

The New Fundamentals:
The Spiritual Gift of Tongues

Foreword

This book is the first in a series entitled “The New Fundamentals” based upon Psalms 11:3 “If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?” The New Fundamentals are a study of the bible doctrines principally under attack in the black church.

The foundations of a people and a nation consist of the institutions that God set up in the first chapters of Genesis, namely marriage, family and government. It is the proper function of these institutions that enable the profitable operation of civilization.

These institutions in turn sit upon the bedrock of the Word of God as taught by pastors and teachers. It is by the scripture that we come to know how we should live with God (spiritual stability), with ourselves (mental stability) and with one another (social stability). It is the bible, properly taught, that is the basis of eternal salvation through Christ, but that same book is also the basis of all morality in society. It is by the observation of obedient Christians that unbelievers see how a marriage and family should function; it is how they see the proper function of citizenship as well. This Christian example is the basis of morality in society. Morality will not save the soul, but it is essential for the function of civilization.

Thus the institutions that determine the well being of our families and communities are established upon of the Word of God, the bible. The responsibility for the accurate proclamation of that Word is in the hands of bible teachers and preachers. It is here in the preaching and teaching of the Word of God, where the undermining of society first takes place by the systematic attack of the devil upon the foundations mentioned in Psalms 11.

The outcome of false teaching: false teaching due to premeditation or due to laziness and neglect of study is the spiritual oppression that always precedes every other kind of oppression. I will quote from a chapter in this study to further develop this point:

“The outcome of spiritual oppression is the weakening of marriage. This results in the breakdown of the family. The crippling of the family destroys the production of leaders and prevents the transfer of human and economic capital from one generation to the next. Thus every generation of the oppressed must start over from the beginning. This produces a disaster among the youth of the oppressed resulting in massive social instability.

Regarding the loss of leadership caused by spiritual oppression, and its resulting social instability, Isaiah noted the following regarding Israel:

Isaiah 3:4-5 "I will give children to be their princes, And babes shall rule over them. 5 The people will be oppressed, Every one by another and every one by his neighbor; The child will be insolent toward the elder, And the base toward the honorable." NKJV

Isaiah 3:12 As for My people, children are their oppressors, And women rule over them. O My people! Those who lead you cause you to err, And destroy the way of your paths." NKJV

This is how false teaching destroys the nation. This is why the charismatic error is not merely a difference of opinion, but the difference between discipleship and disaster.

As long as the emphasis of the church is upon the hammer and the shovel (gifts) rather than upon the builder of the house, we will continue to build huge ministries in the midst of a collapsing community.

Our focus upon gifts such as tongues is evidence of a departure from a true understanding of God's purpose for the church, and the role of the church in nation building. We have turned the church from being an agency of spiritual uplift by the transformation of individuals through the Word of God into a place that provides emotional release without lasting spiritual impact.

Therefore a handful of individuals have become wealthy while the community is on its way to a new form of slavery, locked in economic bondage, political disenfranchisement and extreme social instability. We are jumping and shouting our way to judgment."

So you can see the background from which we approach the issue of the spiritual gift of tongues, which are a part of a charismatic doctrinal *system* that is fundamentally in error. If in fact the church is the foundation of a properly operating society, then false teaching is not merely a difference of opinion, but a matter of deadly seriousness to the black community.

The future of the black family in America and therefore the future of generations of blacks to come rest heavily upon what we do with the Word of God. The "New Fundamentals" Series intends to provide an accurate view of the central doctrines currently under attack in the pulpits of black America.

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Tongues Part 1: General Principles of Spiritual Gifts

This is the introductory lesson in a series on the spiritual gift of languages, also known as tongues. This introduction will focus upon the divine purpose for spiritual gifts in general. A proper understanding of God's purpose for spiritual gifts and how they are to be used will provide a good backdrop for what we have to say about the particular gift of tongues.

General Principles of Spiritual Gifts

1. Spiritual gifts are bestowed by the Holy Spirit as He determines 1Corinthians 12:11, Heb 2:3-4.
2. The function of spiritual gifts have been predetermined Ephesians 2:10.
3. The purpose of spiritual gifts is not for the personal benefit of the believer, but for the benefit of the body of Christ 1 Corinthians 12.7, Ephesians 4:11-13, Ephesians 2.19-22, 1Peter 4:10.
4. All believers are not given the same spiritual gifts 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 28-30.
5. Spiritual gifts are not the same as spiritual maturity 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

1. Spiritual gifts are bestowed by the Holy Spirit as He determines 1 Corinthians 12:11, Heb 2:3-4

1 Co 12:7-11 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: 8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11

But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.
NKJV

Hebrews 2:3-4 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, 4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will? NKJV¹

God Himself determines who receives which gift, and not man. He determines where the gifts are dispersed in history. This means he not only determines **where** a gift will be available but **when** it will be available and **through whom** it will be available.

This is necessary because only God knows what the church needs and when it will need it. God is sovereign over the distribution of spiritual gifts. God is operating according to a plan established by Him in eternity past. He is not making things up as He goes along. Neither is He waiting to see what *we* will do in order to execute His plans. The distribution of spiritual gifts is a function of God's sovereignty and related to His omniscience: God distributes spiritual gifts to individuals based upon the predetermined plan of God.

The idea behind 1Cor 12:11 is that all the gifts are given by the Spirit as a single endowment. He must divide that endowment among elect individuals according to a specific preordained formulation. Although divided among many individuals separated both geographically as well as temporally across history, God's design is validated as these gifts operate and interact across time and space for the common good of Christ's spiritual body.

In order to discover the spiritual gift that God has provided, you must grow spiritually. This is similar to our recognition of natural gifts that result from the first (physical) birth. We must grow and develop in order to discover that we can run fast, or understand mathematics or music.

In the same way, we only discover our spiritual gifts by growing up spiritually. This is one serious way in which bad teaching impacts the effectiveness of the church. Bad or incorrect teaching prevents believers from growing spiritually; like a child that is raised on candy. Believers that do not grow, never realize their true spiritual gifts, so they just make them up. They simply decide that they want a certain gift, and then they make up ways to use the “gift” that pleases them.

2. The function of spiritual gifts have been predetermined
Ephesians 2:10

Ephesians 2:10 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God **prepared beforehand** that we should walk in them. NKJV

The *proper use* of spiritual gifts are not determined by the believer, but by God. It is as the believer grows in obedience to God that he is most profitably used in the Plan of God.

Even though Jesus is God, he also submitted to the Father in the exercise of his ability. Jesus Himself did not *independently* exercise his deity while in the flesh but walked according to the Fathers plan.

Phil 2:5-8 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8

And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. NASBⁱⁱ

3. The purpose of spiritual gifts is not for the personal benefit of the believer, but for the benefit of the body of Christ 1 Corinthians 12.7, Ephesians 4:11-13, Ephesians 2.19-22, 1Peter 4:10

1 Corinthians 12:7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: NKJV

1 Peter 4:10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. NKJV

Christ's purpose in providing spiritual gifts is not individual spiritual self-construction; no single believer has all the gifts necessary to accomplish his own individual spiritual development. It is by the joint use of all the gifts, under the instruction of the Holy Spirit, for the common good, that God's righteous purpose is accomplished. This is the true meaning of the concept of edification ("built up" in Eph 2:21-22) which describes the church as a spiritual *temple* under construction, and Eph 4 where the church is described as a *body*, which growth is caused by the proper working of each individual part.

Ephesians 2:19-22 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, 20 having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; 22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. NASB

Ephesians 4:15-16 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. NASU

Spiritual gifts are not for the purpose of self edification: the spiritual body of Christ does not and will not grow in that fashion. You do not receive spiritual gifts in order to use them upon yourself in your prayer closet.

