

THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT; IS IT BLESSED OF GOD?

Exploring Aspects of the Charismatic Movement:

Are Their Beliefs, Claims and Practices Biblically Sound?

Compiled by Ron Myers

FOREWORD: There are various contrasting views and opinions concerning the Charismatic movement, along with its beliefs, claims, and practices. All of which begs the question: Are today's Charismatic exhibitions genuine? Meaning, are tongues (*Glossolalia*) manifested by the unction and power of the Holy Spirit? Are they good, right, and true, blessed of God? Or, are they imitation; manifested through human emotions or euphoric religious highs, either of which can induce ecstatic utterances. Perhaps they are induced through hypnotic suggestion, brought on by repeatedly mouthing words or meaningless sounds. In many cases tongues is produced without the conscious control of the speaker where unintelligible speech pours forth. On the other hand, tongues may not be of human or Divine origin at all. Some sources believe the tongues phenomenon is either a mental disorder or demon possession. Paul warned the Corinthians that Satan has the ability to camouflage himself as an *Angel of Light*, influencing thoughts and actions (2 Corinthians 11:14).

I'm wondering, what are your thoughts or points of reference on the subject:

1) Do you believe today's Charismatic and Pentecostal tongues-speaking practice is the same as the miraculous Apostolic sign gift of tongues?

- (a) YES, THEY *ARE* AUTHENTIC: coequal to the miraculous Apostolic sign gifts in every way.
- (b) NO, THEY ARE *NOT* AUTHENTIC: but are produced by the flesh or by other external means.
- (c) I'm not sure.

2) Probably more critical, for what purpose do you believe God ordained the miraculous Apostolic sign gift of tongues?

- (a) AS A CONFIRMING SIGN TO JEWS: to verify the Gospel message (Acts 2:1–12; 1 Corinthians 1:22).
- (b) AS A FORM OF WORSHIP: to be practiced and propagated among believers (1 Corinthians 14:22–23).
- (c) I'm not sure.

Are today's tongues and healings for real? Are they biblically sound? Can the above points of reference be true simultaneously, depending on each one's point of view? Are these opposing positions coequal and valid? ...depending on various personal points of preference? Are they God-ordained and empowered? ...or otherwise? We have an indisputable final authority, God's inspired Word, which implores us to diligently "*Study to show oneself approved unto God, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing (parsing or interpreting) the Word of Truth*" (2 Timothy 2:15).

Furthermore, the Apostle Peter warned us in 2 Peter 1:16–21 not to follow personal interpretations. Peter recounts that, even though he, James and John were eyewitnesses to the glorious transfiguration of Christ on the mountaintop where Moses and Elijah appeared alongside Him, Peter implores us to follow God's inspired prophetic Word. Essentially meaning, not to follow personal impressions, experiences, hearsay, allegorical interpretations or grandiose-sounding reports of the miraculous, i.e., "lying wonders" (2 Thessalonians 2:9).

Concerning references to tongues in Scripture; like any other biblical subject, they can best be understood in light of the three classifying factors or principles of interpretation. ⁽¹⁾ Determine the passage's contextual surrounding, historical time period, cultural implications, literal expository or exegetical meanings of the text, and the grammatical structure of Greek verbs (TVM). ⁽²⁾ Determine the speaker, audience, and the topic in focus. ⁽³⁾ Finally, determine the literary style: narrative, authoritative, instructive, prophetic, allegorical, or poetic? On the other hand, if one relies on personal impressions, emotional experiences, preferences or allegorized assumptions to determine the content, the original meaning will be convoluted or misconstrued to suit one's liking, while ignoring the principles of sound biblical interpretation.

Beware: Faulty interpretation leads to incorrect understanding, which causes erroneous belief, resulting in wrong practice. St. Augustine wrote: *"When the regard for truth has been broken down or even slightly weakened, all things will remain questionable."* (See Exegesis vs. Eisegesis in Glossary on page 34)

Can personal experiences, gut feelings, or inclinations be coequal indicators of truth when placed alongside God's inspired written Word? No, because Scripture *always* takes precedence! Who is in charge, man or God? Granted, as we walk by faith, we experience life-lessons whereby we grow and mature in the faith. (Philippians 3:10) However, some seem to believe experiences are coequal; a valid means of establishing one's doctrinal convictions. Let's be clear; how can things that vacillate be on the same level as God's unwavering truths, as recorded in Scripture? In light of this, are Charismatic beliefs, claims, and practices supported in God's Word? Scripture reminds us: *"Every Word of God is pure (error-free)."* (Proverbs 30:5) And, *"Forever, O LORD, Thy Word is settled (established) in Heaven."* (Psalms 119:89)

On that basis, when examined against Scripture, the Charismatic Movement either stands or falls, including its beliefs, claims and practices. These things stimulated my curiosity, to the point where I decided to do a more in-depth look. After research, studying Scripture, prayerful reflection and observation over a five-decade period; the following material formulates my

questions and conclusions, which have helped shape my own views. My objective is that my assessments be: factually honest yet kind, fair-minded and unbiased, candid and respectful yet uncompromising. My desire is to present you with a definitive answer, endeavoring to speak the truth in love. (Ephesians 4:15; Colossians 4:6)

Upon reading this paper, you may agree with my evaluation of this watershed issue, or not. Either way, please hear me out, because you will very likely gain information you may not have previously realized, some of which is quite alarming. I am fully aware that multitudes of good people are involved in the Charismatic movement, sincere Christians who love God and desire to live for Him. Many of these are involved because that is all they have known; others were drawn in for various reasons, not being fully aware of all its implications. It is mostly these to whom I am addressing this paper.

Due to a weak view of scriptural authority, the Charismatic movement is a breeding ground for an array of fakery: false teachers; false apostles; flamboyant televangelists; prosperity gospel showmen; and faith healers. Many of these self-serving charlatans are very personable and convincing. Charismatics have little discernment, accepting and applauding every weird thing as a new revelation or avenue of expression.

[There's now an Islamic Mulla *faith-healer*](#) who rubs his saliva on eyes (like Christ), prays in *Allah's* name and claims to heal blindness and other incurable diseases. Allah is not an alternative name for God, but is actually their moon-god whom they worshiped before Islam—note the moon crescent on their flags. So, beware! When truth is mixed with error, it can be hard to discern between the two because the demarcation lines become blurred. For example, if you were thirsty and were offered a cup of cool water, yet suspected it might be tainted with a few drops of poison, would you still want to drink it (Matthew 7:15)?

Are these truly God's messengers? Or are they false prophets, or false apostles who deceive and feed off naïve seekers? They communicate their corrupted message while amassing personal fortunes, mansions, lands, and private jets for themselves (2 Corinthians 11:13; 2 Peter 2:1–19; Jude 1). This, along with promoting false teachings replete with allegorized meanings, *proof texts* taken out of context and private interpretations based on personal notions instead of Scripture; all done to persuade the uninformed. And yet: *"We have a more indisputable word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts"* (2 Peter 1:19). And yet, the burgeoning number of devotees are convinced that they manifest genuine biblical signs and wonders; just like the divine manifestations exhibited by Christ's Apostles. Are these truly God's messengers or are they false teachers, deceiving and leading their devotees astray?

WHAT IS AN APOSTLE? The Greek: word *apostolos* means an *Official Emissary, Messenger* or *Ambassador*, sent as an authorized representative of a kingdom or nation. Scripturally, the term refers to the *Twelve Apostles* of whom Christ personally picked from among His disciples and appointed them as His *Special Envoys* to initiate the proclamation of the Gospel message to both Jews and Gentiles throughout the known world. These were men who had seen Christ in His resurrected Body; including Paul, to whom Christ appeared on the road to Damascus (Acts 1:2–3, 9:3–6). Conversely, a disciple (*mathitis*) is a follower of Christ—a student or adherent to His teachings—some of whom He chose as Apostles.

Revelation 21:14 gives the actual number of Apostles that Christ personally chose: *Twelve*. These were His official Ambassadors. Not unlike a select Delta-Force or SEAL team, Christ endowed His Apostles with special equipment, powerful spiritual gifts to perform miraculous signs and wonders, done to validate the Gospel message to unbelieving Jews who require miraculous signs to validate the thing being done is of God (1 Corinthians 1:21–23). The period was during the establishment of Christ's Church before the New Testament canon was complete (1 Corinthians 13:8–10). God initiated these signs and wonders through His *twelve* chosen Apostles on a temporarily. Today, some believe in a theory called "Apostolic Succession," meaning the continuation of the miraculous Apostolic sign gifts through to the present age. This theory aligns with Pentecostal and Charismatic thought. However, sound Bible scholars disagree with this view.

INTRODUCTION—Some Background Information: During Old Testament times, when God was about to do something significant among His Chosen People, the Israelites, later also called Jews (2 Kings 16:6), He would validate it through supernatural manifestations of His mighty power, done through His chosen servants. Dr. Jared Wilson, pastor, author and teaching professor at Midwestern Theological Seminary wrote; *"Whenever God does a mighty work, it has been through some very insignificant instrument."*

MOSES: In the book of Exodus, we see Moses, whom God chose as an instrument to lead His people Israel out from under bondage under the cruel reign of the Egyptian Pharaoh. God caused various loathsome plagues to befall Egypt before Pharaoh finally complied and let them go. The last plague being the death of every firstborn Egyptian son. As they were departing, Pharaoh changed his mind and angrily led his elite army in hot pursuit. The Israelites found themselves helplessly trapped on the shores of the Red Sea with no way to escape. Yet, as Moses held up his staff, God caused a mighty wind to blow, which parted the Red Sea's waters from shore to shore.

All the Israelites escaped, walking across on the dry seafloor. As they reached the safety of the far shore, God then released the two great walls of water, which came rushing back together, drowning Pharaoh's pursuing army, including Pharaoh himself. (Exodus 14:21–15:10)

Note: SCUBA divers, who explored the bottom of the Red Sea at that location, discovered the remains of horses' and men's bones, as well as pieces of coral-encrusted chariots—even pieces of Pharaoh's gold-clad chariot—all of which had been there thousands of years, ever since the day in history that it occurred. ([Video documentation of the Red Sea crossing discoveries.](#))

God then miraculously led the Israelites throughout a prolonged 40-year wilderness journey, both day and night, providing sustenance for them and protecting them from their enemies (Nehemiah 9:21). Despite their continual waywardness, unbelief, and complaining, God led them back to conquer and inhabit the land that He had promised their Patriarch Abraham would be theirs forever. God even provided a miraculous cure (a type of Christ) when they were all dying of poisonous snakebite—judgment for their disobedience (Numbers 21:8–9; John 3:14–15). It is estimated that there were at least two-million Israeli men. Sources suggest that, including counting women and children, the total count approached five million people. God performed these miracles by his mighty power through His chosen servant, Moses, who had once fled Egypt for forty years before the great *I AM* chose him at the *burning bush* to return to deliver His people Israel (Exodus 3:1–17).

ELIJAH: We also see God's prophet Elijah as he stood alone against the 400 Prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:11–40), challenging them to prove their false god Baal's existence, to ultimately show who was truly God, Jehovah or Baal. Contending with them, Elijah challenged them to prepare an altar with a bull offering to Baal. He then invited them to call on their false god Baal to come down and consume the bull offering by fire. Elijah taunted and mocked them as they cut their bodies, crying out all day long to their non-existent god, Baal, to come down to consume the offering. When they were completely exhausted and had finally given up, Elijah poured buckets of water on the bull offering he had prepared for Jehovah God, drenching the offering, the altar, the wood, and the surrounding area around the offering site until all was dripping wet.

Then, Elijah called upon God to prove Himself real before His wayward people. Immediately, God sent fire down from heaven, consuming the bull, the water-soaked wood, altar and surrounding trench, proving that Jehovah was truly God and that He abhorred false gods and false prophets who led His people astray. God's holy fire even licked up the water in the trench surrounding the offering (v. 36–38).

Elijah then ordered all the false prophets of Baal to be rounded up and executed on the spot. Again, it was God who performed these miracles through His chosen servant, Elijah, who later fled for his life from the wicked, Baal-worshipping Queen Jezebel's threats (1 Kings 19:1–3).

CHRIST: We then see the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, whose advent was prophesied throughout the Old Testament; born of the virgin Mary through a miraculous conception (Luke 1:26–35; Galatians 4:4). We see His sinless life, His Divine power over sickness, nature and even death itself (John 10:38). Then, His substitutionary death on the Cross as our sin-bearing Savior, followed by His bodily resurrection from the grave three days later, just as He had foretold. Followed by His appearance before hundreds of eyewitnesses, inviting some to touch Him and watch Him eat, proof positive that He was not merely a ghostly apparition (1 Corinthians 15:4–8). James, Peter and John even saw Him in his Divine glory on the Mount of Transfiguration with Moses and Elijah at His side (Mark 9:2–4). Many witnessed His bodily ascension back into the realms of glory, where He is now seated at the right hand of the Heavenly Father as our High Priest, Advocate and Intercessor (Acts 1:9–11; 1 John 2:1).

THE CHURCH AGE: Then, at the onset of the Church Age—recorded by Dr. Luke in the Book of Acts—Christ sovereignly initiated various miraculous signs and wonders, displayed through His personally-chosen Apostles; Paul being the last (Acts 9:3–6; 1 Corinthians 5:8–10). These things were done to validate the Gospel of the resurrected Messiah to the hard-to-convince Jews, who consider signs and wonders as Divinely-initiated confirmation of God's workings on their behalf, just as he did in the Old Testament, through Moses and Elijah. (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:22)

The Church Age began at Pentecost with the coming of the promised indwelling Holy Spirit (John 14:17, 16:13–15), accompanied by the proclamation of the wondrous Gospel message by the Apostles to visiting Jews in their heart languages and dialects. This astounded their hearers, who reacted with, *"How is it that we hear, each in our own native-born dialects"* (Greek: *dialektos*; Acts 2:4–12)? God performed many miraculous signs and wonders through these men to validate the Gospel. Bible Scholars believe these sign gifts eventually waned as the Church became firmly established and the New Testament canonical writings were complete (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:8–10). For example, Paul, once having possessed the Apostolic sign gift of miraculous healing, had to leave his sick friend *Trophimus* in the city of *Miletum*, unable to accompany Paul to Rome (2 Timothy 4:20). Were Paul's supernatural Apostolic sign gifts beginning to wane (1 Corinthians 13:8–13)? Would he not have miraculously healed his friend if he still could (Acts 19:11–12)?

PRESENT-DAY EVENTS: There is presently a phenomenon increasing in popularity called the Charismatic movement, which seeks to reestablish or emulate what God did through His Chosen Apostles as recorded by Dr. Luke in the book of Acts. This present-day movement began in the 1960s, essentially by the Rev. Dennis Bennett at St Mark's Episcopal Parish in Van Nuys, California. Bennett announced to his conservative congregants one day that he had received the fullness of the Holy Spirit, accompanied by speaking in tongues. Upon hearing this they asked him to resign, to which he obliged.

