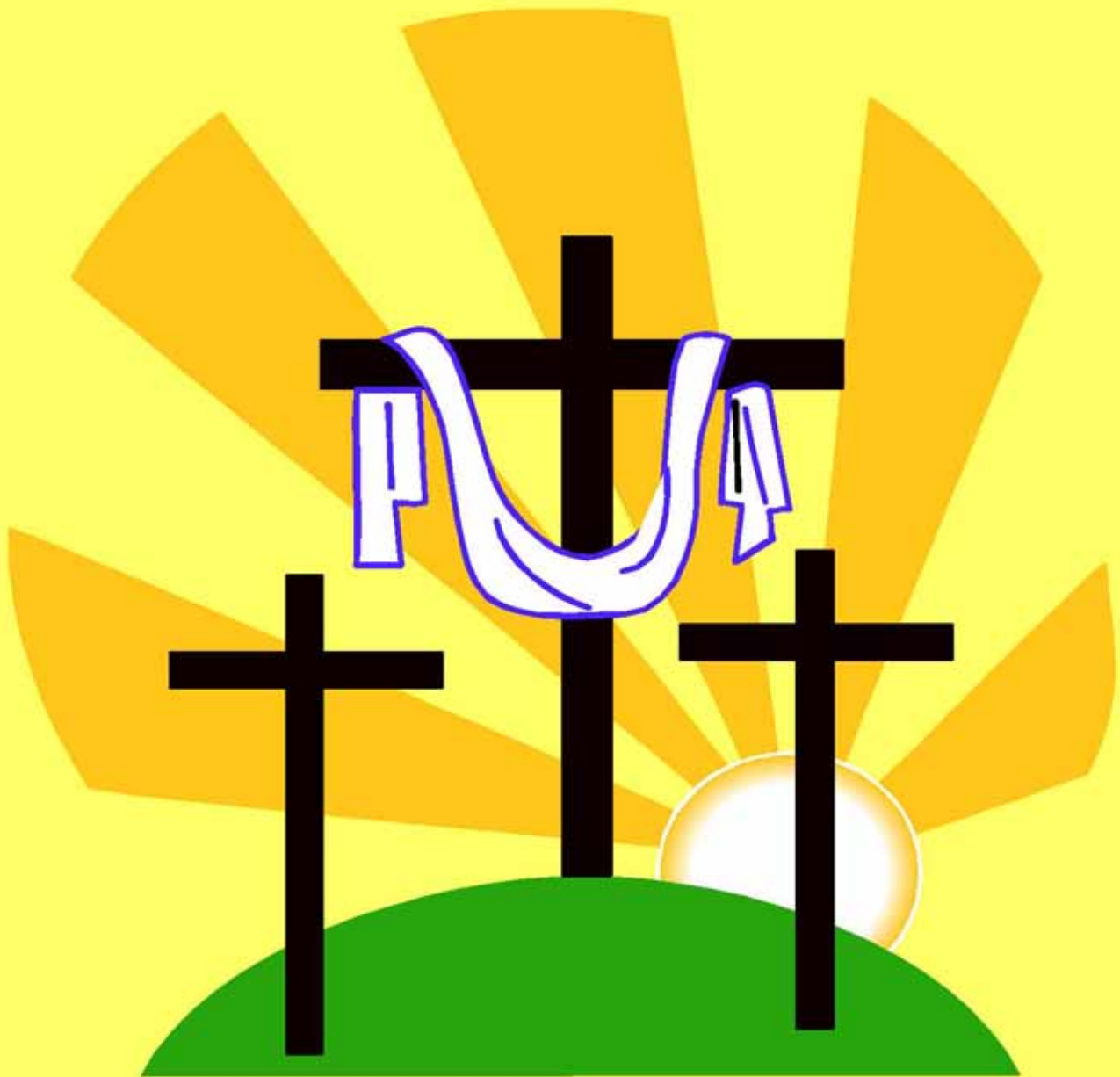


THE HOLY SPIRIT IS FOR YOU TODAY



Jesus died so that every person could receive the Biblical experience of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the initial sign of tongues just like the New Testament Believers experienced in the first century.

THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

by Steve Ritchie

WHY PENTECOST?

It was not without significance that God made the disciples wait until the day of Pentecost to receive the full new birth experience. Pentecost literally means fifty. The number fifty is used in scripture to symbolically represent liberty as in the year of Jubilee, every fiftieth year. Slaves were liberated, debts canceled, and liberty was proclaimed throughout the land. Paul wrote, "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty" (2 Corinthians 3:17).

Moreover, it was at Pentecost that Israel first received the Law of God at Mount Sinai fifty days after departing from Egypt at Passover. So also the disciples received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to write His laws in their hearts fifty days after Passover (Christ's Death). Hence the Law was given physically on the Old Covenant Day of Pentecost as a type of what was to come when the Law would be given spiritually on the New Covenant Day of Pentecost. Great and marvelous is the wisdom of the Lord who masterminded so great a salvation for His people.

"But this shall be the covenant that I will make . . . says the Lord, I WILL PUT MY LAW IN THEIR INWARD PARTS, AND WRITE IT IN THEIR HEARTS . . ." Jeremiah 31:33
"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I WILL PUT MY SPIRIT WITHIN YOU, and cause you to walk in my statutes. .

. " Ezekiel 36:26,27

The Jews have always referred to the Day of Pentecost as "The Feast of the Giving of the Law," or "The Birthday of Judaism." Likewise the Day of Pentecost speaks to the New Testament Believers as the first day of the proclamation of "The Law of Liberty" (See James 1:25) and the Birthday of the New Testament Church.

Pentecost was also known as "The Feast of Harvest" (See Exodus 23:16; 34:22) i.e. "wheat harvest. Spiritually speaking, Pentecost denotes a time of celebration and great joy for the great harvest of the souls of mankind which would be born into the New Testament Church.

THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH TONGUES

The Prophet Isaiah spoke of the promise of the Holy Spirit when he prophesied in Isaiah 28:9-12: "Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from the milk? Those just drawn from the breasts? For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line. Here a little, there a little. For **WITH STAMMERING LIPS AND ANOTHER TONGUE HE WILL SPEAK TO THIS PEOPLE**, to whom he said, **THIS IS THE REST WITH WHICH YOU MAY CAUSE THE WEARY TO REST, AND THIS IS THE REFRESHING;** yet they would not hear."

It is interesting to find a marvelous correlation of scripture when we compare this prophecy with Jesus' words in Matthew 11:28,29. Jesus is the one who causes "THE WEARY TO

REST" through the supernatural experience of speaking in stammering lips and another tongue.

"Come unto me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you REST. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and **YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.**"

The rest and refreshing of God speaking to His people with stammering lips and an unknown tongue is consistent with Jesus' description of the birth of the Spirit in John 3:5-8:

"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God . . . Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again. The WIND blows where it wishes, and **YOU HEAR THE SOUND OF IT**, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. **SO IS EVERYONE WHO IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT.**"

The original Greek word translated as "wind" is Pneuma. The word pneuma literally means "Spirit," "wind," or "breath." In every other place where the word pneuma is used throughout the Greek New Testament, it is translated into English as the word "Spirit," except in this one instance. Hence the more literal and consistent Greek rendering of this passage in the Emphatic Greek Diaglott renders John 3:8 as follows: "The Spirit breathes where it will, and **YOU HEAR ITS VOICE . . . THUS IT IS WITH EVERYONE WHO HAS BEEN BORN OF THE SPIRIT.**" The J. P. Green Interlinear Bible (which is consistent with most other literal word for word Interlinears) also renders John 3:8 as follows: "The Spirit breathes where He desires, and **YOU HEAR HIS VOICE** but you do not know from where He comes, and where He goes - **SO IS EVERYONE WHO HAS RECEIVED BIRTH FROM THE SPIRIT.**"

One might ask, what on earth is Jesus talking about when he said that "The Spirit breathes . . . and you hear it's voice?"