The purpose of spiritual gifts is not for the personal benefit of the believer, but for the benefit of the body of Christ.

Examples:

- The apostles could not heal themselves 2Cor 12:7-10
- Prophets needed other prophets to prophesy to them Acts 21.10
- Teachers required teaching from other gifted individuals Acts 18:24-26
- Those with the gift of languages required an interpreter to discern the message from God 1 Corinthians 14:27-28

The biblical rules are so clear regarding the use of spiritual gifts in general and tongues in particular, that people have created the false concepts of prayer tongues and praise tongues. However, these false uses are self directed and therefore violate the fundamental biblical principle that spiritual gifts are directed outward for the benefit of the body of Christ. In this way, the spiritual body of Christ acts as one body within the world accomplishing the purposes of the Head which is Christ.

4. All believers are not given the same spiritual gifts 1
Corinthians 12:7-11, 28-30

1 Corinthians 12:6-11 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given **to each** one for the profit of all: 8 **for to one** is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, **to another** the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, 9 **to another** faith by the same Spirit, **to another** gifts of healings by the same Spirit, 10 **to another** the working of miracles, **to another** prophecy, **to another** discerning of spirits, **to another** different kinds of tongues, **to another** the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, **distributing to each one individually** as He wills. NKJV

That God is not giving everyone the same gifts should be apparent from this verse. But Paul provides other examples:

1 Corinthians 12:29-31 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? 30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? NKJV

1 Corinthians 12:14-20 **Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.** 15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? 18 **But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.** 19 If they were all one part, where would the body

be? 20 **As it is, there are many parts, but one body.**
NIV

In view of these scriptures, it should be impossible for anyone to claim that the gift of tongues is available to everyone. First of all, the gift of tongues is a dead gift: it was a gift that was needed in the childhood of the church and no longer exists today (as we will demonstrate fully later on). But even if tongues did exist today, the gift would not be available to every believer based upon the scriptures above.

Even in the infancy of the church, every believer did not receive the gift of tongues.

Ac 2:38-42 38 Then Peter said to them," Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. NKJV

Three thousand souls responded to the message. Three thousand souls were saved. Three thousand souls received the Holy Spirit. But not one spoke in tongues. This would have been a wonderful opportunity for Luke to justify the chaos that happens in many tongues speaking churches today by recording that these three thousand plus persons all started speaking in tongues, but he didn't, because *they* didn't.

When everyone wants the same one or two gifts, other less valued gifts are neglected. Even though there are persons who

have these gifts, they don't cultivate them and use them with the result that the church, as well as the community suffers.

1 Corinthians 12:15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? NKJV

Once the spiritual scale of values of a church is undermined, the destruction of the spiritual impact of that church is not far behind.

Here we have Sister Foot who has been rendered spiritually useless by the false belief that spiritual effectiveness is related to a function that she does not possess. She falsely believes that unless she can become a hand, she cannot minister, she is not even a part of the body. This is the danger of the false teaching that tongues are a sign of some superior anointing or endowment of spiritual power.

Many times I am asked, "If tongues have ceased some 1900 years ago and there are no legitimate tongues today, what then is my mother doing or my sister doing?" Here in 1Cor12:15 is a part of the answer. Sister Foot honestly believes that she cannot benefit the body as a Foot-she must be a Hand in order to have spiritual value to the body. *She doesn't even qualify as a part of the body* as a foot, in her thinking.

And why shouldn't she think that way? Her Pastor taught her to believe in the superiority of Hands over feet. All of the leaders of the church are Hands. Nearly all of the radio and television pastors are Hands. Even teachers who used to be feet are hanging out with the Hands and considering hand implants. Why shouldn't Sister Foot think the way she does?

So even though Sister Foot is an essential part of the body, *her true gift is not in use* because of her thinking. Members of the

body are deprived of her ministry, perhaps even the unsaved are neglected due to the confusion of Sister Foot. Enough church members with her problem results in a severely malfunctioning local church.

But wait, there's more. Sister Foot finds out that she can become a Hand, if she has a special spiritual experience. All she has to do is ask God for it and believe that He will do it. Just like that, she will be a Hand. Many others have done it and now they are Hands and are even closer to God because of it. Sister Foot realizes that she is living beneath her spiritual privilege.

One day, you go to church service and notice that Sister Foot is now Sister Hand. In recognition of her achievement, she is promoted into leadership in the church. She finally belongs; she has a sense of purpose and well being, she is a Hand! This is precisely what many believers have done.

Even after all that is said in this book, there will be many that will say, "I know what I experienced and it was real." It is important that you understand that I am *not* here to deny that you had an experience, I am *not* here to deny that it was real; I *am* here to deny that it was biblical.

5. Spiritual gifts are not the same as spiritual maturity

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. NKJV

In the passage love is the evidence of spiritual maturity. The word “nothing” in this passage means “an absolute zero”. Absolute zero is the value of spiritual gifts in the possession of the spiritually immature.

It was love that motivated the ultimate sacrifice by Christ for mankind. Love is the essential nature of God and the end of Christian development; not spiritual gifts.

Spiritual maturity precedes effective spiritual function. It is spiritual growth that makes the gifts function in fullness and in power.

Love has always been associated with spiritual power in the bible. **Today we have mistaken gifts for power.** Gifts are power put to *specific uses*. The gifts are not power, the power comes from our intimacy with Christ. A hammer is not power, it is the strength of the man that makes it useful. The Christian’s power is derived power; it is not available except to the extent we are in fellowship with the Head. Every believer has a spiritual gift, but **not** every believer exercises spiritual power, because every believer does not grow. Therefore we must conclude that there are many believers with spiritual gifts that simply do not function, because the power is cut off.

Love has always been associated with spiritual power.

John 14:21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." NKJV

2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. NKJV

1 John 5:2-4 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His

commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. 4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith. NKJV

In the spiritual life, the one who loves is the one who has and properly uses spiritual power. The one who loves is the one who knows God 1Jn 4:7, and is the one who has kept the greatest commandment Matt 22.37.

Again, today we have mistaken gifts for power. This was the great error of the Corinthians, and the whole point of 1 Corinthians 13. Gifts are power put to specific uses, but they are not power itself. God is power, or divine omnipotence, and to be fully possessed by Him as a result of spiritual maturity produces the very power by which spiritual gifts operate.

Without spiritual maturity there can be no effective function of the gifts. Spiritual gifts can only be *misused* by carnal and infantile believers. Spiritual maturity guarantees effective spiritual function

1 Corinthians 13:8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. NKJV

Conclusion: General Principles of Spiritual Gifts

1. Spiritual gifts are bestowed by the Holy Spirit as He determines 1Corinthians 12:11, Heb 2:3-4.
2. The function of spiritual gifts have been predetermined Ephesians 2:10.
3. The purpose of spiritual gifts is not for the personal benefit of the believer, but for the benefit of the body of Christ 1 Corinthians 12.7, Ephesians 4:11-13, Ephesians 2.19-22, 1Peter 4:10.
4. All believers are not given the same spiritual gifts 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 28-30.
5. Spiritual gifts are not the same as spiritual maturity 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Tongues Part 2: Features of Biblical Tongues-Languages,
Judgment, Israel

Tongues are a spiritual gift.

Tongues are the God given ability to speak in a human language unknown to the speaker for the purpose of a proclamation of divine truth to unregenerate Israel.

This is a very important point. We have already established that spiritual gifts have certain characteristics. If tongues are a spiritual gift, then the principles that we discussed earlier regarding spiritual gifts must apply to the gift of tongues as well.

