

EXPLORING ASPECTS OF THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

ARE ITS BELIEFS, CLAIMS, AND PRACTICES COMPATIBLE WITH SCRIPTURE?

A Biblical Critique
Researched and Compiled
by
Ron Myers

*"For God so loved the
world that He gave His
only Son"*



Acts 2:1-12

OR

*"shalalama balalama
bubalama shalalama
bugalala shalalama"*



1 Corinthians 14:20-25

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INTRODUCTION:

FOREWORD: There are various contrasting views and opinions about the Charismatic movement, along with its beliefs, claims, and practices. These beg the question, are today's Charismatic exhibitions genuine? Are modern-day tongues manifested by the unction and power of the Holy Spirit? Are they good, right, and true, blessed by God? Or are they counterfeit, a manifestation of human emotions, or euphoric religious highs, all of which can induce ecstatic utterances? Some suggest these manifestations are induced by hypnotic suggestion, brought on by emptying one's mind and repeating a mantra of keywords or uttering meaningless sounds.

Modern-day tongues (*glossolalia*) are not a personal prayer language but are unintelligible sounds emitted either by forced personal unction or without the conscious volition of the speaker.¹ Then again, *tongues* may not be of human or divine origin at all. Other qualified sources suggest that the modern tongues phenomenon may be either a mental disorder or possibly even demonic. Paul warned the weak and immature but highly blessed Corinthian believers that Satan has the innate ability to camouflage himself as an *Angel of Light* (since he once was one), influencing both thoughts and actions (2 Corinthians 11:14).

A SHORT QUIZ: I'm wondering, what are your thoughts 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, the practice is *Authentic*, coequal to the Apostolic era miraculous sign gifts in every way.
- (b) No, it is *Not Authentic*: Despite what devotees claim, modern day *tongues* are meaningless sounds, induced by one's own flesh, ecstatic utterances, or even by other external sources.
- (c) I'm not sure one way or the other.

2) And, of equal importance, for what purpose do you believe God ordained the miraculous Apostolic sign gift of tongues and accompanying period gifts?

- (a) As a confirmation to skeptical Jews, verifying the Gospel (Acts 2:1–12; 1 Corinthians 1:22).
- (b) As a form of worship, to be propagated and practiced to edify believers (1 Corinthians 14:22–23).
- (c) I'm not sure one way or the other.

3) What about modern-day apostles? Are they chosen by Christ like His original twelve, or by men?

CAUTION: Whatever your views, be advised that God will *never* act, promote, condone, or bless anything contrary to His inspired written Word. You might fall for anything if you are not grounded in the truth of God's Word.² Bible scholar Dr. Allen Parr warns, "*False doctrine leads to false teaching and practice.*" Can these two opposing views on tongues (defined in the above quiz) be true simultaneously? Are today's tongues and staged healings authentic? Miraculous? Biblically sound? Or does their validity depend on one's preferences, experiences, or inclinations? Does God indeed bless them?

These are reasonable questions that need definitive answers. How can we know for sure? Fortunately, we have been blessed with an accurate, indisputable point of reference: a supreme authority where we can find definitive answers: God's inspired written Word (2 Timothy 3:16). The Apostle Paul implores us to be diligent to: "*Hold fast the sound words which you have heard from me. That good thing which was committed to you.*" "*Present yourselves approved by God, workmen, who don't need to be ashamed, rightly dividing (parsing and interpreting) the Word of Truth*" (2 Timothy 1:13–14, 2:15).

¹ Repetitive meaningless babbling—typically associated with being in a trance or ecstatic religious fervor.

² Adapted from the well-known adage: "*If You Don't Stand for Something, You'll Fall for Anything.*"

The Apostle Peter warns us not to follow after or seek personal experiences. He recounts that, although he, James, and John were eyewitnesses of Christ's glorious transfiguration up on *a high mountain*,³ joined by Moses and Elijah, he implores us to follow God's prophetic Word instead (Matthew 17:1–8; 2 Peter 1:16–21). Meaning not to follow personal impressions, experiences, hearsay, allegorized interpretations, or *grandiose* reports of the miraculous—of which this writer is aware and compares these reports to "lying wonders" (2 Thessalonians 2:9).

Concerning references to tongues or any other subject matter in Scripture, like any other subject, their original meaning can only be determined using mutually recognized principles of interpretation. These principles are called *exegesis*, based on *dispensational hermeneutics*. To exegete a passage means to determine the author's intended meaning. In contrast, hermeneutics means to ascertain the correct interpretation of the exegeted passage to present it properly in light of a dispensational view of scripture, as follows:

- (a) Determine the speaker and his intended meaning, the audience, and the topic in focus.
- (b) Determine the literary style: narrative, authoritative, instructive, prophetic, allegory, prose, or poetic.
- (c) Determine the passage's historical period, cultural implications, surrounding context, and literal meaning of the text, including the Greek verbs' grammatical tense, voice, and mood structure (TVM).
- (d) Determine the relevance of any similar or parallel passages, preferably the same theme as the text in focus.

That procedure is called Exegesis, meaning to *draw out* or *extract* the literal meaning of a Scripture passage. Suppose one relies on personal preferences, impressions, emotional experiences, or assumptions to determine the meaning of a Scripture passage (called Eisegesis). In that case, the original intended meaning will be convoluted and misconstrued to suit one's liking, ignoring the principles of sound biblical interpretation, i.e., Exegesis.

BEWARE: Remember, God will *never* act, promote, condone, or bless anything contrary to His written inspired Word. Faulty interpretation leads to incorrect understanding, which causes erroneous beliefs, resulting in wrong practice and teaching. St. Augustine wrote: "*When the regard for truth has been broken down or even slightly weakened, all things will remain questionable.*" **Note:** See Exegesis and Eisegesis listed on page 55 in the GLOSSARY OF TERMS, which starts on page 53.

Dr. Francis Shaeffer said:

If there is no absolute moral standard, then one cannot say in a final sense that anything is right or wrong. By absolute, we mean that which always applies to all people, that which provides a final or ultimate standard. There must be an absolute if there are to be morals, and there must be an absolute if there are to be real values. If there are no absolutes beyond man's ideas, then there is no final appeal to judge between individuals and groups whose moral judgments conflict. We are merely left with conflicting opinions.

Some think that experiences are coequal with God's written Word and, therefore, valid for establishing one's convictions. Can personal experiences, inclinations, or gut feelings be coequal indicators of truth when placed alongside God's inspired written Word? No, never! It's our supreme authority and final arbiter of truth! Scripture *always* reigns supreme! God declared it; that settles it! Who's in charge, God or man? Granted, as we walk by faith, we experience life lessons whereby we grow and mature (Philippians 3:10). Let's be clear: things that waver and vacillate can never be equal with God's unwavering truths, as recorded in Scripture. So, are our

³ The location where Christ ascended is debated by scholars. Some believe it's Mount Hermon while others say Mount Tabor. <https://www.gotquestions.org/Mount-of-Transfiguration.html>.

Charismatic friend's beliefs, claims, and practices indeed supported by God's Word? Scripture reminds us: "*Forever, O LORD, Thy Word is settled (established) in Heaven*" (Psalms 119:89). "*Every Word of God is pure* (without error)... Add not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Proverbs 30:5-6).

FINDINGS AND DEDUCTIONS: The Berean believers searched the Scriptures "*to see whether these things be true*" (Acts 17:10–11). They compared spiritual thought with spiritual words, measuring what they heard Paul and Silas teach against the Word of God—likely the Old Testament Greek Septuagint—to discern whether it was from God or man (1 Corinthians 2:13). On that basis, the present-day tongues movement either stands or falls, including its beliefs, claims, and practices. Pondering these contrasting views and opinions piqued this author's curiosity to explore it more thoroughly to determine where the truth lies.

After careful research, exegesis of Scripture, and prayerful reflection, the following pages formulate my five decades of observations, questions, and conclusions. My objective is that my assessments be factually honest yet kind, fair-minded yet true, unbiased yet candid, and respectful yet uncompromising. My desire in writing this is to provide definitive answers while speaking the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15; Colossians 4:6).

AGREE OR DISAGREE: Upon reading this paper (which I encourage you to do), you may or may not agree with my evaluation of this watershed issue. Either way, please hear me out. You'll likely gain new information you may not have previously known, some of which I believe you'll find sobering, even alarming. I fully understand that multitudes of honest, good-hearted, God-fearing people are involved in the various Charismatic and Pentecostal movements—sincere, dedicated Christians who love God and desire to live for Him the best they know how. Many of these dear folks are involved because that's all they know. I'm speaking here of what they've been led to believe about the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers. Others were drawn into the movement by friends or acquaintances. It is these whom I am addressing, hoping it will help sharpen their spiritual discernment and heighten their scope of understanding concerning this confusing and divisive issue.

ABREEDING GROUND FOR FAKERY: Due to a generally weak view of scriptural authority, the Charismatic movement provides a breeding ground for an array of fakery. It engenders false teachers, apostles, and prophets, faith healers, flamboyant televangelists, unsubstantiated reports of strange manifestations, and prosperity gospel showmen. Unfortunately, most of these self-serving charlatans are very personable and convincing. Charismatics with little discernment tend to applaud every weird manifestation as a new revelation or avenue of expression from the Lord.

Even now there's a Buddhist faith healer and an Islamic Mulla *faith healer*, who emulates Christ by rubbing his saliva on blind eyes, then prays in *Allah's* name, claiming to heal blindness and other incurable diseases. Be advised that Allah is *not* an alternative name for Jehovah God but likely the name of their *moon god* whom they worshiped before Islam. Note the crescent moon on their flags—pure syncretism. So, beware! Whenever truth is mixed with error, it can be hard to discern between them because the demarcation lines become blurred or missing. Concerning these viperous false teachers (cf. Matthew 7:15), if you were thirsty and were offered a cup of cool water yet suspected it might be tainted with a drop of poison, would you still be inclined to drink it?

Are these self-proclaimed messengers equal to Christ's twelve Apostles? Or are they false prophets and apostles—corrupt imposters who deceive and feed off naïve seekers? They communicate corrupt messages while amassing personal fortunes, mansions, lands, and private jets for themselves (2 Corinthians 11:13; 2 Peter 2:1–19; Jude 1:1). This, along with promoting false teachings, replete with allegorized meanings. They cite so called *proof texts* taken out of context, along with private interpretations based on personal notions instead of Scripture, all done to persuade the naïve and uninformed. 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). Even so, the burgeoning number of devotees are convinced these reprobates manifest genuine biblical signs and wonders, just like the divine manifestations exhibited by Christ's Apostles. Are these indeed God's messengers? ...or are they false teachers, deceiving and leading their devotees astray?

WHAT IS AN APOSTLE?

The Greek word *apostolos* refers to an *Officially Commissioned Emissary, Messenger, or Ambassador* sent as an authorized representative of a kingdom or nation. Scripturally, the term refers to the *Twelve Apostles* whom Christ handpicked from among His disciples, appointed and commissioned as His *Special Envoys* to initiate the proclamation of the Gospel message to Jews and Gentiles throughout the known world. These men 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). Some people today are seeking to restore the position of apostle. This is a dangerous movement since it's based on false presumptions.

NUMBER OF APOSTLES? Revelation 21:14 gives the number of Apostles that Christ chose: *Twelve*. These twelve were His official Ambassadors, whom He empowered with unique spiritual gifts, including the ability to perform miraculous signs and wonders, done to validate the Gospel to unbelieving Jews who seek miraculous signs to affirm the thing being done is of God (1 Corinthians 1:21–23). This was during the establishment of Christ's Church (The Age of Grace), before the New Testament canon was complete (1 Corinthians 13:8–10). The Holy Spirit performed these signs and wonders through Christ's *twelve* chosen Apostles. This was before the completion of the New Testament canon. Today, some believe in a theory called "Apostolic Succession," meaning the continuation of the miraculous Apostolic sign gifts in this present age. This theory is part of Pentecostal and Charismatic beliefs and practices. Yet, most sound Bible scholars agree that scripture does not support this.

Christian blogger Jim Allen wrote an article about modern-day false apostles in his Blog *Keep Watch*, saying:

Frequently, those claiming the office of an apostle seek authority equal to, or at least rivaling, the authority of the original twelve apostles. There is no biblical evidence to support such an understanding of the role of an apostle today. This would fit the New Testament's warning against false apostles (2 Corinthians 11:13). <blogs.org/keepwatch/spiritual-abuse-pf.php>

CAUTION: There's No Such Thing as an authentic, Modern-Day Apostle—Only Modern-Day Imposters!

WHAT IS A DEACON? A deacon (*diakoneō*) is a disciple or follower of Christ and His teachings. (A follower may be an admirer, but not necessarily a believer.) Christ chose some of His disciples included in His Twelve Apostles. The Apostles were weighed down with more important spiritual

duties, so appointed godly men called Deacons to do the lesser tasks. Stephen the Martyr was one of the first Deacons or servants. He was stoned to death by self-righteous Pharisees, enemies of *The Way* whom he had called out for murdering the prophets of old and for arranging the crucifixion of Jesus, the Messiah (Acts 6:5–7: 60).

EXAMPLES OF GOD ORDAINED SIGNS AND MIRACLES: During Old Testament times, when God was about to do something significant among His Chosen People, Israel, 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 of 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 was the death of every firstborn Egyptian son. As they departed, 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 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).

