

SPIRIT BAPTISM, FILLING, & GIFTS

IN ACTS



WAYNE O'DONNELL

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FILLING, AND
GIFTS IN ACTS**

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To

Garry Friesen

for his book

*Decision Making and the Will of God:
A Biblical Alternative to the Traditional View*

Contents

Contents	7
Tables	7
Introduction	9
Acts 1:9-14; 2:1. The Day of Pentecost.....	11
Acts 2:1-3. The Baptism, Filling, & Gifts of the Spirit	17
The Cessation of Miracles and Revelation	33
Acts 2:4-11. Tongues Then and Now	45
Is Pentecost Normative?	53
Conclusion.....	61
Bibliography.....	66

Tables

Spirit Baptism, Filling, and Gifts in Acts	27
Other Fillings in Acts Besides Chapters 2, 8, 10, & 19	27
Men and Spiritual Gifts In Descending Importance.....	29
Crowd Miracles Per Location (1).....	32
Crowd Miracles Per Location (2).....	32
Crowd Miracles Per Location (3).....	33
Crowd Miracles Per Location (4).....	33

Introduction

All my books can be read online for free at <http://wayneodonnell.com>. “Freely you have received, freely give” (Mt. 10:8). This booklet is included in and comprises several sections in my book “Paul’s Decision Making in Acts: Anti-Charismatic, Pro-Jewish Commentary on Acts.”

Whole denominations base their distinctiveness on their interpretations about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Millions of individuals build their lives on their understanding of the filling and gifts of the Spirit. Much suffering and discouragement can be avoided by a right interpretation of the passages about these things in the book of Acts.

All Bible quotations are from the King James Version, unless otherwise noted, but I’ve modernized the English. The word “Christ” has been consistently changed to “Messiah,” since no one knows what a “Christ” is, except for it’s unfortunate religious overtones, but everyone knows what a “Messiah” is, and both are transliterations of the Greek and Hebrew word meaning “anointed.” So much false Catholic and Reformed doctrine regarding Israel would have been avoided over the centuries if the KJV translators had chosen to use “Messiah” instead of “Christ.”

The cover photo is “Pentecost” (1596-1600) by El Greco (1541-1614).

Acts 1:9-14; 2:1. The Day of Pentecost

Amen! Amen! So be it, Lord, with all
 Who love Thy Festival!
 Thou hast not left us orphans; to our need
 The Comforter indeed,
 The Eternal Father's Promise, Thy Work's
 Crown,
 The Spirit has come down;
 The Father thus and Son in Souls may dwell
 For ever. It is well.

Pentecost. Arthur Middlemore Morgan

The first one and a half chapters (1-2a) of Acts describe 1) the creation of the Congregation through the baptism of the Holy Spirit; and 2) the empowerment of the Congregation to perform miracles through the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus had told the apostles to wait in Jerusalem until he gave them the Holy Spirit, and they obeyed.

Acts 1:3-5. He ... commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the [gift from the] Father, ... “for, [he said,] ... you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Acts 1:12-14. They returned to Jerusalem, and ... went up to an upper room, where abode ... all ... with one accord in prayer.

Acts 2:1. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come ...

As for the timing of Pentecost, Jesus gave the Congregation the promised gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, fifty days after the first Sabbath after Passover (Pentecost means fifty), and ten days after his ascension back to heaven.

Acts 1:3. He showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days.

Up until this time, the Holy Spirit had been “with” believers; but from now on He would be “in” believers.

Jn. 14:16-18. I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, so that he may stay with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth. ... He dwells with you, and will be in you. I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you.

Rom. 8:15. You have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, “Abba, Father.” (Also, Jn. 7:38-39; 16:7.)

Jesus “commanded [the apostles] that they shouldn’t depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father” (Acts 1:4). The apostles didn’t have a choice, because along with their apostolic office came the God-provided certainty they would fulfill the essentials of their office, because God’s credibility was at stake through the apostles and prophets he appointed as his official representatives.

But even if the other 109 or so disciples (“the disciples ... were about a hundred and twenty,” Acts 1:15), didn’t remain in Jerusalem, Jesus would still have sent the Spirit at the appointed time, “when the

day of Pentecost was fully come” (Acts 2:1). And the fact that they “all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication” (Acts 1:14) had nothing to do with the timing of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus fulfilled the 4 spring feasts of Israel (Lev. 23) at his first coming exactly on the days the feasts were observed.

1) He fulfilled the feast of Passover, on the day the lamb for the nation was offered, by dying as the Passover lamb. “The fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's Passover,” Lev. 23:5, also Ex. 12:6.

2) He fulfilled the feast of Unleavened Bread, during the seven days of unleavened bread, by proving his sinlessness (Mt. 22:15-46) like the Passover lambs were examined to be sure they were without blemish (Ex. 12:3-6); and the resurrection proved his sinless sacrifice was accepted (Rom. 4:25). “And on the fifteenth day ... is [e.g. begins] the feast of unleavened bread. ... Seven days you must eat unleavened bread. ... You shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest, and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord ... on the day after the [first] sabbath [after Passover],” Lev. 23:6.