Many believe that tongues are a permanent consequence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The experiences described in the book of Acts were not entirely explained in the book of Acts, but by Paul who was the apostle of the mystery of the church.

Colossians 1:24-26 I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church, 25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, 26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. NKJV

I will develop the fact that the book of Acts did not attempt to come close to explaining the church age doctrine of the Holy Spirit, but approached the entire matter from a Jewish perspective, based upon what could be known from the Old Testament and the ministry of Jesus, which ministry occurred

entirely before Pentecost during the period dominated by the Law of Moses.

However, even in Acts there are helpful indications of the true purpose of tongues.

Peter presented the Pentecostal sermon in Jerusalem, on a Jewish holiday when the city was full of national citizens as well as international Jews. He addressed his sermon to the men of the Jewish nation

Acts 2:5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. NKJV

Acts 2:14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, NKJV

Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: NKJV

In his sermon, Peter explained the phenomena of tongues as that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel. Joel made no predictions regarding the church in his book, neither did any Old Testament prophet prophesy about the church. Paul repeatedly describes the church as a mystery, unrevealed in the Old Testament.

Joel 2:28 "And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. NKJV

Ezek 39:29 And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,' says the Lord GOD." NKJV

Acts 1:4-5 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. KJV

Peter was demonstrating that the phenomena of Pentecost were a fulfillment of the Old Testament promise of the outpouring of the Spirit upon believing Israel. The Old Testament did not predict the coming of the church; however God did promise the outpouring of the Spirit upon believing Israel. This was the “promise of the Father” Acts 1:4. It was not until Paul that the full meaning of Pentecost was explained in his epistles.

This outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the believing Jews on the day of Pentecost and thereafter in the book of Acts was described in a number of ways, the basic concept being that Christ was baptizing (Acts 2:33) with the Holy Spirit.

Matt 3:11-12 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. NKJV

Peter himself is the greatest proof of the fact that the Church at Pentecost did not understand the full doctrine of the church, by his unwillingness, **eight years later**, to enter the house of the Gentile Cornelius to proclaim the Gospel. Peter believed what he had preached on the day of Pentecost: that the phenomenon of tongues was one of several signs that presaged the outpouring of the Spirit upon the Jewish remnant as predicted in the Old Testament. He was about to see that the events begun at Pentecost reached far further than Israel.

God enabled the sign of tongues at Cornelius' home and later in Acts 19 to demonstrate that the events of Pentecost extended to the Gentiles as well. Peter finally got the message as indicated by the following scriptures:

Acts 10:34-36 Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. 35 But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him. NKJV

Acts 11:15-18 And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. 16 Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' 17 If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us **when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ**, who was I that I could withstand God?" 18 When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, " Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life." NKJV

Peter now saw the purpose of the vision that he was given three times by God (Acts 10:9-15). He saw that His purpose at Pentecost was greater than Israel alone. God demonstrated the oneness and equality of the members of the Body of Christ (Eph 2:12-17) by providing the Gentile believers the same sign of the gift of tongues that He had previously given to the Jews.

The concept of the church was a *progressive revelation* to Peter and the early church, which was overwhelmingly Jewish. It took eight years for Peter to get to the point that he was in Acts 11, which we just read. (AD 33 to AD 41)

It remained for Paul to clarify the doctrine of the church age ministry of the Holy Spirit. Paul would, 27 years after Pentecost,

explain this idea of the **promise of the father** as relating to the Gentiles as follows:

Galatians 3:13-14 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), 14 that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. NKJV

The details of this baptism are not given in the book of Acts. However, the believers at Pentecost and those believing in Christ elsewhere following that event received as a permanent possession the same endowments of the Spirit that we all receive today.

Paul identified the blessing received at Pentecost as the regenerating (Eph 2:1, 4-5; Jn 3:3,7; 6:44, 65), indwelling (Rom 8:9; Jn 7:38-39), filling (Eph 5:18, Gal 5:16), baptizing (1Cor 12:13) and sealing (Eph 1:13; 4:30) work of the Holy Spirit. What was only incompletely revealed in Acts was give full explanation by the Apostle of the mystery of the church.

Paul offered helpful clarification regarding the spiritual gift of languages or tongues. He explained that the sign of tongues which signaled the unity of Jew and Gentile in the Church, the Body of Christ, was a gift to some but not to all (1Cor 12:28-30). Paul further explained that the phenomena of tongues was a witness to unbelieving *Israel* of impending judgment; as was the case in the days of Isaiah (1Cor 14:20-22). The apostle also argued that tongues belonged to the childhood of the church

1 Corinthians 13:8-12 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we

prophecy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. NKJV

Paul indicates in this passage that certain gifts belonged to an era of *partial knowledge*. The church in its early years did not have the benefit of a completed and collated volume of the New Testament. They “knew in part” that which one day would be fully revealed in the completed scripture. Therefore God bridged the gap between the Old Testament revelation and the completed New Testament with temporary gifts which enabled the growth of the church.

Paul shows us that tongues did not contribute to the spiritual life of the user in that the gift rendered the mind unfruitful (1Cor 14:14). Nor did the gift provide for the edification of the church. Therefore he recommended prophecy as 2000 times more effective than tongues in the church.

1 Corinthians 14:19 yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.
NKJV

Features of Tongues: What Tongues Are Not

Tongues are not related to Gentile believers except when used as a sign to the unbelieving Jew.

1Cor 14.20-22 Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature. 21 In the law it is written: "With men of other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people; And yet, for all that, they will not hear Me," says the

Lord. 22 Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe. NKJV

Tongues are not related to the spiritual life of the believer, tongues were an evangelistic tool related to Israel only 1Cor 14.20-22.

Tongues are not necessary to evangelize Jews today Rom 10:1-12. the gift of tongues were of use until the judgment of national Israel was accomplished by Rome in 70 A.D. Tongues were the special effort from the grace of God to communicate a change of administration to the people who had been His primary evangelistic agency for 1400 years. In 70 A.D. the temple was destroyed and Israel led into captivity. Today, witnessing to the Jews is the same as that of any other individual (Jn 14.6).

Tongues are not necessary for salvation:

1Cor 12:28-30 28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? 30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? NKJV Also Rom 8.9

Note that all believers did not speak in tongues in the days of the Corinthians. Thousands of people were saved at Pentecost, but there is no evidence that any of them spoke in tongues.

Acts 2:41-42 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. NKJV

Tongues are not a sign of the baptism by the Spirit into Christ 1Cor 12.13 cf. 12.29-30

1Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit we were **all** baptized into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have **all** been made to drink into one Spirit. NKJV

In 1Cor 12:13 all the believers had been baptized by the Spirit into the Body of Christ, but all had not spoken in tongues. The gift of tongues has ceased today, its purpose of warning to the Jews having been fulfilled 1900 years ago.

Tongues are not a sign of the filling of the Spirit. The filling of the Spirit is commanded, Eph 5.18, speaking in tongues is not, (and neither is the baptism of the Spirit commanded) and since tongues were a spiritual gift, it was only possible for the few that possessed the true gift of languages 1Cor 12.28-30

Tongues are not means of direct communication with God. God commands no communication that is apart from the conscious mind.