Red Sea Crossing Proof: 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 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 viper bite—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* (*The Eternal One, hâyâh hâyâh*), chose him at the *burning bush* to return to Egypt and 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, calling out all day long to their non-existent god, Baal, to come down to consume the offering. When they were completely exhausted and finally gave 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, the altar, and the surrounding trench, proving that Jehovah was truly God and that He hated 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, God 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:

At the onset of the Church Age, recorded by Dr. Luke in the Book of Acts, Christ handpicked twelve Apostles and gave them the power to perform various miraculous signs and wonders. Paul was the last Apostle Christ chose (Acts 9:3–6; 1 Corinthians 5:8–10). These Apostolic sign gifts were done to validate the Gospel of the resurrected Messiah to the hard-to-persuade Jews, who consider signs and wonders as divine confirmation of God doing something new, as he did in the Old Testament through Moses and Elijah (1 Corinthians 1:22).

The Church Age or Age of Grace began at Pentecost with the coming of the promised indwelling Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28–32; John 14:17, 16:13–15). This was accompanied by the proclamation of the Gospel by the Apostles to devout Jews from every nation in their heart languages and dialects. They, being astounded, reacted with, "How is it that we hear, each in our native-born dialects, the Wonderful Works of God?" (Isaiah 28:11; Acts 2:4–12; I Cor 14:21). God performed many miraculous signs and wonders through these men to validate the Gospel. Most sound Bible Scholars agree that these Apostolic 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 Paul not have miraculously healed his friend if he still could (Acts 19:11–12)?

PRESENT-DAY PHENOMENON: There is now a phenomenon increasing in popularity called the Charismatic movement. The followers of this movement aim to replicate or restore the actions of God's Chosen Apostles, as documented by Dr. Luke in the Book of Acts. This modern-day movement was initiated in the 1960s by Reverend Dennis Bennett at St. Mark's Episcopal Parish in Van Nuys, California. One day, after much seeking, Bennett informed his congregation that he had received the Holy Spirit, confirmed by speaking in tongues. Upon hearing this, they requested he resign, to which he complied.

The Euphoria Effect: This writer, having studied the coming of the indwelling Holy Spirit at the advent of the Church Age as recorded in the Book of Acts, prefaced by the Apostolic sign gift period before the New Testament's completion, Bennett's claim piqued his interest. The question is, did Bennett really 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 euphoric, fleshly origin, a subconscious result of seeking and striving to gain a higher plane of spirituality?

Bennett's Striving or Holy Spirit Unction? Was what Bennett encountered truly of the Holy Spirit? Or, was it an emotionally charged ecstatic utterance—mouthed euphoric sensations brought on by deep striving? Psychologists suggest this is entirely possible as an involuntary psychological manifestation.

This recently-birtherd term, *Charismatic*, as in the *Charismatic Movement* (a misnomer⁺), 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. It is a very dubious claim at best, but entirely possible through other spiritual forces, i.e., powerful demonic entities. 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 birthed out of the Wesleyan Holiness tradition.

The Greek Term for Grace: [†]Strong's etymology of the Greek word *charis* is associated with *Grace, Beauty, Benevolence, and Kindness*—God's gifts by His unmerited favor. He revealed His grace (*charis*) towards us, the helplessly, hopelessly, utterly lost human race, with the incomparable gift of Salvation. Furthermore, *charis* should *not* be associated with emotionally charged elation, strivings, swooning, or other carryings-on associated with the meaningless babble of the tongues movement. Salvation or deliverance from sin by grace (*charis*) through faith, apart from works, is given by God immediately upon one's repentance and belief. Repentance means *changing one's mind about one's sin, God's righteousness, and the coming judgment* (John 16:8–11; Revelation 20:11–12). God endows us with the following gifts (*charis*) by His grace (*charis*) and loving-kindness upon our receiving Christ, in alphabetical order:

- Adoption – *accepted into God's family of Saints as an adult member and joint heir* (Romans 8:17).
- Salvation – *delivered from the penalty, power and presence of sin* (John 3:15-16, 36; Rom 10:9; Titus 3:4-7).
- Forgiveness – *pardoned fully of all sin, past, present, and future* (Psalms 103:12; Micah 7:19).
- Justification – *declared righteous by God in His sight* (Romans 3:24, 4:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
- Reconciliation – *reestablished broken relationship* (Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18; Colossians 1:20-21).
- Redemption – *purchased back from the market place of sin* (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14).
- Regeneration – *born anew spiritually into God's family* (2 Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23).
- Restoration – *restored to a formerly good relationship before the fall* (Mark 3:5, 8:25).

These graces are given freely to *all* believers by the indwelling Holy Spirit at the moment of their repentance and receiving Christ (Acts 2:38, 20:21; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8), never to be withdrawn (John 10:27-30; Hebrews 13:5;).

Grace versus Mercy—What's the Difference? Grace and mercy can be illustrated as a coin.

- On the one side is *Grace*, God's freely giving us what we do not deserve: the gift of *Eternal Salvation*.
- The flip side is *Mercy*, God's withholding from us what we do deserve: judgment and *Eternal Damnation*.

HIGHER-PLANE SEEKER MOVEMENTS: Higher-plane seeker movements—impetus for the tongues movement—somehow seemed more attractive and fulfilling than to simply obey 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 "*Blessed with Every Spiritual Blessing in Christ*" (Ephesians 1:3, Aorist Tense, Active Voice); ^{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 a higher plane of spirituality or second-blessing experience?

The point is, 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 to have: *"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 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 origin of today's *Tongues Movements*, this writer knows of three waves of higher-plane seeker movements: Nazarene, Pentecostal, and Charismatic, including 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 these movements attained a higher level of spirituality. Nor was there any evidence that these movements were divine confirmation of any new biblical transition 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).

TWO SEQUENTIAL TONGUES 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 pandemic virus across denominational and theological demarcation lines in epidemic proportions from Evangelical to Ecumenical (see John MacArthur's article on page 56). Even a few Baptists fell prey. This "new enlightenment" also entered 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 it made their worship of Mary more fulfilling.

The focus evolved as the Charismatic movement grew 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 omissions 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, and eternity in Heaven. These glaring omissions ought to have raised red warning flags to its more conservative adherents, which they probably did but were ignored (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 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). Following is an example of an ecstatic tongues utterance, recorded during a Charismatic meeting: “*shalalama, balalama, bubalama, shalalama, bugalala, shalalama.*”[#] Professional linguists have analyzed modern tongues' 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). [#]*See 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 humankind, 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 delivered the message 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 told onlookers to stop staring into the open 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.

If that's the case, why the claims of needing a Heavenly prayer language? Both God and His Angels have always communicated with people using human languages. Therefore, why do modern tongues speakers think 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.*” The word “groanings” here means “not expressible with words” (Greek: *alaletos*). It does *not* mean speaking in tongues!

SIMILAR BOGUS TONGUES MANIFESTATIONS:

BRAHMAN AND BUDDHIST: Now the more sobering manifestations. Most Christians do not realize that heathen Brahman and Buddhist 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 in 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 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? Could it be fleshly ecstatic emotionalism or, perchance, even demonic? Is the Spirit of God all this? One thing is certain, the Spirit of God is not empowering them!

BUDDHIST PRIEST CAJOLES FOLLOWERS: I recently viewed another video of a Thai Buddhist priest cajoling some followers to clear their minds and repeat a jumble 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 empowers them to do? This is similar to Charismatic zealots who coax non-speakers to open their mouths and repeat meaningless noises until the “gift” (so-called) is manifested. This practice can induce a hypnotic state, resulting in ecstatic babbling. However, during one tongues-speaking meeting, a visitor in the group 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?

SATAN WORSHIPPER USES TONGUES: On an equally chilling note, ex-Satan worshipper John Ramirez—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 Satan-worshipping father spoke in mystical or occultic chants (calling them *demonic languages*), which corresponded in sound and cadence 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 eternally in unapproachable light—in collusion with the realms of heathen darkness (1 Timothy 6:16)? The obvious answer is a resounding, *Never!* Who 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 of reasoning Charismatics and their fellow travelers,

giving them goosebumps and serious pause. We must always base our beliefs and actions on the *rightly divided Word of Truth* (2 Timothy 2:15), not personal impressions, experiences, hearsay, or great-sounding reports.

PHARAOH’S SORCERERS: Consider how Pharaoh’s sorcerers produced 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, being turned into a 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” (since he once was one), causing things ingenuine to appear amazingly genuine until they are unmasked by the Word of Truth (2 Corinthians 11:14, 2 Timothy 2:15, 3:16–17).

Dr. Anthony George, Senior Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Atlanta, Georgia, succeeding Dr. Charles Stanley, said when speaking about the Satanic Anti-Christ in Revelation 13, *The Devil has a counterfeit version for everything God says and does*. This applies to today’s false prophets and apostles as well, who claim their beliefs and practices are as genuine as the Apostolic era miraculous signs and wonders.

CONTINUIST vs. CESSATIONIST – To What Do They Refer?

CONTINUIST: Continuists believe in what is called *Apostolic Succession* or *Continuationism*. These are Christians who practice modern-day tongues. They believe they are endowed by the Holy Spirit just like Christ had ordained and empowered His twelve selected New Testament Apostles at the onset of the Church age. However, the purpose for which the Apostles were given the miraculous sign gifts in question was to validate the Gospel message to the unbelieving Jews, confirming that the occurrences they witnessed were from God (cf. Acts 2:4–12; 1 Corinthians 1:22).

CESSATIONIST: Cessationists reject the Continuitist’s position. They point out Scripture passages contradicting the Continuitist’s belief (1 Corinthians 13:8–10, 14:22). These show that the three miraculous sign gifts will *cease*: New Testament Prophecy, Speaking in Unlearned Tongues, and Special Knowledge or Revelation. For a further explanation, see ^{††}Cessationism vs. Continuationism under ADDENDUM on page 50.

The Charismatic movement continues to splinter off into various subgroups as new, even more bizarre, manifestations occur—with no end in sight—called the *Neo-Charismatic* wave. The *New Apostolic Reformation* is a phrase coined by C. Peter Wagner of the *Vineyard* movement to describe a development within the Pentecostal and Charismatic community—presumably reclaiming the original apostolic and prophetic offices.

This Neo-Charismatic wave includes uncontrolled *holy* laughter (so-called); twitching and jerking with eyes rolled back, contorting into a semiconscious fetal position; barking and howling; leaping, running, and crawling around—all supposedly done under the anointing power of God’s Holy Spirit. These strange and *unholy* phenomena are often called the *Toronto Blessing*, where it was first manifested. There are even more grotesque manifestations in the Bethel Church in Redding CA. Although they produce great worship music, they teach that all miracles in the Bible can be performed by believers today. Who doesn’t see a serious problem here? Charismatic claims and practices have caused no end of confusion among the naive 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)?

Do these grotesque displays remind you of the fruit of the Spirit? ...displayed in believers walking in truth spoken of in Galatians 5:22 and Ephesians 5:9? To which Paul states, “*For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.*” No! They resemble demon possession (things this author has witnessed). This makes it increasingly evident why the *Continuation* or *Apostolic Succession* position is inconceivable and is *not* blessed by God, as assumed by resent-day Christians. These phenomena are products of the higher-plane seeker movements, which began in the early 1900s among Armenian-leaning Wesleyan groups.

Again, regarding the Book of Acts, one *must* bear in mind that it was Dr. Luke’s historical account of events during the early church period after Christ’s resurrection, *circa* AD 63 or later. Like a journalist, Luke recorded actual events as the Apostles spread the Gospel under the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Unlike the Epistles written to the churches, Acts should *not* be considered a teaching manual (2 Timothy 3:16). Charismatic devotees are still doggedly determined to emulate the supernatural events recorded in the Book of Acts in the power of the flesh. Or, worse yet, like the strange howling and crawling around at *Bethel Church* and *Toronto Blessing* events, obviously demonically influenced like Satan worshipers do in the Occult!

To accurately determine the origin of these watershed issues, conclusions *must* be based on God’s Word, properly studied, rightly divided, and correctly interpreted (2 Timothy 2:15). Consider the noble Bereans of Macedonia. They searched the scriptures daily, as Paul and Silas taught, to see whether the things they spoke were indeed true (Acts 17:11). Furthermore, never let yourself be influenced or persuaded by peer pressure, personalities, impressions, emotional experiences, or giving heed to hearsay (1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Timothy 4:1–2; 2 Timothy 2:15–16). Also, do not be persuaded by so-called proof texts taken out of context, quoted only in part, or misapplied, all of which fosters more confusion. Prayerful discernment is of prime importance when dealing with people or groups since *ye shall know them by their fruits* (Matthew 7:15–20). Actions, not words, reveal the character and motives of leaders and teachers. Their actions will prove they are either genuine or expose them as false prophets: *wolves in sheep’s clothing* (Acts 20:29; 2 Peter 2:1–3).

THE MINISTRIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Holy Spirit is *not* an *it*, a *concept*, or a *force*. He is a divine person and *fully God*—the third Person of the Triune Godhead, equal in power and authority to the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit dwells in every born-again believer. He 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. Following is a further look at the Person and Work of God the Holy Spirit.

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S MINISTRIES AMONG BELIEVERS – WHAT ARE THEY?

