

# *The Charismatics*

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*“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:1-4*

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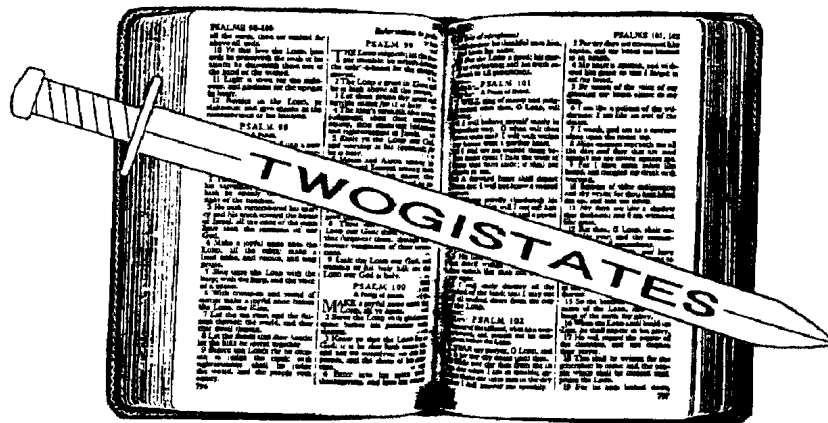
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1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 2001  
2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2006

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as the best source for God's Word in English



For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any  
twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of  
soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a  
discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

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## INDEX

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
<b>BAPTISM IN (WITH) THE HOLY SPIRIT</b> .....	2
What Is Baptism in (With) The Holy Spirit? .....	2
Conclusions About Being Baptized in The Holy Spirit .....	5
<b>SPEAKING IN UNKNOWN TONGUES</b> .....	6
Should I Seek To Speak in Tongues? .....	6
Acts 10 – The Holy Spirit Comes To The Gentiles .....	10
Acts 19 – The Holy Spirit comes to The Disciples of John .....	11
1 Corinthians 12-14 – Tongues at Corinth .....	11
What Conclusions Can Be Drawn About Tongues? .....	16
<b>MIRACULOUS HEALINGS</b> .....	17
What Is The Word of Knowledge? .....	17
Laying on of Hands .....	19
<b>SLAIN IN THE SPIRIT</b> .....	25
What Does It Mean To Be Slain in The Spirit?..	25
<b>EXPLANATION OF 1 CORINTHIANS, CHAPTER 13</b> .....	26
That Which is Perfect .....	29
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	30

# THE CHARISMATICS

## INTRODUCTION

While the term "charismatic" is not all-inclusive in its meaning, it will be used throughout this paper to identify certain beliefs held by many who classify themselves as charismatic believers. Some factions of the movement may be identified as Pentecostal or Pentecostal Holiness as many adherents to charismatic practices interpret the Holy Spirit's manifestations today as being the same as those described in Acts, Chapter 2 when He came to the early church at Pentecost.

Whatever the movement may be called, and regardless of the differences in beliefs among the various groups, there are many viewpoints held in common among those who claim to be modern charismatics. So rather than attempt to address all the aspects of the various movements, I will focus on some of the more common phenomenal claims and show how they measure up to the Word of God.

As far as I am concerned, the Bible is the only true rule of faith for the Christian community. If something is purported to be from God, and it cannot be backed up solidly with Scripture, it must not be accepted as being from God. I do not believe that He will give us revelation today that cannot be confirmed by His Word, and if His Word cannot confirm it, the only conclusion I can reach is that it is not from God. While many will disagree with this viewpoint, they are entitled to do so, but they do not have the right, or authority, to tell me that I must believe something that can't be proved biblically.

I have heard it said that the modern charismatic movement is harmless, so why be concerned about it. If this were true, I would forget it, but clearly it is not innocuous because it creates irreparable damage among the Christian community by generating ill feelings and causing disagreements among professing believers. It is like a cancer! When the movement is allowed to proliferate in a biblically sound church, its false doctrines spreads among the members and continuously eats away at the fundamentals of belief until it eventually creates divisions and chaos.

In general, the entire movement is not about God but about the experiences of people who are involved in it. It seems to me that many charismatics are basing their entire salvation on some personal experience they (or some leader) may have had. This is chancy, not only to the person claiming the experience, but also to those whom they lead into seeking the same type of encounter, for experience and works have little or nothing to do with the true salvation as presented in the Bible. However, the greatest danger lies in the reality that getting involved in the charismatic movement, which focuses on experience and works, could keep many souls from seeking the only way to salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

The following discussion focuses on some of the more sensational aspects of the charismatic movement. It centers on one subject at a time, but in many cases there are overlapping topics as many of the purported manifestations are codependent. The procedure is to give the topic, describe the charismatic view, and then give the biblical view, It is not my

purpose, nor intent, to ridicule anyone's belief, but to give a factual description and biblical account as closely as possible.

## BAPTISM IN (WITH) THE HOLY SPIRIT

### What Is Baptism In (With) The Holy Spirit?

It is a fundamental doctrine of the modern charismatic movement that there is a second work of the Holy Spirit after salvation; this is called being "baptized in the Holy Spirit." According to adherents of this doctrine, evidence of being baptized in the Spirit is speaking in tongues. This tongues speaking is an ecstatic language that the speaker doesn't know or understand, but it is believed that one who has a special gift to do so may also interpret it. Some adherents of the charismatic movement claim to have both the gifts of speech and interpretation.

The upshot of those who hold to this belief about Holy Spirit baptism and speaking in tongues is an attitude that many Christians are inferior because they have not received the "baptism." While some of their claims regarding a new and exciting walk in Christ may sound plausible, it behooves each of us to always test any and all unfamiliar doctrines by the truths of the Bible. (All the verses in the New Testament dealing with this subject may be found in Appendix 1.)

The Scripture usually quoted by the charismatics to make the point about Holy Spirit baptism is Acts, Chapter 1, and Verse 5 where Jesus told the apostles that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

*Acts 1:5*

5 *For John truly baptized with water; but **ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.***

It is clear from this passage that there is such a thing as being baptized with the Holy Ghost (Spirit). It is equally as clear that Jesus is speaking of the occurrences often called the Pentecostal experience that followed and it is described in Acts, Chapter 2.