1 Corinthians 14:14-15 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. 15 What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. NKJV

Tongues Part 3: Arguments for Tongues

Used by Tongues Speakers	Ignored by Tongues Speakers
1Cor 13.1 tongues of angels 1Cor 14.2 speaks to God 1Cor 14.4 edifies himself	Gal 1.8; Acts 2.8; 1Cor 14.10 Matt 6.7 1Cor 14.20-22 1Cor 12.7; 1Pet 4.10-11; Eph 4.11-13; 1Cor 14.14b-15
1Cor 14.5 every one speak in tongues 1Cor 14.14 pray in a tongue 1Cor 14.15 sing with my spirit	1Cor 12.28-30; 1Cor 14.27-28 1Cor 14.5b 1Cor 14. 14b-15 Matt 6.7 1Cor 14.15b; 17b “my spirit, not the Spirit”
1Cor 14.16 praising God...your spirit 1Cor 14.18 I speak in tongues more than	1Cor 14.16b-17 “your spirit, not the Spirit” 1Cor 14.19 Rom 9-11
1Cor 14.39 Do not forbid...tongues	1Cor 14.27-28 Acts 2.8; 1 Cor 12.7, 1Cor 12.30

Used by Tongues Speakers

1 Corinthians 13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. NKJV

Response

Galatians 1:8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! (NASB95ⁱⁱⁱ)

Paul does not actually expect angels to personally preach a false gospel to the Galatians. His argument to them is that regardless of the stature of the individual preaching a false gospel, regardless of his degrees, the books he has written or the size of his church, let him be accursed. In like manner, Paul uses hyperbole, or extreme language in order to make the point in 1Corinthians 13 that spiritual gifts are not the same as spiritual maturity, which has as its primary attribute the capacity for love.

Paul is not making a case for non-rational languages for praise and prayer. He contradicts this line of reasoning in Chapter 14.

1 Corinthians 14:7-10 7 Yet even lifeless things, either flute or harp, in producing a sound, if they do not produce a distinction in the tones, how will it be known what is played on the flute or on the harp? For if the bugle produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle? So also you, unless you utter by the tongue speech that is clear, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air. 10 There are, perhaps, a great many kinds of languages in the world, and no kind is without meaning. (NASB95)

Acts 2:8 8 “And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? (NASB95)

The tongues of Acts, and the tongues spoken of by Paul are both actual languages. There are not two different kinds of tongues. We can see this when we compare Paul's comments in 1Corinthians 14 with the events in Acts 2. Both are actual languages

Now there were ecstatic, non-rational utterance used in the early centuries of the church, but this type of speech was used by the pagans in the worship of false Gods.

Used by Tongues Speakers

1 Corinthians 14:2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. NKJV

Response

Matthew 6:7-8 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. 8 Do not be like them, NIV

In 1Cor 14.20-22 Paul specifically says that tongues are not for the purpose of communication with God or with believers, but are a sign for unbelieving Israel. He notes that to use this gift in any other fashion is an indication of spiritual childishness.

1 Corinthians 14:20-22 20 Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature. 21 In the Law it is written, “By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people, and even so they will not listen to Me,” says the Lord. 2 So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophecy is for a sign, not to unbelievers but to those who believe. (NASB95)

Therefore first, the purpose of tongues is **not** communication with God. Secondly, the use of non-languages for the purpose of communication with God is forbidden by Paul in 1Cor 14:15.

1 Corinthians 14:14-15 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. 15 What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. NKJV

Many people claim that an unfruitful mind, the consequence of praying or praising in tongues is a desirable spiritual state. However, this conclusion goes against the Word of God that says that the human mind plays an indispensable role in our spiritual function. The bible says that an unfruitful mind^{iv} is an unnatural state; divine fellowship requires positive mental activity based upon the Word of God (Matt 22:37; 12:34) We will look at this concept in detail later.

Used by Tongues Speakers

1 Corinthians 14:3-4 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. 4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. NKJV

Response

1 Corinthians 12:7; Eph 4.11-13 Both of these scriptures say that spiritual gifts are not given for self edification. All spiritual gifts are given to the church and are not for self therapy. Paul's statement in 14.4 is a rebuke and not a recommendation.

1 Peter 4:10-11 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. NIV^v

1 Corinthians 12:7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. NASB

The purpose of spiritual gifts is for the building up of the body of Christ. No one grows as a result of using spiritual gifts upon themselves.

- The apostles could not heal themselves 2Cor 12:7-10
- Prophets needed other prophets to prophesy to them Acts 21.10
- Teachers required teaching from other gifted individuals Acts 18:24-26
- Those with the gift of languages required an interpreter to discern the message from God 1 Corinthians 14:27-28

The fact that we have people trying to direct spiritual gifts at themselves is an indictment of modern Christianity and not a cause for praise.

Furthermore, if the purpose of tongues is the edification of unredeemed Israel for the purpose of salvation, which Paul clearly states, how then can it be used to edify Gentile believers?

Finally Paul has prohibited the use of tongues for the purpose of prayer, he himself said that although he spoke in tongues more than all, that he refused to pray in tongues in 1Cor 14:14-15.

Used by Tongues Speakers

1 Corinthians 14:5 I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification. NKJV

Response

1 Corinthians 12:29-30 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? 30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? NKJV

Clearly, Paul knew that although he may have wished that all had the true gift of languages, he knew that this was not possible, because these gifts are sovereignly bestowed by God upon some but not all believers.

Paul did not believe in the private use of tongues for praise or prayer. He now speaks out against the use of tongues in the church.

Paul wanted everyone to speak in tongues because of his burden for the salvation of Israel. The true use of tongues was for the purpose of serving as a witness to unregenerate Israel. Paul was very motivated to see his brethren saved.

Rom 9:3-4a For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, 4 who are Israelites, NKJV

Within the church, Paul could not have been clearer that the gift of tongues was almost useless. Again this means, no use of tongues as a praise language in the local church.

1 Corinthians 14:5b for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification. NKJV

1 Corinthians 14:19 yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue. NKJV

The common modern justification for tongues speaking today is that it is a prayer or praise language to be used by all saved individuals. Everyone cannot speak in tongues because it is a spiritual gift. If the purpose for tongues was to be used as a prayer language, then all would have been provide the gift.

The purpose of tongues proves that it is unrelated to Gentile spirituality, prayer or praise. If tongues did exist today they would be actual languages. Paul prohibited praying in a tongue (1Cor 14:14-15). Paul prohibited the use of uninterpreted tongues in the church (1Cor 14:27). Paul placed severe restrictions on the number of people who could speak in tongues during a church service (1Cor 14:27), because of their low value compared to the teaching of the Word of God (1Cor 14:19).

Used by Tongues Speakers

1 Corinthians 14:14-17 14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. 15 What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding. 16 Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say? NKJV

Response

Prayer in a tongue is illegitimate for all the reasons already mentioned: these people are not using actual languages, but the true gift of tongues is always actual languages. Jesus said not to babel in prayer like the pagans Matt 6.7-8.

Further, Paul notes that the use of tongues in the local church results in the malfunction of evangelism. The unbeliever will either disregard the church because of the madness of the proceeding (1Cor 14:23), or worse yet, assume that this so called tongues speaking is the proper behavior of believers in relation to God.

Again, tongues are a sign for unbelievers (1Cor 14.22). Paul himself says in this very passage (1Cor 14:14-15) that praying in tongues is ineffective because the mind is unfruitful.

Is the “unfruitful mind” the desired state of worship?

Is Paul’s command a recommendation or rebuke? Is Paul saying that speaking in tongues is a desired method of worship?

If Paul is saying that tongues are an acceptable form of worship or communication with God, then he also saying that an “unfruitful mind” is also profitable for these purposes. The Word of God says that the human mind plays an indispensable role in our spiritual function. **The bible says that an unfruitful mind is an unnatural state**; divine fellowship requires positive mental activity based upon the Word of God.