3) He fulfilled the feast of Firstfruits by his resurrection on Sunday, “the day after the [first] Sabbath [after Passover]” (Lev. 23:11).

And, 4) he fulfilled the feast of Pentecost by uniting Jewish and Gentile believers into his one body, the Congregation, through the baptism and indwelling of the Spirit, on the Sunday fifty days after the first sabbath (Saturday) after Passover. “You shall count

to you from the day after the [first] sabbath [after Passover], from the day [Sunday] that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering [Firstfruits], seven sabbaths shall be complete [49 days], even to the day after the seventh sabbath [Sunday], you shall number fifty days,” Lev. 23:15-17.

Passover is always on the 14th of Nissan, and the Unleavened Bread Week always starts the day after on the 15th of Nissan. Since the feast of unleavened bread is seven days long, there’s always one Sabbath, a Saturday, within it, and Firstfruits is always the day after that Sabbath, i.e. Sunday. (The rabbis calculate this wrong because they consider the first day of unleavened bread on the 15th of Nissan as the first ‘Sabbath’ after Passover no matter what day of the week Passover (the 14th) and Unleavened Bread (the 15th) fall on.)

Why did God make it so that Firstfruits (Resurrection Day) and Pentecost (Congregation Creation Day) always fall on a Sunday? Because even at the time when the nation of Israel was born at the Exodus, God was already planning the birth of his new creation, Messiah’s body, the Congregation, which would celebrate Sunday, rather than Saturday, for both Yeshua’s resurrection and Congregation creation. Saturday is still the Sabbath; but the Sabbath was given to Israel, not to the Congregation. The Congregation was given the Headcovering and Lord’s Supper meeting observances of 1 Corinthians 11 instead.

Ex. 16:29. The Lord has given you the sabbath.

Ex. 31:13-17. Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, “Truly my sabbaths you shall

keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations. ... Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever.”

Ezk. 20:12. I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them.

The first three spring feasts, Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits, represented Jesus, and required an absence of leaven, which represents sin. Thus only matza, unleavened bread, is eaten during the first three feasts of the Passover week.

But the feast of Pentecost, fifty days later, represents the union of sinful Jews and sinful Gentiles into one body, the Congregation, and so amazingly required two loaves of leavened bread.

Lev. 23:16-17. [From the first Saturday after Passover] you shall number fifty days [Pentecost, means ‘fiftieth,’ from ‘pente,’ meaning ‘five’]; and you ... shall bring out of your houses two wave loaves ... of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven.

Eph. 2:14-15. [Messiah] has made both [Jews and Gentiles] one, ... to make in himself of two [both Jew and Gentile] one new man.

1 Cor. 12:13. For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles.

So, the Holy Spirit didn’t come at Pentecost because the disciples ‘prayed through,’ but because the day

was appointed from the time of Leviticus 23, and even from the foundation of the world, to be fifty days after the first Sabbath after Passover, or seven weeks, i.e. seven sevens, forty-nine days after Firstfruits, the resurrection.

Acts 2:1-3. The Baptism, Filling, & Gifts of the Spirit

Jesus said the apostles would experience two things at Pentecost. The first was the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which is the same as receiving the promise of the Father.

Jn. 14:16-17. [The Promise:] I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, so that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth. ... He dwells with you, and will be in you.

Acts 1:4-5. Wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, you have heard of me, for ... you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the invisible action in which the Spirit baptizes every believer into the Congregation, the body of Messiah. The first time this happened was at Pentecost, manifested by tongues of fire resting over each person. That was the only time in history there was ever any visible or audible indication of the actual point in time when anyone was baptized by the Holy Spirit.

From Pentecost on, every person who believes is simultaneously and invisibly baptized into the Congregation, the body of Messiah, at the moment they are justified by faith, without any manifestation.

1 Cor. 12:13. By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, ... and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

Rom. 8:9-10. You are ... in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if any man has not the Spirit of Messiah, he is none of his. ... Messiah [is] in you.

The second thing Jesus said the apostles would experience at Pentecost, was the “filling” of the Holy Spirit. This was the same thing as the Spirit “coming upon,” “falling upon,” or being “poured out on,” someone, and it resulted in miraculous manifestations of power.

Acts 1:8. You will receive power, after the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be witnesses to me.

For the Spirit to come on or fill someone in the New Testament, is the same as it was in the Old Testament.

Ex. 31:2-4. I have called by name Bezaleel, ... and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, ... in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, ... in gold, and in silver, and in brass [for the tabernacle].

Deut. 34:9. And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the Spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him.

Jdg. 6:34. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet, and [sent messengers], [and the tribes of Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali were] gathered after him.

Jdg. 15:14-15. The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon [Samson], ... and he found a new

jawbone of an ass, ... and slew a thousand men with it.

Each person can only be baptized by the Spirit into the Congregation of God one time, but can be filled with the Spirit multiple times. Peter was filled with the Spirit at Pentecost.