*Acts 2:1-4*

1 *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*

2 *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*

3 *And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*

4 *And **they were all filled with the Holy Ghost**, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

The cited references above depict how all the believers in the upper room were filled with the Holy Ghost. It is evident from the earlier mentioned Scripture that being filled with the Holy Spirit and being baptized with the Holy Spirit mean exactly the same thing. It is also just as

evident in subsequent Scriptures that this is not a one time occurrence for this filling is necessary often if one is to boldly profess Christ because Peter was again filled with the Holy Ghost in Acts 4:8.

*Acts 4:8*

8 ***Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,***

The questions that naturally come to mind is, "Was it necessary for Peter to be filled again after he was already baptized as recorded in Acts, Chapter 2, or was it necessary for him to continually be filled to do the work of the Lord?" The Bible leaves no doubt, for he had to be filled each time the Lord had a special work for him to do. This is confirmed by the same terminology being used again to describe Peter's condition in Acts 4:31.

*Acts 4:31*

31 ***And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.***

Again the Word of God makes it clear; the early Christian believers were filled with the Holy Ghost repeatedly. It seems that each time they needed the power of God for a specific task, they had to be again prepared by the Holy Spirit. This was early in the life of the Christian movement when the power of the Holy Spirit was stronger within the church, and the people seemed to feel His Presence more readily. This seems to be related directly to the faith and strong beliefs of the early Christians. Maybe if we could get closer to the God of the Bible and seek to please Him more we'd see a stronger presence of the Holy Spirit in the churches today.

To fully understand the Holy Spirit baptism experience in the early church, there are other references to His coming that also must be considered, and these are found in Acts 8, 10, and 19.

*Acts 8:14-17*

14 ***Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:***

15 ***Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:***

16 ***(For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)***

17 ***Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.***

Here in Acts 8, the Bible tells of the Holy Spirit being revealed to the Samaritans. These were people whose Jewish blood has been mixed with the Gentiles. They were most hated by the Jews, but God loves all people. This is well expressed by the story of the woman at the well and her meeting with Jesus.

God wants all nationalities to come to His saving grace through Jesus Christ. The apostles saw evidence that God had also accepted these people, but it does not say they were baptized with the Holy Ghost; it merely says they received the Holy Ghost. This must be the

same as being baptized, or being filled with the Holy Spirit, or God would have told us differently.

Another event we need to examine is found in Acts, Chapter 10 where the Holy Spirit is given to the Gentiles.

*Acts 10:34-48*

34 *Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:*

35 *But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.*

36 *The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)*

37 *That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;*

38 *How **God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost** and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was *with him.**

39 *And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:*

40 *Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;*

41 *Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.*

42 *And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.*

43 *To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*

44 *While Peter yet spake these words, **the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.***

45 *And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that **on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.***

46 *For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,*

47 *Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, **which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?***

48 *And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.*

There are several allusions to the Holy Ghost in the referenced Scriptures. Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost fell on the Gentiles, and they received the gift of the Holy Ghost. It is self evident that all these expressions mean the same as being baptized with the Holy Spirit.

There is one other reference that speaks of the Holy Spirit coming to a specific group that needs to be considered. This is found in Acts, Chapter 19.

*Acts 19:1-6*

1 *And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,*

2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

6 And **when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.**

In this event, the disciples of John the Baptist were introduced into the church of Jesus Christ. It says that the Holy Ghost fell upon them. This then has to mean the same as being baptized with the Holy Ghost, being filled with the Holy Ghost or receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. Whatever it is called, the Holy Spirit comes into people's lives when they accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or accept Jesus as their personal savior.

### **Conclusions about Being Baptized In the Holy Spirit**

There are many biblical references about the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but there is not one mention about it being a second blessing, or that one must speak in tongues as evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit. The expressions of being filled with the spirit and gift of the Spirit have exactly the same meaning as being baptized in the Holy Spirit. If God had wanted to make being baptized in the Holy Spirit a major tenet of the Christian faith and practice, He would have unequivocally said so. We find no other doctrine in the Bible where He is so timid and obscure that we have to guess at what He wants us to know.

The dogma of Baptism in the Holy Spirit as a second blessing is not a true Christian doctrine and will not be supported by those who accept the Bible as God's only rule of faith. It is an addition to God's Word and is concocted to support the experiences of those who speak in tongues, and even further, to make them feel just a little bit more holy than the average Christian who has not had the experience. The Bible is clear, all Christians are baptized into one body at the time of the new birth, and they can only get more if they strive to get rid of the old nature. Paul's words in Ephesians 4:30 express it well.

*Ephesians 4:30*

30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, wherby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

This theme is also well expressed in 1 Corinthians 12:13-13.

*1 Corinthians 12:12-13*

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

## **SPEAKING IN UNKNOWN TONGUES**

### **Should I Seek To Speak In Tongues?**

Many people, as they embark on the Christian faith journey, often ask the question, "Should I seek to speak in tongues?" This is perhaps a valid question as one looks about and observes many people speaking in tongues that are showing evidence of a renewed life in Christ. It is natural for the Christian to want more of what God has to offer. Consequently, if speaking in an unknown tongue is getting more of God, then all should strive to have the gift. However, if it is not of God, then the Christian would do well not seek this experience and avoid it as we do other things foreign to God's Word, for what we accept or reject must always depend on what the Bible has to say about it.

There are many Scriptures that refer to tongues throughout the Bible. (All of the New Testament references are presented in Appendix 2.) Careful study of the Scriptures will show that the tongues of the Bible fall into three basic categories. These are:

1. The actual organ, the tongue.
2. The words coming from the mouth.
3. Languages of various kinds.

There are no other definitions for tongues presented anywhere in the Bible. The quest for the "gift of tongues" as it is called by the modern charismatic must fall into one of these categories to be biblically accepted as a valid gift from God.

As we look at the charismatic tongues movement, we see that it is basically a verbal presentation of something different than a known language. It falls more into an ecstatic category that is totally unknown to either the speaker or the listeners. These unknown tongues are often referred to as spiritual or heavenly languages. They may also be called prayer languages. The identifying aspect of the charismatic tongues is that they cannot be interpreted by the usual means; they need individual interpreters who also must have the special gift of interpretation.

Does the Bible support this charismatic tongues experience? This should be the primary consideration of all interested parties before they seek to acquire this ability. If it is not supported by God's Word, it is not a biblical gift, but only another of a long line of unscriptural emotional experiences.

