manhood will soon be reached.”

In the first century, a boy was recognised as a mature man when he got married, left his parents home and established his own home.

In the first century, Judaism was regarded as the parent religion, where Christianity (the child) resided. The early Christians enjoyed the protection of Judaism as an officially recognised religion. Christianity seemed like another Jewish sect.

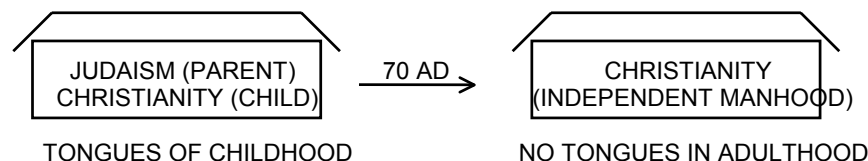
Sulpicius Severus in discussing Titus’ destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, states that:

“Titus formed the deliberate purpose to destroy Christianity and Judaism in one blow, believing that if the Jewish root were torn up the Christian branch would soon perish”.

[F. Farrar “The Early Days of Christianity” p.326.]

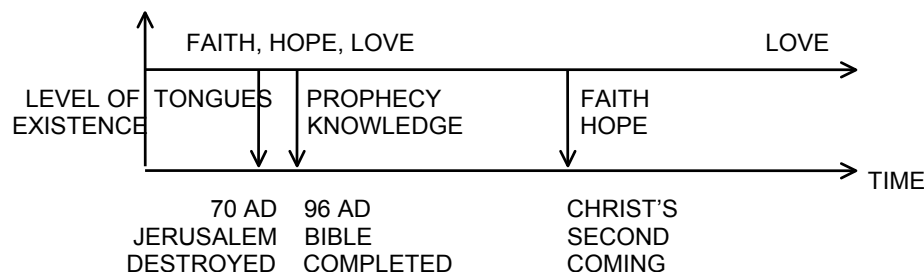
Judaism was the parent/home religion and Christianity was the child religion. But with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, the church moved out of its childhood home. It became a separate, independent, distinct religion, able to grow without the Jewish temple and without the protective umbrella of the Jewish religious system. Christianity had left the Jewish parents home and had reached manhood. It had left childhood behind.

This was another reason for putting away the childish things of tongues.



In Revelation 22:18,19 God finished prophecy and knowledge revelations by giving us the completed Bible with a warning against new prophecies. There would be no more partial revelations given by prophecies or knowledge. They had forever been superseded by a completed Bible.

Tongues ceased in 70 AD, prophecy and knowledge ceased in 96 AD. This graph summarizes it:



When Paul wrote I Corinthians 12,13,14 around 55AD, the infant church was still a child in its childhood home. Tongues still had a purpose. No one then was to forbid speaking in tongues.

However, after Jerusalem’s destruction in 70AD genuine tongues ceased, never to be heard again from the lips of the matured church (13:11).

With manhood reached by 96AD, heralded by complete/perfect **knowledge** in the Bible (“understanding” in 13:11) and complete/perfect **prophecy** codified in the Bible (“thought” in 13:11), childish things of prophecy, tongues and knowledge were forever put away. To revert to these would be a tragedy, a breakdown in manhood, and a pathetic **regression to infancy**. Tongues are not for the church today, because they ceased in 70 AD. Church history agrees with this.

C.L. Rogers analyses the writings of Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Chrysostom, Justin Martyr from 100-400 AD from every area of the Roman Empire and states that: “the miraculous gifts of the first century died out and were no longer needed to establish Christianity.” (p.143).

Language is the verbalising of one’s thoughts and denotes one’s level of understanding. Tongues in the early church, were thus like infancy childish language to a man.

When we hear a baby speaking childish language, we think it is cute and normal. However, when a full grown man reverts to baby talk because of some mental breakdown, we think it is a pathetic disability, horrible and to be pitied. This is because men are expected to have “put away childish things.” **What is normal in infancy is abnormal in adulthood.**

So, also for the Church to revert to tongues, is to revert to babyhood. Paul at that early date (55AD) is telling the Corinthians to recognise tongues as a passing phenomena. The time was fast approaching when they would have to grow up, put away their tongues babytalk and become full grown men, living by faith, hope and love as taught in the perfect/completed Bible.

- b) Looking into a **mirror** of the Bible to see one’s true spiritual condition.
“For **now** (55AD) we see through a glass (mirror) darkly; but **then** (96AD) face to face: **now** (55AD) I know in part; but **then** (96AD) shall I know even as also I am known.” I Corinthians 13:12.

An expanded explanation of this would be:

“For **now** (55AD) we **see** (prophecy as a temporary gift) through a **mirror** (a partly given New Testament) **darkly** (a blurred image, partial revelation by prophecy and an incomplete New Testament); but **then** (96AD when the full New Testament is given) **face to face** (we see ourselves clearly in the completed New Testament, as we see our true physical condition in a perfectly reflecting mirror): **now** (55AD at the time of writing) I **know** (I have the temporary gift of knowledge) **in part** (only part of the New Testament was given, along with the gift of knowledge only gave a partial view of God’s full New Testament revelation due to be completed by 96AD); but **then** (96AD when the full New Testament would be given) shall I **know** (I will have the full **New Testament** revelation intended by God to equip me for the ministry, for a holy life, and for godliness (II Peter 1:3,4)) **even as also I am known.**”

With the completion of Scripture, there was a completion of the **portrait of Christ** that reflected His glory. What was “dim or dark” at the writing of I Corinthians 13:12 (at 55AD) became **clear** at the completion of scripture in 96AD, so that believers could see the Lord and their own changing likeness to Him “face to face.”

In **13:12** Paul compares the New Testament Church without a complete New Testament to a person looking into a polished metal mirror giving a blurred reflection. All they had was the partial revelation of prophecy, tongues and knowledge to tide the church over until they received the full New Testament in 96 AD. This only gave them an imperfect understanding of divine truths, like a blurred mirror reflection.