Having studied the advent of the Holy Spirit—the issuing in of the Church Age—and the details surrounding the Apostolic sign gifts in the Book of Acts, Bennett's claim piqued this writer's interest. The question was, did Bennett, in fact, experience the miraculous Apostolic sign gift of tongues? Could his experience have been genuine? Was it truly brought about by the power and unction of the Holy Spirit? Or, was it of fleshly origin—a subconscious result of seeking and striving to gain a higher plane of spirituality? Meaning, was Bennett's experience actually of the Holy Spirit, or an emotionally-charged ecstatic utterance—sensations of euphoria brought on by striving? This is entirely possible as an involuntary psychological manifestation.

This recently-birthered term, *Charismatic* (a misnomer⁺) as in the *Charismatic Movement*, was a spin-off of the Pentecostal renewal movement which began on January 1, 1901. There, Ms. Agnes Ozman—a student at Charles F. Parham's Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas—after great seeking, was purportedly able to speak, read, and write in the Chinese language. A very dubious claim as best, but entirely possible through “other” spiritual forces. Historically, Pentecostalism had emerged from the earlier Holiness *seeker* movement, where Parham taught, which sought to attain a higher plane of spirituality. As for the seeker movement, it was birthered out of the Wesleyan Holiness tradition.

Note: ⁺The Greek term *charis* means *Grace*, revealed in God's indescribable gift of Salvation. Redemption, forgiveness of sin and spiritual regeneration is freely given by the indwelling Holy Spirit upon one's repentance and trust in Christ (Acts 2:38, 20:21; Rom 6:23; Eph 2:8). It (*charis*) does *not* mean a sensation of elation, experienced while uttering meaningless sounds (tongues), emotional feelings, strivings, seekings, or general carryings-on.

These higher-plane seeker movements somehow seemed more attractive and fulfilling than to simply follow Scripture: "*Abide in Me*" (John 15:4); "*Walk in Newness of life*" (Romans 6:4); "*Put on Christ*"

(Romans 13:14); "*Walk by Faith*" (2 Corinthians 5:7); "*Walk in the Spirit*" (Galatians 5:16); "*Walk in Good Works*" (Ephesians 2:10); "*Walk in Love*" (Ephesians 5:2); "*Walk in Him*" (Colossians 2:6); and "*Walk in Truth*" (3 John 1:4). These Scripture passages provide visual analogies of the step-by-step, moment-by-moment, faith-walk life of the believer—maintaining sweet fellowship with God by abiding *in Christ*.

Don't they realize? God has already given *every* believer *everything* we need for godly living: ^{A)} We have been "*Given Every Spiritual Blessing in Christ*" (Ephesians 1:4); ^{B)} We are "*Complete in Him*" (Colossians 2:10); ^{C)} We have been "*Granted All Things pertaining to Life and Godliness*" (2 Peter 1:3). As dedicated and godly as the seeker-movement leaders presumably were, one might wonder whether they truly understood the significance of God's Word concerning their heritage "In Christ," and the faith-walk life. Or, did they disregard these truths in their quest to seek after a higher plane of spirituality or second-blessing experience?

The point being, there is *nothing* to seek after that God hasn't already given each born-again believer as their spiritual inheritance at the moment of Salvation—other than to grow in grace and mature in knowledge and understanding. A study of the Apostle Paul's prayers for believers will reveal that what we need is: "*the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,*" and "*an enlightened understanding of God's greatness,*" as well as "*the riches of our eternal position, our inheritance, and unfathomable Love In Christ.*" Finally, to "*walk worthy and pleasing to the Lord with thankful hearts in the knowledge of His will.*" I suggest that you review Paul's prayers for believers, found in Ephesians 1:16–23, 3:14–21; Philippians 1:9–11; and Colossians 1:9–12.

Concerning the *Tongues Movements*, there were three main historic waves of seeker movements of which this writer is aware: Nazarene-Pentecostal; Charismatic; and the newly-emerging ultra-radical Neo-Charismatic wave. Each was progressively further removed from mainstream Evangelical Christianity in belief and practice. Furthermore, there is no proof that any of these movements succeeded in attaining a genuine higher plane of spirituality. Nor, was there any evidence that these movements were divine confirmation of any new biblical transitional period, dispensation or covenant where actual signs and wonders were in evidence, like with Moses, Elijah, the Life of Christ or the Apostolic and Church-age era—seen in the INTRODUCTION (pg. 4).

THE PENTECOSTAL and CHARISMATIC MOVEMENTS: Pastor John MacArthur points out that Calvary Chapel's 1967 hippie outreach was the impetus that initiated the first Charismatic wave. Unlike the more-moderate Pentecostal denominations, the major difference with the Charismatic wave is that they took on a life of their own as they spread like a virus across denominational and theological demarcation lines in epidemic proportions from Evangelical to Ecumenical (see pg. 57). Even a few Baptists fell prey. This "new enlightenment" also found its way into heretical sects and cults. Those who deny the Deity of Christ and Salvation by Grace through faith took on a Charismatic flavor. These included LDS (Mormons), whose adherents claimed it helped them to follow Mormon rules. Also Roman Catholics, whose members said that it made their worship of Mary more fulfilling.

As the Charismatic movement grew, the focus evolved until tongues-speaking became the litmus test for acceptance and fellowship. The absolute fundamentals of the faith once delivered to the saints were ignored (Jude 1:3). These included: the authority of Scripture; the Triune Godhead; Christ's Deity; His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, substitutionary atoning death and bodily resurrection—providing Salvation and Justification by Grace through faith in Christ's atonement, apart from works, the security of the believer, return of Christ, eternity in Heaven. These glaring omissions ought to have raised red warning flags to its more conservative adherents, which they probably did but were ingored (John 1:12, 3:14–18, 3:36; Acts 4:12; Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:8–9; 2 Timothy 4:3; Titus 3:3–7).

In seeking to attain a higher plane of spirituality, sincere but untaught believers are still being captivated by the ecstatic *tongues* phenomenon, which has even begun to supplant regular worship services in some cases (1 Corinthians 14:23). An example of a tongues utterance, recorded during a Charismatic meeting: #“*shalalama, balalama, bubalama, shalalama, bugalala, shalalama.*” Professional linguists have analyzed these random consonant-vowel combinations and concluded that they are *not* languages but merely #*repetitious mutterings*. Furthermore, phonetically speaking, ecstatic utterances are very basic, “baby-like” sounds; whereas, actual languages are grammatically and phonetically complex because God created them (Genesis 11:5–9). #*Tongues: A Private Prayer Language?* D. Cloud; Point 12, p. 5.

Concerning needing a so-called *Heavenly* prayer language to talk with God, every recorded time God or Angels visited mankind, they spoke in human languages. Biblical examples: God's conversation with Adam and Eve in the Garden (Genesis 3:9–19); the angels who visited Abraham

and Sarah—one being The Lord Himself in a pre-incarnate *Christophany* (Genesis 18:1–31); when the “I AM” spoke to Moses from the Burning Bush (Exodus 3); when the Archangel Gabriel spoke to Zacharias, Elizabeth, Mary and the Shepherds concerning the advent of both John the Baptist and Jesus (Luke 1 & 2); when the Heavenly Father extolled praise on His Son (Matthew 17:5; Luke 3:22, 20:13); angels appearing as white-robed men spoke to the women at Christ's empty tomb (Matthew 28:6); and, who later exhorted onlookers to stop staring into the empty skies where Christ had ascended (Acts 1:11). Finally, when Jesus prayed to His Heavenly Father, He spoke in a local human language, not some unintelligible *heavenly tongue*, so-called.

That being the case, why the claims of needing a Heavenly prayer language? Both God and His Angels have always communicated with mankind using human languages. Therefore, why do modern tongues-speakers think that their ecstatic fleshly babbling is a heavenly language? Furthermore, Romans 8:26 states that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us with “*groanings that cannot be uttered.*” This word “groanings” means, “not expressible with words” (Greek: *alaletos*). It does *not* mean speaking in tongues!

Now, for the more sobering manifestations. Most Christians do not realize that heathen Buddhist and Brahman priests and priestesses speak in *tongues* when evil spirits (*fallen angels*) descend upon them during annual temple ceremonies in Bangkok, Thailand. I saw this phenomenon on a video recording given to me by a Thai Buddhist friend. It should be sobering to realize that the sounds these godless souls emit are the exact same basic vowel-consonant construction and cadence as Charismatics, who *claim* to speak in biblical tongues by the power of the Holy Spirit! The heathen priests and priestesses involved also manifest so-called healings, miracles, and “slayings in the spirit” during these annual demonic visits. Sound familiar? All this occurs amidst their dark, idolatrous, demon-infested surroundings. Who or what could be empowering these godless heathens? Guess! Could it be fleshly ecstatic emotionalism or perchance even demonic? Is the Spirit of God all this? One thing is certain; be advised that they are *not* being empowered by the Spirit of God!

I recently viewed another video of a Thai Buddhist priest cajoling some followers to clear their minds and repeat a hodge-podge of syllables. They all snickered and called it gibberish. He countered by claiming it was an Angelic Language! What do you think he was promoting? Is God causing ungodly heathen to mouth the same sounds that Charismatics claim God is

empowering them to do? This is similar to Charismatic zealots who coax non-speakers to open their mouths and repeat meaningless noises until the “gift” is manifested. This practice can induce a hypnotic state, resulting in ecstatic babbling. Conversely, during one tongues-speaking meeting, there was a visitor in the group who was fluent in various Chinese dialects. According to reports, the visitor was shocked upon hearing one tongues-speaker curse God in a Chinese dialect. Who do you suppose was empowering that display?

On an equally chilling note, ex-Satan worshipper John Ramirez—formerly third-highest in rank in a New York City satanic cult before he accepted Christ—testified that he often saw his father speak in ecstatic utterances whenever he worshipped Satan. Ramirez said his dad spoke in mystical or occultic chants that corresponded with Charismatic tongues. One would think that examples like these would cause Charismatic devotees to reconsider the veracity of their claims and practices. Is our God, who dwells in unapproachable light, in collusion with the realms of heathen darkness (1 Timothy 6:16)? The answer is a resounding, Never! Who, then, could be behind the tongues manifestations that Charismatics believe to be God-ordained? Instances of heathen and satanic manifestations like this ought to get the attention thinking Charismatics and their fellow travelers, giving them serious pause.

Consider how Pharaoh's sorcerers were able to produce serpents from their staffs that resembled God's Serpent, which was transformed from Aaron's Staff when he threw it down before Pharaoh upon God's command. In the end, these were proven counterfeit upon being consumed by Aaron's Staff turned Serpent (Exodus 7:8–12). This is an example of how Satan, in his limited power and subtle craftiness, can transform himself into resembling an "Angel of Light" (2 Corinthians 11:14), causing things not genuine to appear amazingly genuine, until being unmasked.

Yet Christians who practice Charismatic tongues believe they are [†]empowered by God to emulate that which He ordained His twelve hand-selected New Testament Apostles to do at the onset of the Church age. The Apostles were given miraculous sign gifts to validate the Gospel message to the Jews, confirming that it was from God. (cf. Acts 2:4–12; 1 Corinthians 1:22)

Note: † This belief is called *Apostolic Succession* or the *Continuationist View*. For further explanation see Cessationism vs. Continuationism under ADDENDUM on page 50.

The Charismatic movement continues to splinter off into various subgroups as new and more-unusual manifestations occur, becoming the Neo-Charismatic wave. It appears that there is no end in sight. These include uncontrolled *holy* laughter; twitching and jerking with eyes rolled back in a semiconscious fetal position; barking and howling; leaping, running and crawling around—all supposedly done by the anointing power of God's Holy Spirit. This strange phenomenon is often referred to as the *Toronto Blessing*. Who doesn't see a serious problem here? Charismatic claims and practices have caused no end of confusion as to where the truth lies. Whatever happened to "*Let all things be done decently and in order*" as a standard for gathering together to praise and worship the Lord? (1 Corinthians 14:40)

One should keep in mind that the Book of Acts is Dr. Luke's account of events as the Apostles spread the Gospel under the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. As such, unlike Paul's letters, Acts is *not* meant to be espoused or followed as a teaching guide (1 Corinthians 11:1). And yet Charismatic adherents still strive to emulate the Book of Acts in what appears to be the power of the flesh.

To arrive at an accurate and balanced determination concerning these watershed issues, one's conclusions *must* be based solely on the rightly-divided (*correctly parsed and interpreted*) Word of Truth (2 Timothy 2:15); not influenced or persuaded by emotional impressions; likes; dislikes; personal motives; personalities; peer pressure; or giving heed to hearsay (1 Timothy 4:1–2). Or, so-called proof texts, which are typically quoted only in part, misapplied, or taken out of context—all of which add to the confusion. Nevertheless, prayerful discernment is of prime importance, since "*by their fruits, ye shall know them,*" Greewich means by the character, motives and actions of false teachers (Matthew 7:16, 20).

THE MINISTRIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is *not* an “it” or a “force.” He is *fully God*—the indwelling third Person of the Triune Godhead. The Holy Spirit has a personality and feelings (Ephesians 1:13–14, 4:30). The following are the ministries of the Holy Spirit during the present Church Age—a further look at the Person and Work of God the Holy Spirit.

What are the Holy Spirit's Ministries Among Believers?

Jesus promised that, upon His return to Glory, He would ask God the Father to send the Holy Spirit to draw alongside (*parakletos*) all believers as their Comforter, Helper, and Guide (John 14:16, 16:7). The moment a person receives Christ, the Holy Spirit enters that one's life, regenerating and giving Eternal Life—being born again into God's family of Saints and placing into the Body of Christ. He seals and keeps believers with His abiding presence and power, signifying God's ownership unto the day of redemption (1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13–14).

The Holy Spirit is also our Teacher, Counselor, Intercessor and Guide. He brings Christ's Words to remembrance the moment we need them (John 14:26; 16:4). He intercedes for us and strengthens us in times of weakness and prayerlessness (Romans 8:26). He roots, grows and matures us in the faith (Colossians 2:7). He empowers each believer for spiritual service, distributing spiritual gifts to each as He wills, for the function of the local Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:11). Being a person with feelings and emotions, the Holy Spirit can be grieved by a believer's disobedience and sinful or wrongful actions (Ephesians 4:30).

Most significantly, the Holy Spirit *always* glorifies (*exalts, magnifies*) and testifies of Christ, never Himself (John 15:26, 16:14). This is in direct contrast to the beliefs, claims and practices of the Charismatics and Pentecostals, who wrongfully emphasize and glorify the Holy Spirit in their fallacious version of tongues, healings and miracles. Fallacious because at the onset of the Church age, God gave special offices upon which the Church was established, Jesus Christ being the foundational bedrock (Acts 4:11–12; Ephesians 2:20). These offices were in operation until the completion of the New Testament canon (1 Corinthians 13:8–9), of which the Holy Spirit inspired each writer (2 Timothy 3:16). He also gave the Apostles miraculous sign gifts—tongues, healing, and working of miracles—which accompanied their office. These were authenticating proofs of the Gospel and that God was now working through Jesus Christ and His Church (Acts 2:1–14, 4:1–16, 5:12–39; 1 Corinthians 14:20–22; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 1:1–3)

What are the Holy Spirit's Ministries Among the Unsaved?