It must be emphasized that while no one has the right to tell anyone they have or have not had a specific personal experience, the person who has had some unusual emotional experience has no biblical authority or right to tell others they must experience the same thing. It is in this area of dealing with the Charismatics, which gives the most problem as many non-charismatic Christians are being told they are inferior because they don't speak in tongues.

Where do the Charismatics get their authority for speaking in tongues? Generally, the discussion starts in Acts, Chapter 2. Usually some where along in the presentation Mark 16, Acts 8, Acts 10, Acts 19, and 1 Corinthians, Chapters 12, 13, and 14 are also cited as biblical evidence for the authority to speak in tongues. There are many other Scriptures quoted such as Mark 16:17, John 15:26, and John 16:7 which take a lot of explaining to get them tied into tongues. These and many of the other references quoted by the charismatics are not discussed in this paper, as they do not address the issue of tongues directly.

It is well to look at the Greek language to help understand the meanings of the tongues references in the preceding paragraph. In each instant, the Greek word is *Glossa*. This is Strong's number 1100-GSN, and it is pronounced *gloce-sah*. The meaning is "of uncertain affinity; the tongue; by implication. a language (specifically, one unnaturally acquired): KGV--tongue." Tongues are generally referred to as *Glossilaia*, which is a derivation of *glossa* (*tongue*), and *lalia* (*speech*).

Strong's definition is clear about *Glossilaia* being a known language that can be interpreted by those who know the language. The question is, "Does this definition comply with the charismatic interpretation?" In order to answer this question, one needs to look carefully at Acts, Chapter 2 for this is where the charismatic advocate usually starts to prove that the gift of tongues was given to the church at Pentecost, hence the term "Pentecostal Holiness." Those who subscribe to this event as being "baptism in the Holy Spirit" are seeking the same experience that the Apostles had at Pentecost, the rushing of wind, the tongues of fire, and the speaking in tongues.

Looking at the pertinent Scriptures, we can determine exactly what the tongues experience was at Pentecost. A simple comparison of this experience with the demonstrated modern tongues movement will ascertain if these two are related in any way.

*Acts 2:1-11*

1 *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*

2 *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*

3 *And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*

4 ***And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.***

5 *And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, **out of every nation under heaven.***

6 *Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that **every man heard them speak in his own language.***

7 *And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, **are not all these which speak Galileans?***

8 *And **how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?***

9 ***Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,***

10 ***Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,***

11 ***Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.***

There were several things that are significant about the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the apostles' speaking in tongues.

1. Acts 2:4 says that they began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. It is important to note that the Spirit gave them the ability to speak in other tongues. They didn't solicit this ability; it was given to them without asking or expecting it. It was spontaneous.

2. Acts 2:5 further identifies specifically what these tongues were as it mentions there were Jews out of every nation who heard in their own language or dialect. The precise identities of the various people who were hearing in their own languages were placed here by the Holy Spirit so there would be no misunderstanding about what the tongues being mentioned were. They clearly were different languages, which corresponded to the understanding of the people from the various nations mentioned.

3. Acts 2:5 further clarifies the identity of the tongues spoken as it clearly states, "every man heard them speak in his own language." There is no doubt about what this means; the people present heard the apostles speak in foreign languages. There was somewhere around eighteen languages and dialects spoken.

4. Acts 2:7-11 lists all the languages and dialects that were spoken and heard. These are listed exactly as given in the King James Bible.

- a. Galilaeans.
- b. Parthians.
- c. Medes.
- d. Elamites.
- e. Dwellers in Mesopotania.
- f. Dwellers in Judaea.
- g. Dwellers in Cappadocia.
- h. Dwellers in Pontus.
- i. Dwellers in Asia.
- j. Dwellers in Phrygia.
- k. Dwellers in Pamphylia.

- l. Dwellers in Egypt.
- m. Dwellers in parts of Libya about Cyrene.
- n. Strangers of Rome.
- o. Jews.
- p. Proselytes.
- q. Cretes.
- r. Arabians.

Several verses confirm the tongues spoken at the coming of the Holy Spirit were known languages, but unknown to the speakers. Verses 6 and 11 further confirm these were known languages as the men listening state, "how hear we every man in his own tongue, wherein we were born," and "we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God."

There is one important point that must be made here. The people who were identified as speaking in other languages were actually speaking in their own normal language. For example, Peter spoke in his natural Galilean dialect, and the listeners heard in their respective language or dialect. The miracle was not in the speaking voice, but in the reconfiguration of the sound waves as they traveled from the speaker's mouth to the ears of the listeners. They did not hear gibberish but real understood languages.

There can be no question in the mind of anyone that the tongues spoken and heard at Pentecost were foreign languages and dialects. This was a Spiritual gift brought to the church with the coming of the Holy Spirit. There were many other signs and wonders, but the speaking in other languages seemed to have the greatest impact.

Since the tongues at Pentecost are clearly identified as known languages which were understood by those present, the only other question to be answered is, "are the records of tongues in Acts and First Corinthians different than the tongues at Pentecost?"

### **Acts 10 - The Holy Spirit comes To the Gentiles.**

In acts, Chapter 10, it is recorded where the Gospel of Jesus Christ is taken to the Gentiles through God's dealing with Cornelius. When the Holy Spirit fell upon them they spake with tongues. Peter was not amazed at this, as he had experienced the same thing when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost. The underlying Greek word, which was translated into tongues, confirms that this is exactly the same word, *glossa*, as recorded in acts Chapter 2. It simply means they spoke in a language different than the one they knew. This confirmed to Peter that they had in fact received the Holy Ghost and that God had brought the Gentiles into the Christian fold. Part of Acts, Chapter 10 is given to clarify this point.

*Acts 10:44-48*

44 While Peter yet spake these words, **the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.**

45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that **on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.**

46 For **they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.** Then answered Peter,

47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

Acts 10:46 specifically says that they spoke with other tongues. That is to say, they spoke in a language they didn't know. Peter heard this and knew it was a sign from God that the Gentiles were also to be taken into the church of Jesus Christ. It was a distinct gift from the Holy Ghost, as anyone speaking and being heard in a language they had not learned had never happened before. God does that when He speaks; He always presents things that cannot be mistaken as coming from anyone else but Him.