Acts 2:1-4. When the day of Pentecost was fully come, ... they were all filled with the Holy Spirit [including Peter].

And when Peter gave his defense to the Jewish council for healing a lame man, he was filled with the Spirit again.

Acts 4:8-10. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, ... “By the name of Jesus Messiah ... does this man stand here before you whole.”

Then after the Jewish council prohibited Peter and John from speaking in Jesus’ name, they returned to the disciples and prayed, and Peter was filled with the Spirit again.

Acts 4:31. And when they had prayed, ... they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Only believers can be baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Congregation, but sometimes even unbelievers, like Saul and Judas, were filled with the power of the Spirit and prophesied or did miracles.

1 Sam. 10:10-12. When ... a company of prophets met [Saul], ... the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them. ...

Therefore it became a proverb, “Is Saul also among the prophets?”

So, “when the day of Pentecost was fully come” (Acts 2:1), the apostles and the other disciples, including some Gentile proselytes, were Spirit baptized into the Congregation, the body of Messiah, as manifested by the tongues of fire.

Acts 2:3. There appeared to them cloven tongues like fire, and it sat on each of them.

And then they were also filled with the Spirit.

Acts 2:4. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues.

There was only one other time in history when Spirit baptism was accompanied by Spirit filling, and that was also the only other time the baptism of the Spirit is mentioned in Acts: at the ‘Gentile Pentecost.’

For the first 9 chapters of Acts, only Jews, Gentiles who had converted to become Jewish proselytes, and Samaritans, who were ethnically mixed Jews, had been part of the Congregation. Jesus had given Peter the “keys of the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 16:19), and so Peter was the main speaker at both Pentecost in Acts 2, and the ‘Gentile Pentecost’ in Acts 10.

Like as happened to the Jewish believers and Gentile proselytes at Pentecost, first the God-fearing, non-proselyte, Gentiles at Cornelius’ house were baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Congregation.

Acts 10:43-44a. “Whoever believes in him [Jesus] will receive remission of sins.” While Peter yet spoke these words ...

... Cornelius and the other Gentiles believed on Jesus, and were spirit baptized into the Congregation. How did they all believe on Jesus at the same time so they could all be spirit baptized into the Congregation at the same time? Because they were already all justified and forgiven by trusting in the God of Israel, like Abraham and David were under the Old Covenant (Rom. 4), and so all without fail believed on Jesus when they heard the gospel.

Acts 10:1-2, 22. Cornelius [was] a centurion, ... a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the [Jewish] people, and prayed to God always; ... [he was] a just man, and one that fear[ed] God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews.

And then, like happened to the Jewish believers at Pentecost, secondly they were filled with the Spirit.

Acts 10:44b-45; 11:15-17. The Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, ... because on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. For they heard them speak with tongues. ... [Peter later explained,] “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning [at Pentecost]. Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said, ... “You will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” ... God gave them [Gentiles] the same gift as he did to us

[Jews], who believed on the Lord Jesus Messiah.

Why was it so important for God to provide a physical manifestation of entrance into the Congregation on these two occasions, the only two occasions in history when invisible spirit baptism was accompanied by visible spirit filling? Because the union of ethnic Jews and ethnic Gentiles together to form the Congregation is the ultimate purpose of the book of Acts, and of God, covering all three doctrinal chapters of Ephesians.

Eph. 1:9-10, 20-23; 2:11-18; 3:4-6. [God] made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he would gather together in one, all things in Messiah, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him. ... [God] raised [Messiah] from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, ... and gave him to be the head over all things to the Congregation, which is his body, the fulness of him that fills all in all. ... Remember, that you being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, ... were without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers. ... But now in Messiah Jesus you [Gentiles] who sometimes were far off are made near by the blood of Messiah. For he is our peace, who has made both [Jews and Gentiles] one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us, ... to make in himself of two, one new man, ... for through him we both [Jews and Gentiles] have access by one Spirit to the Father. ... [This is] the mystery of Messiah, which in other ages was not made known, ... as it is now revealed; ...

that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body [with the Jews].

This doesn't mean Jews and Gentiles cease to exist as distinct entities when they became one in the Spirit in the Congregation, any more than it means male and female cease to exist when they become one flesh in marriage (Gen. 2:24). If male and female cease to exist in the oneness of marriage, then homosexuality isn't wrong. And if Jew and Gentile cease to exist in the oneness of the Congregation, then why would the New Testament mention "Jew" 190 times, and "Gentile" 93 times, and continue to deal with this topic?

In general, the baptism of the Spirit is the more important experience of the two, because the quiet indwelling Spirit of Truth (Jn. 14:17; 15:26; 16:13) causes us to love truth (1 Jn. 2:27; 2 Ths. 2:10), and brings forth the fruit of the Spirit of love, joy, peace, etc. (Gal. 5:21-22), and indwells us forever (Jn. 14:16). But for the apostles and the early brethren to accomplish the mission of Acts, they needed the miraculous manifestation of the power of the filling of the Spirit.

Acts 1:8. You will receive power after the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be witnesses to me.