“But then face to face” refers to the time when the full New Testament would be available to allow accurate and full understanding of spiritual truths for this age.

- “Then shall I know **even as also I am known.**”
- When the full, complete finished New Testament is available for personal study (96 AD) then shall I know the necessary spiritual truths for living a godly life in the church age now **as well as God knows and reveals my true spiritual condition through His Word**, the completed Bible.

This is not talking about knowing Christ face to face in heaven or knowing as much as God knows, because this would require us to have the infinite knowledge of God in heaven. We will never be as all knowing (omniscient) as God.

Literally: “Then shall I know (God’s mind about every situation of life), even also as I am known (by God about every situation and problem that I may encounter in life).”

That is, the Bible has the answer to every situation of life. How true.

13:13. “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, **these three**, but the greatest of these is charity.”

At the time of writing (55 AD), only faith, hope and charity were continuing during the church age to the rapture. “**These three**” emphasises that it is only faith, hope and charity that will abide. Prophecy, tongues and knowledge are excluded as not abiding, and hence ceased in the church age by 96 AD.

Today, we have the apostles and prophets with us only in the sense that we have their New Testament writings which are still their prophecies. They laid and finished the New Testament foundation. Ephesians 4:11 lists three of the gifts that will be with us until Christ’s return: evangelists, pastors and teachers. For these three types of men, there are 3 qualities to be displayed: faith, hope and love, as shown in I Thessalonians 1:3 “Remembering without ceasing your work of **faith**, and labour of **love**, and patience of **hope**....”

Faith, Hope and Charity as Triplets elsewhere:

Another key proof that prophecy, tongues and knowledge are finished by 96 AD, and are not for today is that we often see **faith, hope** and **charity** mentioned as triplets being all that we need for a God-pleasing Christian life. Note the **absence of prophecy, tongues and knowledge** in these passages, showing that **they are not needed today**.

1. I Corinthians 13:13 “And now abideth **faith, hope, charity**, these three.”
2. Galatians 5:5,6 “...the **hope** of righteousness by **faith**. ...faith which worketh by **love**.”
3. Ephesians 1:15,18 “I heard of your **faith** in the Lord Jesus, and of the **love** unto all the saints,...that ye may know the **hope** of his calling....”
4. Colossians 1:4,5 “Since we heard of your **faith** in Christ Jesus, and of the **love** which ye have to all the saints, for the **hope** which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the **truth** (perfect Bible) of the gospel.”
5. I Thessalonians 1:3 “Remembering without ceasing your work of **faith**, and labour of **love**, and patience of **hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ.”
6. I Thessalonians 5:8 “But let us who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of **faith** and **love**; and for an helmet, the **hope** of salvation.”
7. I Timothy 1:1,2,5 “Lord Jesus Christ which is our **hope**; unto Timothy, my own son in the **faith**:
Now the end of the commandments is **charity** out of a pure heart....”
8. I Peter 1:21,22 “that your **faith** and **hope** might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the **truth** (perfect Bible) through the Spirit unto unfeigned **love** of the brethren, see that ye **love**..”

Conclusion: All we need is **FAITH, HOPE** and **LOVE** to live pleasing to God. Eight times it is repeated. You don’t need a prophecy, tongue or word of knowledge. They are not mentioned. So drop prophecy, tongues and knowledge, and build up ourselves in faith, hope and love.

II. FURTHER QUESTIONS.

Question 10: Why would God allow Dedicated Christians to experience the sign and revelatory gifts if they are not from Him?

Many evangelical churches have lapsed into cold, lifeless formalism. They may be doctrinally right, but they have lost their fervent love and zeal for God. If a charismatic church has a high regard for the Bible, prayer, soul winning zeal and a willingness to attempt great things for God, then this fills a void left by dead Churches. Among these good things there resides a deceiving cancer that undermines the good that is being done. This cancer is the matter of new revelations from God of tongues, prophecy, words of knowledge, visions or dreams.

Neil Babcox, a former charismatic pastor left the charismatic church because of this issue. He says,

“When a prophet said “Thus saith the Lord”, he meant that the very Word of God was being proclaimed with infallibility, purity and divine authority. The prophecies that I had spoken and heard others speak paled and diminished to the point of nothingness compare with the Bible.

Ezekiel protested, “Thus saith the Lord God, “Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!” Ezekiel 13:3.

Isn't that what we were - “prophets who had seen nothing?”

When the genuine prophets of God spoke, they spoke with certainty regarding every word. This finds no parallel today. The Bible's prophets knew with 100% certainty that they were speaking the very words of God.

“The spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.” Ezekiel 2:2.

Many who prophesy and claim to speak new revelations from God today know in their own hearts that they don't have the certainty of the Bible prophets, yet they continue to speak “new” revelations.

“Then the Lord said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.” Jeremiah 14:14.

“I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name....they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart....I will even punish that man and his house.” Jeremiah 23:25,26,34.

“they ...have spoken lying words in my name, which I have not commanded them.”

Jeremiah 29:23.

“Because Shemaiah hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, I will punish Shemaiah.” Jer.29:31,32

“The prophets prophesy falsely, ...and my people love to have it so:...” Jeremiah 5:31.

It is serious error to claim to speak new revelation from God, given the deception of Mormon prophecy.

This emphasis on new revelation undermines the authority of Scripture. Dave Hunt rebukes the positive and possibility thinking of Paul Yonggi Cho and Robert Schuller with their occultish visualisation techniques, temptation to power and deification of man which is invading the church.