### **Acts 19 - The Holy Spirit comes To the Disciples of John**

The next place tongues appear in relation to the Holy Spirit is in Acts, Chapter 19. This is the record where the disciples of John the Baptist received the Holy Spirit. Part of the narrative is given below to show that this was exactly the same as the tongues that were spoken at Pentecost.

Acts 19:1-7

1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,

2 He said unto them, **Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?** And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

3 And he said unto them, **Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.**

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

6 **And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.**

7 And all the men were about twelve.

The same word, *glossa*, as used in Acts, Chapter 2 is recorded here, and exactly the same thing happened again, they spoke in tongues. Even though Paul was not there at Pentecost, he recognized that this phenomenon was the work of the Holy Spirit. He knew when they spoke in a language they didn't know, it was a supernatural gift from God, and it signified the disciples of John the Baptist were also to be brought into the Christian fold. Again, God had performed a miracle that was recognized as coming only from Him.

## 1 Corinthians 12 - 14 - Tongues At Corinth.

The only other place that tongues are mentioned in reference to being a gift of the Holy Spirit is in First Corinthians, Chapters 12 through 14. This is an important reference to the charismatic for it seems to support the speaking in ecstatic tongues that are so popular on the modern scene. The questions are, "are these tongues different from the tongues in Acts, and if so, how are they different?" The place to start is with the referenced Scripture.

### 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

7 *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*

8 *For to one is given by the Spirit the **word of wisdom**; to another the **word of knowledge** by the same Spirit;*

9 *To another **faith** by the same Spirit; to another the **gifts of healing** by the same Spirit;*

10 *To another the **working of miracles**; to another **prophecy**; to another **discerning of spirits**; to another **divers kinds of tongues**; to another **the interpretation of tongues**:*

11 *But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.*

It is noted here in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 that speaking in tongues is a genuine gift from the Holy Spirit. The "divers kinds of tongues" mentioned are different languages, and the underlying Greek word, *glossa*, is the same word used at the Pentecostal experience. Clearly, it means many different languages, but they are actual languages that can be understood and interpreted.

Speaking in other languages was a Holy Spirit endowed gift to the apostolic church so that the Gospel could be easily spread to all nations and present evidence that it was from God; there is no other record in history where this phenomenon has been duplicated. Keep in mind that what God does is clearly evident in its manifestation. If he had meant something other than known languages here, He would have said so.

### 1 Corinthians 12:28-30

28 *And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, **diversities of tongues**.*

29 *Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?*

30 *Have all the gifts of healing? **do all speak with tongues?** do all interpret?*

In 1 Corinthians 12:28-30 God again emphasizes the speaking in tongues as being a gift of the Holy Spirit. The writings are clear that all do not possess this gift. Even if the ecstatic language of the charismatics were the tongues the Bible is speaking of (which it is not), it would be a total violation of God's Word to think that all could acquire this gift. Paul is explicit here; not all of the Corinthians spoke in tongues. He is building up to show that there is a better way in the next chapter.

### 1 Corinthians 13:1,8-10

1 *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.*

8 *Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; **whether there be tongues, they shall cease**; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*

9 *For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.*

10 *But **when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.***

In 1 Corinthians 13:1, 8-10, the Word of God is again emphasizing the unimportance of tongues, even in the time when this gift was operative. I often hear charismatics speak of the tongues of angels as if it were an unknown language, but every instance in the Bible where angels spoke, they talked in a language that could be understood. There is not one word of Scripture anywhere in the Bible to back up angelic tongues as being anything other than known languages.

The Word is clear in 1 Corinthians 13:8 that tongues will cease. The only question is when? Actually, the Bible tells us they will cease along with prophecy and knowledge. Contrary to what some people would have others to believe, knowledge and prophecy ceased with the completion of the last book of the Bible.

There is no longer any need for God to foretell of His relationship with mankind as He has given us His plan of the ages and closed the door to future revelation in a prophetic sense. He has spoken to all generations, recorded it in the Bible, and expects us to conform to His Word. There are no prophets alive today who can add to or take away from the Bible. Likewise, there is no gift of tongues today in a biblical sense.

1 Corinthians 14:1-40

1 *Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.*

2 ***For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.***

3 *But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.*

4 ***He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.***

5 ***I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.***

6 *Now, brethren, if **I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?***

7 *And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?*

8 *For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?*

9 *So likewise ye, **except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.***

10 *There are, it may be, so **many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.***

11 ***Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me.***

12 Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.

13 **Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.**

14 **For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.**

15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

16 Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?

17 For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.

18 **I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:**

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.**

20 Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

21 **In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.**

22 Wherefore **tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not:** but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

23 **If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?**

24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

26 How is it then, brethren? **when ye come together**, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, **hath a tongue**, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

27 **If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.**

28 **But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.**

29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

30 If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

36 What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

- 39 *Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and **forbid not to speak with tongues.***  
40 ***Let all things be done decently and in order.***

The entire chapter above is speaking of tongues, *glossa*, as spoken in Acts, Chapter 2. It is an unknown language, but one which can be interpreted. The key to this whole discussion is found in 1 Corinthians 14:21 which references the Old Testament in Deuteronomy 28:49 and Isaiah 28:11&12.

*Deuteronomy 28:49*

49 *The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; **a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;***

There should be no question in anyone's mind that this means a nation who speaks a language that the Jews do not understand. This is a known language that can be interpreted.

*Isaiah 28:11-12*

11 *For with **stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.***

12 *To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing; yet they would not hear.*

In both of the references above the Hebrew word *Lashown* is used. It is defined in Strong's Concordance as a known language. This is given below.

Strong's Number: 3956-HSN, Transliterated: *lashown*, Pronounced: *law-shone'* or *lashon* {*law-shone'*}; also (in plural) feminine *lshonah* {*lesh-o-naw'*}; from 3960 HSN; the tongue (of man or animals)' used literally (as an instrument of licking, eating, or speech), and figuratively (speech, an ingot, a fork of flame, a cove of water): KJV--+ babbler, bay, + evil speaker, language, talker, tongue, wedge.