- 1) He convinces (convicts) unbelievers of God's existence and mighty power through observing the wonders of Creation (Psalms 19:1–4, 50:6, 97:6; Romans 1:18–20).
- 2) He convinces (convicts) unbelievers of: (a) their Sin (Romans 3:23), (b) God's righteousness, and (c) the coming Judgement (Palms 50:6; John 16:7–11).
- 3) He restrains unrighteousness, lawlessness and anarchy until Christ *Raptures* (calls up) His Church out from the earth. Since the Holy Spirit indwells every believer, He will also be removed from the earth at that time (2 Thessalonians 2:7). This signifies the onset of The Great Tribulation period—where lawlessness and anarchy will prevail.

What is the Anointing of the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit, in His relationship with the believer, is spoken of three times in the Scriptures as *the Anointing* (2 Corinthians 1:21; 1 John 2:20, 2:27). The term is the equivalent of the Holy Spirit's indwelling the child of God. Since all Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19), every Christian has received the Anointing. This is indicated in the three passages in which the word appears: *Major Bible Themes, Lewis Sperry Chafer*. Anoint (Greek: *aleiphō*) can also signify being chosen through *anointing* with oil: Jesus was God's anointed Christ (the Messiah). Those of Charismatic and Pentecostal persuasion use this term repeatedly by which they mean they are blessed or empowered by God.

What is the Baptism With the Holy Spirit?

(Jesus Christ does the Baptizing.) The Lord Jesus Christ *baptizes* each believer with the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation (Mark 1:7–8; I Corinthians 12:12–13). Upon His ascension back to be with The Father, Christ sent the promised Holy Spirit, to indwell or take up residence within the heart and life of every Born-again Believer at the moment of Salvation. This signified the establishment of His Church—The Body of Christ—at the onset of the Church Age. (Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16; John 14:17; Ephesians 1:13–14).

What is the Baptism By the Holy Spirit? (Note: By and With are often used interchangeably.)

(The Holy Spirit does the Baptizing.) Upon salvation, the Holy Spirit "baptizes" (incorporates) every Believer into the Body of Christ, which consists of all Born-again Saints: God's Holy People (1 Corinthians 12:13). Compare the *aorist (super-perfect)* Greek: tense of *baptized* used here to the *perfect* tense of "Rooted" used in Ephesians 3:17b and Colossians 2:7. Which means done once, permanently for all time! These are in passive voice—meaning done by God for the recipient.

What is the Baptism Of the Holy Spirit?

Charismatics and Pentecostals believe in something they call the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit." Meaning, they believe that speaking in tongues is evidence of having received the Holy Spirit; proof of having full Salvation. They also believe that the Baptism of the Spirit occurs separately, after salvation, which suggests two categories of believers—one group with and one group without the Holy Spirit. In reality, all believers receive the Holy Spirit (Spirit of Christ) upon salvation (Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13–14). The Charismatic and Pentecostal belief in seeking a second work of grace (i.e., a higher plane of spirituality) is an offshoot of the older holiness movement from where the term originated. This is why Charismatics and Pentecostals attempt (wrongfully) to spread their tongues doctrine with evangelistic fervor—taking over non-tongues-speaking churches through subversive, fifth column tactics—which this writer has seen done repeatedly on the mission field.

One Charismatic leader says this is an *"overflowing and overwhelming of the Holy Spirit, releasing all holy emotion in us and 'we all speak in tongues'."* The key phrase used here is "releasing all holy emotion," resulting in so-called speaking in tongues as a group experience. *Speaking in tongues* is *not* sanctioned by the Apostle Paul, either individually or corporately (1 Corinthians 14:23). A search of the New Testament shows 30 matches for the phrase *"of the Spirit,"* none of which are in the context of being *overwhelmed* in any way. Consequently, these claims—evidence of a second or higher spiritual experience; an overwhelming of the Spirit, and the gateway to speaking in tongues—are without any merit or scriptural evidence. Whereas, the undeniable evidence of the Spirit's control of one's life is manifested in a transformed, Spirit-empowered, godly lifestyle! (Galatians 5:16–25)

What Does It Mean to Be "*Baptized with Fire*"?

What did John the Baptist mean when he said of Jesus: *"He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire"*? Found in Matthew 3:11 and Luke 3:16. The correct meaning of this statement is not difficult if one does a little contextual exegesis—like in reading the verses that follow. Many fail to consider the context in this passage and misinterpret the term "fire" as meaning a fiery zealotness for the Lord and His Word. This may sound viable at first; however, when this is taken within its context, John clearly explains what he means by "fire" in the very next verse of both passages: *"Whose winnowing fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his threshing floor and will gather the wheat into his barns; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."*

The Apostle John was referring to the fire of God's Judgement! People will either be saved (*the wheat*) or judged for eternity (*the chaff*), depending on their relationship with Jesus Christ. Humankind will either be *baptized by the Holy Spirit* into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13) or *baptized with the Fire* of Judgement unto eternal damnation with flames that cannot be quenched. Matthew 3:10–12 speaks of both baptisms: Judgement *fire* and *Holy Spirit*.

Note: If this seems doubtful, it is suggested that the reader study these passages at face value, also passages in Revelation about the *unquenchable* fires of judgment.

What Is the Fire That Cannot Be Quenched?

The fire that cannot be quenched is God's fire of Judgement, found in eleven places in the Old Testament, as well as in Matt 3:12, Mark 9:43–48; and Revelation 20:10, where *"the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone ...tormented day and night forever and ever."* Also, in Revelation 20:14–15, *"Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire, and whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."*

What Is the Unpardonable Sin of Blaspheming or Profaning the Holy Spirit?

Bible scholars believe that the unforgivable sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit is, not only attributing Christ's miracles to Satan's power but also *blatant, willful unbelief*. That is, rejecting the Holy Spirit's appeal to receive Christ. Can a person's sins be forgiven if that one rejects Christ's Deity and Messiahship? No! (Matthew 12:31–32). Therefore, the unforgivable sin is directly related to spurning the Holy Spirit's pleading to receive Christ as Savior. That is, to turn away after receiving the knowledge of the truth since there is no other means of salvation from sin besides Christ's Blood sacrifice: *The Lamb of God* who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29; Hebrews 6:6, 10:26).

Furthermore, how could Christ offer God's Kingdom by the power of the enemy, Satan, as Christ's Jewish detractors arrogantly claimed? (Matthew 12:24). In driving out the Legion of demons, Christ was visually demonstrating that He had far greater spiritual authority over the demonic world than Satan ever had.

In conclusion: A study of this passage refutes the notion that these verses refer to rejecting the tongues movement. The claim is contextually inviable and therefore untrue. In all probability, the Charismatic and Pentecostal's claim that their *tongues-speaking* is ordained and empowered of God may itself, in all probability, be an offense against the Holy Spirit.

What Does It Mean to Be Filled with The Spirit?

To be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) is compared to being drunk with wine. The analogy meaning, if one is filled with wine, his or her words and actions show that he is under the control or influence of the wine—which leads to an ungodly lifestyle. Compared to *Driving Under the Influence* of a controlling substance (DUI).

Conversely, when one is filled with or controlled by the Holy Spirit, his or her words and actions being under the control and influence of the Holy Spirit—which leads to a godly lifestyle. This could be referred to as *Walking Under the Influence* of the Holy Spirit. Incidentally, “be filled” (*plero'o*) is in the *imperative* mood in Greek. Meaning, it's the believer's personal responsibility to yield his or her life over to God's authority, allowing the Holy Spirit full influence and control of one's thoughts, words and actions. This is a moment by moment proposition.

Synonymous Terms: Similar terms for “*be filled with the Spirit*” are found in similar passages. For example: Walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4); Be led by the Spirit (Romans 8:14; Galatians 5:18); Walk by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7); Walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:6 & 25); Walk in Love (Ephesians 5:2); Walk in Him (Colossians 2:6).

The same principle of Ephesians 5:18 is seen in the parallel passage of Galatians 5:18–26 which describes the works of the flesh-life versus the fruit of the spirit. Paul admonishes the believer to allow the Spirit's control of one's life so that the fruit of the Spirit of Christ may be evidenced, not the flesh. There are only two lifestyle choices for the Born-again Christian: the Christ-life (*the New Man in charge*) or the Self-Life (*the Old Man in charge*). Compare this to Paul's testimony in Galatians 2:20: “*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*”

What Is the *Authentic* Spiritual Gift of Tongues?

The authentic spiritual gift of tongues, healings and miracles—including their manifestations—were the God-given Apostolic gifts to supernaturally proclaim the Gospel message to the Jews in their individual languages and dialects, which the speakers did not know (Acts 2:4–12). However, in 1 Corinthians 14:2,4, 13,14,19 and 27, the Apostle Paul

is correcting the Corinthian believers' use of *heathen* tongues—*heathen babbling prevalent throughout the area* (cf. 1 Cor 12:1–3). Whereas, the authentic gift of tongues—including the other supernatural sign gifts of healings and miracles—were given by Christ *specifically* to the twelve Apostles at the onset of the Church age, when the New Testament Scriptures were not yet complete. As these were nearing completion, the Apostolic Sign Gifts waned and ceased to be in operation (1 Cor 13:8–10). What does that say concerning those trying to force present-day tongues on others by telling them to *free* their minds, open their mouths, and begin to make sounds? Authentic or inauthentic?

Concerning Spiritual Gifts:

All spiritual gifts are given by God the Holy Spirit to each believer according to “His” plan for serving the Body of Christ in the local church. Furthermore, spiritual gifts cannot be prayed for or strived after, because they are given according to God's Sovereign choice, *"distributing to each individual believer (severally) as He wills."* (1 Corinthians 12:11). Dr. Wilbur Pickering, retired Bible translator in Brazil with Wycliffe Bible Translators puts it this way: *"No one gets a spiritual gift just because he wants it; the Holy Spirit has His own criteria for distributing them."*

Note: Present-day spiritual gifts are separate from the now-inoperative miraculous Apostolic sign gifts, given by Christ to His chosen Apostles at the onset of the Church Age.

What is Spiritual Power and Authority?

We see various examples of true spiritual power exhibited throughout the book of Acts. It is generally associated with the bold and fearless proclamation of the Word of God, with unflinching confidence and authority, often in the face of imminent personal danger or death. We see this in the life **Peter**, who stood before the Jews and boldly proclaimed the Gospel message at Pentecost, whereupon three thousand souls came to Christ (Acts 2:14–41)

Then, we see the boldness of both **Peter and John**, who healed the paralytic man in the Name of Jesus. They were warned by the Jewish authorities *not* to speak in “that” name again. But they continued to preach the resurrected Christ with great power and authority; whereupon many were saved and praised God as a result of their boldness (Acts 3:1, 4:33)

We also see the boldness and wisdom of **Stephen**, the first Deacon. He exuded both great faith, power and authority, confounding his detractors—enemies of the Gospel—whereupon they were cut to the core. As they seized and stoned him to death for his unflinching testimony, he, looking heavenward, saw Jesus awaiting him as he succumbed (Acts 6:5, 7:60).

Then there's **Paul**, who confronted the bothersome false teachers, saying he bore the proof of his Apostleship—his scars (Galatians 6:17). He had suffered many stonings, scourgings, and other hardships and perils (2 Cor 11:24–27). He authoritatively told all aboard what to do, resulting in everyone escaping the shipwreck on his way to Rome. While there, he proclaimed his innocence before the Jews to little avail. During his two-year house arrest, he boldly preached Christ with authority before being martyred for his fearless testimony (Acts 28:1–31)

What Is Spirituality?

According to Dr. Charles Ryrie, professor emeritus of Dallas Theological Seminary: *"Spirituality, is Christlikeness that is produced by the fruit of the Spirit—in and through the life of the believer. What better portrait of Jesus Christ is there than love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Galatians 5:22–23)? These characteristics describe the fruit of the Spirit, which are our Lord's attributes. Spiritual power in the believer's life is not evidenced in the miraculous or spectacular, but rather the consistent exhibition of the characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the manifestation of the Holy Spirit of whom the Lord Jesus said, 'He shall glorify Me.'" (John 16:14). As the scripture says, "for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness and truth." (Ephesians 5:9)*

The point is, either God is empowering the present-day tongues movement or He is not. It's as simple as that! When reasoning with my Thai Buddhist friends, I often say that: *"Sincerity of belief does not make something untrue true. Nor, does it make something true untrue."* The same applies here. Those who claim that the Holy Spirit is the empowering agent of their ecstatic tongues-speaking, are quick to accuse those who don't of blaspheming the Holy Spirit, referring to Matthew 12:31–32 and Mark 3:28–29. Is this truly the case? Is that what these verses are referring

to, taken in their context? Can a believer truly commit the unforgivable sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit? Sound Bible scholars do not believe so, nor does this writer, because the text in question describes those who reject the Holy Spirit's wooing to accept Christ's Deity as being the Incarnate Son of God, and shun His free offer of deliverance from sin as their prophesied Messiah come in the flesh.

When my wife Cheryl and I were in training for the ministry, preparing for service in Thailand under the auspices of The New Tribes Mission (NTM), all things Charismatic were still in their infancy. The time was the early 1970s and there weren't any clear-cut lines of demarcation at that juncture. So, conservatives were all waiting and watching. Many, including this writer, were wondering whether some of the reports being bandied about might not be of the Lord's doing.

In focus at the time were the events spoken of in a recently released book: Like a Mighty Wind: by Mel Tari and Cliff Dudley (ISBN 9780892211234). It recounted various supernatural manifestations; purported to have taken place on the Indonesian island of Timor in 1965 as the Gospel made its way into remote regions of the island. Our bookstore at the NTM Language and Linguistics Institute even had the newly-released book in its racks. We knew of *bona fide* reports where God had shown Himself real in special ways to get people's attention where the Gospel was being proclaimed for the very first time. Given the time period—the little-known Charismatic movement still being in its infancy—we wondered if these events might not be authentic as well.

This writer's initial thoughts on the subject at that juncture was, if God is truly in this, then He can surely engift me with the Thai language, saving much time and effort by by-passing the need to spend years of in-depth language and culture study trying to master the difficult Thai tonal language. However, this writer did not seek after anything; simply stating here of being open to the Lord's giving the Thai language supernaturally if He so chose.

If anyone could use the biblical gift of tongues, it's church-planting missionaries as they seek out and evangelize yet-unreached lost tribes or ethnic people groups in obedience to Christ's prime directive (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15). Needless to say, that did not happen. However, what God did give me was both vision, perseverance and natural ability to help me gain mastery, not only the Thai language, but in two other local-area tonal languages as well, and partially in a third language.