God fully expects our commitment and love for Him to originate in our minds. He demands the mental focus of man upon Himself (Mt 22.37 Ps 7.9 c.f., Rev 2.23)

Mt 22:37 Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." NKJV

Mind (1271) dianoia: the thinking capacity, understanding, The spiritual identity of a person is demonstrated by his thinking (Mt 12.34 Pr 27.19 Ps 14.1 1Sam 16.7).

Mt 12:34 Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. NKJV

Heart: Kardia-(2588) NT:2588 specifically, of the understanding, the faculty and seat of intelligence^{vi}.

Thinking is an essential factor in spiritual function, without it there is no understanding, no faith, and no godliness (Rom 12.1-2; Ps 119.9, 11 Php 4.8 Col 3.2 Prov 4.23).

Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. NKJV

Proverbs 4:23 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life. NKJV

In fact the Word of God + the Holy Spirit + the human mind = spiritual understanding (1Cor 2.9-12, 16).

1 Corinthians 2:16 But we have the mind of Christ. NKJV

The target of Gods' communication with man is the human mind (Jer 31.33 c.f. Heb 8.10-11 Heb 4.12).

Jeremiah 31:33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. NKJV

The origin of mans' communication with God is the human mind, operating though the influence of the Word of God (Matt 12.34 Matt 6.9, 1Cor 14.15 Pr 4.23 Josh 1.8 Ps 1.2 1Sam 16.7).

1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel," Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." NKJV

Therefore the idea of praying or singing in a tongue ("the outward appearance") is never profitable for the purpose of communication with God. This is because God gave mankind a mind for the purpose of communication with Himself. Our ability to communicate with God is based upon our ability to absorb, process and communicate the Word of God with our minds.

The mind is not the only ingredient of spiritual communication, the Holy Spirit is also involved, but without the intelligence or understanding, meaningful communication with God is impossible.

Therefore, praying or praising God in tongues is completely unacceptable to God for this reason in addition to all the other reasons previously given.

Used by Tongues Speakers

1 Corinthians 14:14-15 14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. 15 What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.
NKJV

Response

Regarding singing in tongues, Paul says he will not disengage or bypass his mind in his worship. His prayer, his singing and his praise v16 is done from the source of His mind as well as his spirit.

Note that in v14-15 the reference is to the human spirit and not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not inciting anyone to sing pray or praise God in tongues, much less artificial manifestations of the true gift of languages.

Used by Tongues Speakers

1 Corinthians 14:18 I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all; NKJV

Response

1 Corinthians 14:19 yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue. NKJV

Paul did not share the false scale of values possessed by the Corinthians regarding the gift of tongues. He knew that it was last among the gifts (1Cor 12:28). He also knew that the Corinthians attitude regarding the gift was due to their pagan background (1Cor 12.1-3).

We already saw the true reason Paul was happy to speak in tongues. It was because of the true purpose of the gift, which was to evangelize Israel in Gentile languages.

Rom 9:3-4a For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, 4 who are Israelites, NKJV

This desire for the salvation of Israel was not a factor in the interest of the Corinthians in this gift. They wanted it because it reminded them of the ecstatic rituals of their pagan days, it gave them status as spiritual believers with a closer relationship to God and it gave the impression of greater spiritual power.

Paul showed in 1 Corinthians 14 that the purpose of the gift was to alert the Jews to the new dispensation of the Church. Tongues were to inform the unbelieving Jews that the evangelistic agency of Israel was being passed on to the Gentiles, who would evangelize the world in Gentile languages. Jews hearing the gift of tongues in operation would have a final opportunity to repent and be saved.

Paul was God's last messenger of this truth. He could be expected to use the gift of languages more than others.

Used by Tongues Speakers

1 Corinthians 14:39 Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues.
NKJV

Response

There was no reason to prohibit the orderly function of the true gift of tongues. If the persons practicing the gift recognized its purpose, a witness to unbelieving Jews, the requirements for their practice when in church (for example, an interpreter) then they should not forbid the function of the gift.

This did not apply to the misuse of the true gift of tongues or the use of a false gift of a non-language used in church. This practice was prohibited both then and now.

Do not forbid speaking in tongues if *all* the following applies:

- They are human languages 1Cor 14:7-10
- They are directed at unbelieving Jews 1Cor 14:20-22
- They are interpreted, when spoken in the church 1Cor 14:28
- They are not being used in prayer or praise or singing 1Cor 14:14-15
- They are spoken by no more than three in the church, and not at the same time 1Cor 14:27
- They are not spoken by women in the church 1Cor 14:34

1 Corinthians 14:36-38 36 Or did the word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached? 37 If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord. 38 But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant. NKJV

Tongues Part 4: Tongues are Human Languages

Tongues are the God given ability to speak in a human language unknown to the speaker for the purpose of a proclamation of divine truth to unregenerate Israel.

The purpose of tongues was the evangelism of unbelieving Israel as a sign of coming judgment to Israel and the advent of the Gentile evangelistic agency 1Cor 14:20-22.

There are at least three erroneous manifestations of the gift of tongues:

1. The use of a non-human language in the place of the biblical gift, which was always actual human languages. This is often referred to as ecstatic speech and originates in pagan religious systems.
2. The use of human languages already known to the speaker, but passed off as if they were actual unlearned human languages.

This was simply people faking the true gift of tongues by speaking languages that they had actually learned and pretending that God had given them the special ability to speak in an unlearned human language.

3. The use of the proper and biblical gift of tongues in a time, place or attitude which violated God's purpose for the gift.

Tongues as Literal Human Languages

Biblical tongues are always a human language spoken somewhere in the world. Every documented occurrence of tongues in the bible is of known languages

Tower of Babel: (Gen 11.1, 6-9 Gen 10.5)

Genesis 11:1-2 Now the whole world had one language and a common speech.

Genesis 11:8 So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. 9 That is why it was called Babel--because there the LORD confused the language of the whole world.

The Biblical Philosophy of Language

It is important to note that human language originated with God, who is the creator of all human languages.

Adam named the animals with words that came from the language that he himself spoke. Adam did not create language, but used the language given him by God, the same language God used to communicate with Adam himself.

God provided His revelation to mankind via human language, which was ultimately recorded in a book, the bible. In the bible God provides revelation via human language. God did not need to use non-human languages to communicate spiritual truth.

God has provided all mankind with the psychological faculties to speak and to comprehend human language. God has provided all believers with the spiritual capacity of understanding revelation in the form of human languages. God has never required non-

human language in order to communicate spiritual truths to or through mankind.

At Babel, God introduced a multitude of new human languages for the purpose of forcing the migration of mankind across the earth, as well as to break up the spiritual revolution which had taken place at Babel. Thus we see that the multiplication of tongues had its origin in Judgment.

These languages were divided along family lines, because families are an institution which God himself established and will not violate.

These languages were unintelligible to those who did not speak them, until they were learned, as they all eventually were.

Every documented occurrence of tongues in the bible is of known languages

Tongues as Actual Languages: Beginning of the Times of the Gentiles

Isaiah 28:11 (NASB95) Indeed, He will speak to this people Through stammering lips and a foreign tongue, (Assyria/Babylon)

Foreign:1. LN 58.36-58.46 other, another, different, i.e., pertaining to one of the same kind or class of object, but distinct within that class^{vii}

As in the case at Babel, this occurrence of the confusion of languages is related to judgment, in this case, the beginning of the Times of the Gentiles. Israel through continual disobedience was scheduled for judgment at the hands of the Assyrians and the Babylonians.

The means by which they would know that the judgment was of the Lord was the languages spoken by their invaders, which would be unintelligible to them. Unintelligible or not, the invaders would be speaking human languages.