It is apparent from the Old Testament reference that the Holy Spirit meant other languages, which can be understood by someone who knows them. In the early church, when the Gospel was being spread abroad, and the Bible had not yet been written, there was a need for all who knew the Gospel to be able to convey it to those who did not understand or know the language in which the missionaries spoke. When the Bible was completed, the Holy Spirit no longer needed this gift to convey the Word. This is not intended to imply that God cannot continue to provide people with this gift today, but it doesn't seem to be operative in the normal sense.

### **What Conclusions Can Be Drawn About Tongues?**

The only valid conclusion that can be drawn about the modern charismatic tongue movement is that the Bible does not support it. This is not to say that many people do not experience some kind of ecstatic speech, but is it from God? To be sure, God has never in the history of the world imitated Satan in the manifestation of any of His gifts; it is always the other way around as Satan often imitates the expressions of God's gifts in order to deceive and cause dissensions in the church.

The history of the ecstatic tongue can be traced as far back as Babylon to those who worshipped Dagon, the fish god. It can also be found among the witch doctors of Africa, the voodoo priest of South America, and in just about any other pagan religion throughout the world.

Keep in mind that these heathen religions practiced the ecstatic tongue long before it was ever recorded in the Bible.

If “speaking in tongues” is proof that God is with the modern charismatics movement, then all other movements in history who spoke in tongues would have to be from God also. Any Bible believing Christian would immediately disagree with this, so it makes sense to also deny the modern charismatic imitators of historical false religions.

What is rapidly happening because of the universal acceptance of the charismatic tongues movement is that denominational lines are being crossed, biblical belief structures are being cast aside, and the common experience of speaking in tongues is being expounded as the only valid test for true Christian fellowship. The mystic nature of tongues, which exalts experience over true worship, attracts all kinds of unsaved people who naturally intermingle with Christians. When these two groups interact together as equals it not only spawns doctrinal confusion among the Christians but also leaves the work of the Holy Spirit open for ridicule by the unsaved masses.

There was a valid reason for God to specify that the Christians must separate themselves from non-Christians, He simply didn't want His children to present the wrong example, and additionally He knew that under these circumstances, His Word would be distorted. To emphasize the seriousness of this believer/unbeliever relationship, He even told us in First John not to wish them God's speed for even this is sinful in God's eyes.

It is clear that those involved in the charismatic movement ignore the warnings of the Bible and choose to continually fellowship with the unsaved and regularly add to God's Word to justify their personal experiences. Regardless of what is called, and it doesn't matter how much Scripture is quoted out of context, there in no way the modern tongues movement can be justified as being from God.

## **MIRACULOUS HEALINGS**

Supernatural healings by the modern charismatics usually falls into two different categories, the mystic “word of knowledge,” and the “laying on of hands.” While they are both related to some degree, they are easier to present individually. The word of knowledge is presented first and then the laying on of hands.

I must preempt this discussion by stating unequivocally that divine healing is in the Bible. It is a gift for the church today as well as it was when the Bible was written, but it always follows a certain pattern, and when manifested accomplishes a definite part of God's universal plan. Only in those explicit cases of illnesses that God specifically designates will healings be affected, and like everything else God does, the world will clearly know that it came from Him.

### **What Is the Word of Knowledge?**

The “word of knowledge,” as it is used by the charismatics, is a present day invention and is presented as something that is a mystical or magical revelation from God. The prophet (or

whatever he calls himself) will have some kind of revelation that something is happening to someone somewhere, but he doesn't know who or where.

Some charismatic TV personalities, such as Richard Roberts or Pat Robertson, usually calls out that they have a word of knowledge, and will then say something like "God just gave me a word of knowledge that someone is being cured of cancer (or some other medical problem). Go to the phone, call me right now, and let us know whom you are. We want to know what God is doing in your life." Sure enough, an assistant will come in after a while and announce that someone has called, and the "word of knowledge was correct." Then there will be a lot of praising the Lord and thanking Jesus.

What does the Bible say about "the word of knowledge?" Knowledge itself is mentioned several times, but as a phrase it is mentioned only one time in First Corinthians but hardly in the context of the mystical way the charismatics use it.

*1 Corinthians 12:4-13*

*4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.*

*5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.*

*6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.*

*7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*

*8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another **the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;***

Since this is the only place this formation of words appear in the Bible we need to ask, "Is this the mediumistic method seen practiced by today's charismatic leaders?" I personally think it takes a long stretch of the imagination to conclude that it is, for God always makes miraculous doctrines very clear in His Word.

Actually it is explained in the Bible, for one only has to look at the Greek word underlying knowledge to see that this is exactly the same knowledge that is noted in 1 Corinthians 13:2 and 8.

Strong's Number 1108 *gnosis* (*gno'-sis*); from 1097; knowing (the act), i.e. (by implication) knowledge: KJV-- knowledge, science.

*1 Corinthians 13:2*

*2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and **all knowledge;** and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.*

*1 Corinthians 13:8*

*8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; **whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.***

The knowledge referenced in the above Scripture is not about some mystical messages from God but is totally and completely about the Gospel. There were no Bibles, as we know them today, when this was written. In order to spread the Gospel, God gave some people

special revelation about Jesus Christ that they were to share with others. Likewise, the Word is just as clear that this knowledge passed away along with prophecy and tongues with the completion of the book of Revelation.

The "word of knowledge" that is practiced by the charismatics is close kin to talking to the dead (mediumistic), and it does not exist in God's kingdom. God operates in the supernatural realm, but he does is all in the open. He has never used hocus pocus to do anything. "Let God be true and every man a liar" the Bible says. If anything comes along which cannot be clearly explained by the Scriptures, and it takes a special prophet to make it understandable, it is best to let it alone. It is a safe bet that it is not from God.

## **Laying on of Hands**

Miraculous healings by the laying on of hands is a common practice among the charismatics, but they are never isolated events, for there is usually dancing, speaking in tongues, and being slain in the spirit that goes along with each healing. The adherents of this procedure go all out to make it seem Bible based, but it is in reality a far cry from the instructions Jesus left us and varies greatly from the examples the apostles set. God's Word must confirm miraculous healings, as well as anything else the charismatics do, if it is to be acceptable to Him, and this should be only concern for the Christian.