Charismatics teach that a proper understanding of Scripture does not come through correct **interpretation**, but through **revelation** (only to certain leaders), and that these new revelations **supplement the Bible**, and **that these must be accepted as a “great move of God.”**

- Charismatics often say: “...we have revelation knowledge as God continues to speak to His people.” This sounds really spiritual, but it is adding to Scripture. Because the Scriptures are perfect, we cannot add to them.
- John Wimber states: “rational control (of the mind) must be forfeited for tongues speaking to occur, for ecstatic worship, for messages from God to be received directly into the mind, and for miraculous healings to happen.”
- Charismatics Kenneth Copeland and Kenneth Hagin's heresies were exposed in “The Agony of Deceit.” Kenneth Copeland claimed that Jesus spoke new revelation to him, saying: “Jesus did not come to earth as God, but only as a man; Jesus never claimed to be God during his earthly ministry.”
- John White, a famous author, claims that Jesus Christ personally appeared to him on three occasions to give new revelation that would become part of Scripture.

Question 11: Why would God allow dedicated Christians to experience and give in to influences that are not from Him?

Answer: Every moment of his life, the Christian must battle spiritually with the world, the flesh and the devil. This is part of the maturing process. All believers are tempted with pride, worry, fear, sin and disobedience. Does God allow believers to sin? Yes, of course.

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” James 1:12.

The Lord allows us to test every experience by Scripture, or to go by our feelings. God will allow us to be tempted in all forms. This includes the temptation to depart from Scripture by believing false revelations. Signs and wonders can have sources other than God (Deuteronomy 13:1-5; II Thessalonians 2:9,10; Revelation 13:13,14; Matthew 24:24). Jesus warns four times of deception at the end of the Church age in Matthew 24.

If a Christian swaps the **sword of the Spirit**, and takes up **feelings** or **human reasoning**, he opens himself up to satan's deception.

Many Christians in dead churches know very little scripture. In daily struggles with sin and temptation, believers are most vulnerable to the attraction of false instant spirituality. Rather than live by the Word of God for victory, one may seek the apparent short cut of tongues, prophecy, power evangelism, healing, etc as the answer to his problems.

Charismatic leaders who criticise Bible teachers who urge careful study of the Bible, are hence criticising the legitimate spiritual gift of teaching. They urge charismatics to follow them without questioning their interpretation. They oppose non-charismatics by asking: “Who did God use, the educated Pharisees or the simple apostles?” They thus forget II Timothy 2:15,

“**Study** to show thyself approved unto God...rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Along the way we all have difficult times, as seen by Elijah under the Juniper tree (I Kings 19:4,5), David fleeing from Saul, Paul's beatings, etc. Don't seek a quick fix to gain instant spirituality. The devil offered Jesus a short cut to earth's kingdoms by avoiding the cross. The devil will offer us many short cuts seeming to easily solve our problems. We must stick to the basics: study the Word, pray, confess sin, yield to Christ, abide in Christ, and take up the cross daily. These require work, watching and warfare. Don't swap the Word of God for an experience.

The main damaging side effect of charismaticism is the welcoming and accepting of heretics, apostates, nominal Christians and Roman Catholics into the Church. A person can pray to Mary, then speak in tongues, thus being accepted into many charismatic fellowships. Charismatics emphasise unity at the expense of doctrine.

Question 12: Why would God allow dedicated Christians to continue in error and deception to their hurt or spiritual detriment?

Answer: I Kings 13 reveals that even a dedicated and fearless prophet of God must suffer the consequences when he chooses deception over the clear revelation of God.

An unnamed man of God (v.1) was sent to Bethel “by the Word of the Lord” to prophesy against King Jeroboam and his idolatry (v.1-3). When the King tried to arrest the prophet, the King’s hand withered (v.4,5). He begged the man of God to intercede to God to restore his hand. (v.6). The man of God showed mercy, prayed to God and Jeroboam’s hand was restored. Then King Jeroboam offered him a reward (v.7) but the man of God refused (v.3-10).

Why? He refused to stop for food because the clear revelation of God forbade him from receiving food or drink or retracing his steps (v.9). So far he had walked in complete obedience to the Word of God. He had passed the tests of:

1. **Fear** because he had boldly carried out his job of proclaiming God’s Word to the King.
2. **Compassion/Mercy.** He had not allowed the King’s threats to dry up his mercy. He willingly, lovingly prayed for Jeroboam’s hand to be restored without revenge.
3. The test of **faithfulness to God** over human favour had been overcome, because he turned down the King’s offer of hospitality and reward .
4. The test of **deception**, was the final test which he sadly failed.

Why? God had clearly told him not to receive hospitality, but he rejected the clear revelation of the Word of God for a new revelation, and it cost him his life.

There was an old prophet living nearby who heard about his faithful stand. The old prophet had lived in compromise at Bethel and invited the man of God home to dine with him (v.11-15).

The man of God refused saying that he was under strict orders from God not to eat, drink or retrace his steps (v.16,17). The old prophet replied in v.18,

“I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But **he lied** unto him.”

Why did he lie? We are not told.

- a) Maybe he was **envious** at seeing a true prophet faithfully discharge his duties, when he had lived in compromise.
- b) Maybe he **resented** the man of God and had a **convicted conscience**.

The old prophet claimed a new revelation from God. The man of God had to decide:

- a) Would he accept at face value the new revelation, or
- b) Would he continue to cling to God’s previous revelation?

Sadly, the once fearless and faithful prophet succumbed to deception. God allowed this to happen to a dedicated man of God. Why? Because in our pilgrimage on earth, there will always be the choice to follow the clear teaching of God’s Word, or to replace it with the shallow promises, prophecies and deceptions of man.

The man of God retraced his steps back to the home of the old prophet and ate with him (v.19). Over the meal, the old prophet revealed that because the man of God had disobeyed the Word of God, he would die (v.20-22).

And that is exactly what happened (v.23-26) because a lion slew him in the way.

From this we see that if God allowed a dedicated prophet of God to choose between the clear teaching of the Lord and deception, surely the Lord will let us have this choice today. Many Christians suffer poor spiritual lives because they give up the Word of God, and embrace teachers who prophesy or give new revelations of their own spirit.

Question 13: But why doesn’t God step in and chasten His children to woo them back to obedience? (Hebrews 12).