Tongues as Actual Languages: Postponement of the age of Israel

Acts 2:6-11 6 And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language. 7 They were amazed and astonished, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 “And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born?” 9 “Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God.” (NASB95)

Acts 10:45-47 45 All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. 6 For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, 7 “Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?” (NASB95)

Eight years after the day of Pentecost Peter is nearly forced to present the gospel to the Gentiles. God gives Peter a vision three times in order to demonstrate His intent to evangelize the Gentiles (Acts 10).

When Peter presented the gospel to the Gentiles, they received the Holy Spirit with the phenomena of tongues. Again, as in Acts 2 and later in Acts 19, Jews are present. The purpose of tongues, the witness to the coming judgment of God, is still intact, it has not changed; however, here the point is also being made that the Gentiles are included in the same Body as the Jew.

The doctrine of the church was being progressively revealed. This doctrine was a *mystery* in the Old Testament (Col 1:24-26). Peter clearly did not know that the making of one spiritual entity composed of both Jews and Gentiles was God's purpose.

Peter acknowledges his new understanding of God's plan in Acts 11 after being *challenged* by the Jews for taking the gospel to the Gentiles.

Acts 11:15 (NASB95) "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning."

Since Peter claimed that the Gentiles had the same experience that the Jews experienced, in the beginning, it should be clear that the Gentiles also spoke in human languages. The only way that Peter could have known that the Spirit had indwelt the Gentiles was by their speaking in unlearned foreign languages, since no other phenomena is mentioned.

In Ephesus

Acts 19:1-7 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples 2 he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." 3 And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "**Into John's baptism.**"

4 Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. 7 Now the men were about twelve in all. NKJV

In this setting, the Jews were present; those who received John's baptism were Jews since John ministered to Israel the gospel of the kingdom. Speaking in tongues resulted from the teaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

There is no reason in the text to assume that the tongues here were any different from the tongues in chapters 2 and 10:

human languages.

In Corinth

Many claim that the gift of tongues in Corinth is a different kind of tongues than in Acts. They argue that although the tongues in Acts were actual human languages, the tongues in Corinth were ecstatic speech.

The fact is that neither the definition nor the purpose of tongues changed between Acts and the Corinthians. The definition of tongues is still the God given ability to speak human languages unknown to the speaker. The purpose of the gift of tongues is still the witness to unbelieving Israel of coming judgment

The difference between Corinth and Acts is that in Acts we saw the beginning of the Church and its inclusion of the Jews, Gentiles and disciples of John in the three occurrences of tongues in that book.

In 1 Corinthians, which was written 21 years after the day of Pentecost, the church is already in existence and the doctrine of the church is being put into writing by Paul. We find the definition and purpose of the gift of tongues in the writings of Paul to the Corinthians

1 Corinthians 14:10 There are, perhaps, a great many kinds of languages in the world, and no kind is without meaning.

There is no such thing as a language which nobody knows. It appears here that Paul is addressing the false gift of tongues-the use of a so called heavenly language which had no linguistic meaning to anyone. Now this *was* a significant difference between Acts and Corinthians: the presence of pagan varieties of tongues. We will visit now the pagan belief systems represented in Corinth and referred to by Paul.

1 Corinthians 14:21 In the Law it is written, “By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people, and even so they will not listen to Me,” says the Lord. (NASB95)

We already established that the Assyrians and Babylonians spoken about here were not speaking in ecstatic or heavenly language, but in human languages that were unknown to the Jews.

Paul is providing this purpose to the Corinthians so that they would stop putting the true gift of tongues to improper use; and to stop altogether the use of a false gift of tongues.

Paganism in Corinth

1 Corinthians 12:2 You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the mute idols, however you were led. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 10:20-21 20 No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. 21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons. (NIV)

In Barnes Notes it is written regarding the Corinthian Christian women and the issue of having a covering for her head: 1 Corinthians 11:5 “[With her head uncovered] That is, with the veil removed which she usually wore. It would seem from this that the women removed their veils, and wore their hair disheveled, when they pretended to be under the influence of divine inspiration. **This was the case with the pagan priestesses**; and in so doing, the Christian women imitated them^{viii}.”

The Ecstasy of the Greco-Roman World-John MacArthur^{ix}

”At the time of the Corinthian church, the Greco-Roman world had a multitude of gods. In their worship of these gods, it was very common for a person to go into ecstasy, which literally means "to go out of oneself." They would go into an unconscious state where all kinds of psychic phenomena would occur.

“They believed that when they were in an ecstatic trance, they actually left their body, ascended into space, connected up to whatever deity they were worshiping, and would begin to commune with that deity. Once they began to commune with that deity, they would begin to speak the language of the gods. This was a very common practice in their culture.

“In fact, the term used in 1 Corinthians to refer to speaking in tongues (glossais lalein) was not invented by Bible writers. It was a term used commonly in the Greco-Roman culture to speak of the pagan language of the gods which occurred while the speaker was in an ecstatic trance. By the way, this language of the gods was always gibberish.”

So, as we can see, it is probable that the Corinthians did bring their pagan values and practices into the church. Paul warned the Corinthians to forsake their pagan scale of values, which elevated the gift of tongues to the most valuable of all the gifts.

The idea of a heavenly language originated not in the church, but among the pagan religions. Biblical tongues are human languages, whether in Acts or First Corinthians.

Tongues Part 5: Tongues Have Ceased

Tongues are no longer a functioning gift in the church. The gift of tongues no longer functions in the church because they were never intended to be a tool for prayer and praise, which is how they are used today.

The gift of tongues were designed as an evangelistic tool to unbelieving Israel, who were being temporarily set aside from their role to be replaced by the body of Christ, composed mostly of Gentiles.

Tongues were a sign

- Of the failure of Israel as an evangelistic agency (Rom 9:31-33; 10:3, 19-21)
- Of the breaking of the Mosaic Covenant (Jer 9:12-16)
- Of coming judgment via diaspora and captivity (Ps 79:1; Jer 9:12-16)
- Of the Times of the Gentiles (Isa 28:11; c.f. 1Cor 14:20-22; Lk 21:24; Rom 11:25)
- Of a dispensational change from law to grace, from Israel to the Church, from the letter to the Spirit (Jn 1:17; Rom 8:1-4)

Tongues are no longer a functioning gift in the church

1 Corinthians 14:20-22 (NASB95) 20 Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature. 21 In the Law it is written, “By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people, and even so they will not listen to Me,” says the Lord. 22 So then tongues are for a sign,

not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophecy is for a sign, not to unbelievers but to those who believe.

The people in question in this passage are the Jews as can be seen here and the context of Isa 28.

Tongues are for a sign, not for praise, worship or prayer. The Jews on the day of Pentecost were indeed praising God; however they did not need to speak in tongues to praise God. The tongues were a *sign* to the international Jews who were to hear the message of Peter.

Tongues are not a sign to believers in the church service or to believers at all. Tongues are a sign to unbelieving Jews alerting them to the end of the dispensation of the Mosaic Law and the beginning of a new, undisclosed dispensation called the church, the body of Christ.

Since the destruction of Israel in 70 AD by the Romans and since the church age has fully come in, there is no need to have a special means of Jewish evangelism-no need for the gift of tongues.

1 Corinthians 13:8-11 (NASB95) 8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things

Discipleship or Disaster

1 Corinthians 13:8 (NASB85) Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away

Love for God is the consequence of spiritual development or maturity. The victory of the Word of God in the soul of the believer is the development of love for God.

This love for God is the motivation for love of all mankind. It is the basis of spiritual victory in all human relationships.