In doing so, I spent thousands of hours in language and culture study, and practice, as I endeavored to identify with the people on a close level in their daily lives. I laughed with them during times of joy; grieved with them during times of sadness; sat with them eating their food; helped during planting and harvest, helped build and repair houses, etc.—all to befriend and gain their trust, to effectively communicate the Gospel in a cross-linguistic, cross-cultural, readily understandable manner.

Concerning the purported signs and miracles on the Island of Timor, it later came to light that they were debunked by missionaries ministering in the general vicinity. I knew one missionary personally, both of us being in the same conservative mission organization, New Tribes Mission. He told me how numerous people who had read the book came there and traveled throughout the area, seeking out the people and villages where these things were said to have taken place. He went on to say that, to the best of his knowledge, none were ever found, and none of the locals ever heard of any names or places mentioned in the book, likely because they did not exist. I view these types of reports as being in the same category as what the Scriptures call "lying wonders" (2 Thessalonians 2:9). My fellow missionary friend added that a Pentecostal husband and wife team serving there, having seen through the whole scenario, became disillusioned to the point where they left the Pentecostal-tongues movement altogether, reportedly later returning to serve under a conservative mission organization.

Note: This writer knows of other missionaries who are fluent in various remote South American Indian languages that have told how they had attended some Charismatic meetings as an experiment while home on furlough. During these meetings, where so-called *tongues* were being practiced, they stood and spoke briefly in the respective remote tribal languages that they knew, then sat back down. The missionaries attested that, in each instance, any alleged interpretation given didn't come close to what they had said. If the purported Apostolic gift was present, their attempts of *interpretation* would have certainly coincided with what was said. This certainly attests to the questionable validity of Pentecostal and Charismatic claims of possessing the Apostolic spiritual gift of "Interpretation."

Concerning speaking actual languages, consider the fact that this writer and many other non-charismatic missionaries are more fluent and able to teach and converse in spoken Thai than many of the Pentecostal or Charismatic missionaries in Thailand. If claimants truly possessed the biblical gift of tongues, they should be able to speak flawless Thai, just like a native-born national

speaker. Also, if they possessed the actual spiritual gift of healing, should they not be going from hospital to hospital healing the sick and incurably afflicted, in the same manner as the New Testament Apostles? Instead, they put on staged events with purported claims of miraculous healings, all of which have been proven invalid upon post-event investigation, or even by later testimony of the disillusioned recipient!

Furthermore, the modern-day tongues and healing movements have little to do with proclaiming the Gospel message to the unreached as occurred in the Book of Acts. First, their brand of tongues has been proven *not* to be actual spoken languages by linguistic professionals who have studied them. Second, if anything, it's more about egotistical self-edification, as purportedly having attained some higher level of spirituality, following the goal of the earlier twentieth-century seeker movements.

The more weird carryings-on increase, the more I lean towards the ††Cessationist view (see ADDENDUM on page 33). After careful consideration, I believe the various modern-day tongues and healing movements, including assertions of the miraculous, are more fallacious and of uncertain origin than they are genuine, irrespective of what dedicated adherents may believe or claim. These manifestations are, in fact, either emotional highs or fleshly grandstanding at best, or of demonic influence at worse, but *not* of Divine origin. You shall know them by their fruits (Matthew 7:15-16, 20). God is the author of peace, harmony and clarity, not clamor, confusion and disorder (1 Corinthians 14:33, 40).

Those who openly practice and advocate these things—as well as *fellow travelers* who help to propagate them—spread misinformation and chaos, mixed with just enough truth to confuse and mislead. Keep in mind that all true spiritual gifts are given to each believer by God as He, in His sovereignty, decides. They are not acquired by being sought after, pressured into or prayed for. God doesn't pass out fraudulent gifts either. Biblical tongues were, in fact, a miraculous sign for unbelievers—in essence for sign-seeking Jews who spoke other languages—that they might hear, repent and believe the Gospel message, proclaimed to them supernaturally in their respective heart languages and dialects (Acts 2:5–8; 1 Corinthians 1:22, 12:11, 14:22).

The whole matter rests on biblical authenticity or the lack thereof. If present-day manifestations were truly authentic, would it not result in God reestablishing genuine New Testament Apostleship.

Unbelieving Jews who speak a variety of different languages would likely be present, experiencing actual Divine miracles. They would hear the Gospel about their Messiah's wondrous acts on their behalf (the Gospel message)—spoken in their respective native tongues or dialects. Languages unknown to the speakers as recorded in Acts chapter 2:5–8. Certainly not the ecstatic religious utterances, as well as the so-called healings and miracles that are being propagated in viral proportions today, the majority of which come under the heading of lying wonders (2 Thessalonians 2:9).

On another note, some present-day conservatives deny the validity of Apostolic biblical tongues altogether (Acts 2:4–12). They claim that the Apostles did not supernaturally announce the wonderful works of God (the Gospel) to the visiting Jews at Pentecost; speaking to each group in their own languages or dialects which the speakers did not personally know. No, they wrongfully assert that it was the visiting Jews somehow *heard* the message in their own languages; emphasizing *heard*. Therefore implying that the miracle was not in the *proclamation* but in the *hearing*.

This view is an misrepresentation of the passage based on the personal denial of the text, including faulty exegetical hermeneutics. Simply stated, they choose to disavow the miraculous; saying that God's empowering the Apostles to declare the Gospel in other languages, unknown to them, never took place at Pentecost. One might wonder whether these doubters also question the miraculous events of the Old Testament in the times of Noah, Moses, and Elijah, or even the six 24-hour day Genesis account of Creation.

Conversely, those who claim to be modern-day Apostles are self-deceived at best and liars at worst, deluding many, including themselves. Scripture records that there are only twelve Christ-ordained Apostles (Matthew 10:2; Mark 6:7; Luke 6:13; John 6:70). As proof, count the foundations that contain the Apostles names according to the prophetic Word in Revelation 21:14: "*And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE LAMB.*" Note the definite article, "the" coupled with "Apostles." This denotes the exact, definitive number: "THE TWELVE" (Luke 6:13). According to the Word of God, there is no such thing as modern day apostles, despite their braggadocios self-appointed claims!

Matthias, who was chosen by men as Judas' replacement, was not valid. However, Paul was, having been chosen directly by Christ on the road to Damascus as the twelfth and last apostle (Acts

9:1–16). Paul even defended his Apostleship in his letters (1 Corinthians 15:9; 1 Thessalonians 2:6). But beware! Those claiming self-appointed apostleship today, or claiming to have had some dream where Christ conversed with them, giving them *new, extra-biblical light*, are false apostles, false teachers and false prophets, dooming themselves to God’s righteous judgment.

Furthermore, if these present-day “miracle workers” were truly *anointed* and *empowered* by the Holy Spirit, would they not be seeking out hospitals and hospices throughout the land; going up and down the halls and into every room, healing the sick, the crippled, the infirmed and the hopelessly dying? Or even go into funeral homes or cemeteries—where bereaved relatives are sorrowing over the recent loss of their loved one—walk up to the caskets of the dearly departed and command them to arise? Why don’t they do that? Because they can’t, that’s why! They’re powerless to do so. So, they resort to hypocritical lies and sleight of hand as they rake in the cash to pad their opulent lifestyles.

Peter describes these types in 2 Peter 2:17–19: “*These are wells without water, clouds drifting in the winds, speaking great boastful words; alluring people by fleshly lusts; servants of corruption; promising freedom but bringing bondage; reserved for the mists of darkness.*” Jude describes these in 1:12–13 as: “*Corrupted beasts, evil speakers of good, dangerous hidden reefs, spots in your midst, clouds without water, wild foaming waves, and wanderings stars reserved for darkness.*”

Not being truly anointed or empowered of God, they put on staged fakery; further deceiving misinformed, ignorant seekers and the weak in faith. It has been proven that their staged *healing events* are not done through the power of the Spirit of God, but by sleight-of-hand and trickery in the power of the flesh—possibly even by demonic influence! The Apostle Paul gave a stern warning: “*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their consciences seared with a hot iron*” (1 Timothy 4:1–2; 2 Thessalonians 2:7–12).

I was exposed to some of this “pseudo-apostolic” Charismatic behavior while interim pastoring at a city church in my adopted home province in Northeast Thailand. It was dwindling because its pastor had resigned and its membership had fallen until only one family remained. This occurred in the early 1980s when various undesirable groups were eyeing this church and others, as well as our surrounding village works, hoping to assimilate whomever they could in typical sheep-stealing

fashion. I saw that same church take-over scenario played out numerous times in the Northeastern Thailand region where I ministered.

I had just moved our family from our remote village ministry outpost into town, where I planned to spend most of the time on the Isan New Testament translation. However, of necessity, that was put on a partial hold, since our village folks looked to this dwindling city church (rightly or wrongly) as their elder sister in the faith. That being the case, we could not afford to see the city church flounder or become another Charismatic outpost. I was friends with that particular evangelical mission's field director, who welcomed my presence and willingness to intervene.

While serving as the city church's interim teaching pastor, I shared leadership responsibilities with my gifted translation assistant, Pastor J. whom I had been mentoring. Previously not having been grounded foundationally in Grace, it was thrilling to watch him grow and hear him expound on his newly-acquired understanding of God's saving grace, according to Ephesians 2:8-10. The congregation grew in strength and number as we taught foundational truths. We would share Sunday morning teaching responsibilities, work on the Isan New Testament translation and visit church members during the week, then evangelize unreached ethnic Phu-Thai villages on Saturdays, in a district town 50 kilometers south of Nakhon Phanom. There, we saw many receive Christ and get baptized. Later, Pastor J. later assumed full pastoral responsibilities when I returned to the States on furlough. The city church continued to thrive and grow under his capable leadership.

Things were going great. The city church, now having been grounded in Grace, got back on its feet and began to grow in a real grass-roots *each-one-win-one* movement. Then, one Sunday morning when I was arriving, I saw a panel truck with license plates from another province parked out front. An unknown Thai group was busy conducting an impromptu meeting with church members without our knowledge or permission.

There were at least 10-12 of them, all sitting in a circle, simultaneously jabbering away in Charismatic-type tongues. I remember how very strange it sounded, more like the chirping of many birds than any actual language. This was a chilling experience because it brought to mind Isaiah 8:19: "...*them that have familiar spirits, and wizards that peep and mutter.*" They were also trying to force our members to speak in these so-called tongues as well. Stepping up to intervene, I asked what they were doing, but they continued, feigning obliviousness of my presence. As I was speaking, some from their group approached

me, gesturing and loudly imploring God to "cast out the demon... the demon meaning me! In my opinion, these emboldened uninvited invaders were the ones being demonically led and needed to leave, not me.

Pastor J. arrived at that juncture and was just as surprised and taken aback as I. We started to extract our people out from the circle. These were mostly new, uninformed spiritually immature believers, ignorant of the implications of what was happening. Visibly frustrated, Pastor J. promptly called the local police, who came and carted all these uninvited strangers off to the local police station for detention and questioning. What they had done was a chargeable offense under Thai law: *Disturbing the Peace!*

We later learned how this group had gotten there. A young Christian lady in our congregation who worked at the local hospital had taken it upon herself to invite them, without checking with us first. She had recently arrived from Bangkok and had earlier come to faith through this same Charismatic group, some of whom were her friends. We were aware of her background and had admonished her about these teachings. Yet, it was obvious that she was not convinced, and remained deeply influenced by this group and obviously her tongues experiences there.

Pastor J. and I were concerned that she had been offended by how things had gone down, him calling the police who carted them off, etc. However, the next Sunday she came to the service seemingly unaffected and happy as ever. She gave testimony that she had gone along with her friends the previous Sunday afternoon to hold a meeting at the local prison. She praised the Lord how one of the prisoners had been "restored" of a condition where one leg was supposedly shorter than the other from birth; an oft-repeated Charismatic claim. It was unfortunate, but she had obviously bought fully into the Charismatic agenda.

During the following week, I contacted prison officials whom I knew there, asking if anything had occurred out of the ordinary during the group's visit. They said none of them had seen or heard of anything. I then asked them specifically about the alleged short leg healing incident. They denied that anything had happened, to the best of their knowledge. These officials were honorable men. If anything had truly occurred in the realms of the miraculous as was claimed, news of it would have surely spread far and wide. There was nothing, yet these types of claims get bandied about as truth, which helps further propagate lies, false doctrines, and false practices—Satainc lying wonders, as I call them (2 Thessalonians 2:9).

In hindsight, I don't presume this dear young lady, whom I love in the Lord, was trying to lie or deceive when she stood up and shared her heart that following Sunday. I do believe, however, that she was being deceived by spiritual lies (lying wonders), as were her Charismatic friends. That was the last we heard of them. The young lady forgave us and was later joined in marriage—performed by a conservative Isan pastor and close friend—to an Isan Army Sergeant, Mr. S., who came to faith under my minister during their courtship days. He is now a retired Army Colonel, lay-pastoring a village church that was established during my earlier village ministry. Being a *straight-shooter*, he doesn't appear to have bought into his wife's Charismatic propensities.

Years later, while I was on an extended sabbatical leave, Pastor J. had moved to start a discipling and church-planting ministry in an adjoining province. He had left the city church strong and growing on its own under a new pastor. However, this young lady, now a married woman with grown children, declared herself a spiritual leader there under the somewhat weak new pastor, who was obviously in agreement. From that self-appointed position, she has now propagated tongues (ecstatic utterances) to about everyone who still attends there—despite having sat under very clear teaching to the contrary by this writer and others, including Pastor J.

Sweet and kindhearted on the surface, she has proven herself to have a strong, unteachable spirit behind her winning smile as she spreads this tongues and healing doctrine, all in direct disobedience to Scripture—as many other Charismatic leaning women have done and continue to do. I was recently told by my present Isan coworker that meetings there have now been reduced to communal speaking in euphoric religious highs producing ecstatic utterances—a so-called personal prayer language (cf. 1 Corinthians 14:23). As stated previously, whatever happened to "*Let all things be done decently and in order*" as a standard for meeting together to worship the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:40)?

Note: See comments concerning women holding positions of spiritual authority over men; and, women speaking in tongues, starting on page 44 under *The Biblical Use of Tongues*, points 6–10. Also, note that today, sincere but misinformed and self-willed women continue to play a major role in both practicing and propagating the Charismatic tongues movement (cf. 1 Timothy 2:12–14).

CHARISMATIC CLAIMS (Assertions that modern *Tongues* is):

(Compare this to: The Ministries Of The Holy Spirit, starting on page 13).

- ✓ A personal prayer language whereby they speak to God. *(Note: both God and Angels always spoke in human languages when communicating with people in Scripture.)*
- ✓ Praying in the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:26; Ephesians 6:18; Jude 1:20) means speaking to God—using unintelligible utterances.
- ✓ Evidence of salvation—the implication being: no speaking in tongues equals no salvation.
- ✓ Evidence of being "baptized" with the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ Evidence of possessing "Name-It-Claim-It" faith. *(Note: part of the false Prosperity Gospel.)*
- ✓ Evidence of there being modern-day Apostles and/or Prophets with alleged ability to heal, perform miracles, and receive new revelations from God.
- ✓ Claims of supernatural healings of various injuries.
- ✓ Claims of being able to speak things into existence.
- ✓ Claims of being able to control the weather by commanding it to change.