Answer: The Holy Spirit and the Word of God continually call the believer to faithfulness and obedience (Phil. 2:12,13). Deception and impoverishment are the bitter fruits of turning away from the Word of God. Sometimes God will allow His children to remain deceived as a chastisement until they turn again in submission to the Word of God. Their salvation in Christ is secure through Christ’s blood sacrifice. They may serve the Lord faithfully in other areas and even be used successfully by God, but they will miss God’s best blessings on earth and they will lose rewards in heaven.

God will allow believers to choose whether to glorify Christ through submission and obeying scripture or to rebel. For dedicated servants of God who put aside the clear revelation of God and embrace new revelations, in this life they will be deceived and impoverished, and in the next life they will suffer loss of rewards at the judgment seat of Christ (II Corinthians 5:10).

Examples of charismatic deception are tongues, false healings, new revelations, words of knowledge spoken about other people, slaying in the “spirit”, “Toronto” experience, etc. Consider two examples:

Slaying People in the Spirit is a Charismatic invention whereby hands are laid on a person’s head and they lose consciousness, causing them to fall backwards onto the floor. THIS IS NOT IN THE BIBLE, so forget it. Laying hands on people is well known in the occult as a means of transferring demons. It is more likely demonically influenced and all the more reason why we should avoid this movement.

Surrender of Mind and Emotions to Group Pressure. On entering a Charismatic meeting, we meet many people dancing, throwing arms in the air, speaking in tongues, on an emotional high and appearing very happy. The average Christian realises that he is not always like this, nor is the church from which he has come (which is made to appear dead and lifeless in comparison). He and his church are made to feel inferior and below what God expects. He has always had thoughts that his Christian life hasn’t always been as good as it ought to have been. He immediately concludes that these people have a one-shot-sure-fire-answer to spirituality when they ask him if he has been baptised in the Holy Spirit or spoken in tongues. If he is not careful, he will assume that these people are right, without studying the Bible or without praying the issue through. He may then agree to speak in tongues (gibberish), which makes the Charismatics very happy. He feels much love, acceptance and unity as a result, all because of an experience that he has had. He then begins his Christian life by making his experience the authority on which he determines spiritual truth, and not the Bible. He then defends his decision logically by saying what wonderful love and unity these people have and “power” (false albeit). He asks, “how can they be wrong when they show such qualities?”

Why do charismatics succeed so much?

- i) Because most churches are DEAD and show no spiritual life, no one ever gets saved and nothing miraculous ever happens.
- ii) The Bible teaching on this issue is not taught.
- iii) People equate emotional show and bubblyness with spirituality.
- iv) Everyone would like an instant formula for spiritual success in the Christian life. Tongues is easy.

- v) People are lazy. They find it easier to believe what they are told, especially by “happy, persuasive people”, than to study and search the Bible for themselves.
- vi) It looks as if all churches are uniting by tongues speaking and this is, on the surface seen to be a good thing, yet it ignores Bible doctrine. People are told to hold hands, form a circle, and this show of “love” causes many well-meaning Christians to sacrifice dearly held essential Bible truths for which our ancestors died, and to unite with error. This is just what Rome wants to bring us all back to the “Mother of Harlots” and form the Super-church of Revelation 17, which will be destroyed by the antichrist that she brings to power.

Question 14: If sign and revelatory gifts are not for today, and are not from God, why do they produce apparently good effects in believers lives?

Step 1. Many Charismatics claim to be enriched by speaking in tongues, making prophecies, words of knowledge, casting out demons and sign gifts, etc. They may have a greater interest in the Bible, prayer and witnessing. How could such positive results not be from God?

Step 2. Any military strategist knows that an enemy will often give up ground in order to gain a greater victory (Israel defeated Ai with this tactic. Joshua 8:15-21). Satan is not afraid of prayer, Bible study or bold witness that is contrary to the Word of God, especially when it promotes error and advances his own kingdom. Satan does strongly oppose genuine prayer, Bible study and gospel preaching when it is done Biblically and in the filling of the Holy Spirit. Satan is happy to pull back opposition to Bible study, prayer and witness, if he can woo the believer away from Bible decision-making and into experiential decision-making (which is Satan’s greater sought-after victory).

Step 3. If a believer moves into experiential decision making, Satan can withdraw his opposition to Bible study, prayer and witness. The believer then attributes his advancement in prayer, Bible study and witness to his new tongues experience. This serves to lure the believer deeper into his experiential decision making, and hence further away from 100% Bible authority only. Hence, by giving some ground, Satan leads believers into greater deception. The believer thus more strongly clings to non Biblical experiences.

Step 4. The believer who accepts sign and revelatory gifts is replacing Biblical authority with experiential authorities. Interpretation of verses becomes heavily weighted towards vindicating his experiences.

Step 5. People are genuinely saved, they in turn accept the signs and wonders message, and the deception grows. The basis for Christian fellowship is no longer the Bible, but a common experience such as tongues. That is why Roman Catholics, liberal protestants, some evangelicals and heretics unite in ecumenical charismatic fellowship. Tongues causes divisions in churches, just as it did at the Tower of Babel.

Many Charismatics are not completely sure that their prophecies are from the Lord. Many are troubled at healings that relapse. Many Charismatics say that they are Spirit-filled yet live inconsistent lives.

Satan’s contest in Eden was to steal Adam’s loyalty away from the Word of God (“Yea, hath God said?”) and for him to live independent of God and His Word.

Question 15: Do Christians know when they are being misled?

Answer: No, not always. In Matthew 16:21-23, Peter in expressing his love for Christ, was deceived by Satan in trying to stop Christ from going to the cross. Jesus looked past Peter’s love and saw Satan leading Peter away from the revealed will of God. **Note:**

- 1) With the **heart** one receives or trusts Christ for salvation.
- 2) With the **will** one obeys Christ.
- 3) With the **mind** one abides in Christ.

Heart means: Intellect, will, affections, loyalties. **Will** means: Action, commitment.