“The Holy Spirit works in and through the believer who submits to His leadership. This work is making you perfect and complete, and the Lord will not stop until He has finished making you into the image of His Son Jesus.” Pastor Jack Hibbs, Calvary Chapel, Chino Hills CA

Jesus promised that, upon returning to Glory, He would ask The Father to send the Holy Spirit to draw alongside (*parakletos*) all born-again believers as Comforter, Helper, and Guide (John 14:16, 16:7). He is also our life-giver. The moment a person receives Christ, the Holy Spirit indwells that person, regenerating and giving Eternal Life. He also places us into God's family of Saints—the Body of Christ. Also, according to Romans 8:9, one *cannot* be a Christian, “*is none of His*,” without the indwelling Holy Spirit, who infuses us with new life. 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, 1 Peter 1:3–5).

The Holy Spirit is also our Teacher, Counselor, and Intercessor. He brings Christ's Words to remembrance the moment we need them (John 14:26; 16:4). He intercedes for us in times of weakness and despondency to the point where we are unable to pray (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. He never exalts Himself (John 15:26, 16:14). This contradicts the beliefs, claims, and practices of the Charismatics and Pentecostals, who wrongly emphasize and glorify the Holy Spirit in their modern-day version of tongues, healings, and miracles. Questionable because at the onset of the Church age, Christ appointed a special Apostolic office of 12 men upon whose ministries His Church was planted and grew—Christ being the foundational bedrock (Matthew 16:18; Acts 4:11–12; Ephesians 2:20). Christ gave His 12 Apostles miraculous sign gifts (tongues, healing, and working of miracles) which accompanied their office. These were authenticating proofs of the Gospel message—that God was now working through His Son, Jesus Christ, and His Church (Acts 2:1–16, 4:1–16, 5:12–39; 1 Corinthians 14:20–22; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 1:1–3). The Apostolic office and its miraculous signs receded as the New Testament canon was completed, written under the inspiration of Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 13:8–9; 2 Timothy 3:16).

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S MINISTRIES AMONG UNBELIEVERS – WHAT ARE THEY?

- 1) The Holy Spirit draws the unredeemed to repentance and faith. 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) God not being willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9), the Holy Spirit seeks to draw all unsaved persons to Salvation through faith in Christ by convincing them ^(a) of their sin (Romans 3:23), ^(b) of God's righteousness, and ^(c) of the coming Judgement (Psalms 50:6; John 16:7–11). He draws people by convicting their consciences (Romans 2:14–15) and through the convicting power of the living Word of God (Romans 10:17, Hebrews 4:12).
- 3) The Holy Spirit restrains unrighteousness, lawlessness, and anarchy until Christ *Raptures* His Church up from the earth. Since the Holy Spirit indwells every believer, His convicting power will also be removed at the time of the Rapture (2 Thessalonians 2:7). This signifies the onset of The Great Tribulation period where unrighteousness, lawlessness, and anarchy will be unrestrained, yet He will remain, being the omnipresent Third Person of the Divine Godhead (Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9).

THE ANOINTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT – WHAT IS IT?

The Holy Spirit, in His relationship with believers, is used three times as *The Anointing* (*aleiphō*), seen in 2 Corinthians 1:21; 1 John 2:20, and 2:27. The term is synonymous with the Holy Spirit's indwelling since all Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit immediately upon receiving Christ (Ephesians 1:13–14; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19). Therefore, every Christian has received the *anointing*, indicated in the above passages. (See *Major Bible Themes* by Lewis Sperry Chafer.) Second, the term can signify being chosen through *anointing* with oil: Jesus was God's anointed One: Christ (NT) or Messiah (OT). Third, James 5:14 uses the same term: praying while anointing the sick with oil for healing in the Name of the Lord. Lastly, this term is used dubiously by those of Charismatic and Pentecostal persuasions, referring to being blessed or empowered by God.

BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT – WHAT IS IT?

(Jesus Christ does the Baptizing.) The Lord Jesus Christ *baptizes* each believer with the indwelling Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation (cf. Mark 1:7–8; 1 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). Like Dr. David Jeremiah (Sr. Pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church, esteemed Bible scholar, and founding director of Turning Point Ministries) wrote in his book on the subject, “*The Holy Spirit is standard equipment at the time of Salvation, not an optional accessory to be added later.*” (See BAPTIZED WITH FIRE on page 16.)

BAPTISM BY THE HOLY SPIRIT – WHAT IS IT?

(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. This act of the Holy Spirit is done once, permanently, for all time! These are also in passive voice, meaning having been done by God for the recipient. (**Note:** *By* and *with* are often used interchangeably.)

BAPTISM OF OR IN THE HOLY SPIRIT—WHAT IS IT?

Charismatics and Pentecostals believe in a concept they call the "Baptism of (or in) the Holy Spirit." Meaning they believe that the *Baptism of (or in) the Spirit* is a separate event—occurring after salvation—and that speaking in tongues is evidence of having received the Holy Spirit (proof of having full Salvation). This suggests two categories of believers. One group of believers has the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the other doesn't. No scripture exists that supports this *bizarre* view. It is a "private interpretation" interjected to bolster their tongues practice (cf. 2 Peter 1:20). Scripture teaches that all believers receive the indwelling Holy Spirit (Spirit of Christ:) *at the moment of salvation* (John 14:19–20; Romans 8:9–11; 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. That is why Charismatics and Pentecostals attempt to spread their tongues doctrine with evangelistic fervor. They justify seeking out non-tongues-speaking individuals and churches to convert them through subversive, fifth-column tactics—doing so without remorse for causing confusion, splits, and divisions. God's Word says that He hates these things (Proverbs 6:16–19), yet this writer has seen it done repeatedly on the mission field—high-jacking churches.

One Charismatic leader referred to the modern-day tongues movement as an *overflowing and overwhelming of the Holy Spirit, releasing all holy emotion in us, and 'we all speak in tongues.'* The key phrase here is "releasing all holy emotion," resulting in the so-called speaking in tongues as a group experience. *Speaking in tongues* as a form of worship is *not* sanctioned by the Apostle Paul, individually or corporately (1 Corinthians 14:23). A search of the New Testament shows 30 matches for the phrase "of the Spirit." None of them are in the context of *overflowing* or being *overwhelmed*. Consequently, the claims of a second or higher spiritual experience, or being "overwhelmed" by the Spirit" as the gateway to speaking in modern-day tongues (*glossolalia*), fail due to a lack of scriptural evidence. No, the proof of the Spirit's control of one's life is *not* manifested by being *overwhelmed* but transformed by the Spirit—a Holy Spirit-empowered and Holy Spirit-led, God-honoring lifestyle (Galatians 5:16–25).

"BAPTIZED WITH FIRE"—WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

What did John the Baptist mean when he said of Jesus: "*He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire*" (Matthew 3:11 and Luke 3:16)? Many believers misunderstand these passages, thinking that the term "fire" here means to be "on fire for the Lord and His Word." This interpretation might sound correct according to modern Christian culture, but it's not. The correct meaning of this passage is not difficult if one reads it within its given context, meaning to read the next verse. (All translations say the same thing.)

When read within its context, John the Baptist explains clearly what he means by "fire" in the very next verse of both passages: "*Whose winnowing fan is in His (Christ's) 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.*" By fire, he referred to being baptized with (immersed into – *baptizo*) the everlasting 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 be *baptized with the Fire* of Judgement unto eternal damnation with flames that cannot be quenched. These two passages (Matthew 3:10–12 and Luke 3:16–17) speak of both baptisms—with the *Holy Spirit* or with Judgement.

Suggestions for Doubters: If these things seem doubtful to you, this writer respectfully suggests that you, the reader, honestly consider these passages at face value and within their surrounding context in whichever translation you wish. Also, compare the passages about the *unquenchable* fires of God's judgment in Revelation 20:10–15.

THE FIRE THAT CANNOT BE QUENCHED—WHAT IS IT?

The fire that cannot be quenched is God's fire of Judgement—not "zeal in the Holy Spirit." It's found in eleven places in the Old Testament, as well as in Matt 3:12, Mark 9:43–48, and Revelation 20:8–10, where "*the devil that deceived the nations was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone ...tormented day and night forever and ever.*" Also, Revelation 20:14–15 states, "*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.*"

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN—WHAT IS IT?

Bible scholars believe that the unforgivable sin—blaspheming or profaning the Holy Spirit—is not only the Pharisees attributing Christ's miracles to Satan's power but also reveals one's *blatant, willful unbelief*. That is, rejecting the deity of Christ and the Holy Spirit's appeal to receive Him as one's personal Savior. Can a person's sins be forgiven if one rejects Christ's Deity and Messiahship? No (Matthew 12:31–32)! Therefore, the unforgivable sin directly relates 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 way to be saved 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, why would Christ offer God's Kingdom by the power of His enemy, Satan—as His 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. One day, Christ will cast Satan forever into the *Lake of Unquenchable Fire*.

Determining Factors: An exegetical study of this passage contradicts the idea that these verses refer to the tongues' movement in any way. The claim is contextually inviable and, therefore, untrue. In all probability, the Charismatic and Pentecostal claim that their *tongues speaking* is ordained and empowered of God may be an offense against the Holy Spirit!

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT—WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Scripture equates being filled with the Spirit to being drunk with wine (Ephesians 5:18). The analogy means if one is filled with wine, their words and actions show that they are under the control or influence of wine—which leads to an *ungodly lifestyle*. Compare that to driving *Under the Influence* of alcohol or drugs (D.U.I.), which may result in a serious accident. When a believer is filled with the Holy Spirit, their words and actions are controlled and influenced by the Spirit, exhibited in a *godly lifestyle*. This could be called *Walking Under the Influence* of the Holy Spirit (W.U.I.). Also, "be filled" (Gr. *plero'o*) is in the *imperative* mood (essential or urgent). It refers to the believer's turning their life over to God's authority, thereby giving the Holy Spirit full influence and control of their thoughts, words, and actions.

When the Tabernacle was about to be built, the Lord filled Bezalel with His Spirit, with wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and workmanship to design artistic works of gold, silver, and bronze to adorn the Tabernacle (Exodus 35:30-32). John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15); also, being filled with the Holy Spirit: Zacharias prophesied of the soon-coming Messiah (Luke 1:67); the Apostles preached the Gospel to visiting Jews in their various foreign languages (Acts 2:4); Peter defended healing a man on the Sabbath before angry Jewish rulers (Acts 4:8); Stephen did many signs and wonders, spoke great wisdom, recounted Messianic prophecy—befuddling his enraged detractors before his Martyrdom (Acts 6:5–7:59); Paul chastised Elymas the sorcerer for his intentions and evil actions (Acts 13:9).

Same Principle – Different Terminology: The same principle of “*be filled with the Spirit*” (meaning to be led, controlled, influenced, live by, or walk in the Spirit) is found in other 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). This denotes a moment-by-moment walk in the Spirit—keeping short accounts with God.

This 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 control*). Compare this to Paul's testimony in Galatians 2:20: “*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ lives 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.*”

THE AUTHENTIC GIFT OF TONGUES – WHAT IS IT?

The authentic spiritual gift of tongues, healings, and miracles—including their manifestations—was the God-given Apostolic gifts to assist the Apostles in supernaturally proclaiming the Gospel message to the Jews in each of their heart languages and dialects (in which they were born), 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—*demonic heathen babbling prevalent throughout the area* (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:1–3).

Whereas the authentic gift of tongues—including the other supernatural sign gifts of healing 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 the New Testament Canon neared completion, the Apostolic Sign Gifts waned and ceased 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? Would mindless babbling be authentic tongues? No. The biblical gift of tongues was always *a legitimate language of some unreached people group*.

CONCERNING PRESENT-DAY SPIRITUAL GIFTS – WHAT ARE THEY?

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 in some spiritual capacity. Spiritual gifts cannot be prayed for or strived after because they are given according to God's Sovereign choice, “*distributing to each believer (severally) as He wills.*” (1 Corinthians

12:11). Dr. Wilbur Pickering, retired Bible translator in Brazil formerly with Wycliffe Bible Translators puts it this way: "No one gets a spiritual gift just because he wants it; the Holy Spirit has His criteria for distributing them."

Natural Skills versus Spiritual Gifts: There are innate natural abilities that everyone has in varying degrees. And there are spiritual gifts, but the two should not be confused. Both Christians and unbelievers have natural skills and abilities which can be used to accomplish great things. We often call someone who has a unique, recognizable skill or learned talent as *gifted*. There are musicians, painters, singers, songwriters, authors, carpenters, teachers, cooks, administrators, organizers, farmers, janitors, inventors, truck drivers, pilots, astronauts, *ad infinitum*. God can and does use all these skills to serve the Body of Christ. However, only believers can have genuine spiritual gifts, which are operable when the one possessing that gift is walking in fellowship with God.

We can easily recognize the visible gifts, like teaching. Yet, other less visible gifts are just as important and functional. Anyone having any of these gifts may not sense anything while it is functioning. For example, the speaker may think he's failed in delivering his message to his liking. Yet, listeners may come to him afterward exclaiming how his message was very clear and compelling—something they'd never really understood before. That is proof that the gift's possessor was being used by God, yet without sensing anything special—a gift with which this writer identifies. Also, a gifted teacher will likely enjoy teaching.