Surely he is not talking about a believer making a verbal confession of faith. This cannot be said to be the Spirit's Voice.

There is something else that Jesus is talking about in which everyone must receive to receive the birth of the Spirit. The only supernatural phenomenon found in the Bible in which God's Spirit blows or breathes upon His people and you hear the Spirit's sound or voice is the speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gave them the utterance. Jesus also stated in Mark 16:17 that one of the signs that shall follow them that truly believe upon Christ as the scripture has said would be that **"THEY SHALL SPEAK WITH NEW TONGUES."**

In Acts chapter ten we read of an unsaved Roman Centurion by the name of Cornelius. He was a devout man who feared God according to the Law of Moses. While in prayer he saw an angel in a vision who said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. Now send for Simon whose surname is Peter . . . **HE WILL TELL YOU WHAT YOU MUST DO.**" In Acts 11:4 Peter adds that the angel further said to Cornelius that the apostle Peter **"SHALL TELL YOU WORDS, WHEREBY YOU AND ALL YOUR HOUSE SHALL BE SAVED."**

Cornelius and those with him obeyed the angels instructions and sent for Peter who preached salvation through belief in the name of Jesus Christ. Acts 10:43-47 give us the following account of the conversion of Cornelius, his household, and his cohorts: "To Him all the prophets witness that through His name, whosoever

believes in Him will receive remission of sins. While Peter was still speaking these words, **THE HOLY SPIRIT FELL UPON ALL THOSE WHO HEARD THE WORD.** And those of the circumcision (the Jews) who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because **THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT HAD BEEN Poured OUT ON THE GENTILES ALSO. FOR THEY HEARD THEM SPEAK WITH TONGUES** and magnify God. Then Peter answered. Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized **WHO HAVE RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT** just as we have."

In the above conversion account we must note that there is nothing to vindicate a belief in a new birth of the Spirit prior to being filled with the Spirit. The question must be asked, how did the believing Jews which came with Peter know that the Gentiles had received the gift of the Holy Spirit? The scriptural answer is consistent with Jesus' statement, "The Spirit breathes where it will and you hear it's voice . . . thus it is with everyone who has been born of the Spirit." The believing Jews were convinced that the Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit when they "heard them speak with tongues and magnify God." Believing Christians of today should also expect the same initial sign as positive proof that someone has received the Holy Spirit.

Those who purport that a verbal confession alone automatically causes one to receive the Holy Spirit must ask why the Bible is silent upon such a belief. The scripture says that a believer is to "Repent and be baptized . . . and he shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38)." It does not say the moment one believes he automatically receives the Holy Spirit.

The scriptures plainly declare that all who would lawfully enter God's Kingdom must "Repent and be baptized" and they "shall receive the Holy Spirit." This is consistent with Jesus' own words found in Luke 11:5-13."And He said to them, which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him; Friend, lend me three loaves . . . I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, YET BECAUSE OF HIS PERSISTENCE he will rise and give him as many as he needs. So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you . . . how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those WHO ASK HIM!"

The context of the above passage indicates that a confession of Jesus Christ as Lord or repentance does not automatically impart the Holy Spirit. Jesus instructed his followers to have faith and persistence in asking God their Father for the gift of the Holy Spirit. The teaching of the apostle Paul confirms this to be true.

"Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples, he said to them, "DID YOU RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT SINCE YOU BELIEVED? So they said to him, 'We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.' And he said to them, 'Into what then were you baptized?' So they said, 'Into John's baptism.' Then Paul said, 'John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.' When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied." Acts

19:1-6

These Ephesian Disciples had believed upon Christ to such an extent that they disciplined their lives according to the knowledge that they had of Christ from John the Baptist. To be called "disciples," they must have repented of their sins prior to getting baptized into John's baptism. Paul addresses two major areas where these Ephesian disciples were lacking in. Paul addressed water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ and receiving the Holy Spirit baptism."