- Many Christians spend hours in Christian bookshops looking for a book to give them the secret of victorious living. If they can’t find the power of God in a book, they will seek it in an experience.
- The goal of the Christian life is to remain Spirit filled, to find the will of God and do it.

Question 16: Are there any Biblical examples of Satan giving up spiritual ground in order to gain spiritual advantages?

Answer:

- 1) Satan offered Christ the world’s kingdoms in exchange for Christ’s worship. Matthew 4:8-10.
- 2) The demonized damsel proclaimed that Paul’s team were servants of the Most High God who showed the way of salvation. Acts 16:16-18. Why? So the gospel would be associated with the occult.

Many churches have changed from being a lighthouse to a weather vane. Instead of lighting the way in the darkness, many churches merely turn with whatever fashion or worldly wind blows at the time. Our Lord Jesus Christ is to take pre-eminence in all things. The Holy Spirit’s job is to reveal and exalt Jesus Christ. The problem of powerless Christians is due to believers failing to surrender totally to the lordship of Jesus Christ. Living the Christian life is described by: “Warfare”, “fight”, “run the race”, “yield not”, “work out”, and “press towards.” The Christian life is a disciplined life of constant vigilance and taking up the cross daily. There are no short cuts to instant spirituality. Roman Catholic charismatics have greater zeal for Mary, Mass, the Papacy, and praying to saints etc. If Satan can achieve this, he will stop opposing Charismatic churches so that apparent growth occurs.

Question 17: If the sign and revelatory gifts today are not from God, why are Charismatic churches the fastest growing churches in the world?

Answer:

1. Much Charismatic growth is by attracting Christians from **other churches**. Because many Charismatic churches place **little emphasis on sound doctrine**, this breeds an atmosphere of **acceptance**, which assists numerical growth. If you never rebuke sin, have worldly attractions, and give people everything they want, you’ll see growth, but you won’t please God. Charismaticism weakens churches that are committed to the fundamentals of the faith, while it energises ecumenical liberal, worldly churches.
2. **Numerical growth does not equal God’s stamp of approval. Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses** and cults can boast amazing growth statistics, yet their beliefs are very unbiblical. What about growth of Charismatic churches that hold to the fundamentals of the faith? Jesus’ parables of the wheat and tares (Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43), mustard seed (13:31,32), and the leaven (13:33) all predict outward growth in Christendom, but this growth would be accompanied by growth in evil influences (leaven, birds) from within. Numerical growth does not mean that God approves all a church’s doctrines.

Numerical growth, even by true conversions can occur amidst false doctrine. eg. The Corinthian church grew rapidly, even though it had many false doctrines and sins.

Many churches claim to be evangelical, but challenge them on:

- 1) The 100% inerrancy of Scripture.
- 2) The historical, literal accuracy of Genesis 1-11.
- 3) The factual nature of Jonah being swallowed by a whale.
- 4) The scientific accuracy of a literal 6 day creation week, and they prove to disbelieve the Bible.

Christ prayed that the Father would sanctify believers through His **Word** (John 17:17), before he prayed that believers would be **one** (John 17:21).

If we loudly profess to believe every Bible truth, except where the world and devil are at the moment attacking, we are denying Christ and proving disloyal. Today's battle against the Bible takes the form of an invasion of new revelations. This is why Rome can happily endorse the Charismatic movement because Rome also has her new revelations that are contrary to the Bible. We must be sound in **belief**, sound in a Godly **life**, and sound in **servicing Christ**.

III. 20 REASONS THAT TONGUES CEASED IN THE FIRST CENTURY.

1. Tongues were a sign of judgment against Jewish unbelief as a nation.

With the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, God's judgment on Israel had been executed, and the tongues gift as a sign of coming judgment on Israel was no longer needed. I Corinthians 14:22 says,

"Wherefore, tongues are for a sign NOT to them that believe, but to them that **believe not**."

"In the law it is written, with men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto **this people** (Jews); and yet for all that (all the tongues) **will they** (Jews) **not hear me** (warning ignored), saith the Lord." I Corinthians 14:21.

Tongues here were clearly a **warning to the Jews** that they ignored.

Paul quotes I Corinthians 14:21 from:

- i) **Deuteronomy 28:49** where God warns of judgment coming from "a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand."
- ii) Jeremiah 5:15 "Lo I will bring a nation upon you from afar...a nation whose language thou knowest not...." (612 BC). Hence, Babylonian tongues warned Jews of coming judgment.
- iii) Isaiah 28:11,12 "With another tongue will he speak to this people." (712 BC). Here, Assyrian tongues warned the Jews of coming judgment.
- iv) Isaiah 33:19 "Thou shall **not** see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive: of a stammering tongue that thou canst not understand."

Here the absence of foreign tongues will be a sign that Israel is under God's blessing. Paul applies the Jewish unbelief of Isaiah 28:11,12 from 712 BC to the first century Jewish unbelief. "This people", "they", and "them that believe not" all refers to Jews. There were many Jews at Corinth who did not believe (Acts 18). Hence, tongues were a sign of future judgment to the Jews.

2. There are 3 major outbreaks of miracles in Scripture:

- i) Moses and Joshua (1441-1370 BC) of about 71 years duration.
- ii) Elijah and Elisha (870-785 BC) of about 85 years duration.
- iii) Christ and the Apostles (28-70 AD) of about 42 years duration.

Continuous miracles in the Bible are the exception, and do not occur always, but in three periods. The miraculous gift of tongues occurred from 30 to 70 AD.

3. Tongues belonged to the infant days of the church.

"But when I became a man, I put away childish things." I Corinthians 13:11.

Tongues (along with prophecy and knowledge) would cease when the church became mature. The childhood days of the church ended, when Israel as a nation was judged. Then there was no longer any need for a sign to **authenticate** the apostles' message (Mark 16:17-20) which started the church. Nor was there need for a sign **against** the extinct Jewish nation.