As a foreign missionary ministering among unreached people groups in remote, faraway places, this writer has seen missionaries who are very adept and can easily adapt to whatever circumstance presents itself. Some missionaries are the opposite. One may lack natural abilities and need help building a house, contacting government officials, or learning a foreign language. Yet, that same one may be spiritually gifted as a Bible teacher, administrator, pastor, evangelist, or in having discernment. Natural abilities differ from spiritual gifts, which every believer has been given *as God wills* for the Body's function (1 Corinthians 12:11).

Operative Spiritual Gifts versus Inoperative Sign Gifts: Biblically speaking, New Testament spiritual gifts are for the operation of the local Church or Body of Christ—all of which are *operative* today. However, these are separate from the presently *inoperative* Apostolic sign gifts (miraculous signs and wonders, tongues, and miraculous healings), explicitly given by Christ to His chosen Apostles at the onset of the Church Age—until the New Testament manuscripts were complete (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:8–12). Furthermore, *no* amount of striving, carrying-on, or erroneous Bible interpretation or application can ever reproduce the authentic Apostolic gifts in this present age. No, they can only produce deceptive artificial clones performed by the flesh.

SPIRITUAL POWER AND AUTHORITY—WHAT IS IT?

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

Spiritual Boldness: We see the boldness of the Apostles 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, at which point many were saved and praised God due to their boldness (Acts 3:1, 4:33). We also see the boldness and wisdom of Stephen, the first Deacon. He exuded great faith,

power, and authority, confounding his detractors—enemies of the Gospel—by which they were cut to the core. As they seized Stephen and stoned him to death for his courageous testimony, he looked heavenward and saw Jesus standing to welcome his arrival as he succumbed (Acts 6:5, 7:60).

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

SPIRITUALITY OR BEING SPIRITUAL – WHAT IS IT?

According to Charles Ryrie, professor emeritus at Dallas Theological Seminary: “*Spirituality is Christlikeness, or the fruit of the Spirit in and through the life of the believer.*” What better portrait of Jesus is there than love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23)? These characteristics, called the fruit of the Spirit, are our Lord’s divine attributes. *Therefore*, Spirituality, as evidenced in the believer’s life, is not in dubious signs and wonders but through a consistent godly lifestyle. This is the true manifestation of the indwelling Holy Spirit of whom the Lord Jesus said, “*He shall glorify Me*” (John 16:14). Paul tells us, “*For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth*” (Ephesians 5:9). Also consider the spiritual attributes of God’s kind of love, laid out in 1 Corinthians 13:4–7, the *Love Chapter*. These Christlike attributes are what every Christian’s life should exhibit—the “Fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16–26).

Spirituality vs Religiosity – What’s The Difference? Some refer to Biblical Christianity as a *religion*. No, Biblical Christianity is *not* a religion. It’s a fully restored relationship with God, given freely as a gift when a person repents and trusts Christ as their personal Savior (Acts 20:21). Christians are people who are saved by grace, through faith, apart from good works (Ephesians 2:8–9). Religious people trust in their own good works, not in Christ. Faithful churchgoers might be *religious*, but they are *not* true Christians if they aren’t born-again (John 3:3). All human belief systems are like *religion* since they adhere to various beliefs and practices: Nominal Christianity (*Churchianity*), Catholicism, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Humanism, Socialism, Communism, Agnosticism, Atheism, Occultism, Animism, and Satanism.

These persons have belief systems, principles, and traditions to which they adhere in hopes of achieving a desired end. Jews adhere to the Mosaic Law, given to Israel by God through Moses. Islamic zealots believe that killing all “infidels” (Jews and Christians) is honorable and blessed by *Allah*, whereby they enter Heaven, replete with 72 concubines. Buddhists believe that if they do enough good deeds to exceed their bad deeds, they will attain *Nirvana*, thus *escaping* Reincarnation’s endless cycle of birth, sickness, sorrow, and death. Communists strive to achieve a Utopian society of equality by *Big Brother* tactics, hijacking all personal rights. Agnostics aren’t sure what to believe. Atheists foolishly deny God exists. Animists appease feared evil spirits by animal sacrifices and by avoiding taboos. Humanists promote human, animal, and environmental welfare. They often refer to themselves as “spiritual” on a metaphysical or philosophical level and believe in *hope* for hope’s sake—some positive cause to motivate themselves. Nominal Christians, like Humanists, have a nondescript *faith*, yet they are not spiritual or possess true faith in a biblical sense since their understanding is fleshly or carnal. Anyone not receiving God’s free gift of forgiveness of sin and new life in Christ is eternally lost and dead in their sins.

DOES ONE'S SINCERITY MAKE SOMETHING FACTUAL?

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 suggest they consider that: "*Sincerity of belief does not cause something untrue to become true. Nor does it cause something true to become untrue.*" The same fact applies here. Those who sincerely believe that the Holy Spirit is the empowering agent of their ecstatic tongues are quick to accuse those who disagree with 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? Bible scholars do not believe so, nor does this writer, because the text describes those who reject Christ's Deity as the Incarnate Son of God. They deny Him as their prophesied Messiah come in the flesh and shun the Holy Spirit's wooing to accept God's free offer of deliverance from sin. Rather, they accuse him of being satanically empowered. Ouch!

WONDEROUS MIRACLES OR LYING WONDERS? When my wife and I were in training for the ministry under the auspices of The New Tribes Mission—preparing to serve in Thailand—all things Charismatic were still in their infancy. The time was the early 1970s, and there weren't any clear-cut demarcation lines at that juncture concerning the movement. So, as conservatives, we were all waiting and watching, wondering whether the reports being bandied about might be of the Lord.

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 occurred on the Indonesian island of Timor in 1965 as the Gospel entered the island's remote regions. Our NTM Language and Linguistics Institute bookstore even had the newly-released book in its racks. We knew of *bona fide* reports where God had shown Himself real in unique ways to get people's attention where the Gospel was being proclaimed for the very first time. Given the time, the little-known Charismatic movement still in its infancy, we wondered if these events might also be authentic.

This writer's initial thoughts on the subject at that juncture were, if God is truly in this, 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 anything, but am simply stating of being open to the Lord's giving the Thai language supernaturally if God so chose.

If anyone could use the biblical gift of tongues, it would undoubtedly be church-planting missionaries as they seek out and evangelize yet-unreached lost tribes and ethnic people groups with complex languages in obedience to Christ's prime directive (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15), as well as Paul's passion (Romans 10:10–15 and 2 Corinthians 10:14–16). However, that did not happen. Instead, God gave me vision, perseverance, and natural ability to help me gain mastery in the Thai language, two other local-area tonal languages, and partially in a fourth language.

I spent thousands of hours in language and culture study and practice as I endeavored to identify with the people on a friendly 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 became known that they were debunked by missionaries ministering in the vicinity. I knew one missionary personally, both of us in the same organization, New Tribes Mission. He told me how numerous people who had read the book came 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 knew any of the names or places mentioned in the book—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 God under the auspices of a conservative mission organization.

THE GIFT OF INTERPRETATION: This writer knows missionaries fluent in remote South American Indian languages. These missionaries related how they (while home on sabbatical) attended different Charismatic meetings as an experiment. During these meetings, where so-called *tongues* were being practiced, they stood and spoke briefly in the respective remote tribal languages they knew, then sat down. They all attested that, in each instance, none of the canned interpretations came anywhere near what they had said. If the Apostolic gift were present, their interpretations would have coincided perfectly with what the missionaries had spoken in their respective South American Indian languages. This attests to the fact that any Pentecostal or Charismatic claims of validity do not align with Scripture, compared to the defunct Apostolic era miraculous gift of Interpretation of Tongues.

Concerning speaking actual languages, consider that this writer and many other non-charismatic missionaries are more fluent and able to teach and converse in spoken Thai than many non-native Pentecostal or Charismatic missionaries in Thailand. If claimants truly possessed the biblical gift of tongues, they should be able to speak flawless Thai or any other language, just like a native-born speaker. Also, if these had the true spiritual gift of healing, should they not be going from hospital to hospital, healing the sick and the incurably afflicted in the same manner and with the same power 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 who was taken in!

This does not mean God cannot heal people today because He can and does. This writer prayed for and saw a young girl, now married and serving God, miraculously healed from death's doorstep. God also instantly healed this writer's immobile foot, fractured in a freak mishap while traveling to a mission conference.

Since *faith comes by hearing the Word of God* (Romans 10:17), modern tongues and healing movements have nothing to do with proclaiming the Gospel to unreached people as occurred in the Book of Acts (Acts 2: 4–11, 1 Corinthians 14:22), spoken lucidly in the hearer's own heart languages. Furthermore, professional linguistics have dissected tongues (*glossolalia*) audio recordings applying regular linguistic techniques. As a result, they conclusively proved what they had dissected *did not* resemble actual spoken languages but was incoherent, disconnected vowel-consonant babble. Finally, tongues are more about egotism and self-edification, as having attained some *higher* level of spirituality, following the goals of earlier twentieth-century seeker movements.

The more that weird and grotesque carryings-on increase, the more this writer is persuaded of the validity of the ^{††}Cessationist view (see ADDENDUM on page 50). After careful consideration, He believes the various modern-day tongues and staged healing movements, including assertions of the miraculous, are more fallacious and of uncertain origin than genuine—irrespective of what dedicated adherents may believe, claim, or practice. These manifestations are, in fact, either emotional highs or fleshly grandstanding at best or, *God forbid*, of demonic influence at worst, 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 and 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 wills, by His sovereign plan. They are not acquired by being pressured into, prayed for, or sought after. Neither does God distribute fraudulent gifts. Biblical tongues were, in fact, a miraculous sign for evangelizing unbelievers *only*, not in worship (1 Corinthians 14:22). These were sign-seeking Jews who lived in other countries and spoke other languages. God's purpose was that they might hear, repent, and believe the Gospel, that their long-awaited Messiah had come, supernaturally proclaimed to them in their respective heart languages and dialects (Acts 2:5–8; 1 Corinthians 1:22, 12:11).

The whole matter rests on biblical authenticity or the lack thereof. If present-day manifestations were authentic, would it not result in God reestablishing genuine New Testament Apostleship? Unbelieving Jews speaking various languages would likely be present, experiencing divine miracles. They would hear the Gospel message about their Messiah's wondrous acts on their behalf—spoken in their native tongues or dialects. Languages unknown to the speakers are recorded in Acts chapter 2:5–8. Certainly not the ecstatic utterances, as well as the so-called healings and miracles that are being propagated in pandemic proportions today, the greater 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 heart languages and dialects, which the speakers did not personally know. No, these wrongfully assert that it was the visiting Jews who *heard* the message in their heart languages, emphasizing *heard* and not *spoke*. Thereby implying the miracle was in the *hearing*, not the *proclamation*.

This view is a misrepresentation of the passage based on the personal denial of the text, including faulty exegetical hermeneutics. They disavow the miraculous, saying God's empowering the Apostles to declare the Gospel in 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 (2 Timothy 3:13). Scripture records that there are only twelve Christ-ordained Apostles (Matthew 10:2; Mark 6:7; Luke 6:13; John 6:70). As a proof text, count the foundations that contain the Apostles names according to the prophetic Word: "*And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE LAMB*" (Revelation 21:14). Note the definite *the* article here; "the 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! These types are nothing but imposters and prevaricators—false prophets and false teachers who deceive many.

For instance, the disciples' choice of Matthias as Judas' replacement was invalid, having been chosen by men. However, Christ's personal choice of Paul was valid, having been directly selected by Him as the twelfth and last apostle on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1–16). Paul even defended his Apostleship in his letters (1 Corinthians 15:9; 1 Thessalonians 2:6). So, beware! Anyone claiming to be an apostle or having 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.

REAL HEALING – THE TRUE GIFT:

Suppose these present-day “miracle workers” were truly anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Would they not seek out hospitals and hospices throughout the land, going up and down the halls and into every room, healing the sick, the maimed and 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 being *“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 by 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 speaks 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).

BRAZENLY BOLD HIJACKERS:

I was exposed to some disgustingly bold and brazen Charismatic behavior while serving as an interim pastor at a city church in my ministry headquarters province in Northeast Thailand. Attendance 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 and our surrounding village works, hoping to assimilate whomever they could in typical intrusive sheep-stealing fashion. I saw that same church take-over scenario by tongues-speaking groups numerous times in Northeastern Thailand, where I ministered, by Pentecostals and Charismatics alike.

I had just moved our family from our remote village ministry outpost into town, where I planned to focus on the Isan New Testament translation. However, of necessity, that was put on a partial hold since our village folks considered this dwindling city church (rightly or wrongly) their elder sister in the faith. So, someone needed to rescue the city church since we could not afford to see it flounder or become another Charismatic outpost. I was friends with that evangelical mission's field director (strictly non-Charismatic), who welcomed my presence and willingness to intervene.

That same mission organization had a Bible school in Thailand's Isan region that became the target of a hyper-Charismatic Philippine group whose goal was to infiltrate every non-Charismatic church with their Charismatic message. This occurred after the mission organization's conservative field director had retired. The mission organization soon became weaker in his absence due to a lack of solid leadership. They decided to leave the Isan region, so they felt they no longer needed to maintain their Isan region Bible school. Astonishingly, they accepted the "friendly" offer of the hyper-charismatic Philippine group to assume possession of the school. This gave them a strategic outpost and access to all the Isan-area churches that that mission organization had established—abandoning and opening them up to their teaching and practices. Goal accomplished!