The early brethren were never commanded to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, because that happens to every believer, and no one can either cause it or prevent it. But they were commanded to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18).

Now that their mission has been accomplished, as

described in the book of Acts, the filling of the Spirit is no longer given. It's not that we no longer have a need, but we must now rely on his grace. God never provided prophets or miracles based on personal needs alone, but only to further his plan for Israel, the establishment of the Congregation, and the future Messianic Kingdom. People in many different times in many different countries needed healing, but Jesus came only to one generation and only to Israel, because his miracles were to prove he was the Messiah, not merely to provide relief.

Mt. 8:16-17. He ... healed all that were sick, so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses [not when he died on the cross, as is commonly taught, but when he healed all in Israel right then according to Mt. 8:16-17]."

Believers were also given visible power through spiritual gifts.

1 Cor. 12:1, 7. Now concerning spiritual gifts, ... the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit thereby.

Eph. 4:8. To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Messiah. Wherefore he says, "When he ascended up on high, he ... gave gifts to men."

Acts 8 and 19 indicate spiritual gifts could only be obtained by the laying on of the apostles' hands. Paul said he wanted to visit the believers in Rome, "so that I can impart to you some spiritual gift" (Rom. 1:11), by laying his hands on them; though some in Rome already had spiritual gifts, because

they had already met the apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 2:10, etc.).

In Acts 8, Phillip preached the gospel in Samaria, and water-baptized those who believed, but apostles had to be sent from Jerusalem to give the new believers spiritual gifts.

Acts 8:12-18. When [the Samaritans] believed Philip preaching, ... they were [water] baptized. ... Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John [apostles], ... because as yet [the Holy Spirit] was fallen upon none of them, only they were [water] baptized. ... Then [the apostles Peter and John] laid their hands on them, and they received [the gifts of, as explained below] the Holy Spirit. And ... Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands [the gifts of, as explained below] the Holy Spirit was given.

What did Simon see when he saw the apostles lay their hands on the new believers in Samaria in Acts 8? Probably the same thing as when Paul laid his hands on new believers in Ephesus in Acts 19: the spiritual gifts of tongues and prophesy.

Acts 19:6. When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

The Samaritans were justified, Spirit-baptized, and indwelt by the Spirit as soon as they believed in Acts 8:12a, “when [the Samaritans] believed Philip preaching”; and then they were water-baptized to testify of their salvation in 8:12b, “they were [water] baptized.” So why did verse 17 say that when the

apostles laid their hands on them they “received the Holy Spirit,” instead of saying they “received the gifts of the Holy Spirit?” And why did Paul ask the disciples of John in Ephesus, “Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?” (Acts 19:2) instead of asking “Have you received the gifts of the Holy Spirit since you believed?”

Because it looked like they were receiving the Holy Spirit when they received the manifestation of the Spirit via spiritual gifts, since you can’t see the Spirit come and indwell a believer at justification. The brethren didn’t know the baptism and indwelling of the Spirit occurred invisibly at justification, until it was revealed to Paul when he wrote 1 Corinthians during the two years he taught in Ephesus in Acts 19:10.

1 Cor. 12:13. By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.

Gradual increase in knowledge is also why Peter and John “prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit” (Acts 8:15), before they laid hands on them; whereas by Acts 19, Paul knew he only had to lay hands on them, without praying first.

Acts 19:5-6. Paul [said] ... they should believe ... on Messiah Jesus. When they heard this, they were [water] baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied [spiritual gifts].

When the last of the twelve apostles died, no more spiritual gifts could be imparted by their hands. And when the last of the people they had laid their hands

on died, no more spiritual gifts could be exercised.

The gifts of the Spirit people claim to exercise today, are far removed from the miraculous ones described in the New Testament. God gives all people natural abilities, and helps us exercise our talents, but our ministering, teaching, exhorting, giving, ruling, showing mercy, discernment, helps, and governments (Rom. 12:7-8; 1 Cor. 12:10, 28), are far from miraculous. Unbelievers, with only natural abilities, are often better at doing those things in their own realm.

“When [Messiah] ascended up on high, he ... gave gifts to men” (Eph. 4:8) to celebrate the creation of the Congregation, his espoused bride. You receive ‘bridal shower’ gifts to celebrate an upcoming marriage, or ‘wedding’ gifts to celebrate a wedding, but you don’t keep getting ‘marriage’ gifts from people everyday after you’re married. Likewise, the gift of the physical manifestation of the Holy Spirit was the Son’s gift to the Congregation at it’s beginning, not continually afterwards. At the future marriage supper of the Lamb, once again many miracles and prophesy will celebrate the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom (Rev. 19:9; Ezk. 47:1-12).

The following table shows Spirit baptism, filling, and gifts in Acts 2, 8, 10, and 19.

Only the first time the Jews entered the Congregation in Acts 2, and the first time the Gentiles entered the Congregation in Acts 10, was Spirit baptism accompanied by Spirit filling, so that the invisible baptism could be seen for those two non-repeatable, historical events in the progression

of God's plan to bring Jews and Gentiles together into Messiah's one body. Acts 8 and 19 show that spiritual gifts were given by the laying on of the apostles hands, and since we have no apostles of and by Jesus Messiah today, we have no spiritual gifts today.