The gifts of tongues, miracles, healing, etc had stopped by 70 AD, but of course God still performs miracles and heals as He chooses today in answer to prayer. Since some foundational gifts were temporary. Tongues, a lesser miraculous gift, was temporary also.

4. Tongues authenticated the apostles' message as from God.

"And they (apostles) went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and **confirming the Word** with **signs** (tongues, healing, exorcism etc.) following. Amen." Mark 16:20.

Today the need for tongues has ceased. God has **authenticated** the **apostles** and the **New Testament** that they penned. This proves the temporary nature of tongues.

5. Hebrews 6:5 shows that the only other age of miracles will be the Millennium described as "the powers of the age to come."

Q. What are the powers?

A. The word rendered "powers" is "dunamis" (1411) in Greek, which is the usual New Testament word for **miracles**. These people had tasted, experienced or witnessed the apostles' miracles.

Q. What is the "age to come"?

A. A common Hebrew expression for the **millennium** where the Messiah will rule as King on earth.

Q. Why therefore are miracles referred to as "powers of the age to come"?

A. Because they **would not** characterise the **church age** (which Hebrews 6:5 was quoted in), but the millennial Kingdom age to come.

6. Hebrews 2:3,4 shows miracles (such as tongues) to be in the past tense, and not continuously being experienced by the Hebrew Christians of 64 AD.

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation which:

- 1) **At the first** began to be spoken by the **Lord** (in Jesus' 3 year ministry) and
- 2) **was** (past tense) **confirmed** (same as Mark 16:20) unto **us** (second generation Christians) by **them** (apostles and first generation Christians) that heard **him** (Jesus Christ),
- 3) God also **bearing them** (the apostles, **not us or every** generation of Christians) **witness**, both with signs (eg: tongues, miracles, healings, etc) and **wonders**, and with **divers miracles** (miracles belonged to the apostles, not to every Christian. II Corinthians 12:12), and **gifts of the Holy Ghost** (eg. the temporary miraculous gifts), according to His own will."
 - a) Notice the phrase "**at the first**". This gives the **time** element which governs all these signs, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.
 - b) All Greek verbs in Hebrews 2:3,4 are in the **aurist tense** indicating a past completed act which can never be repeated.

7. This is also seen in **Acts 11:15**, where Peter describes **tongues at Cornelius household, not as a regular occurrence weekly** in every church, but only something that happened last time at Pentecost (Acts 2) “as on us at the beginning.”

8. The Process of Elimination shows tongues to be not for believers of today.

Tongues primary purpose was to warn unbelieving Jews to repent, or God would judge them. They refused to repent, so God judged them in 70 AD, thus making tongues as a warning to the Jews no longer necessary. I Corinthians 14:22 is a key verse which says:

“Tongues are a sign, **NOT to THEM that BELIEVE, but to them that BELIEVE NOT...**”

Tongues are a sign for one of three types of people. Which one?

- a) **NOT FOR BELIEVERS.** 14:22. This means that tongues have no purpose for believers. For Christians to speak in tongues is not valid.
- b) **NOT FOR GENTILE UNBELIEVERS.** 14:23. Those **unlearned** in the Old Testament meaning of tongues, or **unbelievers**, “will they not say that ye are mad?” This describes **unsaved Gentiles.** Tongues are not for this group because the history of Assyrian and Babylonian tongues as a warning of a judgment to Israel meant nothing to them.
- c) **JEWISH UNBELIEVERS.** 14:21. “In the law (Isaiah 28:11; Jeremiah 5:15 and Deuteronomy 28:49) it is written, with men of **other tongues** (Assyrian, Babylonian, Roman) and other lips will I speak unto **this people** (Jews); and yet for all that will they **not hear me**, saith the Lord.”

9. Tongues had ceased by 70 AD because their use is only mentioned in the earlier New Testament books, such as Mark 16 (57 AD), Acts (54 AD), I Corinthians (55 AD).

In all the latter books, tongues are never mentioned.

Why? Because they never happened after 70 AD and were of no relevance to any churches thereafter. Tongues are never commanded in any New Testament book for believers to practice.

I Corinthians 12,13,14 rebukes the Corinthians wrong use of tongues. It is not endorsing tongues to be practised. Charismatics think that the key to spirituality is tongues, a phenomena that is not mentioned in 24 out of 27 New Testament books.

Why are tongues ABSENT from **II Corinthians to Revelation**? If tongues were so necessary, you would definitely see them in the **rest of the New Testament.**

The book of Romans, which is well known as the most complete summary of Christian doctrine and practice in the Bible, does not once mention tongues. Why not? Because tongues, by the time Romans was written (60 AD) was almost finished as a gift and would be of **no relevance** in the Church age after 70 AD when God judged Jerusalem.

Think about it, if tongues were important, God would have mentioned them at least once in Romans, or II Corinthians, or Galatians, or at least in one letter to a church **in a positive context.**

10. The gift of tongues was never endorsed or practised by early church leaders.

Clement of Rome in 95 AD wrote a letter to the Corinthian church rebuking every problem that Paul rebuked except tongues. Why did he not mention tongues or miracles?

Justin Martyr (160 AD) visited many churches but never once mentions tongues, not even in his lists of spiritual gifts.

Origen (250 AD) in his voluminous writings never mentions tongues, but argues against Celsus that the sign gifts of the apostles' age were temporary and were not exercised by Christians in the 3rd Century.

Chrysostom (347-407 AD) commented on the I Corinthians passage: “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.**” [Homilies, XXIX, 1].

Augustine (354-430 AD) said in speaking of Acts 2:4, “In the earliest times, the Holy Ghost fell upon them that believed: and they spake with tongues...these were signs adapted to the time. For there behooved to be that betokening of the Holy Spirit...that thing was done for a betokening and **it passed away.**”

11. “Now abideth faith, hope, charity, **these three...**” I Corinthians 13:13.