While serving as the city church's interim teaching pastor, I shared leadership responsibilities with my gifted translation assistant, Isan Pastor J, whom I was mentoring. Previously not having been grounded in Grace and the fundamentals of the faith, it was thrilling to watch him grow and hear him expound on his newly acquired understanding of God's redeeming grace, according to Ephesians 2:8–10. The congregation grew in strength and number as we taught foundational truths. Pastor J and I shared Sunday morning teaching responsibilities. We worked on the Isan New Testament translation together, visiting church members during the week. On Saturdays, we evangelized unreached ethnic Phu-Thai villages in a district town 50 kilometers (30 mi.) south of Nakhon Phanom. We saw many receive Christ and get baptized there. Pastor J later assumed full pastoral responsibilities when I returned to the States on an extended leave. Meanwhile, the city church continued to thrive, growing further under his capable leadership as a native-born Isan man.

Things were going great. The city church, now grounded in Grace, got back on its feet as it grew even stronger 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. (The enemy's plans to disrupt this vibrant, growing church were put in motion.)

ALPHA FEMALES: Most of these spiritual hijackers were sitting in a circle, simultaneously chattering away in babbling sounds (*glossolalia*).⁴ Their leader was a woman with a very strong personality. I vividly recall how strange it sounded, more like the loud chirping* of many birds than the typical ecstatic tongues sounds. This experience was chilling, spoken of in Isaiah 8:19: “*Them that have familiar spirits, and wizards that peep and mutter.*” These women were trying to force our members to speak in so-called tongues. Stepping up to intervene, I asked what they were doing, but they continued, feigning obliviousness to my presence. As I was addressing them, a man from their group approached me. He gestured and implored loudly for God to *Cast out the demon.*” Meaning me! These brazenly bold invaders were demonically led and needed to depart, not me. *I recently heard that same uninvited loud chirping sound from Laotian women visiting an Isan church as we prayed for healing.

Pastor J arrived at that juncture and was just as taken aback as I was. We started to extract our people out from the circle, one by one. These were mostly new, spiritually uninformed babes in Christ, ignorant of the implications of what was being forced on them. Visibly frustrated, Pastor J called the local police, who arrived promptly and carted off all these uninvited strangers 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 come to faith earlier through this same Charismatic group, the leader of which was her close friend. 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 her forced tongues experiences while there—believing in her experiences rather than the Word of God.

Pastor J and I were concerned that she had been offended by how things had gone down, him having called the police, who carted them off to jail. However, she came to the service the following Sunday, seemingly unaffected and happy. 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 fully bought into the Charismatic agenda.

The following week, I contacted the prison officials I knew there. Not being specific, I asked if anything had occurred out of the ordinary the previous week (during the group’s visit). They all said none had seen or heard of anything special. 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 spread far and wide.

Note: These types of hollow claims are continually bandied about as truth, which further helps to propagate lies, false doctrines, and false practices—akin to lying wonders (2 Thessalonians 2:9).

⁴ Ex-Warlock and high-status Satan worshiper John Ramirez, now Christian (whose father was also a Satan worshiper) says from experience that Satan worshipers also form a closed circle when worshipping, claiming a circle cannot be broken or invaded.

LYING WONDERS AND SPIRITUAL DECEPTION: 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 hyper-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. Mr. S. is now a highly regarded retired Army Colonel. He lay-pastors the village church established during my earlier village ministry. Being a *straight-shooter*, he doesn't appear to have bought into his wife's Charismatic propensities, which I pray he doesn't.

A STRONG-WILLED YOUNG LADY: Years later, while I was on an extended sabbatical leave, Pastor J moved to a new location in an adjoining province with a discipling and church-planting ministry. Pastor J had left the city church strong and growing before they called a new pastor. However, this young lady, now a married woman with grown children, declared herself a spiritual leader under the passive new pastor, who assented to her strong-willed determination. Despite having sat under clear teaching to the contrary by this writer and others, including Pastor J, she has now propagated tongues to about everyone who still attends there under her self-appointed position.

Sweet and kindhearted on the surface, she has proven herself to have an unteachable spirit behind her winning smile as she spreads this tongues doctrine, all in direct disobedience to Scripture, just like many other Charismatic 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, or 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)?

CONCERNING LADIES: See comments concerning ladies with positions of spiritual authority over men and women—tongues-speaking or otherwise—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 2:11–14).

CHARISMATIC ASSERTIONS:

(Compare these against "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 telling it to change—commanded a tornado to retreat up into the clouds, which it purportedly did, post-haste.

CHARISMATIC PRACTICES:

- ✓ Spreading false or highly exaggerated reports concerning tongues, healings, and miraculous occurrences—lying wonders (2 Thessalonians 2:9).
- ✓ 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 or suspicion 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.

DUBIOUS CLAIMS:

- ✓ When one is full of the Spirit—through periods of intense seeking—that one is endued with a “supernatural anointing” of power to perform miracles.
- ✓ Heal the weak and sickly by having them touch an "anointed" piece of their clothing—neckties, handkerchiefs, etc.
- ✓ Spread incredulous claims of astounding miracles occurring in the lives of recipients who drink or anoint themselves with free packets of their “blessed” holy water.
- ✓ Heal the weak and sickly by sprinkling them with anointed holy water.
- ✓ Make wheelchair-bound paralytics or cripples walk normally again, right on stage—who toss their wheelchairs or canes away until out of view later.
- ✓ 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!*

AN APPEAL TO RETHINK THINGS:

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 written Word of God is perfect, complete, and inerrant as God gave it—contained in the sixty-six (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, *"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."* No wonder, since Satan was created originally as Lucifer, a beautiful Angel of Light.

CLAIMS OF A CHARISMATIC PASTOR:

A prominent Charismatic pastor claimed in his writings that:

Once the Holy Spirit [is released] 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 it 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 the concept of a *Soul Area* in his letters to Timothy or the churches. This nice spiritual-sounding phrase confuses and misleads the naïve and unwary.

Do not be misled! This is complete conjecture—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 Charismatics is that born-again Christians can allegedly become “*demonized*” unawares—their term. This sounds strangely akin to Animistic practices (like in Thailand), where calamities can befall some unsuspecting soul caused by an unhappy spirit entity that must be appeased to gain release. However, in this case, the unfortunate Christian is supposedly not fully possessed, just partially. The exorcists go through all sorts of contortions and long prayer vigils to deliver the so-called demonized believer. I’m unsure how they knew the person got that way initially or clues that the person had been delivered by their carryings-on.

I became aware of a situation where strivings went on in intervals for many days and nights, trying to free a perplexed female missionary candidate whom someone assumed was *demonized*. These beliefs and practices are without substance. Satan is probably amused, having gotten 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 might claim, a born-again Christian cannot 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).

A SICKLY FAITH HEALER GETS OWNED:

A Charismatic faith healer—ironically frail and sickly in physique—frequented some of Thailand's churches annually to promote his purported *gift* of healing arts. On another occasion, I recall how he held a huge, 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 the country had reopened to the outside world after suffering Pol Pot's heinous and brutal *Killing Fields* regime had fallen. The event was reportedly packed as the typical healing show began.

Having just endured years of devastating terror and heart-wrenching sadness, these hapless Cambodians were hungering for genuine hope and truth. Having pastored a Cambodian refugee church in San Diego for over ten years, consisting of people who had escaped the brutal Pol Pot regime, this writer was told firsthand accounts of things these dear people had experienced. They had undergone losing family and loved ones to the senseless carnage they had experienced and escaped. It was 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! (Since then, he has heard other horrific Cambodian accounts.)

But no, all the seeking, poor-in-spirit Cambodians got that day were staged scams put on by a so-called healer whom they immediately saw through as a flamboyant charlatan. 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. One might say this is just what they deserved. It's unfortunate how undesirable elements like this can gain entry, but it happens.

This certainly does not imply that God cannot or does not heal or perform the miraculous today because He *can* and *does*. This writer has first-hand knowledge, having both experienced and witnessed genuine divine healings while taking the Gospel to the unreached peoples in the *regions beyond*—meaning Isan ethnic groups of Northeast Thailand in this case. Be assured, however, that God *does not* bless or operate through staged events or before an audience where prideful, glory, and money-seeking men and women gather wealth unto themselves on the backs of misled and deceived audiences. The Holy God, who dwells in unapproachable light and righteousness, is not involved in things like this, nor does He share His Glory with these types who spread a false gospel.

PSEUDO-MANIFESTATIONS AND NAÏVE AUDIENCES: These present-day claims and staged pseudo-manifestations are performed before a misinformed, gullible 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. Dr. Luke, Paul's constant companion (or sidekick) and traveling journalist recorded these miraculous events in the Book of Acts. Luke even followed Paul to Rome (2 Timothy 4:11).

Remember! All these recorded New Testament events occurred *before* the 27 books of the New Testament we enjoy today were completed and bound in Canon form. First Corinthians 13:9–10 is obvious: *For we know in part and prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect comes* (complete, lacking nothing: Grk *teleios*), *that which is in part* (the sign gifts) *shall be done away*. Most New Testament writers were Apostles. Some sensed their epistles to believers would form a part of the Holy Writ like Peter wrote concerning Paul (cf. 2 Peter 3:15–16).

As previously stated, we must remember that Dr. Luke recorded the Book of Acts as a historical account, not a teaching epistle or how-to instruction manual. Luke recorded these things to inform his friend Theophilus of events taking place during the birth and growth of the Church. The Book of Acts was Luke's second recorded letter to Theophilus. It was a follow-up to Luke's Gospel—an account he wrote concerning The Living Christ, that He was real. Therefore, Acts is not a teaching (*didactical*) book like Paul's Epistles, most of which he wrote to churches to correct erroneous teachings and practices.

Also, the events surrounding Paul's life recorded in the last chapters of Acts were a comprehensive chronicle written journalistically by Paul's companion, Dr. Luke. Therefore, the accounts recorded in Acts are *not* teachings to be learned or examples to be emulated. Nor is Acts a behavioral manual or handbook—unlike Proverbs or the Book of James—but it remains *The Acts of the Apostles*, a historical account of the ministry of the Apostles at the onset of the Church Age, done under the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

To their credit, a few Charismatic leaders believe correctly that biblical tongues are *not* a sign for believers but for unbelievers, according to 1 Corinthians 14:20–25. However, many remain spiritual con artists who peddle the Word of God deceitfully, done for personal gain and not for God's Glory (Philippians 3:17–19).

These Broadway stage actors appeal to the flesh by telling convincing tales of how they experienced some miraculous provision and how their listeners can enjoy the same prosperity by sending a “*seed gift*” to their ministry, designated in a specific amount. However, these stage actors are the only ones who prosper by deceiving gullible people who buy into their *seed gift* schemes. They want a *piece of the action* and a shortcut to prosperity. Yet they know nothing about 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 unbiblical views on the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Some would say this is a secondary fellowship issue. I disagree because we are to eschew false teachers and their doctrines, leading people astray, even deceiving some 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. These previously mentioned types promote 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. Instead, they pervert and add to the Gospel of Grace as they promote emotionally charged, ecstatic religious exhibitions and other unscriptural phenomena, 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).

LACK OF MUTUAL RESPECT:

This writer has seen and experienced mainline Pentecostals and Charismatics—when left to their own devices—employ deceptive tactics as they seek to infiltrate established churches using *Fifth Column* tactics and *Trojan Horse* methodologies. Believing they're on a God-given mission to spread their tongues gospel, they show little respect for anyone who doesn't adhere to or help promote their cause. On the mission field,

they use tempting giveaway programs among the needy and poor, causing disruption, confusion, splits, and division in churches as they sheep-steal and spread their false doctrines to gain new adherents to their unbiblical beliefs and practices—things that God hates (Proverbs 6:16–19).

Then, they brazenly claim that they have established new churches. They remove existing church signs and put 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 had initially founded the work. They justify their actions by claiming their ministry is to “*strengthen existing churches.*” The Apostle Paul knew these types well. He constantly dealt with the *Judiazers*, who tenaciously followed him around, disrupting his work while spreading their false doctrines. They boasted of their superiority while defaming Paul, who was forced to defend himself and his ministry to the churches he had established (2 Corinthians 11:1–12:13; Galatians 5:1–12, 6:13–14).

UNREPENTANT LEADERS EMBRACED:

Without any pangs of conscience, Charismatic and Pentecostal organizations alike unashamedly embrace penalized or disfellowshipped Christian leaders from conservative organizations into their fold without addressing their undealt with issues. This writer has seen it occur in Thailand on numerous occasions! They receive those under discipline by their organization or group—found to have been living in immorality or other unacceptable, non-Christlike behavior 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 helping introduce tongues into non-tongues speaking churches established by their former group, thus hijacking the church.

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).

THE AUTHOR’S VIEW OF MIRACLES:

This author believes and accepts, as divine truth, every miraculous account recorded in Scripture. God, who dwells in timeless present-tense eternity, is all-knowing, all-wise, all-powerful, and sovereign across all ages and dispensations. This writer knows by personal experience that God is not only righteous and

just but is also full of loving-kindness, compassion, and grace—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).

This writer also realizes that God does many truly miraculous things even today, mainly behind the scenes. There are numerous accounts—some he has been involved in personally—where God has gloriously revealed His presence, power, and protection to missionaries. He shows Himself real to new believers and fledgling churches, as well as amidst unreached primitive people groups where the Gospel message is only just arriving. Yet, these expressions tend to decline once the Gospel gains a firm foothold where self-governing, self-propagating churches have been established, especially where God's Word has become available in the local language, like among the Isan people of Northeast Thailand, where they previously had no Isan Bible.