Looking at the Bible we find that there are accounts of supernatural miracles happening in both the Old and New Testaments brought about by the laying on of hands by a specially anointed person. In the Old Testament, there is the account of Elijah's physical touch bringing the widow's son back to life. This is recorded for us in I Kings 17:17-24. The record is as follows:

### *1 Kings 17:17-24*

*17And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.*

*18And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?*

*19And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed.*

*20And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?*

*21And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again.*

*22And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.*

*23And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.*

*24And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth.*

Healings by the laying on of hands in the New Testament is more commonplace. Jesus went about healing all kinds of sickness, and in some cases He even raised people from the

dead. It is noted that He did not always lay hands on the individual to accomplish this. We see in Matthew 5 where He Just decreed it and the centurion's servant was healed.

*Matthew 8:5-8*

*5 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,*

*6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.*

*7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.*

*8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.*

*Matthew 8:13*

*13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.*

In the occurrence where Lazarus was restored to life, Jesus merely called him to come forth and his life was restored. This is recorded in John 11.

*John 11:41-44*

*41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.*

*42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.*

*43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.*

*44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*

There were many other instances of healings brought about by the supernatural powers of Jesus. There is also a record of where He conveyed this power to others in Luke 10.

*Luke 10:1*

*1 After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.*

*Luke 10:8-9*

*8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:*

*9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.*

*Luke 10:17*

*17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.*

After the Holy Ghost was given to the church there were cases where the apostles were used as the agents of divine healing. One of these occurrences is recorded in Acts 3:1-7.

*Acts 3:1-7*

1 Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.

2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

As far as the biblical record is concerned the ability to raise the dead was confined to Peter and Paul after Jesus' ascension. There are only two instances where this happened and there is no other record in the New Testament of anyone else ever having this power. The occasion where Peter restored life to Tabitha is recorded in Acts 9:36-41.

*Acts 9:36-41*

36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

38 And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.

40 But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

41 And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.

The other recorded occurrence, where Paul raised Eutychus from the dead, is found in Acts 20:9-10.

*Acts 20:9-10*

9 And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.

10 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.

There were several other instances where people were miraculously healed but not always by the laying on of hands. There was even a situation where people were healed just by passing under Peter's shadow. This is recorded in Acts 5:15-16.

*Acts 5:15-16*

15 Inasmuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

*16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.*

It seems that Paul's power to heal was so strong that it could be transferred in cloths that had touched his body. This is recorded in Acts 19:11-12.

*Acts 19:11-12*

*11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:*

*12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.*

In 1 Corinthians 12:28-30 we read about the gifts of healings which can safely be assumed to mean the power to bring about miraculous cures by the person or persons with the gifts. It is given as plural, gifts, because there are many gifts of healing. It also implies that the gifts are given as needed for specific purposes.

*1 Corinthians 12:28-30*

*28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then **gifts of healings**, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.*

*29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?*

*30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?*

The above Scriptures are some of the biblical records of miraculous gifts that may be bestowed upon select persons. The question that comes to mind is, "Why do we not see these kinds of gifts displayed today?" Actually we do, but it is not the sideshow productions of Benny Henn, Richard Roberts, Leroy Jenkins, or other such like faith healers.

In an attempt to imitate the biblical records some faith healers have mailed out cloths that they have prayed over which was supposed to induce healing in the same manner that Paul blessed cloths and people were healed. Using a variation of this procedure Oral Roberts used to send Holy water in small packets to cure all kinds of illnesses. (I can't find this procedure anywhere in the Bible.) I remember Leroy Jenkins doing somewhat the same thing. He had a well that he had blessed and the water was supposed to bring miraculous cures. Today is not uncommon to see the TV healers praying over large stacks of letters and requests for healing. There are all kinds of procedural variations and all are supposed to be based on some special personal anointing by the Holy Spirit so that the faith healer will be able to continually induce healings of all kinds.

However, the Bible does not support these claims. If we study the lives of the apostles, we will see that the gift of healing was given for an individual situation and then was made inoperative in that specific person. This is evident in Paul's own life, which we know had the power of healing from God, but even Paul could not indiscriminately heal just because he wanted to.

It is recorded in 2 Timothy 4:20 where Paul left Trophimus sick. If he could purposely call upon the power to heal, he would have surely cured him before he departed. He even tells about Timothy's stomach problems in 1 Timothy 5:23 and he didn't seem to be able to heal that either. In addition, he couldn't even heal his own infirmaries as recorded in 1 Corinthians 12:7-10. We can deduce from these failures of Paul to heal that he was not empowered by God to

do so. If he could call upon the healing power of God at will, he surely would not have let his friends suffer.

God knew, in His omnipotent wisdom, that if he allowed His supernatural powers to be channeled indiscriminately through a person, that the people would worship the healer and not Him. Knowing this, He gave us a formula in James 5:13-15 for supernatural healing within the church that would work for all ages and support the needs of the Christians until the rapture.

*James 5:13-15*

*13Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.*

*14Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:*

*15And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*

Here are the instructions from God for the church today. It all revolves around prayer. Even more than this, it involves strong faith on the part of the ones praying. There is no limit to the power of God that could be displayed if we had elders in the churches that were filled with the faith once delivered to the saints. The Holy Spirit is still here, but we are too caught up in the things of the world to be able to use His power. Faith on the part of the healer is the sole issue confronting those who would desire to perform miracles today.

What do we do with all the instances of miraculous healings claimed by the faith healer of today? We do what God has always had us do, we see if it measures up to the Scripture. If not, we reject it.

In the New Testament specially anointed people did all the recorded miraculous healings. It was accomplished in many ways; "laying on of hands" was only one of them, and each and every healing was a sign to the early church that testified of a risen Savior. If miraculous healings are evident today, they will do exactly the same thing. We also noticed that in the Bible there is no particular emphasis on the healers as they always used their gifts to glorify God. Clearly, the gifts of healing were not as strongly emphasized when James gave the formula for the future church.

Another point of special interest is there never seemed to be a secular circus-like atmosphere in connection with the healings in the New Testament. It was always set in a worshipful experience that glorified God. There was no loud shouting and rock music. There was no strutting across a stage and looking smug. It was something that was done in a matter of course to demonstrate God's presence.

Today's faith healers are so far away from the biblical examples that they do not even remotely measure up to God's standards. What I do see on the faith healing scene is a big emphasis on money, glorification of the healers, and flashy surroundings. I have yet to see one healing demonstration where there even vaguely appears to be a concern about following acceptable biblical instructions; it all seems to be built around a gigantic secular entertainment atmosphere that could never honor God or His church.