We must understand that the book of Acts is the only New Testament book which gives us actual historical accounts of people actually getting saved under the apostolic preaching. Just as in the four gospels, each account does not always explain every detail of each historical event. The following passage of scripture does not directly state that the Samaritans spoke in tongues. However, the context demands it.

"Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them THAT THEY MIGHT RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostle's hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money. . ." Acts 8:14-18

Notice that the people of Samaria had received the word of God, and were baptized in water, yet were tarrying in prayer for the Holy Spirit. The Evangelist could have easily said, "repeat the following words of a confession of faith" and told the

Samaritans that they had received the Holy Spirit. However, there is no such language in scripture to give rise to the belief that one has received the Holy Spirit without the initial sign of speaking in tongues. Simon the sorcerer would not have desired the power to repeat a prayer if verbal confession alone brought the power to receive the Holy Spirit. There was a definite external evidence proving that the Samaritans had received the Holy Spirit.

"The Spirit breathes where it will, and you HEAR IT'S VOICE . . . THUS IT IS WITH EVERYONE WHO HAS BEEN BORN OF THE SPIRIT." John 3:8

FULL GOSPEL SALVATION

We are not suggesting that we are not saved by grace through faith. Faith and grace are vital to salvation, but to teach belief alone as "whole salvation" is not scripturally founded. James said in his epistle, "even the demons believe and tremble!" (James 2:19) True belief will lead one to "believe upon Christ as the scripture has said," and thus receive "rivers of living water."

Genuine faith in Christ will cause a soul to obey the whole gospel message of repentance and remission of sins in Acts 2:38. Therefore, true biblical faith leads to true repentance, true water baptism, and true Spirit baptism.

No where does the Bible give credence to the notion that belief or confession alone is whole salvation. However, belief and confession are vital elements that lead to whole salvation. "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in

your heart that God has raised him from the dead you will be saved. For with the heart one believes UNTO righteousness, and with the mouth **CONFESSION IS MADE UNTO SALVATION.**" Not confession is salvation, but confession is made unto salvation." Romans 10:9,10

There is no disharmony between scriptures that speak of the necessity of belief, grace and confession and the scriptures that speak of the necessity of being born of the water and Spirit. Hebrews chapter six verses one and two state that the Church of Jesus Christ is built upon the foundational doctrine of **BAPTISMS**, i.e. water and Spirit. Note that along with faith toward God, belief in the resurrection and eternal judgment, Hebrews chapter six does not state the doctrine of baptism, it says, "the doctrine of **BAPTISMS** - more than one. The New Testament only speaks of two baptisms, one of water and one of the Spirit. Hence, both are necessary for all true believers to receive.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS FOR US TODAY

"For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that be afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 2:39

Many think that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues is not for us today. Many others think that speaking in tongues only exists as one of the nine spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians chapters twelve through fourteen. Therefore they contend that speaking in tongues is not

for every believer. This contention is proved erroneous by 1 Corinthians 14:27. "If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most three, and that by course; and let one interpret." 1 Corinthians 14:27

First, we must acknowledge that Paul wrote by the inspiration of the Spirit that the spiritual gift of tongues could only be in operation but "by two, or at the most by three" in one particular church meeting "and that by course," i.e. one at a time.

Therefore, according to 1 Corinthians 14:27, if four persons spoke by the gift of tongues in one meeting someone would be out of order. Moreover, according to this scripture, if many spoke by the spiritual gift of tongues simultaneously in a given meeting of Spirit Filled Believers, this scripture would also be violated.

We know that "God is not the author of confusion," and scripture certainly does not contradict itself. Yet we read in Acts chapters 2, 8, 10, and 19 that many persons spoke in tongues simultaneously during the same meetings (many more than two or three by course).

Hence, it is clear that the Bible speaks of two different manifestations of tongues: one as the prayer languages given to all believers for their personal edification and one as a distinct spiritual gift to be interpreted for the edification of a local assembly. It is this gift of tongues which the apostle states, "ought to be interpreted."