In Acts 2 and 10, at the filling that accompanied spirit baptism, ALL spoke in tongues, and tongues ALONE. But in Acts 8 and 19, in the filling that accompanied spiritual gifts, only SOME spoke in tongues, and SOME prophesied. "Concerning spiritual gifts, ... are all prophets? ... Do all speak with tongues? [Implying no.]," 1 Cor. 12:1, 29-30.

SPIRIT BAPTISM, FILLING, AND GIFTS IN ACTS			
Occasion	Cause	Occurrence	Manifestation
Acts 2 Jewish Pentecost	Nothing	<u>Baptism</u> Baptized With 1:5 Gift Of 2:38 Promise Of 1:4; 2:33	Tongues of Fire (ALL) 2:3
		<u>Filling</u> Fell Upon 1:8; 11:15 Poured Out On 2:17-18 Filled With 2:4a Received Power 1:8	Tongues (ALL) 2:4b
Acts 10 Gentile 'Pentecost'	Nothing	<u>Baptism</u> Baptized With 11:16 Gift Of 10:45; 15:8 Received 10:47	
		<u>Filling</u> Fell Upon 10:44; 11:15 Poured Out On 10:45	Tongues (ALL) 10:46
Acts 8 Samaria	Laid Hands 8:14-19	<u>Gifts</u> (Received 8:15, 17, 19?) Fell Upon 8:16	Tongues & Prophecy (SOME)? 8:15-19
Acts 19 Ephesus	Laid Hands 19:6a	<u>Gifts</u> (Received 19:2?) Fell Upon 19:6b	Tongues & Prophecy (SOME) 19:6c

OTHER FILLINGS IN ACTS BESIDES CHAPTERS 2, 8, 10, & 19		
Occasion	Persons	Results
1st Opposition	Peter & Jeru. Disciples 4:8	Bold Speech
1st Deacons	Qualification 6:3, 5 Stephen 6:8, 10	Wonders, Miracles, Wise Speech
1st Martyr	Stephen 7:55	Grace, Boldness
Calling of Paul	Paul 9:17	Power for Ministry
Description of	Barnabas 11:24	Exhortation
1st Missions	Paul 13:9	Miracle for Ministry
1st Gentiles	Antioch Syria 13:52	Joy and Power

Not only did God give spiritual gifts to individuals in

the Congregation; but he also gave some individuals as gifts to the Congregation. These individuals functioned constantly in their offices, in contrast to spiritual gifts, that the Spirit enabled in individuals intermittently in Congregation meetings.

Eph. 4:7-14. [Spiritual Gifts to Individuals in the Congregation:] To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Messiah. Wherefore he says, “When he ascended up on high, he ... gave gifts to men.” ... [Gifts of Individuals to the Congregation:] And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Messiah.

MEN AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS IN DESCENDING IMPORTANCE				
Eph 4:11	1Cor 12:28	1Cor 12:29-30	1Cor 12:8-10	1Cor 13-14
1. MEN AS GIFTS TO THE CONGREGATION				
apostles	1st, apostles	apostles		
Apostles (Foundation): Peter, bro Andrew; James, bro John; Philip, Bartholomew; Thomas, Matthew; James, Thaddaeus; Simon, Paul. Mt 10:2-4. 2Cor 8:23				
prophets	2nd, prophets	prophets		
Prophets (Foundation): 13:1 Barnabas?, Niger?, Lucius?, Manaen?, Saul. Acts 15:32 Judas, Silas. Acts 21:10 Agabus.				
evanglsts	--	--		
Evangelists: Stephen?. Acts 21:8 Philip.				
pastors	--	--		
teachers	3rd, teachers	teachers		
			wisdom	undrstnd mysteries
			knowldge	knowldge
	after that, miracles	miracles	faith	faith
2. SPIRITUAL GIFTS TO MEN IN THE CONGREGATION				
	then, gifts of healings	gifts of healing	gifts of healing	
			miracles	
			prophecy	gift of propcey
			Gift of Prophecy: Acts 21:9 Philip's daughtrs Acts 21:10-11 private	
			discerng	
	helps			
	governmnts			
	oth. tongues	tongues	tongues	tongues of men
		interpret		

If the Spirit gave a man to the Congregation in one role, he also had all the roles underneath. For example, since Paul was an apostle, he was also a prophet (1 Cor. 14:37), evangelist (Acts 14:7), pastor (1 Pet. 5:1), and teacher (Acts 14:21).

The apostles and New Testament prophets were the foundation of the Congregation, and you don't keep laying the foundation of a building, but build upon it.

Eph. 2:19-20. You are ... the household of God, and are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Messiah himself being the chief corner stone.

So God gave apostles and prophets to only the first generation of brethren. God still gives evangelists, pastors, and teachers to the Congregation. If any other men could ever do what the twelve apostles did, then the miraculous works of apostles wouldn't have had any validation value.