CHARISMATIC PRACTICES (Charismatic practices include the following):

- ✓ Spreading false or highly exaggerated reports concerning tongues, healings, and miraculous occurrences.
- ✓ Seeking out non-charismatic churches and believers with their message of attaining a higher level of spirituality.
- ✓ Attempting to convert churches by forming subversive fifth column groups from within, splitting or claiming the church as one of their own by erecting new signs.
- ✓ Making incredulous claims of the miraculous on Charismatic TV shows which are applauded without doubt concerning their validity.
- ✓ Coaxing or cajoling non-charismatic Christians to speak in tongues (fleshly ecstatic utterances) by letting their minds go free and mouthing disjointed sounds until their "gift" begins to flow.

FALSE SIGNS OF THE MIRACULOUS (Usually staged before large audiences):

- ✓ When one is full of the Spirit—through periods of intense seeking—that one endowed with a “supernatural anointing” of power to perform miracles.
- ✓ Heal the weak and sickly by having them touch an "anointed" piece of their clothing—handkerchiefs, neckties, etc.
- ✓ Drinking or anointing recipients with free packets of “blessed” holy water, said to cause miracles to occur in one's life, with incredible claims to back it up.
- ✓ Heal the weak and sickly by sprinkling them with anointed holy water.
- ✓ Make wheelchair-bound paralytics or cripples walk normally again, right on stage.
- ✓ Cause the deaf and dumb to speak and hear.
- ✓ Restore sight to the blind.
- ✓ Make short legs grow. (*Canes, crutches or wheelchairs are made a prearranged show of being tossed aside and retrieved later.*)
- ✓ Raise the dead back to life—the most dubious of all their claims but accepted among their Charismatic.
- ✓ Receive new, extra-biblical visions, revelations and messages *directly from God!*

Anyone who claims they have received new revelations directly from God like the Prophets of old is either lying or deceived; and, is treading on dangerous ground. Adding to the Word of God comes with dire warnings and consequences (Deuteronomy 4:2, 12:32; Galatians 1:6–9; Revelation 22:18). The inspired Word of God is perfect, complete, and inerrant as God gave it—contained in the 66 books of the Old and New Testament canon. Yet, they allege that any new truths they receive are valid and equal to how the Apostle Paul received the Gospel message: in a vision directly from Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:12). These assertions only bring glory to themselves, not to God, and He shares His glory with no one (Isaiah 42:8). Claims like these also undermine the final authority of the written Word of God! Second Corinthians 11:13–14 states that *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."*

A prominent Charismatic pastor claimed in his writings that:

Once the Holy Spirit releases to come up into your soul [sic], you are going to be as close to Him, God, and Jesus as you possibly can get while living down here on this earth. Through the Holy Spirit, you will have direct access, a direct connection to both God and Jesus in heaven. This gift is just going to bring you that much closer to the Three of Them, because He will now be residing with you up in your soul area. You will be truly Spirit-filled when this happens.

What does this man mean by “*Up Into Your Soul Area*”? Where is that area located? What Scripture passage does that come from? There is none of which this writer is aware. Possibly, a new Charismatic revelation? The Apostle Paul said he was given the authentic, certified Gospel directly in a vision by Jesus Christ Himself (Galatians 1:11–12), yet Paul never mentioned anything about the concept of a *Soul Area* in his letters to Timothy or the churches. This is more spiritual-sounding conjecture, designed to confuse and mislead the innocent and unwary.

Do not be misled! This is absolute conjecture, otherwise called a perversion of God’s truth. It is proven false by numerous Scripture passages about the believer’s spiritual inheritance and authority, based on one’s eternal position *In Christ*. First, God’s inspired Word plainly states that, at the moment of salvation and the new birth into God’s Family of Saints, we have been blessed by God “*with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.*” (Ephesians 1:3). Also, “*He ... has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature*” (2 Peter 1:3–4).

Furthermore, we have immediate access to the Father at any time, which has already been freely granted to us through Christ, our Intercessory High Priest, and Advocate (Hebrews 4:14–16). And, the gift of God is Eternal Life in Christ, given through the indwelling Holy Spirit at the time of Salvation (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8–9).

Another alarming claim among certain Charismatics is that born-again Christians can allegedly become “*demonized*” unawares—their term. (*This sounds strangely akin to Animistic practices in Thailand, where calamities can befall someone, caused by some unhappy spirit entity.*) In this case, the hapless Christian is supposedly not fully possessed, just partially, or whatever. The deliverers go

through all sorts of contortions and long prayer vigils to deliver the so-called demonized believer. I'm not sure how they knew he or she got that way initially, or clues that person had been delivered.

I was made aware of a situation where strivings went on in intervals for many days and nights trying to free a perplexed female missionary candidate who someone assumed was *demonized*. These beliefs and practices are without substance. Satan himself is probably amused, having been able to get Christians off-track once again. Granted, a believer may be influenced through suggestion, but never indwelt, i.e., demons taking up residence in the heart of a born-again believer alongside the Holy Spirit. Never! No matter what these ones might claim, can a born-again Christian be unwittingly *possessed* or *demonized*? Since the Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of every believer, darkness and evil cannot coexist in His presence (John 8:12, 14:30; Ephesians 1:13; 1 John 4:4).

On another occasion, a Charismatic faith healer—frail and sickly in physical appearance—frequented some of Thailand's churches on an annual basis to promote his purported *gift* of healing arts. I recall how he had once held a staged event in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, replete with all the typical hype and fanfare. Flyers were distributed in blanketed advertising campaigns, decorated with colorful carnival sideshow-looking photos and grandiose claims. This was shortly after Pol Pat's heinous and brutal *Killing Fields* regime had fallen and the country had just reopened to the outside world. The event was reportedly packed as the typical healing show began.

The hapless Cambodians, having just endured years of devastating terror and heart-wrenching sadness, were hungering for genuine hope and truth. This writer having pastored a Cambodian church in San Diego for over 10 years, they told firsthand the things these dear people had experienced, losing family and loved ones to the senseless carnage they had undergone—nothing less than a literal Hell on Earth. What a wonderful opportunity it would have been for that frail-looking “faith healer” to communicate the Gospel of God's lovingkindness, hope, and deliverance from sin and death through the Lord Jesus Christ! But no, all the seeking Cambodians got that day were staged scams, put on by the so-called healer; which, they immediately saw through. In near-riotous fashion, they drove the impostor and his crew off the stage and out of town ...to the point where the authorities were mobilized to protect them as they fled the country. Which, one might say, is just what they deserved. It's unfortunate how undesirable elements like this are somehow able to gain entry.

This certainly does not imply that God cannot or does not heal or perform the miraculous today, because He can and does, for which this writer has first-hand knowledge, having both experienced and witnessed many things while taking the Gospel to the unreached peoples in the regions beyond—the Isan people groupss of Northeast Thailand. Be assured, however, that God *does not* bless or operate through staged events, or before an audience where prideful, glory-seeking men and women gather wealth unto themselves on the backs of a misled, deceived and audience. The God of light and righteousness is not involved in things like this, nor does He share His Glory with them.

These present-day claims and staged pseudo-manifestations are performed before a misinformed, gullable audience—drawn in and taken advantage of (2 Timothy 3:13). These charlatans deceive their audience and themselves trying to emulate in the strength of the flesh what Christ did by sovereign design through His chosen Apostles at the advent of the Church Age. Many of these miraculous events were recorded in the Book of Acts by Dr. Luke; the Apostle Paul's constant companion and traveling journalist (*The Book of Acts.*), even following Paul to Rome (2 Timothy 4:11). This occurred *before* the 27 books of New Testament that we enjoy today were completed in canonical form (1 Corinthians 13:9–10). Some of its writers even realizing their epistles to believers would form a part of Holy Writ (2 Peter 3:15-16).

As previously stated, we need to keep in mind that the Book of Acts was penned as a historical account, recorded by Dr. Luke to inform his friend Theophilus of events that were taking place during the birth and growth of the Church, just as he did in the Gospel of Luke concerning The Living Christ. Therefore, the Book of Acts is not a teaching (*didactical*) book like Paul's Epistles, many of which Paul is correcting erroneous teaching and practice. Also, events about Paul's life recorded in the last chapters of Acts were a comprehensive chronicle, set down in journalistic fashion by his companion, Dr. Luke. Therefore, the accounts recorded in Acts are not teaching examples to be emulated. Nor is Acts a behavioral manual or handbook—unlike Proverbs or the Book of James—but it remains a historical account of the ministry of the Apostles at the onset of the Church Age, under the empowerment and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

To their credit, a few Charismatic-leaning leaders—although it's unclear how they analyze things—correctly believe that biblical tongues are *not* a sign for believers, but for unbelievers (1 Corinthians 14:22). However, many others are spiritual conartists who peddle the Word of God deceitfully for personal gain and not for God's Glory (Philippians 3:17–19). These stage actors appeal to the flesh by telling convincing tales of how they experienced some miraculous

provision, and how listeners can also enjoy prosperity by sending a sizable “*seed gift*” to their ministry. These are the only ones that prosper by deceiving gullible people who want a shortcut to prosperity, so they buy into these *seed gift* schemes. They have never experienced God’s ability to supply their every need (Psalms 23; Philippians 4:19).

If these stage actor types are truly born-again believers—many are not—this writer is obligated to count them as brethren in Christ, even though they hold to unbiblical views on the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Some would say this is a secondary fellowship issue. I do not agree, because we are to eschew false teachers and their doctrines which lead people astray, even deceiving some who are seemingly grounded in the faith. Therefore, although I have been asked to do so, I cannot in good faith fellowship, promote, or work alongside them in the light of their heretical views—divisive beliefs, false doctrines, and selfish goals that confuse and mislead believers unawares.

King David wrote: “*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity*” (Psalm 133:1). And, the Prophet Amos laid down a scriptural principle: “*How can two walk together except they are agreed?*” (Amos 3:3). They’re right, we cannot. What these aforementioned types promote is the antithesis to the clear teachings of God’s Word—truths such as salvation by Grace and the believer’s faith-rest walk in Christ. Rather, they pervert and add to the Gospel of Grace as they promote emotionally-charged, ecstatic religious exhibitions and other unscriptural phenomena, of which their Charismatic peers readily applaud. These exhibitions include women speaking in tongues although Scripture commands them to remain silent and not hold spiritual authority over men in a church setting (1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:12). In promotions and exhibitions like this, these types place themselves under God’s judgment (Galatians 1:8; 1 Timothy 5:24–25; Revelation 22:18–19).

They also show little respect for others who don’t adhere to or help promote their doctrines and practices. They employ deceptive tactics as they seek out and infiltrate established churches using Fifth Column, Trojan-Horse methodologies. They gain willing followers on the mission field by tempting the destitute and poor through giveaway programs, causing disruption, confusion, splits and division in churches as they sheep-steal and spread their false doctrines to gain new adherents to their anti-biblical practices.

Then, they brazenly claim that they have *established* new churches; removing any church signs and putting up their own, sending photos to their supporters. When confronted, some have

admitted that establishing new churches among the unreached is too difficult, so they resort to invading existing churches; promising various types of assistance while maligning those who established the work. They justify their actions by saying their ministry is to “*strengthen existing churches.*” The Apostle Paul knew these types well. He constantly dealt with the legalistic *Judiazers* who tenaciously tagged him around; disrupting his work while spreading their false doctrines ...boasting of their superiority while defaming Paul, who was forced to defend himself and his ministry to the churches (2 Corinthians 11:1–12:13; Galatians 5:1–12, 6:13–14).

Both Charismatic and Pentecostal organizations, without any pangs of conscience, readily embrace disfellowshipped Christian leaders from conservative organizations without addressing their undealt-with issues. This writer as seen it occur in Thailand on numerous occasions! They receive those who are placed under discipline by their own organization or group—found to have been living in immorality or other types of unacceptable and unchristlike behavior; things not God-honoring and unbecoming to a Christian. These unrepentant ones often carry deep-seated grudges for having been exposed and humbled. As such, they often swear to exact revenge by assisting in sheep-stealing, splitting and generally wreaking havoc on as many churches of their former organization as they can, as well as help introduce tongues into non-tongues speaking churches established by their former group.

The Apostle Paul clearly warned: *"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple"* (Romans 16:17–18).

This writer believes without question and accepts as divine truth every miraculous account recorded in Scripture. God, who dwells in timeless eternity, is all-knowing, all-wise, all-powerful and sovereign; across all ages and dispensations. I also know by personal experience that God is not only righteous and just; but also full of loving-kindness, compassion, and grace. As such, He is ready to fully forgive all who come to Him in repentance and faith in the Name, Person, and atoning Work of His only-begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:12, 3:36; Acts 20:21).

I also realize that God does many miraculous things, even yet today, yet mostly behind the scenes. There are numerous accounts—this writer having been personally involved in some—where God has gloriously revealed His presence, power, and protection to missionaries and those in infant local churches. This also occurs amidst totally-unreached primitive people groups where the Gospel message is only just arriving. Yet, these manifestations tend to decline once the Gospel gains a firm foothold and growing, self-governing and propagating churches have been established—especially where God's Word is available in the local language.

I also know that God does not work through, or share His glory with unscrupulous men or women who promote a false gospel for financial gain: "*deceiving others and being deceived*" (2 Timothy 3:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:11–12). These types arrange staged, emotion-packed meetings where people are brought up from the audience prearranged, tapped on the forehead and fall backwards or faint and fall down trembling—said to be †*Slain in the Spirit* and/or *healed* of whatever ailment. These manifestations are supposedly done through the power vested in the performers, who gain fame and great fortunes at the expense of their highly impressed followers. It is suggested that the so-called *slain* ones have instead responded to hypnotic suggestion, an induced trance-like state of anticipation.

Note: The dictionary definition to be †*slain* means to be killed intentionally with premeditation. It does not mean to get tapped on the forehead and, upon cue, fall backward onstage into a catcher's arms before returning to their seat in the audience; all of which occurs by prearranged design. Granted, some may be overcome with the emotion of the moment and faint or swoon and have to be awakened. Where is that found in Scripture—other than in Acts 5:1–11, where Ananias and Sapphira plotted to lie to the Holy Spirit?

Again, I view these types of staged displays and dubious reports very-much akin to the lying wonders of the last days (2 Thessalonians 2:9), in that however believable they may seem, they are not true. Also, the only people recorded in Scripture who were truly *slain by the Spirit* were Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1–10), the husband and wife team who conspired to lie to the Holy Spirit and, upon executing their plan before the Apostle Peter, paid for it immediately with their lives.