SLAIN IN THE SPIRIT:

I'm also certain that God *does not* work through (or share His glory with) unscrupulous evil 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 backward or faint and collapse trembling. These are said to be [†]Slain in the Spirit and *healed* of whatever ailment they *purportedly* had. These pseudo-manifestations are supposedly done through the power vested in the performers, who gain fame and great personal fortunes at the expense of their impressed followers. It is suggested that the so-called *slain* ones are playacting or have responded to hypnotic suggestion—an induced trance-like state of anticipation.

DICTIONARY DEFINITION: The dictionary definition of [†]*slain* means to be killed intentionally with premeditation. It does not mean for persons 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 this occurs by prearranged design in these types of meetings. Granted, some may be overcome with the moment's emotion and faint or swoon, needing to be awakened. Otherwise, it's staged fakery. Where is that found in Scripture? ...other than in Acts 5:1–11, where Ananias and Sapphira plotted to lie to the Holy Spirit and died instantly for their sin—*not to get up again and return to their seats in the audience*.

BEWARE! Nor does this mean a popular Charismatic personality will wave his arm over the crowd, causing a whole swath of people on stage to collapse as if cut down by an invisible scythe. If that ever happened for real, it would be the Holy Spirit doing it!

Again, this writer views these types of staged displays and dubious reports very much akin to the *lying wonders* of the last days (2 Thessalonians 2:9). However believable they may seem, they are untrue.

Also, the only people recorded in Scripture who the Spirit truly slew were Ananias and Sapphira, as mentioned (Acts 5:1–10), the husband-and-wife team who conspired to lie to the Holy Spirit. Upon executing their plan to the Apostle Peter, they paid for it immediately with their lives.

THE AUTHOR'S EVALUATION:

The Scriptures teach very clearly that every born-again believer is sealed with the Holy Spirit in His Divine fullness at the moment they trust in Christ for Salvation since He's the one that imparts eternal life (Ephesians 1:13–14, 4:30). Scriptures also state that, if anyone does not have the Holy Spirit, that person is not one of God's own family of redeemed Saints (Romans 8:9). These passages negate the theory that speaking in *ecstatic utterances* (modern tongues) is required as a sign of having received Salvation and the fullness of the Spirit. It's a bogus claim, espoused by Pentecostals and Charismatics and has nothing to do with Salvation whether they care to admit it or not.

When confronted with Romans 8:9, they split hairs by conceding that those who do not do tongues *might* possess the Holy Spirit, but without His fullness or power. And, that one cannot experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit without the evidence of speaking in tongues. This claim is indefensible because nowhere in Scripture is it supported. 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 those who maintain a consistent lifestyle—walking in fellowship and 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.*"

Scriptures teach that the Holy Spirit—our helper, teacher, comforter, and guide—indwells 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, 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). How does one repent? Biblically, repentance means *a change of heart or mind*, resulting from the conviction and acknowledgment of one's unsaved, sinful condition—even remorse. Contrary to misunderstanding, a behavioral change comes *second*, i.e., experiential sanctification, following a change of heart and trusting Christ. Not vice-versa! God saves us to the uttermost (Hebrews 7:25), seals us (Ephesians 1:14), places us into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13), and keeps us eternally safe and secure by the power of God (1 Peter 1:3–5) unto the Day of Redemption—Christ's return in the air to receive all believers unto Himself for all Eternity (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17).

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 His fullness abiding within in all 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 with God through abiding and walking in the truth. 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, matures, comforts, convicts, 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). Those who are redeemed have become regenerated as new persons in Christ, 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).

THE AUTHOR'S FIRST EXPOSURE TO TONGUES:

Shortly after receiving Christ in August 1963, this writer was invited to a Sunday evening meeting. It was at a Pentecostal church in a nearby city, as it turned out. These folks were certainly friendly, outgoing, and more animated than those in the little country Baptist church I attended. They all seemed to be enjoying themselves—as did we (in the Lord) at our church, but without the extra noise and high-spiritedness. The sporadic organ and piano riffs were loud and lively in between lulls. During the preaching, I noticed a woman sitting on the opposite side near the front. She began to sway and whoop loudly at intervals as the pastor voiced encouragement!

Having worked herself into a frenzy, the woman shrieked, jumped up, and rushed to the podium steps, where she mouthed something I couldn't follow. Noticeably spent, she then returned to her seat. *That is strange*, I thought. What she had shouted out was an emotionally charged ecstatic utterance. Meaning tongues, or glossolalia—*repetitive nonmeaningful speech (especially associated with a trance state or religious fervor)*.

After the service, another woman approached me, saying matter-of-factly that she had once been a Baptist and would never go back after receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit—supposedly evidenced by speaking in *tongues*—as if I was missing something special. Go back from what? ... I pondered. ... all these strange carryings on? Frankly, it's *not* about being a *Baptist* or anything else but about receiving full salvation by Grace through faith. Then, diligently studying His Word (2 Timothy 2:15–16) and pursuing a God-honoring lifestyle according to the truths written in God's Word (Ephesians 2:8–10; Titus 3:3–8).

WOMEN AND THE PROPAGATION OF TONGUES: Whether Pentecostal or Charismatic, sincere yet misguided and self-willed women have played a major role in advancing the tongues movement from its onset—contrary to Paul's stern command to "*Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says*" (1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:11–14). What does it mean? Any actual Apostolic-age speaking in an unknown tongue was to be done by men, likely church elders, not women.

WHAT ABOUT NON-TONGUES SPEAKERS?

Is there anything Christians lack without tongues and all its implications? No! According to John 3:16, God loves and gives Eternal Life to all who accept His Son. 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, rooted eternally in God's 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, being made His ambassadors; having taken all our sin upon Himself and giving us His Righteousness in return. Second Corinthians 1:3–4 tells us we have peace, comfort, guidance, and joy from the indwelling Holy Spirit of Ephesians 1:12–14.

Hebrews 7:25 reassures us that we are saved to the uttermost for eternity! 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 through Christ. The Apostle Peter assures us that we have been given a *living hope* through the resurrection of Jesus Christ and an unfading inheritance reserved in Heaven for us (Peter 1:3–4).

The Apostle Peter continues, “We have been given all things pertaining to life and godliness and called to live a virtuous lifestyle” (2 Peter 1:3). We have all these promises and more. What else could anyone want or need—*except for the Glories of Heaven?* The only alternative is to be lost in one’s sin, having to face the Supreme Judge at the Great White Throne Judgment as a result. Then, spend eternity in the unquenchable flames of the Lake of Fire, one’s name not being found in the Book of Life!

THE GREATEST MIRACLE:

Concerning the desire to seek present-day wonders and miracles, the greatest miracle of all is the spiritual new birth, exemplified in a transformed lifestyle, evidenced by a yielded life and a consistent walk, maintaining divine 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 newborn infant, as Christians, we don’t attain adulthood during the first days of new life in Christ (1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 1:5–9, 3:18).

PASTORS WHO LEFT THE TONGUES MOVEMENT:

I had the opportunity to personally know two men of God who are highly successful pastors and once heavily involved in the Pentecostal and the Charismatic movements, respectively. One person, Pastor G, had once pastored Pentecostal mega-churches. He had even held large tent meetings where the occurrences mentioned in this paper were practiced. G told me that during his involvement, he began to realize that their key doctrines and practices concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers were *not* aligned with scripture. In his quest, G said the more he studied God’s Word, the more he became persuaded—to the point he could no longer continue. He also realized that the doctrines and practices he felt more attuned to through studying Scripture were those of conservative Baptists. 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 is Pastor C, my former next-door neighbor who pastored a conservative Bible Church nearby. I didn’t realize until he told me one day how much he had been involved in the Charismatic movement. I asked him what had happened, to which he said how he had

begun to sense that things they were practicing and promoting seemed like empty window dressing. Also, all those involved seemed to keep up a facade to maintain mutual acceptance within their peer group. Pastor C became convinced of the error of the whole thing and left the Charismatic movement altogether, along with his wife and family. Pastor C wrote his thoughts on what he had learned: *"Grow in your relationship with God through a true knowledge of His Word."* Note here he did not say ecstatic experiences, i.e., tongues.

During our conversation, Pastor C shared more insight 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 behavior, attitudes, speech patterns, and dress codes, all to earn other's approval. As if to say, "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).

A THAI PASTOR SEES THE LIGHT:

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 actively raising support to return to Thailand as a missionary to his own Thai 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 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 a solid Bible education at Bob Jones University (BJU). Their goal is to work as a husband and wife team to start a conservative church in Bangkok. There, they will provide a reliable alternative with foundational teaching to help ground those caught up in the same tongues infrastructure from which they had come. Pastor B's wife will be working with the women and children.

CONFESSIONS OF A FORMER CHARISMATIC:

In the spirit of the Apostle Peter's testimony in Second Peter 1:16–21, a former Charismatic has a blog called [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 many sincere Christians 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—which do not align with Scripture—and are not perpetrators. They might have grown up within these belief systems or been pressured into the tongues phenomenon through someone trying to force them to speak in ecstatic utterances by making them repeatedly mouth nonsense syllables.

SUPER-RICH CHARISMATIC SUPERSTARS:

I recently had the distinct opportunity to meet the now-born-again nephew of a world-famous Charismatic Superstar at a Christian writers' conference where he was a keynote speaker. He had once been heavily involved in his uncle's staged performances as a *catcher*. This means that 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 crisscrossed the world with his famous uncle, one with gold furnishings at an amazing \$25,000 per night's stay. There's only one thing this super-rich charismatic superstar lacked—a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ!

During the course of events, the superstar's nephew was attracted to a conservative young Christian lady. Her lifestyle was different, and she spoke of things he did not understand, such as being saved and knowing the Lord. As their talk 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 naïve Christian supporters. It took some time, but this attractive young Christian lady was instrumental in him receiving Christ and now his wife and mother of his children. Now a *born-again* Christian, he completed his Bible education at a prominent seminary, including a doctorate. He presently co-pastors a conservative Bible church in southern California, where he delights in preaching the Gospel and is committed to exposing and debunking falsehood. He is also a published author and takes numerous speaking engagements, exposing the deception in which he was once involved—calling it a microcosm of the lavish prosperity-gospel scene. He also revealed that his relatives and former associates are *not* born-again Christians. Adding that they know nothing of true Christianity, he holds Bible studies with his unsaved relatives, which has generated genuine interest among some. He says his famous uncle, although unsaved, has a very kind personality.

A RECAP:

Consider the Apostle Peter's statement about trusting in the final authority of God's written Word over visions, dreams, impressions, or emotional experiences. Peter had seen it all, yet he wrote: *"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables (fictitious hearsay) 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 whereunto ye do well that ye take heed" (2 Peter 1:16–19). The God-breathed written Word is more trustworthy than what? ...than any mountaintop experience or reports thereof. No matter how real these may seem, they are a fleeting vapor compared to God's eternal Word. Therefore, all experiences must be compared with the final authority—God's rightly-divided infallible Word. As stated in the Foreword, upon reading this paper, you may fully agree. 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 involved in this movement. It is certainly your prerogative to feel that way. However, it's not about people. This writer is focused on beliefs, claims, and practices and has purposely not named individuals involved.

One might ask: "What's wrong with Church attendees (*nominal Christians in name only*), Catholics, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Humanists, Atheists?" Doesn't God love them too? Yes, of course, He does, because God is Love personified (John 3:16; 1 John 4:8, 16). Or, you may know some good people of these persuasions, maybe even a spouse, close relative, or someone 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 searched the Scriptures to ascertain the validity of 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 things directly violate the truths of God's Word, so these charlatans should be profoundly embarrassed. Why aren't they ashamed? Because their unsaved hearts are calloused, using God's holy Name of profit. God's Word plainly states these types "*Speak lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron*" (1 Timothy 4:2).

A PRAISE FOR THE LADIES:

By God's design, ladies are often more sensitive and emotionally perceptive to things than their male counterparts. That's a positive trait for their role as wives, mothers, and housekeepers, making them strong and resilient. Although equally intelligent and capable as men, even more so in some respects—except for physical strength and ability—God also chose to bless them with the role of followers in the marriage relationship. All these things are entirely positive by God's design. That said, due to their emotional qualities, they can be more susceptible to

suggestion, making it easier for them to yield to things—like being drawn into the modern-day tongues movement. Eve, not Adam, was enticed by Satan. Therefore, God made him head over her in marriage (1 Timothy 2:13–14).

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: *"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 2:11–14).

AN EXEGETICAL OVERVIEW OF 1 CORINTHIANS 14:

(1) CHAPTER THIRTEEN: The *Love Chapter*, chapter 13 is a preface to 14, where Paul confronts their petty strife and division over apostolic sign gifts – tongues, prophecy, and knowledge. Paul speaks hypothetically using "if" or "although" (vv. 1–3). He then gets to the heart of the matter, giving examples of genuine, selfless *Love* (vv. 4–7), which supersedes all else, even Faith and Hope (v.13). Paul then speaks prophetically of the coming cessation of the Apostolic sign gift period as partial revelation or "seeing dimly" v. 12. Which, we shall see *face to face* upon the introduction of the perfect—the completed New Testament canon (vv. 8–13).⁵

(2) PROPHECY: During the Apostolic era, prophesying was a miraculous sign gift for believers as an oral account of NT truths.⁶ Of prime importance in the early church setting for teaching, comforting, edifying, and guiding believers. It included revealing God's will and purposes before the completion of the New Testament canon, which superseded and nullified the gift of New Testament Prophecy (cf. I Corinthians 13:8–10; 14:3, 20–25).