Love for God is the consequence of spiritual development. Love for God is the motivation for further spiritual growth as the believer continues to learn and obey the Word of God. Love for God results in confidence in God or Faith. Love is what makes you want to obey and grow. It is the highest kind of spiritual motivation for the believer.

It is love for God that will “never fail” and this love is the “greater thing” for which Paul wants the church to aspire. Spiritual maturity is greater than spiritual gifts just as the builder of the house is greater than the shovel and the hammer that built it.

Love as spiritual motivation “never fails”. It never becomes inadequate, never loses potency, never goes dead or becomes unreliable. ***Love as a source of spiritual power*** never runs out of gas, it is an inexhaustible source of ability, capacity, strength and virtue. The sign gifts of the early church failed, they were stopped, they ceased of themselves, and they became obsolete. The sign gifts such as tongues gave way to new gifts suited to the challenges of the adulthood of the church. In fact, the ancient

and dead sign gifts, even if they continued to exist, would be totally inadequate to the challenges and issues of the present time.

The most effective means of oppression is spiritual oppression. In fact no system of human oppression is effective unless spiritual oppression is first engaged.

It is spiritual oppression that damages the institutions of marriage, family and government and not economics. Economic failure is the result of the collapse of the institutional base of the community. Oppressors, those involved in the *science* of discrimination, provide for the abundant availability of false teachers among those targeted for marginalization. The first strategy of Satan was the injection of false teaching into the institution of marriage in the Garden of Eden.

2 Co 11:13-15 13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works. NKJV

The outcome of spiritual oppression is the weakening of marriage. This results in the breakdown of the family. The crippling of the family destroys the production of leaders and prevents the transfer of human and economic capital from one generation to the next. Thus every generation of the oppressed must start over from the beginning. This produces a disaster among the youth of the oppressed resulting in massive social instability.

Regarding the loss of leadership caused by spiritual oppression, and its resulting social instability, Isaiah noted the following regarding Israel:

Isaiah 3:4-5 4 "I will give children to be their princes, And babes shall rule over them. 5 The people will be oppressed, Every one by another and every one by his neighbor; The child will be insolent toward the elder, And the base toward the honorable." NKJV

Isa 3:12 As for My people, children are their oppressors, And women rule over them. O My people! Those who lead you cause you to err, And destroy the way of your paths." NKJV

This is how false teaching destroys the nation. This is why the charismatic error is not merely a difference of opinion, but the difference between discipleship and disaster.

As long as the emphasis of the church is upon the hammer and the shovel (gifts) rather than upon the builder of the house, we will continue to build huge ministries in the midst of a collapsing community.

Our focus upon gifts such as tongues is evidence of a departure from a true understanding of God's purpose for the church, and the role of the church in nation building. We have turned the church from being an agency of spiritual uplift by the transformation of individuals through the Word of God into a place that provides emotional release without lasting spiritual impact.

Therefore a handful of individuals have become wealthy while the community is on its way to a new form of slavery, locked in economic bondage, political disenfranchisement and extreme

social instability. We are jumping and shouting our way to judgment.

The Church as a Spiritual Immune System

The church is supposed to be the immune system of the community. The human body is always under attack from a vast variety of disease systems. The body resists these attacks through the immune system. The immune system does not totally prevent sickness, but it protects us from many things that could kill us if our system were weakened.

In like manner the local church protects the community from various categories of sin that could destroy it. The church does not eliminate sin entirely, just as the human immune system does not totally eliminate disease. The church limits the destructive impact of sin (Matt 5:13). Because of the properly functioning local church, the institutions of society (marriage, family, government) are strengthened rather than weakened.

The church accomplishes this work through its dual witness. The church has a witness of the gospel and a witness of its example; a witness of its lips and of its life. Through the gospel witness, the church actively converts others to faith and Christian discipleship. Through the witness of Christian example, the unbeliever sees the obedience of the Christian in all areas of life. This example leads to morality. Unbelievers learn morality by witnessing obedient believers. Morality does not save, however morality enables the function of civilization to the profit of all people.

When the immune system of the human body is damaged (for example, by AIDS), then disease mechanisms that would not normally harm us become deadly. In the same way, when the local church mishandles the Word of God, when believers are taught that spiritual gifts are spiritual power, that sanctification is

a one time experience and speaking in gibberish is the means of communication with God, then the church eventually fails in its dual witness (because false doctrine does not create Christian disciples) and the community is overcome by sin and its consequences: the destruction of the institutions and the decline of civilization, resulting in slavery.

Paul admonished the Corinthians to place the gifts in their proper place in their spiritual scale of values and to elevate the outcome of true spiritual advance, love for God, to its proper place of primacy. Paul used two arguments to defend his position. I will start with the second argument first.

The Church as “Under Development”: Paul’s Second Argument Given First

1 Corinthians 13:11 When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things

Paul likens the church to a *person* who develops and matures. As he matures, the quality of his understanding matures. Functions common to a child are replaced by the interests of an adult.

The bible represents the church is a developing entity. The Church began focused upon the small number of believing Jews who received the “promise of the Father” on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. It continued with the salvation of thousands of Jews who had not heard the gospel of Christ.

After eight years, the church received an influx of Gentiles who responded to the gospel at first through Peter and later through the successful ministry of Paul.

Paul set down the doctrines of the church in writing, clarifying and expanding knowledge of what actually occurred on Pentecost and since:

Galatians: 16 years after Pentecost

1Corinthians: 21 years after Pentecost

Ephesians and Colossians: 27 years after Pentecost

The Church did not have a completed New Testament for over 60 years. Even when Revelation was completed in 96 A.D. all the New Testament books were not gathered together until many years later.

The early church required special spiritual gifts, temporary spiritual gifts, to provide teaching that would not become available in written form for many years. Paul speaks to some of these gifts in our passage (1Cor 13:8-11). He also notes their temporary nature.

In August, 70 AD Jerusalem and the Temple were invaded and destroyed by the Romans. Over one million Jews were killed; another 97,000 were taken into captivity.

The judgment predicted by the sign of tongues 1Cor 14:21 had occurred and the gift was no longer needed as a special method of Jewish evangelism.

The church gradually became a largely Gentile body, the apostles died off and elders become the leaders of the local church.

Elsewhere, Paul calls the church a sacred building, a temple that has a cornerstone, a foundation and is currently under construction.

Ephesians 2:19-22 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. NKJV

A foundation is only laid once.

The Apostles, once the church was established, passed off the scene, never to return.

The Apostolic doctrine, recorded in scripture is completed; therefore we do not need temporary Apostolic gifts required in the early Church to account for the non availability of the New Testament.

The preoccupation with the resurrection of these dead offices and dead gifts is not a “move forward to a new level”; instead, they are keeping the church from where it should be and from having the effects it should have, in the black community.

Now that the foundation has been laid, less spectacular but no less powerful gifts have been provided for the building of the structure of the church. These gifts, such as pastors, teachers and evangelists, exist for the exposition and protection of the revelation once for all delivered to the church.

The Apostolic doctrine would be constantly under attack by the devil, who seeks to undermine and defeat the church through the contamination of bible truth (Acts 20:18-30; 2Cor 11:12-15; Jude 3, 4). There can be no salvation, no holiness and no discipleship without accurate teaching; therefore the devil is

inalterably committed to false teaching and to the dilution of the Word.

The gifts that are prominent today exist to enable the church in its maturity to accomplish its ministry to mankind and to position the church for final victory over Satan.