All faith healers profess to be anointed by God as universal miracle workers, but yet they can't heal all sicknesses that confront them. You only have to attend any charismatic healing service to witness this, for there will be large numbers of sick people who attend who will leave still sick. They often times tell those who can't be healed that their faith is not strong enough, but the Bible doesn't record where the one being healed had to have faith, it always came from the healer.

In an attempt to refute this statement the charismatics will often times bring up the examples of Jesus speaking of faith making one whole. This is nonsense. Jesus could heal anyone he wanted to regardless of his or her faith, and there are instances recorded in the Bible where He did just that. It must be noted that the Apostles never relied on the patient's faith, but depended on their own for their healing sessions. It is inhuman to make a sick person feel guilty because God does not heal them. God does things in His own way, and in His own time, and we should be fully aware that sometimes death is God's way of healing.

It seems that the charismatic healers do not concern themselves with what God wants and are much less concerned about accurate biblical exegesis as they often bend the Scriptures to suit their own claims and desires. This is well illustrated by their totally inaccurate rendering of Isaiah 53:5, "By His stripes we are healed" which they claim promises all Christians a disease free life.

*Isaiah 53:5*

*5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

Does this really mean that we are to be completely healthy if we are Christians? Peter didn't think so. He used the same verse in 1 Peter 2:24 to show that Isaiah was referring to spiritual healing.

*1 Peter 2:24*

*24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*

You can easily see here that he is informing the church about being healed from sin when we truly accept the saving power of Jesus Christ. It does not even allude to physical healing, and anyone who says it does is misusing Scripture in an attempt to prove a point that is not intended.

If those who claim to have indiscriminate healing power were truly ordained by God, they would not have to pick and choose whom they heal. I have noticed that none of them bother to go into a hospital intensive care unit and heal the dying or to a funeral home and restore life to the dead. I've also noticed that they all stay away for the AIDS issue.

Jesus took on the incurable diseases of His day, and broke up every funeral He came in contact with. The modern healers are careful to avoid attacking the tough sicknesses, and are especially careful to not go near graveyards and funeral parlors. The faith healers of today are charlatans at worse and misguided individuals at best. Stick with God and His Word and you can't go wrong.

The reader probably thinks that I don't believe in the miraculous healing of God's power. This is not so, for I have personally witnessed His intervention on many occasions. I never underestimate the power of prayer or the power of God to restore people's health in any way He desires. I believe that the gifts of healing are apparent in many people for it displays itself in the caring for humankind, medicine, prayer, and laying on of hands in certain cases. God cannot be placed in a neat little box that is bounded by the sides people create, but neither can His Word be mocked when it comes to the seriousness of His business.

I've also notice that God does not always answer the prayer to heal. He has a plan, and sometimes His plans do not exactly correspond with what we want. Better than asking for healing; ask for salvation and understanding. Keep in mind that we all are going to die; even the faith healers. However, it is not important how we die, or when we die, but what is most important is that we be ready to die.

## **SLAIN IN THE SPIRIT**

### **What Does It Mean To Be Slain In The Spirit?**

If you look at television programs such as the Trinity Broadcasting Network, you'll see the modern charismatics at work. Benny Henn is one of the most prevalent healers who practice "slaying people in the Spirit." Usually this "slaying" is manifested by a specially anointed person laying hands on someone (usually on the forehead, but not always) and recipient will fall over backwards. There are catchers who stand behind the person being "slain" to keep them from falling hard and getting hurt.

It is not clear as to exactly what this is supposed to accomplish other than to display the power of the healer. Generally, people who have been "slain" will lie there for a while and then get up as if something marvelous has happened. As a rule, there will be assistants who will cover the ladies to keep them from being exposed. While it appears that the person is being pushed over backwards, this is not the case for sometimes the healer will blow upon a person and he or she will fall over backwards.

The charismatic Roman Catholic priests often times "slay" people using "holy water." They sprinkle it on a person and he or she falls. Sometimes they sprinkle a whole group of people and they all fall. It has been witnessed where the priest merely points his finger or blows his breath at a person and he or she falls. There does not seem to be a set way to do this, but the "laying on of hands" is by far the most common.

What does the Bible say about all this? Absolutely nothing! There is not one place in the Bible that such an occurrence is ever mentioned. Many try to use the Scriptures in John 18 where Jesus was arrested as proof that this is in the Bible, but John records nothing like what is happening on the charismatic scene.

*John 18:3-6*

*3 Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.*

4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

6 **As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.**

As can be seen from the referenced Scripture, those who came to arrest Jesus were overtaken by His power. It had to do with sin and the reason they were there. The power of God had such a profound effect on these children of Satan that it made them weak just to be near such a divine person. If the charismatic claim that being "slain in the Spirit" is the same as this, then they are falling for the wrong reasons.

It is concluded that nothing such as the charismatic being "slain in the Spirit" is recorded in the Bible. It falls totally in the realm of imagination at best, or is of Satan at worse. Wherever it comes from, being "slain in the Spirit" is not from God and those who wish to please Him should avoid this experience.

## EXPLANATION OF 1 CORINTHIANS, CHAPTER 13

Much of the charismatic doctrine comes from a misunderstanding and misinterpreting of 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13. It would do well for us to look at some of the key words and verses from both sides of the controversy.

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

1 Though I speak with the **tongues of men and of angels**, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have **the gift of prophecy**, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 **Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.**

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 **But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.**

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 *For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

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

## **Tongues**

The tongues of men and angels that is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:1 is self explanatory to the discerning reader. As we well know men of this world speak in known languages, and there is no recorded event in the Bible where angels spoke in any kind of heavenly language. They are messengers of God and always bring a message that can be understood. In other words, they always speak in known languages. The Word of God is telling us that eloquent languages of men or even angels are not enough. If one does into have the love of God in whatever he does, it is worthless.

## **Prophecy**

The gift of prophecy was prevalent in the making of the New Testament. When the Bible was completed, there was no longer any need for prophecy for the plan of the ages was completed and recorded. Prophecy is foretelling the future. There in no need for one to foretell the future any longer for the Bible clearly tells us what the future holds. Some may claim to be prophets of God today, but will they meet the biblical test as God gave it in the Old Testament?