(3) TONGUES: Apostolic era tongues were a miraculous sign gift for confirming the authenticity of the Gospel among unbelieving Jews. Called *the wonderful works of God*, it was declared miraculously to Jews living in yet-unreached locations in their heart languages and dialects, unknown to the speakers (v. 21).

(4) IN OPERATION: The miraculous operation of tongues was not for believers or in a Church setting (v. 22). It too was superseded and nullified by the completed New Testament canon (cf. I Corinthians 13:8–10).

(5) PAUL'S WISH: What did Paul mean? *"I wish you all spoke in tongues; but rather that you prophesied"* (v. 14:5).

⁵ There are two views as to when Paul was referring: (a) at the completion the New Testament canon (best exegetically), or (b) later in Glory.

⁶ Taught by Dr. David Jeremiah at a men's Bible study of the Book of Acts; Shadow Mountain Community Church, February 1, 2023.

a. Prophecy: Paul emphasized prophecy, the *forth telling* of God's revelation to believers before the completion of the New Testament canon through which the infant church would be edified and grow (v. 5). Old Testament prophets were God's mouthpiece (*nabi*). They scolded Israel and *revealed* or *foretold* future events.

b. Tongues: The Apostle Paul was referring to proclaiming the Gospel through intelligible human languages, a miraculous sign gift verifying the Gospel message to the signs-seeking Jews (1 Corinthians 1:22), not *unintelligible* babbling or gibberish (1 Corinthians 14:22–25).

c. Clarification: First, Paul did *not* mean mouthing unintelligible ecstatic utterances (*glossolalia*) for self-edification (v. 4), as practiced today (Acts 2:4–12; 1 Corinthians 14:4, 22–25). Second, Paul was also referring to this heathen practice in a corrective sense, interspersed in the context of chapter 14. **See note 2, pg. 46.**

THE BIBLICAL USE of TONGUES:

Paul informed the Corinthians that he was planning to take the Gospel message to those living in the unreached *regions beyond* their location (2 Corinthians 10:16). These were places where many people groups with unique languages lived, unknown by Paul—where Jews also lived. Paul's God-given Apostolic gift of Tongues would be put to good use as he delivered the Gospel message to the Jews (Diaspora) who had settled there, having fled their homeland, dispersing when the Romans leveled their temple during the siege of Jerusalem *circa* 70 AD.

There are countless unique dialects, languages, and language families in the world today. Thailand has well over fifty languages, including various dialects and subdialects. This writer has learned four languages in the *tai-gadai* family of tonal languages—three to the point of near-fluency. The sole purpose was to communicate the Gospel effectively in a cross-cultural setting in the heart languages of the hearers. The objective was to befriend, teach, counsel, and articulate God's Word, including the faith-walk life, and teach them to discern false teachings (2 Timothy 2:2, 24–26). The ultimate goal was, like Paul's, to establish new self-sustaining churches where there were none, as he had done in Acts Chapters 10–28.

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, including those spoken among the remote North and South American Native tribal groups—all of which comprise areas in the *10–40 Window*!

THE APOSTOLIC GIFT OF TONGUES: Concerning the Apostolic gift of tongues. What a great tool to expedite the evangelization of unreached people groups in fulfillment of Christ's *Great Commission* before His return! This writer would be open to that without hesitation! Yet God, in His sovereign wisdom, has chosen not to make that Acts 2 Apostolic gift available today. This begs the question: Why don't those who *claim* to

have the biblical gift of tongues yield their lives to be used by God to preach the Gospel to the myriads of unreached people groups? It's because they don't have the true gift, that's why. So, they can't do it. Nor could they, because it has ceased operation according to 1 Corinthians 13:8.

(1) IMMATURITY: 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 God's Love."* The answer is we can only understand God's fathomless Love for us through studying doctrine (teaching) and is not separate from it (Ephesians 3:17–19).

(2) ADMONITIONS CONCERNING WOMEN: Women were not to teach or hold positions of spiritual authority over men (1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:11–14). 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 testimony before the church, which this writer has seen women speaking freely while standing on the podium alongside her husband, her spiritual head.

(3) FURTHER ADMONITIONS: Women are instructed to remain in silent submission to their husbands while in church (1 Corinthians 11:3, 14:34). This admonition has not found popularity among feminists. Why would that need to be said? This is likely due to their loud chatting or interjecting between themselves during teaching.

(4) COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: Textual analysis concludes that the Apostolic era operational gift of pre-New Testament Canon tongues and prophecy was restricted to men. The male pronoun is specified here, as seen in 1 Corinthians 14:2–4, 13, 21 and 28. Paul confirms this, stating that women are to remain silent in a congregational church setting (v. 34).

(5) CHURCH SETTINGS: In an Apostolic era church setting, during a prophetic revelation, no more than three men should speak in succession and at intervals so different languages in attendance might be edified (built-up), enlightened (taught), exhorted (entreated), and comforted (consoled) (cf. vv. 3 & 29).

PAUL'S CLOSING STATEMENTS:

Paul closes with these admonitions (written in paraphrase form): *"Did you Corinthians come up with God's Word yourselves, or are you merely its recipients? If you consider yourself prophets or spiritual persons, realize that what I am writing here are the Lord's commands, not my own"* (vv. 36–37). *"Therefore, I tell you, regard prophecy highly instead of tongues, and be sure to maintain order and discipline in all things"* (vv. 39–40).

Paul said clear, effective communication is paramount (vv. 6–8). Otherwise, how can believers understand God's Mighty Greatness, including His act of Creation, His Plan of Salvation, and the *spiritual victory and eternal heritage* He has freely given to all believers *In Christ*?

PAUL'S PRAYERS FOR BELIEVERS: Paul's 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, it was during the Apostolic age when the New Testament Canon was incomplete (1 Corinthians 13:9–10). Although, both the Apostles Paul and Peter sensed that their writings would become a part of the 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) 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 **for believers'** *edification, exhortation, and comfort* ⁽¹⁾ in a local church setting and ⁽²⁾ with the full comprehension of the speaker and his hearers. Under the superintendence of the Holy Spirit, men revealed yet-unwritten New Testament truths to the local church body (1 Corinthians 13:8–10, 14:3, 21).

Note: Old Testament Prophecy was proclaiming *current-day warnings or foretelling future events*, whereas New Testament Prophecy was forth-telling God's *new Church-age revelation*.

(B) Tongues: An Apostolic era miraculous sign gift. It was a temporary gift given for the supernatural proclamation of the Gospel **for 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).

NOTE 2 – SURROUNDING CULTURES AND INFLUENCES: 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 age gift, which Paul warns about in First Corinthians 12:1–3.

Authentic Tongues versus Bogus Clones: 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 Zuck. 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 true 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.*” Yet in v. 15, Paul says: “*So, which is it? I will, therefore, pray with both my spirit and my understanding and sing with both my spirit and my understanding.*”

CRYSTAL CLEAR WARNINGS:

God's Word is crystal clear, strongly admonishing believers to avoid false doctrines, practices, and the individuals and groups propagating them. Furthermore, Paul cautions the immature Corinthian believers (and us) to “*Come out from among them*” (2 Corinthians 6:14–18). It means not to continue to follow or live alongside things of darkness, meaning to sit under false teachings, which he calls doctrines of demons, of which deceiving spirits are the underlying propagating agents (1 Timothy 4:1–2). Also, to shun extra-biblical beliefs and practices, things that confuse and lead people astray from the authentic 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 they decided to bow out when they realized many beliefs and practices were erroneous and unsupported by Scripture.

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

IN CONCLUSION:

The crux of the whole matter is why the Charismatic movement eagerly promotes and practices things 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 displays with little or no emphasis on spiritual growth or maturity.

Do Charismatic beliefs, claims, and practices ring true when weighed against rightly divided and correctly interpreted Scripture? ...exegeted within its grammatical, contextual, and historical environs? All considered, he believes the preponderance of evidence tilts heavily towards, *No!* The Pentecostal to Charismatic tongues movements and their components are not biblically sound because they are incompatible with Scripture. If you're not in agreement, you are encouraged to examine the rightly divided and interpreted biblical evidence for yourself (2 Timothy 2:15). Having witnessed this phenomenon for six decades since he received Christ as his Savior in 1963, this author favors the *Cessation* position, having seen it since then. However, he has endeavored to author this paper from a neutral, investigative standpoint.

Consequently, this writer has concluded that—based on lack thereof scriptural evidence—both the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement's beliefs, claims, and practices concerning present-day (or contemporary) tongues are heretical in nature, not been being biblically sound from their inception. These beliefs and practices 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!"* – *"Letting all things be done decently and in order"* – *"Approved unto God, correctly dividing the Word of Truth"* (Psalm 133:1; 1 Corinthians 14:40; 2 Timothy 2:15).

THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT – IS IT TRULY BLESSED BY GOD?

With all these glaring negative aspects mentioned above—including the weird and even frightening tongues manifestations—how can the Continuationist or Apostolic Successionist position be *truly* blessed by God? They can't. This writer sees no way that God can even consider blessing it—even though countless good people are involved. Their beliefs and practices are not based on (or derived from) Biblical truth. They are bogus ideas inserted "between the lines," so to speak, based on supposition, personal preference, and wishful thinking. This practice and belief system is *not* based on the rightly divided and correctly interpreted *Word of Truth*. It is, therefore erroneous, of which God withholds His approval and His

blessing, according to His Word—simple as that: “*Be diligent to present yourself approved unto God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, correctly dividing the word of truth*” (2 Timothy 2:15).

GOD’S TRUE PLAN OF SALVATION: The absurd idea that Salvation is fragmented is a false teaching. To say that one receives Christ *first*, then the Holy Spirit *later*—supposedly evidenced by ecstatic babblings—cannot be found in scripture. Eternal life in Christ (Salvation) is given freely by the indwelling Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9) upon placing one’s trust in Christ (2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13, 4:30; Titus 3:5). Without the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:11), one cannot be a Christian because both the Holy Spirit and eternal life are gifts of God, apart from works (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9). Good works follow (Ephesians 2:10). The chorus “*Christ Is All I Need*” is true. Whoever is *in Christ* is a *New Creation*—saved and kept by the power of God (1 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Peter 1:5). Salvation is a gift to every believer (fully and freely), *never* to be lost, as some wrongly believe (John 10:28; Hebrews 13:5). Scripture also teaches that born-again Christians who live an ungodly lifestyle are saved and heaven-bound, yet will not receive any rewards (1 Corinthians 3:11-15). Consider Lot; he chose to dwell in a wicked environment, yet the Apostle Peter declared that Lot was righteous (2 Peter 2:7-8).

ADDENDUM**††Cessationism versus Continuationism:****THE TERM CESSATIONIST:**

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 twelve 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 accept it as God-ordained (1 Corinthians 1:22). It also provides Apostolic authority over the early church, initially consisting mainly of Jews.
2. Speed the spread of the Gospel message through Tongues and 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 (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:8–12).

Note: Each of the three miraculous sign gifts mentioned (Prophecy, Tongues, and Knowledge) are *Apostolic* era sign gifts that are discontinued today—the Church age—and not presently in operation (cf. v. 8), except for possibly a form of Prophecy or forth-telling Biblical truth (as in teaching), which some scholars believe.

Since the authority of the early church had been established and the New Testament Canon completed, Cessationists believe scripture clearly 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. That said, God never acts, promotes, or blesses anything contrary to His Divine will as it is revealed in God's Written Word.

Like Christians who believe in a literal six twenty-four-hour day Creation according to Genesis One—as does this writer—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).

THE TERM CONTINUATIONIST:

The Continuationist or *Apostolic Succession* view directly contrasts with the Cessationists' position. Namely, is our Bible perfect, or does God add 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, 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.

Nowhere are these views 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 unbelieving Jews (cf. Joel 2:28-32), *not* for believers to practice in worship as seen today.

Paul's matter-of-fact statement in verse 22 could not be clearer. 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 from Isaiah: *"This people draw near me with their mouths and honor 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"* (Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 15:8–9; Mark 7:6–7).

THE TERM FELLOW TRAVELER:

A "Fellow Traveler" is a person or persons who assumes no set position on a particular issue one way or the other but tends to acquiesce with whichever side he's talking with. In this case, that person would fall under the general heading of following a *Continuationist* or *Apostolic Succession* position. As such, they are most likely untaught and sport a blasé *to-each-his-own* attitude. A Fellow Traveler does not practice modern-day tongues personally, yet finds it perfectly acceptable, along with their seeking to emulate other Apostolic era sign gifts.

THE TERM FENCE SITTER:

A fence-sitter is a double-minded person who won't take a position on controversial issues, preferring to remain neutral or uncommitted because of indecision or fear of offending someone. Merriam-Webster's online dictionary–thesaurus defines fence-sitting as *"A state of indecision or neutrality as to conflicting positions"* and *"A state or an instance of temporary inaction because of uncertainty about the right course of action."*

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

The following terms are Biblically related. They must be considered to arrive at an accurate meaning and its application of a scriptural theme or passage. Translators must also regard these to produce a faithful translation that accurately reflects the best available manuscripts.