1 Corinthians 3:9-16 (NASB95) 9 For we are God's fellow workers; **you are God's field, God's building.** 10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, **like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it.** 11 For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. 14 If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. 15 If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. 16 **Do you not know that you are a temple of God** and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

Rather than edifying the church through the teaching and protecting of the doctrines of the apostles, pastors are reaching back to the childhood of the church to lay again a foundation that has already been laid. This they are attempting to do by the *imitation* of gifts that they do not and cannot possess, while the devil is destroying both churches and believers who now without pastoral protection, are like sheep without a shepherd.

Hebrews 5:12-6:1 (NASB95) 12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. 14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. 1 Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

Paul uses this same idea of development over time to show that just as with a person, those things necessary for the childhood of the church **are not necessary in its maturity.**

1 Corinthians 13:8-11 (NASB95) 11 When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things

Paul again uses this same idea of development and growth in 1Cor 14.20 in exhorting the Corinthians to become mature in their thinking about the meaning of tongues

1 Corinthians 14:20 Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature. NKJV

Paul argues that the Corinthian belief that tongues were heavenly languages to be used for their own personal benefit was childish thinking, unrelated in any way to true doctrine, but a hold over from their days living in pagan superstition.

So to summarize, Paul argues that one reason we know that the gift of tongues was a temporary gift is because of the developmental nature of the church (a body, a building). The gifts appropriate to its childhood or its foundation, during a period of partial knowledge of God's revelation would no longer be necessary in the maturity of the church. Now we shall address Paul's first argument for the temporary nature of the Gift of Tongues.

The "Perfect": Paul's First Argument Given Second

1 Corinthians 13:8-11 (NASB95) 8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.

The passing away of the partial, imperfect age of Israel and of the Law of Moses and the coming of the Perfect dispensation of Christ where he rules through His body the church is yet another reason for the passing away of the temporary gifts.

These temporary gifts were the bridge over which the believers of the Mosaic era were transported to the Church age. Once the church age had sufficiently advanced, these gifts and offices were sloughed off.

The Mosaic Law, which was in force all the way from the Wilderness until the day of Pentecost, was an inferior mechanism for spiritual development in that it identified man's sinfulness, but offered no *effective remedy* for forgiveness or for sanctification (Rom 8:3; 3:20; Acts 13:39).

Christ came to provide the *perfect* solution for sin and for relationship with God. This solution will be progressively (not all at once) made known to the Church, beginning with the revelation of the mystery of the body of Christ, and culminating in the establishment of an everlasting kingdom over which God reigns.

The end of this maturation of the Body, the church, is our ultimate uniting with Christ in heaven to be both *with* Him and *like* Him. In the meanwhile, there are stages in the development of the Body of Christ.

- The creation of the body of Christ at Pentecost 33 A.D.
- The inclusion of the Gentiles in the body 41 A.D.
- The termination of the age of Israel 70 A.D.
- The completion of the canon of scripture 96 A.D., the death of the apostles and the end of special revelation and the special spiritual gifts which accompanied it.
- The establishment of the elders rather than apostles as the leaders of the local church.

At the time of the writing of 1 Corinthians (circa. 54 AD), there were still alive *believers* who had not been included in the body of Christ and who had neither the Spirit nor His gifts. The temple would not be destroyed until 70 AD, and there were apostles alive and ruling the church. The Scriptures were not completed until nearly 100 AD, and took much longer to be accumulated and distributed.

Paul was, in his statement regarding the partial and the perfect, preparing the church for the full teaching of the doctrine of Christ and preparing the church for the impact it would have upon the world.

The writer of Hebrews would complete our understanding of the transition from the partial, the Mosaic Law to the Perfect, the Ministry of Christ.

The “Perfect” is presented in Hebrews as a direct consequence of Jesus’ work upon the cross.

At the death of Christ, the veil was torn, signifying the coming end of the age of Israel “the partial”.

Mark 15:38-39 Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. 39 So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, "Truly this Man was the Son of God!" NKJV

Heb 6:19-20 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, 20 where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. NKJV

The partial was signified by the veil. If we entered there we would be instantly killed. Because of the ministry of Christ upon the cross we are now free, *perfectly* free to boldly approach the throne of grace to find grace and mercy to help in time of need. We have this freedom now, the perfect *has come*, and the perfect *is coming*.

The Law and therefore the age of Israel became obsolete (“the partial”)

Heb 8:13 In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. NKJV

Heb 7:18-19 For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, 19 for the law made nothing *perfect*; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. NKJV

The book of Hebrews shows us what the partial is and what the perfect is. It is in this book that we find out what Paul is speaking of when he uses these terms.

The Law provided an imperfect tabernacle

Hebrews 8:5 (NASB95) 5 who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, “See,” He says, “that you make all things according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.”

Under the Law there existed an imperfect Tabernacle, built based upon the plan of a heavenly and perfect one. The earthly Tabernacle was but a type or an earthly picture of a spiritual reality. Today, God inhabits a temple made without hands, the church, in which He dwells as in a holy temple.

Christ provides a perfect tabernacle:

Hebrews 9:11 (NASB95) 11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation;

The Law provided an imperfect high priest

Hebrews 7:28 (NASB95) For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever.

The Law provided an imperfect ministry made up of imperfect sacrifices administered by imperfect men. Jesus is now our great High Priest, eternally making intercession for us in the presence of God.

Christ provides a perfect high priest:

Hebrews 2:10 (NASB95)10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. 5:9; 7:28

The Law provided imperfect sacrifices

Hebrews 10:1 (NASB95) 1 For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.

The Law was a shadow, it was partial, imperfect. It pointed to something else that *was* perfect. The sacrifices of the Law pointed to a greater truth, thus these sacrifices *covered* the sins of the people, but these sacrifices were not expiatory, they did not pay for the sins of the people.

Christ provides a perfect sacrifice:

Hebrews 10:14 (NASB95)14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

The Law provided an imperfect conscience

Hebrews 9:8-10 9 It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience — 10 concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation. NKJV

Christ provides a perfect conscience:

Heb 9:13-14 13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? NKJV

It should now become clear what Paul was speaking of when he referred to the coming of the “perfect”.

1 Co 13:8-10 8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. NKJV

The perfect is the effect of the New Covenant which was brought about by the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. These effects began shortly after the cross, beginning with the tearing of the veil and continuing with the day of Pentecost, the eventual introduction of the Gentiles to the Body of Christ, and the completion of the canon of the scriptures. The perfect continues today with the

maturity and completion of the church and the coming of Christ in final victory over sin and Satan to establish an everlasting kingdom.

Hebrews 7:18-19 (NASB95) 18 For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness 19 (**for the Law made nothing perfect**), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

James 1:25 (NASB95) But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

Once the dispensational transformation from the age of Israel to the church was completed there was no longer a need for the sign of tongues or any of the temporary transitional gifts required by the infant church. After the destruction of the Temple, Israel need no longer be warned via the temporary gift of tongues of a change that had already occurred.

The perfect had come: a perfect covenant, a perfect high priest, with a perfect sacrifice, taken to a perfect tabernacle that renders partakers perfectly cleansed and perfectly able to meet the demands of a perfect God.

Under the new covenant, John 14:6 represents the only witness necessary for Israel or for anyone else. There is absolutely no need for the gift of tongues anywhere on earth today.

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ⁱⁱⁱ THE NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE UPDATE (NASU)
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^{vii} Swanson, J. (1997). Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew (Old Testament) (electronic ed.) (HGK337). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

^{viii} Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by BibleSoft, 1 Corinthians 11:5

^{ix} The Truth About Tongues Part One, John MacArthur, (The Bible Bulletin Board <http://www.biblebb.com/files/MAC/sg1871.htm>)