IN REVIEW:

The Scriptures clearly teach that ALL born-again believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit in His Divine fullness at the moment they believe (Ephesians 1:13–14, 4:30). The Scriptures also clearly state that, if anyone does not have the Holy Spirit, that person is not one of God's redeemed Saints (Romans 8:9). These passages certainly counter the theory that speaking in *ecstatic utterances* (tongues) is required as a sign of having received Salvation and the fullness of the Spirit, nor does it have anything to do with it, as espoused by Pentecostals and Charismatics, whether they admit it openly or not.

When confronted with Romans 8:9, they concede that those who do not do tongues *might* have the Holy Spirit, but not in His entirety. They claim that one cannot experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit without the evidence of speaking in tongues. This claim is indefensible as it is nowhere supported by Scripture. Especially in the light of the rhetorical statement in 1 Corinthians 12:30: “*Do all have the gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?*” So, we either have the Holy Spirit or we don't. If we don't, we are *not* saved. Also, the Spirit's power is revealed in the lives of those who maintain a consistent walk in fellowship by keeping short accounts with God, often more so than those who make such claims. Concerning keeping short accounts with God, A.W. Tozer said: “*The unattended garden will soon be overrun with weeds, and the heart that fails to cultivate truth and root out error will shortly become a theological wilderness.*”

Scripture teaches that the indwelling Holy Spirit—our helper, teacher, comforter and guide—takes up residence within the heart and life of every believer at the moment of Salvation (Ephesians 1:13–14; 1 Corinthians 6:19). He engifts us with eternal life as He regenerates us into *New Creations in Christ* upon our demonstrating "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21; 2 Corinthians 5:17). Whereupon, He saves us to the uttermost (Hebrews 7:25), seals us (Ephesians 1:14), and places us into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13), keeping us eternally safe and secure by the power of God unto the Day of Redemption—Christ's return in the air to receive all believers unto Himself for Eternity (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17; 1 Peter 1:3–5).

Therefore, according to Scripture, we who are born-again into God's eternal Family of Redeemed Saints—through the New-Birth experience—have the Holy Spirit in all of His fullness abiding within in all of His fullness, not just in part as these types would wrongly claim if we don't receive

their tongues teachings (John 1:12–13; John 3:3–7; 1 John 5:10–13). How does one dissect God? The real question is; does God have all of us? He does as we yield our lives to His will, walking in the light moment-by-moment (Philippians 2:13). As such, we will be growing in grace and knowledge as we mature and gain godly wisdom (Philippians 3:10; Colossians 2:6–7).

This entails maintaining spiritual fellowship by keeping short accounts with God through confession of sin; consistently walking in the light as we maintain fellowship through abiding and walking in the truth. And, as believers, our eternal position (or standing) and inheritance is "In Christ" and can never be lost (John 3:16, 3:36, 10:27–30). Hence, the indwelling Holy Spirit seals us, matures us, comforts us, convicts us, guides, teaches and uses us as He fills our hearts with His peace and joy until Christ's return (Ephesians 1:13–14, 4:30).

Truly, the most powerful and convincing example of God's manifestation of the miraculous is the supernatural spiritual new-birth experience (2 Corinthians 5:17), which transforms an unrighteous hell-bound sinner into one of God's Holy Ones, having received forgiveness and declared justified by the Righteous Judge Himself (Romans 5:1). At that moment, an instantaneous change occurs when one is transformed from condemned sinner to redeemed Saint and integrated into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13). These redeemed ones have become regenerated into new persons in Christ, being born-again into God's family of the Redeemed; not evidenced through mouthing ecstatic utterances (tongues), baptism, communion, or trying to keep themselves saved by following a list of self-made rules or admonitions, but by the power of God (1 Peter 1:5).

After having received Christ in August 1963, this writer was invited to a Sunday evening meeting at a Pentecostal church in a nearby city. These folks were certainly more animated than the little country church where I attended, and they all seemed to be enjoying themselves. The sporadic organ and piano riffs were loud and lively between lulls. During the preaching, I noticed a woman sitting near the front began to sway and shriek at intervals, *with the pastor's shouts of encouragement!*

She soon shrieked, jumped up and rushed to the altar where she kneeled and shouted out something I couldn't follow. She then returned to her seat, noticeably spent. That's strange, I thought. It was an emotionally-charged ecstatic utterance or tongues that she was shouting out. After the service, another woman approached me, saying matter-of-factly that she had once been a Baptist until she

received the gift of tongues and would never go back—as if I was missing out on something special. Go back from what? From this strange carryings-on? Frankly, it's *not* about being a *Baptist* or anything else, but about receiving salvation by Grace and pursuing a God-honoring lifestyle, according to the truths of God's written Word (2 Timothy 2:15–16).

Note: Whether Pentecostal or Charismatic, sincere yet misguided and self-willed women have played a major role in advancing the tongues movement from its onset.

So, is there anything Christians lack without tongues and all of its implications? No! According to John 3:16, God loves us and gives us Eternal Life. In Hebrews 7:25, He has forgiven and saved us to the *uttermost* from a Hell-bound eternity. Ephesians 3:17–21 says, Christ dwells in our hearts by faith; being rooted eternally in God's incomprehensible and unfathomable Love. First Corinthians 12:13 says we have been placed into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit, having drunk deeply of the Water of Life according to John 4:14 and Revelation 22:17. Second Corinthians 5:17–21 says, we are new persons in Christ, Who made us His ambassadors; having taken all our sin upon Himself and giving us His own Righteousness in return. Second Corinthians 1:3–4 tells us, we have peace, comfort, guidance, and joy, given to us by the indwelling Holy Spirit of Ephesians 1:12–14.

Continuing: Hebrews 7:25 reassures us that we, for eternity to the uttermost! Ephesians 1:3–4 says we have been given *every* spiritual blessing in Christ as our spiritual heritage. And, that we now stand holy and blameless before a righteous and holy God, in Love. First Peter 1:3–4 says, we have been given a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ and an unfading inheritance reserved in Heaven for us.

Second Peter 1:3 says, we have been given all things pertaining to life and godliness and called to live a virtuous lifestyle. Yes, we have all these things and more. What else could anyone want or need—*except for the awaiting Glories of Heaven?* The only alternative is to be lost in one's sinfulness, resulting in having to face the Supreme Judge at the Great White Throne Judgment; then, spend eternity in the unquenchable flames of the Lake of Fire, one's name not being found in the Book of Life!

Concerning the desire to seek present-day wonders and miracles, the greatest of all miracles is the spiritual new birth, exemplified in a transformed lifestyle; evidenced by a yielded life and a consistent walk in fellowship with God under the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 2:12; Colossians 2:6–7). Striving to attain anything more is futile because there is no more. We have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ (Ephesians 1:3) and we've been given everything pertaining to life and Godliness (2 Peter 1:3). The changed life in Christ is a bona fide a walking miracle—transformed from death to life, darkness to light. Unexplainable by the world yet manifested before all onlookers—the outworking of new life in Christ is a growing, maturing process. Like a new-born infant; as Christians, we don't attain adulthood during the first days our being born-again (1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 1:5–9, 3:18).

I had the opportunity to know personally two men of God who are successful pastors, both of whom were once heavily involved in the Pentecostal and the Charismatic movements respectively. One, Pastor G., had once pastored Pentecostal mega-churches. He even held large tent meetings where things mentioned in this paper were practiced. During his involvement, he told me that he began to realize that their key doctrines and practices concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer were *not* aligned with scripture. In his quest, the more he studied God's Word the more convinced he became, to the point he could no longer continue. He also realized that doctrines and practices of Baptists were more attuned to Scripture. Subsequently, Pastor G. left his former associations and became a loving and caring preacher of Baptist persuasion and a trusted friend of this writer.

My other good friend of whom I speak is Pastor C., my former next-door neighbor who pastored a Bible Church located nearby. I didn't realize—until he told me one day—the extent to which he had been involved in the Charismatic movement. I asked him what had happened. He went on to say how he had begun to sense that things they were practicing and promoting were like empty window dressing. And, that all those involved seemed to be trying to keep up a facade to maintain acceptance within their peer group. It was then that he came face-to-face with the error of the whole thing and left the Charismatic movement altogether, along with his wife and family. Pastor C. once wrote: *"Grow in your relationship with God through a true knowledge of His Word."*

During our conversation, Pastor C explained that, as human beings, those who lack a sense of positive self-worth tend to seek acceptance within a group, often conforming to that group's norms, including behaviors, attitudes, speech patterns, and dress codes, all to earn their acceptance and approval. As if saying: "My friends are doing it, why shouldn't I? I don't want to be left out, or miss God's blessing. What if they don't like me anymore?" Otherwise stated, self-worth can be directly related to acceptance by one's peers and societal surroundings, more than seeking God's approval (2 Timothy 2:15).

This writer recently had the opportunity to befriend a Thai Pastor and his gracious wife. Pastor B had just completed his doctorate at Bob Jones University (BJU) and was in the process of raising support to return to Thailand as a missionary to his own people. Their testimony was unique in that they had initially been part of the burgeoning Charismatic movement in Bangkok. Pastor B's wife told me apologetically that it was all they knew; that is until they met some mature Thai believers from a conservative church. Something clicked, and they realized that what they had been involved in lacked the same depth of reality and purpose. Disassociating themselves from all Charismatic ties, they sought out a solid biblical education at BJU. Their goal now is to work as a team to start a conservative church in Bangkok. There, they will provide a solid alternative with foundational teaching to help ground those caught up in the same tongues system that they had come out of. Pastor B's wife will be working with women and children.

In the spirit of the Apostle Peter's testimony in 2 Peter 1:16–21, a former Charismatic has a blog that he calls: [A Journey Into, Through, and Out Of Charismania](#). He writes: *"Now that I'm in a different place in my Christian faith and no longer put much stock in the idea that we should be focusing on seeking some new dream or vision from God; but instead, we ought to focus on the written Word He has already given us."*

As a matter of clarification, this writer fully realizes there are many sincere Christians who love the Lord and seek to live for Him; yet, find themselves involved in the unscriptural aspects of the Pentecostal or Charismatic movements. These are often unsuspecting recipients of erroneous teachings on the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer—of which this writer considers it to be erroneous—and are not perpetrators. They might have grown up within these belief systems, or pressured into the tongues phenomena through someone trying to force them to speak in ecstatic utterances by making them repeatedly mouth nonsense syllables.

Concerning Rich Charismatic Perpetrators: I recently had the opportunity to meet the nephew of a world-famous Charismatic Superstar at a Christian writers' conference where he was a key-note speaker. He had once been heavily involved in his uncle's staged performances as a *catcher*. Meaning, when people were "slain in the spirit" on stage, they would fall back into his arms. He also did event planning. As a family member, he enjoyed a truly lavish lifestyle, lived in palatial multimillion-dollar mansions, drove his choice in a fleet of exotic cars, had a closet full of expensive suits, traveled in private jets, and stayed in luxurious multi-roomed royal suites in five-star hotels as he traveled the world with his famous uncle, one with gold furnishings at an amazing \$25,000 per night's stay. Only one thing he lacked; a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ!

During the course of events, he met and was attracted to a conservative young Christian lady. Her lifestyle was different; and, she spoke of things he did not know—being saved, knowing the Lord, etc. As their talks of spiritual things progressed, he became increasingly aware of his lost condition, and that what he had been involved in was a huge, deceptive façade, built on the backs of Christians. It took a while, but this attractive young Christian lady was instrumental in his receiving Christ—now his wife and mother of his children. He went on to complete his Bible education, including a doctorate at a prominent seminary. He presently co-pastors a conservative Bible church in southern California where he delights in preaching the Gospel and exposing error. He is a published author and also takes numerous speaking engagements, exposing the deception of what he was once involved. He calls it a microcosm of the whole lavish prosperity-gospel scene. He adds that his relatives and the people with whom he was formerly associated are not born-again Christians and know little or nothing of true Christianity. He now holds Bible studies with his unsaved relatives, which has generated genuine interest among some. Of his famous uncle, he says he has a very kind personality.

TO SUMMARIZE: Consider the Apostle Peter's statement about trusting in the final authority of the written Word of God over all else—visions, dreams, emotions, impressions or experiences. Peter saw it all and yet he wrote: *"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables (fictitious or hearsay accounts) when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ but were eyewitnesses of His majesty (on the Mount of Transfiguration). For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'* And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount. Yet we have also a more sure word of prophecy—God's inspired, written Word—*whereunto ye do well that ye take heed...*" (2 Peter 1:16–19).

As stated in the Foreword; upon reading this paper, you may find yourself in full agreement. Or, you might dismiss my conclusions as being biased and mean-spirited, or out of touch with the times; which I have sought to avoid. Or, you might be inclined towards my findings, yet not ready to say that some of what I describe might not be of the Lord since you know some very nice people that are involved in this movement. It is certainly your prerogative to feel that way. However, it's not about people. This writer is focusing more on beliefs, claims, and practices than naming any individuals involved.

One might ask: "What's wrong with Catholics, Mormons Jehovah's Witnesses, Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Humanists, Atheists, or mainline Church attenders—*Christians in name only?*" Doesn't God love them too? Yes, of course He does (John 3:16). Or, you may know some really good people who are of these persuasions; maybe even a spouse, close relative or someone whom you highly esteem. Even good people can be deceived by convincing teachers of unsound doctrines. So, we all should be vigilant, like the Bereans, who verified in Scripture what was being taught (Acts 17:11; Colossians 2:8; 2 Timothy 2:15, 4:3-4; 2 Peter 3:17). I have intentionally left unnamed the major players alluded to here—only pointing out their beliefs, claims, and practices. These are things which directly violate the truths of God's Word, to the point where these charlatans ought to be profoundly embarrassed. Why aren't they embarrassed? Because their unsaved hearts are calloused. God's Word plainly states that these types: "*Speak lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron*" (1 Timothy 4:2).

CONCERNING THE LADIES: By God's design, they are usually more sensitive and emotionally attuned to things than their male counterparts. That's a positive trait for their family role as wives, mothers, and housekeepers, which also makes them strong and resilient persons. Although equally as intelligent and capable as men and maybe even more so in certain situations, God also blessed them with the role of followers in the marriage relationship. On the *con* side, due to their emotional makeup, they can be more susceptible to suggestion since they are often the first to yield to things like the modern-day tongues movement.

Please understand ladies, this is not a gender-bashing thing, because men can succumb to these things as well; yet, they tend to hold back, being more cautious by nature. Dr. Owen Strachan, Professor at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, stated that: "*The historical understanding of the mutually complementary roles of men and women in the church is that they are equal in the eyes of the Lord, and yet God has assigned different [leader-follower] roles to each.*"

In the Garden, Adam followed Eve's lead in her disobedience—of which there are various explanations—who, being deceived by Satan's lies and subtle suggestions of grandeur, succumbed and disobeyed God's direct command and warning, resulting in *The Total, Irreversible Fall and Separation of Humankind from God!* Consequently, God, in His Divine wisdom and sovereignty, has declared the husband as head and leader of both the household and the local church setting, with both husband and wife being in submission to each other in marriage and both to Christ (1 Corinthians 14:34; 2 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:21–28; 1 Timothy 2:14).