Just as not all Christians have the operation of the spiritual gift of tongues and yet all Christians can speak in tongues - so likewise the same is true for many of the other gifts of the Spirit. All Christians must have at least a certain degree of faith (for

example: faith for salvation), but clearly, not all Christians have the gift of faith. All Christians have at least some wisdom, but clearly, not all Christians have the gift of the word of wisdom. All Christians have a certain degree of knowledge, but clearly, not all have the gift of the word of knowledge.

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 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: But all these work by that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

Second, the apostle Paul makes it candidly clear that he was primarily addressing the nine gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians chapters twelve through fourteen, not the Baptism of the Holy Spirit which is clearly promised to all believers.

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren . . ." 1 Corinthians 12:1

". . . desire spiritual gifts, brethren . . ." 1 Corinthians 14:1

Thirdly, the Greek word for "gift" is always the word "dorea" when pertaining to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with tongues.

However, in referring to the nine gifts of the Spirit the word "charisma" is always used. There is no place in the New Testament where one of these words is substituted for the other. The word "dorea" is never applied to any of the nine gifts of the Spirit and the word "charisma" is never applied to the Baptism

of the Holy Spirit. Hence we clearly have two different operations of tongues found in the Bible. One operation of tongues for all believers who have received the gift of the Holy Spirit and another operation of tongues for only certain believers having received the gift of tongues to be interpreted in the local church assemblies.

SCRIPTURAL REASONS WHY TONGUES CONTINUE TODAY

1. Why would God take away something He declares that He "SET IN THE CHURCH?" "God has set in the church, diversities of tongues."
2. Why would God command us to "forbid not to speak with tongues" in 1 Corinthians 14:39 if He intended for the churches to stop speaking in tongues?
3. Why would God take away something that He declares edifies? "He that speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself."
4. Why would God suddenly change His New Covenant with His people? It is unscriptural and outright disobedient to change the gospel in any way.
"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we (the apostles) have preached unto you (the first century Christians), let him be accursed."
Galatians 1:8

". . . if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life. . . Revelation 22:18,19

"What things so ever I command you, observe to do it: You shall not add thereto, nor diminish from it." Deuteronomy 12:32

Those who say that tongues are not for us today are "diminishing" or "taking away" portions of New Testament scriptures. Since when has God changed the New Covenant. Just as the Old Covenant could not be added to or diminished from, so the New Covenant cannot be lawfully added to or diminished from.

Finally, it is extremely difficult to believe that when the word "Amen" was penned by the apostle John at the end of the book of Revelation that the entire church automatically ceased speaking in tongues. This is certainly not recorded in the history of the early church subsequent to the first century time period of the original apostles.

Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons from A.D. 188 - A.D. 202, was a prolific Christian writer who sat under the teachings of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna (Polycarp having been well acquainted with the apostle John). Irenaeus taught that those "who have received the Spirit of God do speak in all languages . . ." Note that this record is dated about one hundred years after the death of the last of the original apostles. Irenaeus further records: "For this reason does the apostle declare, 'we speak wisdom among them that are perfect, terming those persons 'perfect' who had received the Spirit of God, and who through the Spirit of God do speak in all languages, as he [Paul] used himself also to speak. In like

manner we do hear many brethren in the Church, who possess prophetic gifts, and who through the Spirit speak all kinds of languages. . ." The Ante-Nicene Fathers Volume 1, Page 531

Notice that Irenaeus declares that those who received the Spirit of God do speak in all languages through the Spirit. Then he differentiates between receiving the Spirit of God with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues and the possession of spiritual gifts, i.e., the gifts of prophecy and tongues. In the selfsame chapter Irenaeus goes on to write: ". . . the man is rendered spiritual and perfect because of the outpouring of the Spirit. . . But if the Spirit be wanting to the soul, he who is such is indeed of an animal nature, and being left carnal." The Ante-Nicene Fathers Volume 1, Page 532