*Deuteronomy 13:1-3*

1 *If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder,*

2 *And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;*

3 *Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*

*Deuteronomy 18:22*

22 *When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.*

You see there are two valid tests; one to see if you love the Lord enough not to follow a self proclaimed prophet that teaches against God's Word, and the second is to look carefully at the proclaimed prophet's predications. If they don't come true, he is a false prophet. A prophet of God is required to predict with 100 percent accuracy. There are no prophets in the world today!

## **That Which Is Perfect**

In 1 Corinthians 13:8 the Bible speaks of tongues and knowledge. Tongues and knowledge have been adequately treated in separate headings. What is important here is that tongues, prophecies, and knowledge will all cease. The question is, when? 1 Corinthians 13:10 tells us it is when that which is perfect shall come. This then is the key to this chapter.

What does that which is perfect mean? The Charismatics say that this is the Second Coming of Jesus. Tongues, prophecy, and knowledge (Word of Knowledge) still exist in the church today. Most of the manifestations that surround the charismatic movement are built around the meaning of the word, perfect. If the perfect mentioned here is to signify the Second Coming, then it would have to be a different Greek word than is used elsewhere which has been interpreted perfect.

The Greek word that perfect is translated from in 1 Corinthians 13:10 is *teleios*. This is Strong's number 5046. *teleios* (*tel'-i-os*); from 5056; complete (in various applications of labor, growth, mental and moral character, etc.); neuter (as noun, with 3588) completeness:

As can be seen from the definition, *teleios* is a process, not an event. Robert Gromacki, in his book, *The Modern Tongues Movement*, gives a superb explanation of this word. He says in part, "However, the word *teleios* (complete or perfect) is never used in the New Testament to depict the Second Coming, the millennium, or the eternal state. Also, since *teleios* is set in contrast to that which is "in part" (*ek merous*), it must refer to the culmination of a process. The Second Coming is not a process; it is an instantaneous event."

Clearly, "that which is perfect is come" has to refer to something concrete that has developed with time. Knowing this then the only question we have to answer is "has the perfect thing arrived on the earth?" The answer to this is yes, for the Bible is God's perfect revelation to mankind.

In the developing of the New Testament, God relied on many parts as revealed through His agents. When all the parts were put together, we had the whole and no longer needed partial revelations. God gave us all of His thoughts and predictions that He wanted us to have in the Bible.

This is what is meant in 1 Corinthians 13:12. The church only knew in part as the revelation of God developed, but when the Bible was fully developed, the necessity for that which was given in part ceased. It is like looking into a clouded looking glass, the image is not too clear, but when the looking glass is clean, clear, and smooth, the likeness is a perfect reflection of what we are. Likewise, the completed Bible is a perfect vision of what God would have us to know.

As the Holy Spirit was giving Paul these words to write for future generation, he stated in 1 Corinthians 13:13, "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." "Now" refers to the time when the New Testament was to be completed. It is clear that of the six gifts enumerated only faith, hope, and charity were left. The others, tongues, prophecy, and knowledge, were taken from the earth when the New Testament was finalized and are not in existence today.

It also says here that faith and hope will cease. From the human standpoint, this does not seem likely, but consider that in heaven there will be no need for faith or hope, only charity will continue throughout eternity. Faith and hope then will cease to exist at second coming of Jesus.

Charity is the word used in the King James Bible to describe God's love. It is a word that presents totally unselfish love. This is the kind of love that God has directed towards mankind and is the only kind of love that will be evident in heaven. Only the love of God will remain in the end.

A graphic portrayal of the duration of gifts as described in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13 is given below. Notice that the temporary gifts, prophecy, knowledge, and tongues, ended when the New Testament was completed, the semi-permanent gifts, faith and hope, ends with the rapture, and the one permanent gift, charity, lasts forever for it is of God.

**Duration of God's Gifts in 1 Corinthian, Chapter 13**

Temporary Gifts (ended when N. T. completed)	Semi-Permanent Gifts (ends with rapture)	One Permanent Gift (never ends)
<hr style="border: 0.5px solid black;"/> PROPHECIES KNOWLEDGE TONGUES	FAITH HOPE	CHARITY

**CONCLUSION**

There are many reasons people get involved with the charismatic movement. Some are looking for new experiences, and it seems to offer that. Some are looking for access to hidden knowledge so they will feel superior to others; it seems to offer that also. Power seems to be another motivation factor, as people are more than willing to follow a leader who offers unsubstantiated claims to have a mystical relationship with God. Those who accept such a person generally elevate this leader to a position equal with God.

However, there are some who get caught up in the charismatic movement who are truly looking for a closer walk with God, but don't know the Bible well enough to know that they are being deceived. Whatever the reasons may be, they are all being led away from the true Jesus and following some mystical Jesus who has been conjured up by men with strong imaginations.

If the people seeking a closer walk with God could only understand that He is not the author of confusion, but of order and restraint, they would come to understand that only Satan brings about confusion among God's people. He alone is the initiator of all the trouble among the professing believers and the churches, and nothing since the church was founded has caused so much confusion and dissension as the charismatic movement. Perhaps it was not the original intention of the charismatic founders, but regardless of their best intentions, the movement has caused more divisions in the church of God than any other schism in the history of the world.

I suppose we are to expect these kinds of things to happen. Jesus said that they would, but yet it is still difficult to accept that such a large number of people who profess to follow Jesus would be led astray and follow the whims of the leaders of the charismatic movement.

In the Book of Revelation, God sounded a warning about those who depart from the faith and the consequential confusion that would reign among the churches in the last days. It is tough to accept, but we are surely living in the last days, and with all that's going on in the world, it is more important than ever that we test all things by the Scriptures. We must adhere to the full council of God to keep from being deceived. If you are involved in the mystical charismatic movement, get out while there is still time, for Jesus is coming soon!

\* \* \* \* \*

“... but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. 1 Corinthians 13:8-13

**PUBLICATIONS INDEX**

**[HOME](#)**

**T**<sub>he</sub> **W**<sub>ord</sub> **O**<sub>f</sub> **G**<sub>od</sub> **I**<sub>s</sub> **S**<sub>harper</sub> **T**<sub>han</sub> **A**<sub>ny</sub> **T**<sub>wo</sub> **E**<sub>dged</sub> **S**<sub>word</sub>

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W  
O  
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T  
E  
S**

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