1 Cor. 2:12. Truly the signs of an apostle were worked among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

The Cessation of Miracles and Revelation

Luke said the apostles (Acts 2:43; 5:12), Peter (Acts 5:15-16), and Stephen (Acts 6:8), all did an abundance of public miracles in Jerusalem. But we shouldn't suppose they continued to do them after Luke ceased to mention them, after the persecution that arose after Stephen's martyrdom (Acts 7:60-8:1), or after James' martyrdom (Acts 12:1-2), or when Paul arrived in Jerusalem in Acts 20:17-18, and that Luke just didn't mention it.

An abundance of public miracles was temporary in each location, only accompanying the outer edge spread of the gospel to new regions. As Mark said, "These signs shall follow them that believe" (Mk. 16:17), and you can't be followed unless you're moving.

CROWD MIRACLES PER LOCATION (1)		
Chp/ Place	Crowd Miracles	Single Miracles
1-7 Jeru- salem	Acts 2:43. Many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.	Acts 3:8, 22. Immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, ... leaping. ... The man was above forty years old.
	Acts 5:12-16. By the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders worked among the people. ... They brought forth the sick into the streets, ... that ... the shadow of Peter ... might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about to Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed every one.	
	Acts 6:8. Stephen ... did great wonders and miracles among the people.	

CROWD MIRACLES PER LOCATION (2)		
Chp & Place	Crowd Miracles	Single Miracles
8-12 Jud- aea & Sama- ria	Acts 8:6-7. The people ... gave heed to ... Philip, ... seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many ... and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. ... Simon ... continued with Philip, ... beholding the miracles and signs.	Acts 9:33-41. Aeneas ... had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy. And Peter said, "... Jesus Messiah makes you whole." ... And he arose immediately. ... A certain disciple named Tabitha, ... was sick, and died. ... Peter ... prayed, and turning him to the body said, "... Arise." And she opened her eyes, and ... sat up.

CROWD MIRACLES PER LOCATION (3)		
Chp & Place	Crowd Miracles	Single Miracles
13-15 1st Journey Galatia	Acts 14:3; 15:12. The Lord ... gave testimony to the word, ... and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. ... Barnabas and Paul, declar[ed] what miracles and wonders God had worked among the Gentiles by them.	Acts 14:8-10. A certain man, ... impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. ... He leaped and walked.
16-18 2nd Journey Corinth	2 Cor. 12:12. The signs of an apostle were worked among you, ... in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.	Acts 16:26. There was a great earthquake, ... and ... all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

CROWD MIRACLES PER LOCATION (4)		
Chp & Place	Crowd Miracles	Single Miracles
19-21 3rd Journey Ephesus	Acts 19:11-12. God worked special miracles by the hands of Paul, so that from his body were brought to the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed, ... and the evil spirits went out of them.	Acts 20:9-12. A certain young man, ... as Paul was long preaching, ... sank down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul ... embracing him said, ... "His life is in him." ... And they brought the young man alive.
27-28 4th Journey Rome	Acts 28:9. When this was done, others also, which had diseases ... came, and were healed.	Acts 28:5, 8. Paul ... shook off the [snake], and felt no harm. ... The father of Publius lay sick. ... Paul ... prayed, ... laid his hands on, ... and healed him.

Near the end of Paul's ministry, he couldn't even heal his own coworkers.

2 Tim. 4:6, 16-20. The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus [because he died]; for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain, but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. ... I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. ... Trophimus have I left at Miletus [near Ephesus] sick.

Phil. 2:25-30. I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, ... your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. ... For indeed he was sick near to death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. ... Hold such in reputation, because for the work of Messiah he was close to death, not regarding his life.

And the last recorded direct revelation in Acts was during Paul's voyage to Rome.

Acts 27: 20-26. When ... no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. But after long abstinence [from food], Paul ... said, ... "There stood by me this night the angel of God, ... saying, 'Fear not, Paul. You must be brought before Caesar; and, lo, God has given you all them that sail with you.'"

And the last recorded direct revelation in the New Testament was the book of Revelation.

Rev. 1:9-11; 22:18. I, John, ... heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, "I am Alpha and Omega." ... If any man will add to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book.

Miracles and direct revelation will not recommence until Elijah returns, the history of Israel recommences, and the Day of the Lord begins.

Mal. 4:5. I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

Rev. 11:3-6. I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days. ... These have power ... to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they want.

Just as the majority of the miracles in the Old Testament were condensed into the first forty years after Israel's creation at the Exodus - the plagues, the parting of the Red Sea, the destruction of Egypt's army, the lightnings and thunderings at Sinai, the pillar of cloud, the daily manna, the water from the rock, the clothes that didn't wear out, etc. - likewise the miracles of the New Testament were condensed into the first forty years after the Congregation was created at Pentecost. And just as the book of Genesis is a book of firsts; the book of Acts is a book of firsts: first Congregation members, first Congregation opposition, first Congregation deacons, first Congregation martyr, first Gentile Congregation members.