Those who teach that the Biblical experience of speaking in tongues passed away with the first century church and the death of the original apostles, often attempt to justify their position by stating that the phrase "when that which is perfect has come" in 1 Corinthians 13:10 is to be interpreted to mean "when the New Testament scripture is fully complete." Thus they assert that this verse of scripture implies that all tongues, prophecies, and knowledge suddenly "vanished away" when the New Testament book of Revelation was completed. Yet this assumption is proved to be erroneous because the Greek word translated "perfect" in 1 Corinthians 13:10 is "teleion", which is neuter singular, but the Greek language always refers to the Scriptures in the feminine plural. Therefore the apostle Paul must have been referring to something other than the holy scriptures being completed in 1 Corinthians 13:10. What then is the apostle referring to?

"Whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease: whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. . . For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know just as I also am known." 1 Corinthians 13:8-12

When we compare the words in verse nine, "we know in part and we prophesy in part," with the words in verse twelve, "now we see in a mirror dimly," we conclude that the apostle is speaking about the same "partial" or "dim" spiritual knowledge through the spiritual gifts of prophesy and tongues. The apostle clearly explains that this partial and dim knowledge "will cease;" "vanish away;" and "will be done away with;" when we shall see someone "face to face." At this time we "shall know just as we also are known." Can we rightly say that when the book of Revelation was completed that the church now can see "face to face?" 1 John 3:2 clearly explains that when our finite bodies have been redeemed to perfection, "we shall be like Him. For we shall see Him as He is" Like who? Like the Bible? Or like Jesus? The evidence overwhelmingly points to Jesus.

"Beloved now we are the children of God; and it HAS NOT YET BEEN REVEALED what we shall be, but we know that WHEN HE IS REVEALED, WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM, FOR WE SHALL SEE HIM as He is." 1 John 3:2

Who shall we see "face to face?" The Bible or Jesus? Jesus shall usher in a new age of perfection in which our minds and bodies shall be like the glorified Christ "knowing all things." For Jesus

Christ is "the first fruits of them that slept" (1 Corinthians 15:20). Hence we shall be like Jesus in knowing all things.

Just as Peter exclaimed to Jesus "Lord, you know all things" in John 21:17, so we shall no longer know in part or see dimly by the Spirits' power but we shall "be like Him," the Lord Jesus Christ; "knowing all things."

Moreover, if one truly believes that 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 proves that prophesy and tongues have ceased and have vanished away when the Bible was completed, he must be consistent with this view. Since the Bible is inspired [God Breathed] it cannot lie or contradict itself. If we say that prophesy ceased or vanished away according to the Word of God then prophecy can never operate any longer, or under any circumstances. You may answer in the affirmative. Why then, if we are to be consistent, does the inspired scripture prophecy of a coming day (prior to Christ's return) when Christ shall send two prophets who shall prophecy 1,260 days?

"And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." Revelation 11:21

If prophesy has not yet ceased to exist, we can conclude that the "that which is perfect" has not yet come. Hence, there is no scriptural proof to assert that tongues are not for the Church today, nor gifts of healing, nor miracles, nor words of wisdom, nor knowledge, nor faith, nor discerning of Spirits, nor interpretation of tongues. Yes these wonderful gifts are for us today.

"And these signs SHALL FOLLOW them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; THEY SHALL speak with NEW

TONGUES; . . . and they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." Mark 16:17,18

Jesus shed his sinless blood so that you could receive this selfsame promise of the Spirit with the selfsame miraculous signs that the first century believers experienced and enjoyed. Those who state that the promised outpouring of the Spirit with the speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives the utterance (Acts 2:1-4) is not for us today, "do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God (Matthew 22:19)."

Let us take heed not to "neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him (Hebrews 2:3)." We must honestly ask who confirmed unto us this great salvation? We all know that it was the original apostles of Jesus Christ who confirmed true salvation unto the Jews (Acts 2), Samaritans (Acts 8), and Gentiles (Acts 10). How then shall we escape if we neglect to hear their words?

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. . . Save yourselves from this perverse generation (Acts 2:38-40)."