Now (55AD) **abides** (continues) faith, hope, charity, **these three**” (not “these six prophecy, tongues, knowledge”). Since **faith and hope finish at Christ's return**, then prophecy, tongues and knowledge had to have finished by 96 AD because they were not abiding, but declining in 55AD.

12. Tape Recorder Test (Independent interpreters) Disproves Interpretation of Tongues.

If no one passes the Interpretation test, then neither does anyone possess the genuine gift of tongues.

This scientific test will disprove anyone's claim to have the gift of “Interpretation of tongues.” Assemble one person who claims to have the gift of tongues, and another two people who claim to have the gift of interpreting tongues, keeping both groups separate.

Let the first person speak in tongues, while you tape record him speaking.

Then bring the first interpreter into the room to hear the taped tongue replayed.

Tape record his interpretation of the tongue.

Then bring the second interpreter into the room to hear the same tongue replayed.

Tape record his interpretation of the same tongue. You will find that the second interpretation will **disagree** with the first person's interpretation.

Why is this? It is because no one today has the first century supernatural gift of interpretation of tongues, this gift having passed away by 70 AD.

It follows therefore, that if the interpretation gift is found to be **NON-GENUINE**, then the tongues gift is also **NON-GENUINE.**

Notice that when someone speaks gibberish, claiming that he is speaking in an unknown tongue, he is, by deception, taking advantage of the fact that his hearers do not know every language in the universe. The hearer, who is caught off guard, finds it hard to state that this gibberish is not a language.

So let us turn the tables and ask if his two interpreter friends can interpret any tongue in agreement.

Note: A variation on this test is to get up in a Charismatic meeting, speak something in a foreign language that you know the meaning of, and then ask for it to be correctly interpreted, e.g. quote the Lord's prayer in Latvian. You will find that the interpretation given, will be nothing like the true meaning of what you said. You may then expose them publicly as deceivers and as being deceived.

13. Ephesians 4,5,6 describe **thoroughly** the **Walk** and **Service** of a **Spirit-filled believer.** Nowhere in this key passage is speaking in tongues mentioned.

Conclusion: “Walking worthy” does not include tongues.

14. Phonetics Test. Every language must have hundreds of different syllables to express the wide range of ideas in a society. Charismatic tongues only have less than 12 syllables repeated constantly. This is typical of gibberish that comes from a mind that is not expressing thoughts, but from a tongue **out of control from the mind.** **Note:** 4 syllables are, for example, seen in “Cha/ris/ma/tic”. This shows that tongues are not real languages, but are just sounds made up on the spot at random.

15. Majoring on tongues **REVERSES** the order of **importance** of spiritual gifts.

In I Corinthians 12:28, God lists tongues as the **least important** of 8 gifts.

In I Corinthians 12:31, God tells the church to seek the “best” gifts.(ie: give more emphasis to teaching)

God gives gifts to believers “as HE will” (12:11), not as we insist.

Charismatics tell people to pray long and hard for the gift of tongues.

We are not to deliberately choose and insist on having the least gift and exalt it above the others. Why not place greater emphasis on the gifts of pastor-teacher, evangelists, helps, government, giving etc.? It is because these gifts involve hard work, but tongues (gibberish) is easy.

16. The **context** of I Corinthians is **rebuking 13 errors**, such as tongues. It is **not recommending tongues**. The Corinthian church was filled with problems that Paul corrects in this book, such as:

1. They were following their favourite **human leaders** causing divisions. 1:11-14.

2. “ “ favouring **human wisdom**. 1:18-2:13.

3. “ “ **carnal, living for self**, not being controlled by the Spirit. 2:14-3:7.

4. “ “ **forgetting the future Judgment Seat** of Christ. 3:8-23.

5. “ “ **proud**, thinking of themselves more highly than they ought. 4:1-21.

6. “ “ **failing to discipline**, by tolerating a fornicator. 5:1-13.

7. “ “ **taking fellow believers to court**. 6:1-20.

8. “ “ confused about **marriage**. 7:1-40.

9. “ “ confused about **liberty** thinking it meant licence to do anything, even stumbling others. 8,9,10

10. “ “ confused about **clothing, long hair** on men and the **Lord's Supper**. 11.

11. “ “ confused about **spiritual gifts**, especially tongues. 12-14.

12. “ “ confused about the **resurrection**. 15.

13. “ “ confused about the **collection**. 16.

As we can see the Corinthian church was deep in error and false doctrine. It was the only church that emphasized tongues as today's Charismatics do. Charismatics therefore place themselves in very bad company. Charismatics fail to understand that Paul is not endorsing tongues, but is rebuking the wrong use of tongues and is strongly **regulating** tongues contrary to today's Charismatics. The Corinthian church was the worst church for Charismatics to follow as an example.

17. They fail the “**Easy to be entreated**” test.

It is amazing how tongues speakers often become very angry, intolerant, irritable, impatient, nervous, very dogmatic, and extremely touchy when anything is said which disapproves of or corrects their idea of speaking in tongues.

“The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, easy to be entreated...” James 3:17.

“The works of the flesh...are wrath, strife...” Galatians 5:19,20.

“Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God.” Hebrews 12:15.

18. The **First Mention Principle** of Tongues is in the Context of Judgment.

This is a well-established principle for correctly interpreting Scripture. It states that:

When any subject, word, expression or idea is first mentioned in the Bible, this shows God thinking on that subject, and is a guide to how we should understand this subject in the rest of the Bible. Example:

The **first mention** of **Babylon, Babel, and languages** is in Genesis 11:1-9 where God confused man's languages so that they did not understand one another's speech. “The Lord scattered mankind abroad upon the face of all the earth.” Man has remained divided by different languages ever since. Hence tongues are associated with **division** and **confusion** (the meaning of Babel), ever since the Tower of Babel; not with the blessing of God, but with the **judgment** of God.

“Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the **strife** of tongues.” Psalm 31:20.

19. **PRAYING IN TONGUES** is **WRONG** because **UNDERSTANDING is ABSENT**.