The existence of miracles is purpose-driven. The purpose of Jesus' miracles wasn't just to provide people with healing, because people in all generations and places have needed healing, but Jesus only healed his generation, and only in and around Israel. As mentioned before, the purpose of Jesus' miracles was to prove he was the Messiah (Mt. 8:16-17).

The purpose of proving Jesus was the Messiah was no longer needed after Israel rejected his Messianic ministry in Matthew 11 and 12.

Mt. 11:20. Then he began to scold the cities where most of his mighty works were done, because they didn't repent.

So Jesus removed his miracles from the nation, by moving his ministry to just outside the borders of Israel.

Mt. 15:21; 16:13; 19:1. Then Jesus ... departed into the borders of Tyre and Sidon. ... Jesus came into the borders of Caesarea Philippi. ... He departed from Galilee, and came into the borders of Judaea beyond Jordan.

In a journal article, Goosen and Pepler say ...

Goosen. Each of the perspectives on the will of God and its discoverability advocated today ... agree that ... God can give specific, even miraculous, direction to individual believers if and whenever he chooses.¹

No. Not every perspective on the will of God agrees with that. God can't do anything he wants, any time he wants. Not even God can do unrighteousness, or anything that is a true logical contradiction (like do something that he can't do), or violate his own nature and purposes. "God ... cannot lie," Titus 1:2. As Goosen and Pepler themselves admit ...

Goosen. The Bible consists of sixty-six different books, composed ... over a period of around one thousand six hundred years. ...

¹ Goosen, Perceiving God's Voice, Location 22.

[It's] quite apparent that while God can and may speak dramatically, he has done so rather infrequently, to very few people, over a vast period of time. The scriptures themselves testify to the fact that in the days of Samuel 'the word of the Lord was rare' (1 Sam 3:1).²

In a journal article entitled, "Does God Still Give Revelation," John MacArthur said:

MacArthur. Just as the close of the OT canon was followed by [400 years of] silence, [broken only by the coming of John the Baptist and Jesus] so the close of the NT has been followed by the utter absence of new revelation in any form since the book of Revelation was completed. ... "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book," Rev. 22:18.³

In the Bible, prophecy means direct revelation from God. It doesn't mean foretelling the future, though it can include 'prophecies' about the future. Anyone who receives inward impressions to direct his decision making is receiving direct revelation from God, which is prophecy, which would mean he was a prophet. But even among the early brethren, when there were genuine prophets, most believers weren't prophets. "Are all apostles? Are all prophets?" 1 Cor. 12:29. And even those few who were prophets didn't usually receive direct revelation for decision making, as we will see throughout the rest of this book.

Though we might wish we always had specific guidance, our needs are not of the kind that God

² Goosen, *Perceiving God's Voice*, 18.

³ MacArthur, *Revelation*, 230.

provided miracles and revelation for. “God shall wipe away all tears” (Rev. 21:4) when he comes down to dwell with man after the Messianic Kingdom, not before.

Heb. 1:1-2. God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days, spoken to us by his Son.

“In times past,” God only spoke “at sundry times,” not often; and only “by the prophets,” not to everyone. The vast majority of Old Testament believers never received any direct revelation from God. God completed the Old Testament over a period of about 1500 years, and after 500 years of silence, burst the finale of his revelation into the world through the coming of his Son, and the writing of the New Testament, in one generation.

The first coming of Messiah, and his forerunner, John the Baptist, was foretold, so Israelites living at the end of the 500 silent years, would know when prophecy began again.

Mk. 1:1-2. The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Messiah, ... as it is written in the prophets, “Behold, I send my messenger before [Messiah’s] face.”

The second coming of Messiah, and his forerunner, Elijah, is also foretold, so the Messianic Kingdom generation living at the end of 2000+ years of silence will know when prophecy begins again.

Mal. 4:5. Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

Until then, don't be swayed by men's false claims, since "every man [is a] liar" (Rom. 3:4). And don't rely on your inward impressions for guidance, since "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9).

The excitement of miracles were good at attracting crowds and persecution, but the furtherance of the mission of Acts was only accomplished by speaking the word of the gospel to the minds of men.

Peter and John healed a lame man in Jerusalem (Acts 3:7), which attracted a crowd (Acts 3:11), and got them imprisoned (Acts 4:3), but faith only came by their words (Acts 3:12-28; 4:1-4).

The apostles did many miracles in Jerusalem (Acts 5:12), which got them beaten (Acts 5:40), but the advance of the gospel came through their message (Acts 5:12b-14, 20-21).

Stephen did miracles (Acts 6:8), which brought about his death (Acts 7:60), and a persecution that scattered the Congregation (Acts 8:1), but the believers were added by the preaching of the word (Acts 8:4; 11:19-21).

Philip did miracles in Samaria, that attracted a crowd (Acts 8:6), but it was what he said that won men's souls (Acts 8:5, 12).

Paul temporarily blinded Elymas the sorcerer so Sergius Paulas could hear his preaching (Acts 13:8, 11), but Sergius came to faith by engaging his mind with the word and doctrine (Acts 13:7, 12).