HOLY SCRIPTURES: The collection of inspired canonical books that comprise the Christian Bible. It contains 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 in the New, totaling 66 books. Types of text include historical (*past events*), narration (*current accounts*), prophetic (*future events*), psalm (*songs of sacred praise*), poetic (*literature in metrical or expressive style*), wisdom (*sound advice*), biographical (*personal accounts*); journalistic (*acts or actions*); didactic (*teaching or instruction*), and epistles (*letters to churches or individuals*). The Apocryphal writings are not included in the compilation of the Holy Writ because they have not passed the test of inspiration.

AUTHOR'S INTENT: Intent means the essence of meaning that the authors (*Divine and human*) had in mind, revealed in every word within its historical, cultural, and grammatical context in its original inspired form. Three main clues must be considered. Who is the speaker? ...the audience? ...the primary focus of the message? Not all scriptures are written for the reader to obey or emulate. The Book of Acts was Dr. Luke's journalistic account of events surrounding the Apostles, including his companion the Apostle Paul, as they followed the Holy Spirit's leading.

CONTEXTUAL RENDERING: This means determining the *Author's Intent* by applying exegetical principles to determine meaning, followed by hermeneutical interpretation. These are based on the contextual environs of a passage: its historical setting, its cultural implications (if any), and its grammatical structure, including the Tense, Voice, and Mood (TVM) of Greek verbs. Also, one must keep in mind that Scriptures have various types of speech, which need to be considered. These include narrative, didactic (teaching), idiomatic, prose, poetic, euphemisms, hyperbole, metaphor and simile, ellipsis, allegory, *etc.* All Scripture passages have *one* original meaning, determined by the context. They may also contain a prophetic theme or principle. These should not be allegorized or interpreted according to the reader's opinion or preference (2 Peter 1:16–19). It's been said, "*If the plain sense makes perfect sense, then seek no other sense, lest you end up with nonsense!*"

INTERPRETATION (LITERAL): Literal or formal interpretation of a passage how the intended meaning of the passage's *Divine and human* authors is accurately determined, i.e., within its historical, cultural, and grammatical context. This is accomplished through "exegesis" (*to pull out, extract, or decipher*). To assist in the discovery, one must consider the *Five Ws* of the passage: *Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How*. After arriving at the passage's intended meaning (exegesis), it is then communicated through the principles of interpretation called "hermeneutics" (*to interpret or explain*). The hermeneutic (*explanation*) may be narrow in focus or wide in scope. However, any interpretation must be related to the core meaning of the passage in question, keeping in mind that every Scripture passage has only *one* originally intended meaning—with potential themes or principles of application that can be drawn. However, that does *not* mean altering or modifying the meaning (*allegorization*) to force it to coordinate with one's own liking or beliefs (eisegesis). As in: "*What it means to me, is...*" (2 Peter 1:19–21).

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS: Old Testament prophets are God's spokesmen. They may chastise Israel or speak of future events, often both close and distant in fulfillment. Although figurative speech is often used (as seen in Revelation), not all prophecy is figurative. One should assume the words are to be understood in their normal, literal sense unless a figurative or symbolic meaning is obvious.

NEW TESTAMENT PROPHETS: Apostolic period Prophets *Teach Previously Unrevealed Truths to The New Church*, truths contained in the completed New Testament Canon. This special gift then ceased, as did tongues.

THE BIBLE: Known as *The Word of God*, it is the linchpin for our beliefs and practices. It is living, divinely inspired (*God-breathed*), infallible (*without error*), and the final authority on all matters it speaks to. The Bible teaches there is one God (Isaiah 45: 5–6; Mark 12:29–31). God (*Elohim*) 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 but with distinct roles.

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, i.e., views, values, and lifestyles that are faulty doctrinally or contrary to Scripture. This can refer to the beliefs of Christians or cults that claim to be biblically based but are not. Examples include inspiration, inerrancy, Christ's Deity, salvation, etc.

FOLLOWER. A follower may be a religious person who identifies as a Christian or like the curious multitudes who followed Christ out of interest or curiosity because of the signs and wonders He performed (John 2:23–25).

DISCIPLE: A disciple (*mathētēs*) is a learner or pupil; typically, a dedicated believer who faithfully follows Jesus Christ and His teachings.

APOSTLE: An Apostle (*apostolos*) means an *Official Emissary, Messenger, or Ambassador*. The twelve chosen Apostles were Christ's ambassadors whom He handpicked as His special messengers and to whom He bestowed miraculous sign gifts. There are no apostles today despite what self-appointed pretenders might claim.

APOSTOLIC SIGN GIFTS: This controversial subject is divided into two main categories: *Biblical* and *unbiblical*. Anyone can discern the difference by sound exegetical analysis: the principles of literal interpretation: context, time period, culture, and grammatical structure of the passage; also, by identifying the speaker, the audience, and the author's intended meaning. Most Bible scholars concur that *Tongues* were the miraculous Apostolic era sign gift to preach to *unbelieving* diasporic Jews in the language of their resident country (cf. Acts 2:5–11). *Prophecy* was the miraculous Apostolic era sign gift for the church to *forth-tell* the will and purpose of God to *believers*. Both were in use before the completion of the New Testament (c. AD 96). This writer believes these miraculous sign gifts were designed by God for the Apostolic era (c. AD 33–96), *not for today!* (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:8–13).

REPENTANCE: This means a change of heart or mind, resulting in the heartfelt conviction or acknowledgment of one's lost condition, acknowledgment of God's righteousness, and the stark realization of the impending judgment. This is revealed in one's actions after being born-anew by the indwelling Holy Spirit. The change of one's mind (perception, realization, and understanding) precedes any recognizable outward change of action.

FAITH: Faith (*pistis*) follows repentance (Acts 20:21). Synonymous terms are trust, acknowledge, reliance upon, dependence, confidence in, assurance, embrace, and *placing one's heart upon* (a Thai expression). True saving faith is not based on unprovable metaphysical or new-age *blind faith* but acceptance and confidence in historical facts: a viable person (Christ), a real object (substitutionary death on the Cross), a principle (atonement), a miraculous event (bodily resurrection). Blind faith or *Faith in Faith* (trusting in one's faith) is impossible and can never save you—like trying to lift oneself by one's bootstraps. Trusting in the Name, Person, and Work of Jesus Christ alone as the object of your faith is the only way you can be saved, seen in changed attitudes and conduct (2 Cor 5:17-21), abiding in the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, "*I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*" (John 14:6).

DOCTRINE: Often contained in a *Doctrinal Statement*, *Statement of Faith*, or *What We Believe*, it is a compilation of Scriptural beliefs held by an individual, a school, a church, or a denominational group. It defines their views, beliefs and practices, sometimes with a sub-section pointing out things they do not believe or practice. These may also contain variations or differences of belief. Doctrinal statements help the inquirer, visitor, or potential new member to understand the church's position on various beliefs and issues, or that of members therein.

EXEGESIS: To exegete a Scripture passage means to *draw out* or determine the author's originally intended (or implied) meaning by *rightly dividing the word of truth* (2 Timothy 2:15). This is accomplished by analyzing its historic, sociocultural, grammatical elements within a passage's contextual environment. Essentially, it means unpacking the treasures therein to gain a correct understanding. Comparing similar passages can enhance clarity.

EISEGESIS: Opposite of Exegesis, it means to *insert* one's personal ideas or beliefs into a Scripture passage instead of relying on exegetical methods of interpretation to arrive at the author's true intended meaning of a passage. It refers to adulterating a verse or passage with one's pet doctrines—with stern warnings (cf. **ALLEGORIZE**).

HERMENEUTICS: The science of interpretation of a biblical passage. It's done by applying the findings of the exegetical process to discern, expound, and clarify the correct meaning contained therein.

AN ALLEGORY – NOUN: An allegory (a noun) is a figure of speech. There is a sizable amount of allegory in Scripture. Linguistically, it comes under the heading of metaphor and Simile. A **metaphor** is an analogous expression referring to something that suggests a similarity like Christ calling Herod a fox (Luke 13:32), meaning sly and crafty. A **simile** contains the term "is like" between the actual and the picture, which denotes a certain resemblance between two otherwise dissimilar things. If Christ had stated what He did about Herod as a simile, He would have said Herod **is like** a fox. Instead, He phrased it as "Go, tell **that** fox..."

TO ALLEGORIZE – VERB: To allegorize (a verb) means to assign an entirely different meaning to a Scripture text—something not intended by the author. Thereby opening oneself up to God's judgment by adding to or removing from (altering) God's inspired written Word (Revelation 22:18–19). Scripture clearly warns: "*Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar*" (Proverbs 30:6).

A FRIENDLY BIBLE QUIZ:

This open-bible quiz is included so you can get a clearer sense of where you stand personally concerning the subject in focus—the Charismatic Movement, its beliefs, claims, and practices.

- 1) According to 1 Corinthians 14:22, of the temporary Apostolic sign gifts of Tongues and Prophecy, which was meant specifically for whom, believers versus unbelievers?
 - ☐ a) The Apostolic-era gifts of Tongues and Prophecy were meant for believers and unbelievers.
 - ☐ b) Tongues was a sign gift for believers' worship while Prophecy was for reaching unbelieving Jews.
 - ☐ c) Prophecy was a sign gift for believers while Tongues was for evangelizing unbelieving Jews.
- 2) According to 1 Corinthians 14:23, did the Apostle Paul encourage the Corinthian all believers to speak in tongues 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 Prophecy, saying 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 instruct 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 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 change and vacillate. 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 eternal judgment. This 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* (Matthew 3:12 and Luke 3:17). Eternal judgment means paying for one's sin against God's righteous Law. Not having received God's gift of forgiveness—Salvation through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ's atoning sacrifice (Romans 6:23).

- 6) Does the Holy Spirit abide in His fullness in all born-again believers? Or, is speaking in tongues a necessary sign for 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 after Salvation—a higher level of spirituality.
 - ☐ b) Since the Holy Spirit gives the gift of Eternal Life, 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 the Apostolic gift of tongues and Charismatic tongues are the same?
- ☐ Yes. They are the same.
 - ☐ No. They are not 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 Pentecost, which occurred 50 days after the Day of Atonement.
- 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 if it's God's will.
 - ☐ Yes. It's good to know that I have the fullness of the Spirit, and it makes me feel close to God to have my personal prayer language.
 - ☐ No. Modern-day tongues are not authentic. It is a false teaching produced through hypnotic suggestion or euphoric religious highs that induce ecstatic utterances or are potentially demonic.
- 10) Lastly, do you believe the inspired written Word of God is true and accurate, and therefore accept what it teaches about the special Apostolic-era sign gifts—Miracles, Tongues, and Healing—that they are *not* in operation today (1 Corinthians 13:8–10, 14:20–25)?
- ☐ Yes. I accept what the Bible teaches about the Apostolic gifts as being ordained by God for the beginning of the Church Age—Tongues being for expediting the proclamation of the Gospel (*the Wonderful Works of God*) among unreached Jews, Proselytes, and Gentiles of distant languages at the onset of the Church Age, previous to the completion of the New Testament Canon. I *do not* believe they are in operation today. Furthermore, I believe God is all-powerful and can do whatever He wishes (including healing), yet God never acts, promotes, or blesses anything contrary to His will, as seen in His inspired, unchanging, written Word.
 - ☐ No. I *don't* believe the Bible teaches the Apostolic sign gifts have ceased. I believe they are still in operation today, evidenced by all who speak in tongues and perform healings. They are modern-day Prophets and Apostles.

THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT
by JOHN MACARTHUR:

Dr. John MacArthur, M.Div. D.D., D.D., is uniquely qualified to speak on this subject because he watched its progression from its beginning. MacArthur is the founding pastor of *Grace Community Church*, Sun Valley, CA (c.1956). He is also the founding president of *The Master's Seminary* (both being in Sun Valley, California). In 1985, Dr. MacArthur became the president of *The Master's University*, a non-denominational, conservative Christian liberal arts university in Santa Clarita, California—formerly called *The Los Angeles Baptist College and Seminary*. Lastly, he authored the award-winning *MacArthur Study Bible* based on his personal study notes. John MacArthur is a firm Cessationist (Apostolic era sign gift cessation) and a prominent voice in rebutting Continuationist beliefs (Apostolic era sign gift continuation) held by both Pentecostals and Charismatics. MacArthur has authored three books in support of his Cessationist position: *The Charismatics* (1978), *Charismatic Chaos* (1993), and *Strange Fire* (2013).

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: "*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, visions, voices from heaven, tongues, prophecies, out-of-body experiences, trips to heaven, special anointings, and pseudo-miracles are deceptive lies—wrongly attributed to God's 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.

Dr. MacArthur acknowledged that those within the Charismatic movement (like Pastor Chuck Smith, 1927–2013) 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 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 generally describes the Charismatic movement.

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

Concerning Chuck 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. Many like him 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 after 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 people cannot understand or deal with. If these kinds of things remain core values 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, 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 in dead denominationalism, et al. I think it's a false form of Christianity."

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

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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*. Subsequently, he has observed the Charismatic movement's growth and development—including its extremes and ramifications—from its inception to the present and can therefore speak authoritatively.

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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 by others.