A BRIEF EXEGETICAL OVERVIEW OF 1 CORINTHIANS 14: *(Not in sequential order.)*

(1) Chapter 14 is a continuation of chapter 13, where Paul makes an important distinction. Initially, Paul speaks hypothetically, using "if" or "although" (1 Cor 13:1–3). He then gets to the heart of the matter—spiritual understanding and maturity where genuine, selfless **Love** supersedes all else, even Faith and Hope (vv. 13:4–13). Christ's Love was tough, righteous love, like when He drove the money changers out of the Temple. Then, in His next breath, He healed the blind and the lame who had come to seek Him at the Temple (Matthew 21:12–14).

(2) Prophesying was a miraculous sign gift for believers—of prime importance in the early church setting for teaching, comforting, edifying and guiding believers; and, revealing God's will and purposes, previous to the completion of the New Testament canon, which would supercede the gift of New Testament Prophecy (I Corinthians 13:8–10; 14:3, 22–25).

(3) Tongues was a miraculous sign gift for confirming the authenticity of the Gospel among unbelieving Jews—declared to them in their individual languages and dialects; spoken in surrounding unreached areas in languages unknown to the speakers (v. 21).

(4) The operation of tongues was *not* for believers or for a Church setting (v. 22). It too was superceded by the completed New Testament canon (I Corinthians 13:8–10).

(5) When Paul said "*I wish you all spoke in tongues; but rather that you prophesied*" (v. 14:5),

a. He emphasized prophecy (*the forth-telling of God's will and purposes to the congregation before the completion of the New Testament canon*) that the church would receive edification and grow (v.5). Whereas Old Testament prophets, as God's mouthpiece, *foretold future events*.

b. By tongues, Paul meant intelligible human languages, after his office as an Apostle: a miraculous sign gift, verifying the Gospel message to the Jews, who seek signs (1 Cor 1:22).

c. Paul did *not* mean mouthing unintelligible ecstatic sounds for self edification (v. 4), as is seen today (Acts 2:4–12; 1 Corinthians 14:4, 22). **See note-2, pg. 47**

The Biblical Use of Tongues: Paul told the Corinthians that he was headed for the unreached regions beyond their location (2 Corinthians 10:16); where, what with the many unique unreached language groups unknown to Paul, his God-given Apostolic gift of Tongues would be put to good use as he delivered the Gospel message to the Jews who had settled there, having fled their homeland when the Romans leveled their temple during the siege of Jerusalem, *circa* 70 A.D.

There are countless unique dialects, languages and language families in the world today. In Thailand alone there are known to be well over fifty different languages and language families, including various dialects and subdialects. This writer has learned four of them in the *tai-gadai* family of tonal languages—three to a point of near-fluency. This was all to communicate the Gospel effectively in a cross-cultural setting, and the heart language of the hearers. Done to befriend, teach, counsel, and articulate various aspects of God's Word, including the faith-walk life. Ultimately, to establish new self-sustaining churches where there were none.

On the remote island of New Guinea, there are myriads of unique tribal languages, sometimes even different from village to village. These, not to mention the countless unique tribal languages spoken throughout the Indonesian and Philippine Islands, as well as those spoken among the remote North- and South American Native tribal groups—all of which comprise areas in the *10–40 Window!*

Concerning the Apostolic gift of tongues; wouldn't be of great value to reach these unreached people groups in expediting the fulfillment of Christ's Great Commission before His return? Without any hesitation, this writer would certainly be open to that! And yet, God in His infinite, sovereign wisdom has chosen not to make that Apostolic gift available for today. Which begs the question; Why don't those who claim to have the biblical gift of tongues yield their lives to be used of God to reach the myriads of yet unreached people groups with the Gospel? It's because they don't have it and so they can't do it. Nor could they because it has ceased. (1 Cor 13:8)

(6) Due to their spiritual immaturity and lack of discernment, Paul admonished the Corinthian believers to "Grow Up" in their misuse of *spiritual things*—including spiritual gifts and heathen tongues. Untaught believers have said: "*Forget the doctrine thing, just give me Love.*" The answer is, we can only understand God's fathomless Love for us through studying doctrine and is not separate from it (Ephesians 3:17–19).

(7) Women are not to teach or hold positions of spiritual authority over men (1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:12–14). However, there is no scriptural admonition concerning women *not* being allowed to teach or hold positions of spiritual leadership over other women and children, or even giving their personal testimony before the church, which this writer seen done—a woman speaking freely while standing on the podium alongside her husband, her spiritual head. Or, not, depending on the situation.

(8) Furthermore, women are instructed to remain in silent submission while in church (1 Corinthians 11:3, 14:34). This admonition has not found popularity among feminists. Why would that needed to be said? Likely due to their loud chatting between themselves or interjecting into the preaching.

(9) Comparative analysis and deductive reasoning concludes that the operational gift of pre-New Testament canon tongues and prophecy was restricted to men. The male pronoun is presumably intended here, seen in 1 Corinthians 14:2–4, 13, 21 and 28. Deductive reasoning confirms this, where Paul states that women are to remain silent in a congregational church setting (v. 34).

(10) In a church setting, during a time of prophetic revelation, no more than three men should speak in succession, and at intervals, so all may consider, be edified, enlightened and comforted. (vv. 3, 29).

Paul closes with these admonitions with (paraphrased): *"Did you Corinthians come up with God's Word yourselves or are you the recipients? If you consider yourself prophets or spiritual persons, realize that what I am writing herfe are the Lord's commands, not my own"* (vv. 36–37). *"Therefore, I tell you, highly regard prophecy instead of tongues, and be sure to maintain order and discipline in all things"* (vv. 39–40). Paul was saying here that clear, effective communication is of the utmost importance (vv. 6–8). Otherwise, how can believers understand God's Mighty Greatness, including creation; His Plan of Salvation; as well as the *Victory And Eternal Heritage* He has freely given to all believers, *In Christ*.

Paul's Prayers for Believers: Paul' letters to churches contain this same criterion, which is of the utmost importance for the believers spiritual understanding, growth and maturity. Else, why would he keep repeating himself (Ephesians 1:15–23, 3:14–21; Philippians 1:9–11; Colossians 1:9–12)?

Note-1: The time period in all the cities where Paul preached and taught was during the Apostolic age when the New Testament Canon was not yet complete (1 Corinthians 13:9–10). Although, both the Apostles Paul and Peter sensed that Paul’s writings would become a part of Holy Writ (1 Corinthians 14:36–37; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 3:15–16). In the interim, the Gospel message and other New Testament truths were given by the Holy Spirit by way of:

(A) **Tongues:** An Apostolic era miraculous sign gift. It was a temporary gift given for the supernatural proclamation of the Gospel **to unbelievers;** ^(a) in a non-church setting, and ^(b) in languages that were unknown to the speakers—namely to the Jews residing in other countries (Acts 2:4–11; Corinthians 1:22, 13:8–10, 14:22–25).

(B) **Prophecy:** The Apostolic era miraculous spiritual gift of *forth-telling* the will and purpose of God *before* the completion of the New Testament canon, *circa AD 96*. It was a temporary foundational gift, given **to believers for their edification, exhortation and comfort;** ^(a) in a local church setting and ^(b) with the full comprehension of the speaker and his hearers. Men, under the superintendence of the Holy Spirit, exclaimed yet-unwritten New Testament truths to the local church body (1 Corinthians 13:8–10, 14:3, 21). **Note:** Old Testament Prophecy was proclaiming or *fore-telling*.

Note-2: Concerning the Corinthian church, *ecstatic utterances* were prevalent among sorcerers and witch doctors in the heathen populace of Corinth in those days. Immature believers could have easily been affected by these surrounding influences, some likely having once been sorcerers or witch doctors themselves; all of which suggests that the type of *tongues* practice Paul was warning them about were the meaningless ecstatic utterances of the area, as opposed to the genuine Apostolic gift, which Paul also mentions (1 Corinthians 12:1–3).

In each instance where the word tongue (*glossa*) occurs in Scripture, it refers to human languages: *Bible Knowledge Commentary Volume II*, by Drs. John Walvoord and Roy Zuk. Consequently, it has been suggested by senior pastor-teacher Dr. John MacArthur that the term *unknown* was inserted in verses 2, 4, 13, 14, 19 and 27 in the KJV by its translators, signifying where Paul was referring to extra-biblical *ecstatic utterances*—the surrounding heathen practice—as opposed to the actual Apostolic gift, where *unknown* was not added. A good example is found in verses 14 and 15; where Paul said in v. 14 (paraphrased), “*If my spirit prays in an [ecstatic utterance], it will be unintelligible*

to me.” Whereas, in v. 15 Paul says: “*So, which is it? I will, therefore, pray with both my spirit and my understanding, as well as sing with both my spirit and my understanding.*”

God's Word is crystal clear, warning believers to avoid false doctrines and practices, and the individuals or groups that propagate them; admonishing us to “*Come out from among them...*” (2 Corinthians 6:14–18). Simply stated, it means to not continue to follow or live alongside the things of darkness, or sit under false teachings, called doctrines of demons, propagated by deceiving spirits (1 Timothy 4:1–2), and extra-biblical beliefs and practices; things that confuse and lead people astray from the genuine Gospel message and the unchangeable truths of God's Word (Colossians 2:8; 1 Timothy 4:6–7).

This would include any individual or group that adds to or subtracts from the foundational truths of Scripture—Six-day Creation, Temptation, Fall, Universal sin, the Deity of Christ, Unlimited Atonement, Salvation full and free by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ's Blood alone, His bodily resurrection, ascension to the right hand of the Father to be our High Priest and intercessory advocate, Rapture, Christ's second coming *et al.* As previously stated, this writer has pastor friends who left the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements who affirm that, when they realized many beliefs and practices were erroneous and unsupported by Scripture, they decided to bow out.

As stated above, far be it from this writer to convolute God's Holy Word or imply that it says something that it doesn't or visa-versa, or seek to limit God in any way. All things considered, the question remains; does the preponderance of evidence support Pentecostal and Charismatic claims of experiencing genuine biblical tongues, signs and wonders?

IN CONCLUSION: The crux of the matter is, the Charismatic movement eagerly promotes things that are clearly contrary to Scripture. Not unlike Paul's assessment of his fellow-Jews in Romans 10:2; “*They have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.*” Do those in the movement exhibit zeal and conviction? Yes, very much so, yet misdirected, because much of the focus appears to be on outward exhibition with little emphasis on inner spiritual growth or maturity.

So, do Charismatic beliefs, claims, and practices ring true when weighed against the rightly divided and correctly interpreted Scripture—exegeted within its grammatical, contextual and historical

environs? With all things considered, the preponderance of evidence tilts heavily towards NO! The whole movement and its various components are not biblically sound because they are not aligned with scripture. Not in agreement? You are encouraged to examine the biblical evidence for yourself.

Consequently, this writer can unequivocally conclude that, based on scriptural evidence alone—or lack thereof—the Charismatic movement and its beliefs, claims, and practices are heretical, not being biblically sound from its inception. It tends to lead people away from God’s revealed truth, not towards it. *“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!”* *“... Approved unto God, correctly dividing the Word of Truth”* (Psalm 133:1; 2 Timothy 2:15).

—oOo—

Rev. Ron Myers

Sunshine Publications ▪ San Diego, California

Copyright © Pending

ADDENDUM, ††Cessationism versus Continuationism:**What Does the Term Cessationist Mean?**

In theological terms, the Cessationist view holds that the miraculous sign gifts spoken of in the New Testament (Tongues, Healings, Prophecy, Special Knowledge and Miracles) were given by God to His chosen Apostles at the onset of the church age for three distinct reasons:

1. Give supernatural confirmation from God of the Gospel message to the Jews, who require visible signs of verification before they will accept it as being God-ordained (1 Corinthians 1:22). As well as provide Apostolic authority over the early church, initially consisting mainly of Jews.
2. Speed the spread of the Gospel message through Tongues & Miracles to lay the foundation of the early church around the known world by Christ's twelve Apostles, empowered by the promised Holy Spirit; which was to be given by the Father (Matthew 16:18; John 14:16, 26; Acts 1:4–8).
3. Provide divine guidance and knowledge to early believers through Prophecy (*forth-telling the will and purpose of God*) before the New Testament Canon was completed (1 Corinthians 13:8–12).

Note: Each of the three miraculous spiritual gifts mentioned here (Prophecy, Tongues, and Knowledge) are the *Apostolic* sign gifts that will discontinue (cf. v. 8).

Since the authority of the early church had been established, and the New Testament Canon completed, Cessationists believe scripture teaches that the Apostolic sign gifts ceased to operate with the passing of the last of the twelve apostles and are no longer in operation today (cf. v. 8). However, God's power and Divine authority are not lessened whatsoever, nor His ability to do whatsoever He pleases in the way of the miraculous for His glory.

Even as 6-day Creationist Christians believe in a literal Creation according to Genesis One, Cessationists believe that the manifestation of the miraculous sign gifts (tongues, prophecies, miracles, and healings) ceased at the passing of the Apostolic age and the completion of the New Testament Canon, circa 96 AD (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:8–13). However, the spiritual gifts designed for the function and interaction of the Church Body are still present and in operation today, given by God freely to every believer as *He* wills for each to have; not strived after, prayed for or pressured into (1 Corinthians 12:11).

What Does the Term Continuationist Mean?

The Continuationists' or *Apostolic Succession* view directly contrasts with the Cessationists' position. Namely that, is our Bible sufficient as it stands, or does God still speak newly-inspired scripture today? Also, Continuationism holds that the miraculous Apostolic sign gifts (Tongues, Healings, Miracles) are not temporary, and that the Holy Spirit bestows them on persons even today, not just the original Twelve Apostles during the inception of the Church age. Also that tongues can be attained by seeking after, coaxing or forcing one to vacant one's thoughts, then mouth meaningless sounds to get the "gift" started.

These views are not supported by Scripture, especially when compared alongside the Apostle Paul's admonition in 1 Corinthians 14:22, that Tongues are for the proclamation of the Gospel to unbelievers, namely Jews, and *not* for believers to practice as seen today.

Paul's matter-of-fact statement in verse 22 could not be more clear. Yet it is irrelevant to Charismatics, since they assume their experiences and emotions supersede Scripture—a weak view of scriptural authority. This is not unlike Papal declarations, which are considered more authoritative than Divine Scripture. We are reminded of Christ's words where He quotes Isaiah 29:13: "*This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouths and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*" (Matthew 15:8–9; Mark 7:6–7).

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

The following are Bible-related terms used in this paper that describe methods for arriving at an accurate meaning and its application of a scriptural theme or passage. Bible translators must also take these into account to produce a faithful translation, one that accurately reflects God's written Word.