“For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the **UNDERSTANDING also**.” I Cor. 14:14,15.

Paul is saying here that if you pray in tongues, your spirit might be trying to express something, but your MIND (or understanding) has no idea what is being said. This is wrong behaviour, Paul says.

For prayer to be genuine, we must pray with our **spirit** and with our **understanding**.

Praying in tongues fails the test of understanding. The mind and voice are disconnected.

Many Charismatics will try to justify praying in tongues by quoting Romans 8:26.

“...the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which **CANNOT BE UTTERED**”.

This verse is not talking about praying in tongues because **tongues are uttered** vocal sounds.

The Holy Spirit speaks our thoughts to the Father with groanings which **cannot be uttered** by us, yet prayer tongues are uttered by people.

20. **Mark 16:11-20** (especially v.17) shows that the signs that were to follow them that believe related to a **brief period**, not longer than that covered by the book of Acts, and described in v.19,20

“And these signs shall follow (3877) **them** (apostles because the context of v.11-14 shows unbelieving apostles four times) that **believe**;**they** shall speak with **new tongues**.” v.17.

This refutes the Charismatic idea that everybody who believes all through the Church age should speak in tongues, lay hands on the sick and they shall recover, etc., because this belief only refers to the unbelieving apostles in v.11-14 who **refused to believe in Christ's resurrection** (v.11,12,14).

This continues as part of Christ's rebuke to the apostles for “their unbelief and hardness of heart.” v.14.

IV. 7 REASONS WHY “THEM THAT BELIEVE” REFERS ONLY TO THE APOSTLES.

If we fail to read the entire context of Mark 16:9-20 we may get the impression that the v.17,18 sign gifts apply to **all believers** during all the church age.

There is good evidence that “**them that believe**” refers to **only the apostles**. Why?

Reason 1: Context is the Apostles' Unbelief in Christ's Resurrection.

In Mark 16:14, Jesus rebukes the apostles for their **unbelief** in His resurrection.

In v.11-14, four times the apostles' unbelief is mentioned as Jesus addressed the apostles:

v.11 “They (apostles), when they had heard that he was alive**believed not**.”

v.13 “.....**neither believed they them**.”

v.14 “He.....upbraided them (apostles) with their **unbelief** and hardness of heart.”

v.14 “because they (apostles) **believed not** them which had seen him after he was risen.”

After this rebuke Jesus gives the apostles the Great Commission in v.15,16. Once the commission is given, Jesus returns to his immediate audience of the eleven apostles when He says in v.17,18 "These signs shall follow **them that believe**" (ie. those of you eleven apostles who believe in my resurrection).

In my name :

1. they shall they cast out devils.
2. they shall speak with new tongues.
3. they shall take up serpents.
4. if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them.
5. they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.

Reason 2: Practical experience shows that promises 3,4,5 are not true for every believer today. In spite of continued failures to heal, Charismatics still think that these 5 promises are for all believers today. **The obvious problem** with this interpretation is that it does not deal with everything mentioned in the text.

a) No Charismatic can always fulfil the 5th promise. It says that they **shall** lay hands on the sick, and they **shall recover**. This means 100% recovery all the time. No one can heal every sick person today, as the apostles could in Acts 5:12-16.

"By the hands **of the apostles** were many **signs** and wonders wrought among the people.....**they** (believers) brought forth the sick into the streets.....and they were **healed every one.**" v.16.

John Wimber, a famous Charismatic laid hands on 250 Down's Syndrome children with no cures.

Reinhard Boncke tried to heal over 200 Kenyans at Kisumu in Kenya without any success.

b) "If they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them."

"If" means accidentally. The problem here is that many good Christians have become sick or died by poisoning. Have you as a believer ever vomited?

c) "They **shall** take up serpents."

We ask a Charismatic to take up a deadly snake. He replies by saying: "No, that would be tempting God." Yet in the first century this was a sign that the apostles did (**shall** do) to prove the Word of God and their authority. Some believers today have died in trying this. This shows that this is not for today.

Reason 3: AORIST tense of "believe" in Mark 16:17 refers to those who **did believe in the past, not who will believe** in the future.

"These signs shall follow them that **believe.**" The Greek word for believe here is "**pisteusasin**" which is an **aorist** participle referring to those who **did believe** in the **past.**"

[S. Zodhiates, "Complete New Testament Word Study Dictionary," p.1107],

"**not** those who would believe in the future."

[S. Zodhiates, "Hebrew-Greek Key Word Study Bible," p.1223].

The aorist tense refers to a **past action at a point in time**, not an event that **recurs** again into the future, as it would be if it was true of all believers.

Reason 4: Belief (Gk: pisteusasin in Mark 16:17) **does not refer to saving belief**. In John 3:16 and 5:24 saving belief is "pisteuwn", a different word ending. Hence, "belief" in Mark 16:17 refers not to all future believers, but to the apostles believing in Christ's resurrection at a point in time, once for all time.

Reason 5: "Do All speak With tongues?" 1 Corinthians 12:30 requires the answer "No, not all believers have the gift of speaking with tongues."

Reason 6: The **Purpose** of these signs was to **confirm the Word of God** spoken and **written by the apostles**, as Mark 16:20 says.

"And **they** (apostles) went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with **them** (apostles), and **confirming the Word** with **signs** (eg. tongues) following."

Once the Word of God (the New Testament) had been confirmed by the apostle's signs, then further signs were not needed. The signs had done their job of proving the New Testament as being from God. When the Word of God was completed, then miraculous apostolic confirmatory signs were no longer needed.

Reason 7: Mark 16:20 continues the context to mean apostles.

This tells what happened to the apostles after they changed from unbelief in Christ's resurrection, to believing it and preaching it everywhere with signs following.

Hence, in v.20, the context is still only the apostles doing signs, not every believer doing signs.

Conclusion: Either all five signs are valid for today or none are valid today. They only refer to first century apostles.