- ✓ **THE SCRIPTURES:** The collection of inspired canonical books that comprise the Christian Bible are the 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 in the New, totalling 66 books. The kinds of text include: historical; prophetic; poetic; wisdom; biographical; journalistic (*Acts*); didactic, and epistles. The Apocryphal writings are not included in the compilation of Holy Writ because they have not passed the test of inspiration.
- ✓ **AUTHOR'S INTENT:** Intent means the essence of meaning that the author of Scripture (*Divine and human*) had in mind, revealed in every word within its historical, cultural, and grammatical context. Three main clues are: who is the speaker; who is the audience; and, what is the primary focus of the message? Not all scriptures are written for the reader to obey or emulate. For example, the Book of Acts was Dr. Luke's journalistic account of events his companion, the Apostle Paul, was undergoing, following the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ **CONTEXTUAL RENDERING:** This entails determining the *Author's Intent*—accomplished by applying the benchmarks of exegetical deciphering and hermeneutical interpretation. These are based on contextual environs of the passage; historical setting; cultural implications; and, grammatical structure. Greek verbs have Tense, Voice and Mood (TVM) to consider. The Scriptures are written in various types of speech, which also need to be considered. These include: narrative, didactic (teaching), idioms, poetry, euphemisms, hyperbole, metaphors, simile, ellipsis, allegory, *etc.* All Scripture passages have *one* original meaning, determined by the context. They may also contain a prophetic theme or principle—*not* allegorized or interpreted according to the reader's opinion. Meaning: "*If the plain sense makes perfect sense, then seek no other sense, lest you end up with nonsense!*"
- ✓ **INTERPRETATION (LITERAL):** Literal interpretation of a passage is the means by which the intended meaning of the author of a passage (*Divine and human*) is accurately determined—within its historical, cultural, and grammatical context. This is accomplished through a process called "exegesis" (*to pull out, decipher*). To assist in discovery, one must consider the *Five Ws* of the passage: *Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How*. After arriving at the passage's meaning, is then communicated through the principles of interpretation called "hermeneutics" (*to interpret, explain*). The hermeneutic (*explanation*) may be narrow in focus or wide in scope. However, it must be related to the core meaning of the passage in question. One must also keep in mind that any Scripture passage has only *one* originally intended meaning—with potential themes or principles of application that can be drawn. However, that does *not* mean to alter, change or modify the meaning (*allegorization*) to coordinate with one's personal liking or beliefs. As in: "*What it means to me*" (2 Peter 1:19–21).
- ✓ **PROPHETICAL PASSAGES:** These refer to future events, sometimes events both near and far. Although figurative speech is often used, that does *not* mean all prophecy is figurative, like Revelation. Otherwise, one should assume the words are to be understood in their normal or literal sense—unless figurative or symbolic speech is obvious.

- ✓ **THE BIBLE:** Called *God's Word*, it is the single basis for our beliefs and practices. It is living, divinely inspired (*God-breathed*), infallible (*without error*), and the final authority on all matters to which it speaks. The Bible teaches there is one God (Isaiah 45: 5–6; Mark 12:29–31). He exists eternally in three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—*The Triune Godhead* (Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9), each being fully deity in all aspects.
- ✓ **BIBLICAL:** The term, Biblical, pertains to one's beliefs, values, views, and lifestyle being in harmony with the Scriptures in their originally intended, exegetically accurate meaning. Not, "*What it means to me.*"
 - ✓ **UNBIBLICAL:** The opposite of Biblical—meaning views, values and lifestyle that are doctrinally incorrect or contrary to Scripture. This can refer to beliefs of Christians or cults that claim to be biblically based but are not. Examples are inspiration, inerrancy, Christ's Deity, salvation, etc.
- ✓ **DISCIPLE:** A dedicated follower of Jesus Christ and His teachings.
- ✓ **APOSTLE:** Christ's twelve ambassadors, whom He personally chose as His special messengers, and to whom He bestowed miraculous sign gifts. There are no more apostles today.
- ✓ **MIRACULOUS APOSTOLIC SIGN GIFTS:** This controversial subject is divided into two categories: *Biblical* versus *unbiblical* points of view and interpretation. The key to discerning and determining the difference is accomplished by unbiased exegetical analysis, using the principles of literal interpretation above: context; time period; culture; and grammatical structure of the passage. This includes identifying the speaker, audience, and the intended focus of the message. Bible scholars believe *Tongues* was the Apostolic era sign gift to miraculously witness to *unbelieving* Jews. Whereas, *Prophecy* was the Apostolic era sign gift to miraculously *forth-tell* the will and purpose of God to *believers*. Both of these were in use previous to the completion of the New Testament (*circa* AD 96). This writer agrees, and believes the miraculous sign gifts were sovereignly designed for the Apostolic age: *circa* AD 33–96 (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:8–13).
- ✓ **DOCTRINE:** Often defined as a *Doctrinal Statement*, *Statement of Faith*, or *What We Believe*; it is usually a set of beliefs held by an individual, or mutually-held by a school, a church or denominational groups concerning the Scriptures—which defines their view of beliefs and practices. These may contain variations of defined areas of belief. These help the inquirer or potential visitor or new member to understand the church's position on beliefs or issues.
- ✓ **EXEGESIS:** A process of studying a passage of Scripture to *draw out* or determine its intended meaning, according to its context. Comparing various scripture passages gives more accuracy in cases where the meaning may need clarification—Scripture is its own best interpreter. (1 Corinthians 2:13)
 - ✓ **EISEGESIS:** The opposite of Exegesis—which means inserting one's own ideas or notions into a Scripture passage instead of relying on traditionally approved exegetical methods of interpretation to arrive at the meaning of any particular Scripture passage.
- ✓ **HERMENEUTICS:** The science of biblical interpretation of a passage using the exegetical process to be able to correctly expound and apply the meaning of scriptural truths contained therein.

A FRIENDLY PERSONAL QUIZ:

This open-Bible quiz is included so you can get a clearer sense of where you stand concerning the subject at hand.

- 1) According to 1 Corinthians 14:22, of the two different temporary Apostolic sign gifts, Tongues and Prophecy, which was meant specifically for whom, believers versus unbelievers?
 - a) Both Apostolic-era gifts (Tongues and Prophecy) were meant for both believers and unbelievers.
 - b) Tongues was a sign gift for believers to practice—Prophecy was for talking with unbelieving Jews.
 - c) Prophecy was a sign gift to instruct believers—Tongues was for evangelizing unbelieving Jews.

- 2) According to 1 Corinthians 14:23, did the Apostle Paul encourage the Corinthian believers to speak in tongues together in unison during their congregational meetings to worship God?
 - a) Yes, Paul encouraged this practice, saying that God was greatly glorified and unbelievers were convicted of sin when everyone spoke in Tongues at once.
 - b) No, Paul did not agree with this practice, warning that if unbelievers walked into the meeting, they would think that the Corinthian believers had gone mad.

- 3) According to 1 Corinthians 14:22–24, what Apostolic sign gift did Paul encourage the Corinthian believers to desire?
 - a) Paul encouraged the Corinthian believers to continue speaking in Tongues and not to Prophecy, saying that it would just confuse things.
 - b) Paul encouraged them to desire the gift of Prophecy because it was a special gift God had given to provide instruction to the church until New Testament scriptures were complete (1 Corinthians 13:8–9).

- 4) Are personal feelings and emotional experiences, including Tongues, coequal indicators of truth alongside God's inspired Word, and valid for establishing one's beliefs and convictions?
 - a) Yes, we believe our Charismatic experiences are real—given by God, so we can rely on them.
 - b) No, feelings and emotional experiences are not trustworthy because they vacillate and are fleeting. In comparison, God's Word is changeless because it is established forever in Heaven (Psalms 119:89).

- 5) John the Baptist said: "[Christ] will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." To what was John referring concerning being *Baptized with Fire* (Matthew 3:11 and Luke 3:16)?
- a) John was referring to the believer's zeal in the Spirit or being *on fire* for the Lord.
 - b) John was referring to the unquenchable fires of judgment. The passage is an analogy: Wheat and barns refer to believers who will go to Heavenly mansions. Chaff refers to unbelievers, who will be "Baptized" into the Lake of Unquenchable Fire of eternal judgment for rejecting the gift of Salvation (Matthew 3:12 and Luke 3:17).
- 6) Does the Holy Spirit abide in His fulness in all born-again believers? Or, is speaking in tongues a necessary sign, proof of having received the fullness of the Holy Spirit?
- a) Speaking in tongues is the evidence of having received the fullness of the Holy Spirit, which occurs separately and subsequent to Salvation—a higher level of spirituality.
 - b) Since the gift of Eternal Life is given by the Holy Spirit, He indwells every born-again believer in all His fullness at the moment of Salvation. Ephesians 5:18 commands the believer to "*Be filled with the Spirit.*" Modern-day Tongues, being bogus, are *not* involved in any way.
- 7) Do you believe that Apostolic gift of tongues and Charismatic tongues are the same thing?
- Yes, they are one and the same.
 - No, they are not even similar, because Apostolic tongues were actual spoken languages of the day, spoken by the Jews who inhabited many of the surrounding nations who had come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish day of Pentacost, which occurred 50-days after the Day of Atonment.
- 8) Although unintelligible to humans, are Charismatic tongues, in fact, a heavenly prayer language?
- Yes, they are a beautiful angelic prayer language that enables users to speak to God.
 - No, linguistic research has proven that modern-day Tongues is fleshly gibberish and not ordained of God.
- 9) Do you speak in tongues?
- Not yet, but I would like to.
 - Yes, it's good to know that I have the fulness of the Spirit and it makes me feel close to God to have my personal prayer language.
 - No, modern-day tongues is a false teaching; produced through hypnotic suggestion or euphoric religious highs that induce ecstatic utterances, or potentially demonic in nature.

John MacArthur's Position on The Charismatic Movement:

Pastor John MacArthur—founder of Grace Community Church, Sun Valley, CA (c.1956), president of The Master's Seminary (both of which are located in Sun Valley, California), and author of the award-winning MacArthur Study Bible—is a strong Cessationist and a prominent voice rebutting Continuationist beliefs, which are held by both Pentecostals and Charismatics. MacArthur has written three books in support of his position: The Charismatics (1978), Charismatic Chaos (1993), and Strange Fire (2013). He is uniquely qualified to speak on this subject because he watched it develop from its inception. In October 2013, he hosted a symposium at Grace Community Church called "Strange Fire," to mark the launch of his book by the same name. The event featured several guest speakers who contended for a Cessationist position while pointing out the weaknesses of the Continuationist position.

In the conference's opening remarks, Dr. MacArthur stated that: *"Watching the behavior of Hindus of the Kundalini cult, it appears that their body movements are almost identical to those of some Charismatics, who mimic the extreme behavior of pagans. This is the work of Satan; it is the work of darkness, and not to be attributed to the Holy Spirit."*

He added: *"The Charismatic Movement has made no contribution to biblical clarity, interpretation, or sound doctrine. It detracts and confuses, and has only produced distortion, disarray, and error. People have been saved in Charismatic churches, but nothing attributed to the movement has been the reason they received Christ. Unfortunately, Evangelicalism has thrown open its arms and has welcomed the Trojan horse of the Charismatic Movement into the city of God. Its troops have taken it over and placed their own Charismatic idol there."*

MacArthur believes that modern-day visions, revelations, voices from heaven, dreams, tongues, prophecies, out-of-body experiences, trips to heaven, special anointings and pseudo-miracles are deceptive lies, wrongly attributed to the Holy Spirit. And, that Charismatics have essentially kidnapped the Holy Spirit and created a golden calf, which they all gather around in worship. Dr. MacArthur believes in Spiritual Gifts for today but holds that the miraculous sign gifts no longer have a function, having ceased with the conclusion of the Apostolic Age and the completed New Testament canon.

He acknowledged that there were those within the Charismatic movement (like Pastor Chuck Smith, 1927–2013) who believed in the authority of Scripture, honored the Lord, and pursued Godly living. And, that the Movement retained enough Gospel truth so that souls could be saved. However, he saw its interdenominational inclinations as being a testimony to the absence of any sound theological position and charged that its theology is both heretical and a departure from orthodoxy. Since everything is defined by experience, the average adherent has a weak view of Scripture, which defines the Charismatic movement in general.

At one time, Dr. MacArthur expressed approval of Chuck Smith because he had authored the book: A Straightforward Critique of Charismatic Extremism (1965). This, despite Smith being from a Four-Square Pentecostal heritage and founder of the Calvary Chapel movement in Costa Mesa, CA, as well as the *House of Miracles* commune, designed to reach the *counterculture* Jesus People.

Concerning Smith's exposé, MacArthur commented that:

"I am grateful that some people in the Pentecostal tradition have the courage to confront error in their movement and call all Charismatics to a biblical perspective—and I wish more of them would do that. I am grateful for those who will speak out against these evil things. One of the pamphlets that first alerted me to the terrible, terrible teaching in the Health-Wealth movement was written by Chuck Smith, pastor of Calvary Chapel, a straightforward critique of charismatic extremism. There are many like him who have taken their stand and I thank God for their courage and their desire to be biblical, and I don't want for any moment for people to think that I don't believe there are such people in that Pentecostal tradition because there are."

MacArthur goes on to say:

"I also believe that the seeds of these errors which they wish to fight are sometimes inherent in the very doctrines that they believe. If you believe that the Baptism of the Spirit is subsequent to and separate from salvation, you have now created two classes of believers. If you believe in mystical experience, transcendent esoteric kinds of supernatural things, then what you will do is depreciate study, spiritual discipline and the means of grace by which you grow. If you exalt feeling you will denigrate reason, and open the mind and the spirit to powers that people cannot understand or deal with. As long as these kinds of things lie at the core of Pentecostal tradition the potential for disaster is there, and if you believe that God is still giving revelation of any kind--the lid is off."

"Chuck Smith's book is not only a statement of truth to people who already believe it but an appeal to my Charismatic friends to examine what they believe, as well as an appeal to non-Charismatics to see the difference and to see that the differences are not inconsequential."

However, later on, MacArthur criticized both Chuck Smith and the Calvary Chapel movement in that they played a major role in helping to birth the Charismatic Movement.

He explained that:

"In 1967, a group of 'Jesus Freak' hippies in the beach areas of Southern California got involved in Calvary Chapel, of which the church let their hippie subculture dictate what it would become. Out go the suits and ties, out go the meaningful hymns, out go all the normal, traditional things and in comes the hippie culture—drugs, communal living, free sex, and all that kind of casual thing. That's a typical Charismatic church, the movement that came from Calvary Chapel. Calvary Chapel's leadership essentially said, 'We'll let the culture tell us what we need to be.' Thus, the Charismatic movement is comfortable in Roman Catholicism, and is comfortable in dead denominationalism, et al. I think it's a false form of Christianity."

(Pastor John MacArthur, BA, MA, Th.D)

—oOo—

WRITER'S COMMENTS: Although Pastor MacArthur's approach may seem harsh to some; this writer understands the validity and pastorally-inspired purpose of his position as an *under-shepherd of the flock*. As such, he has observed the Charismatic movement's growth and development, as well as its extremes and ramifications from its inception to the present and can, therefore, speak authoritatively. (Ron Myers)

References available upon request.

Much of this paper was compiled from the writer's personal recollection of events, or as they were related to him.