Paul and Barnabas did miracles in Iconium in Galatia (Acts 14:3), that caused them have to flee the city (Acts 14:5-6), but believers came only through preaching (Acts 14:1, 3a).

Paul healed a lame man in Lystra in Galatia (Acts 14:10), that resulted in a crowd stoning him (Acts 4:19), but the advance in the mission came only through the word (Acts 14:21-23).

Paul cast a demon out of a girl in Philippi (Acts 16:18), that got him and Silas beaten and imprisoned (Acts 16:23), but the progress came by speaking (Acts 16:13-14; 30-32).

Paul did many miracles in Ephesus (Acts 19:11-12), but it was his teaching that caused the word to go into the whole region (Acts 19:9-10, 20; 20:20-21).

Miracles did help Paul and those with him after his shipwreck in Malta (Acts 28:8-9), because the native population then gave them provisions (Acts 28:10), but only the gospel actually furthered the mission of Acts (Acts 28:23-31).

So we lost nothing essential to the spread of the gospel by the temporary cessation of miracles until the Day of the Lord. Miraculous power was only for the purpose of jump-starting the spread of the gospel (Acts 1:8), until the Congregation was large enough to survive local persecutions (Rev. 2:10, 13), and mature enough to spread the gospel without apostles, prophets, or miraculous help (Acts 20:4; Rom. 16:1-12; 2 Cor. 8:16-24; Col. 4:7-17; 2 Tim. 4:10-12; Titus 3:12-13; etc.); for signs to the Jews (1 Cor. 1:22); and for confirming the word before the Bible was complete (Mk. 16:20; Acts 14:3). There

are many other ways to gather crowds, and the empty things taught by those who counterfeit miracles today are better off not heard anyway.

Acts 2:4-11. Tongues Then and Now

The tongues spoken at Pentecost were all human languages that the speakers, all Galileans, miraculously spoke without having to learn them.

Acts 2:4-11. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues. ... And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven [because they travelled to Jerusalem to keep the Jewish feasts of Passover and Pentecost]. ... And ... every man heard them speak in his own language, and [said], “Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how do we hear, every man in our own tongue wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we hear them speak in our tongues.

When God goes out of his way, as it were, to include so much detail, as to name so many of the languages, when he could have just summarized them by saying something like ‘many different languages,’ we know he’s making an important point. In this case, the important point is that these were human languages. God didn’t mention all those languages, and take up all that space in his Word, for us to interpret tongues to be non-existent, or supposed angelic, languages that sound like babbling.

The tongues spoken at the ‘Gentile Pentecost’ were also human languages, because “the Holy Spirit fell

on them [the Gentiles], as on us [the Jews] at the beginning [the same way as at Pentecost]” (Acts 11:15). And there’s no reason to believe the tongues referred to in Acts 8 or 19, Mark 16, and 1 Corinthians 12-14 weren’t human foreign languages.

When Paul said ...

1 Cor. 13:1. IF I [were to] speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and [were to] have not love, I am become as sounding brass.

It was like when he said ...

Gal. 1:8. Even IF we, or an angel from heaven, [were to] preach any other gospel to you, than that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

Paul and angels from heaven didn’t actually go around preaching false gospels, and Paul didn’t actually speak in the tongues of angels. Hebrew was the original language of all mankind from creation until the tower of Babel in Genesis 11, since the early names in the Bible only have meaning in Hebrew. For example, “Adam” only means “man” and “earth” in Hebrew.

Gen. 2:7; 5:2. The Lord God formed man [‘the Adam,’ ‘ha adam,’ אָדָם] of the dust of the ground [‘the adamah,’ ‘ha adamah,’ אֲדָמָה], ... and called their name Adam.

And “Eve” only means “live” in Hebrew.

Gen. 3:20. Adam called his wife's name Eve [‘Chavah,’ חַוָּה], because she was the mother of all living [‘Chai,’ חַי] [people].

We will all speak Hebrew in the future Messianic Kingdom.

Zeph. 3:9. Then I will turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.

Every time God speaks in the Bible, it's in Hebrew, so the language of angels is Hebrew also. But even if angels were to speak a language other than Hebrew, it would still have to have semantics, syntax, grammar, etc., versus the non-miraculous, babbling of Pentecostals and Charismatics today.

There were two differences between the tongues spoken at the two ‘Pentecosts,’ and the gift of tongues. First, in Acts 2:4, “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues;” and in Acts 10:44, “the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word.” But concerning the gift of tongues, Paul said, “Do all speak with [the gift of] tongues?” (1 Cor. 12:30), meaning they don't.

And secondly, the Pentecost tongues in Acts 2 didn't need any interpreters, because they were spoken directly to native speakers of other languages. And the ‘Gentile Pentecost’ tongues in Acts 10 didn't need any interpreters, because they were only given to demonstrate to the Jewish brethren that God had also accepted the Gentiles into the Congregation. “God ... bore them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did to us” (Acts 15:8).

On the other hand, the gift of tongues were spoken in foreign languages which neither the speaker, the interpreter, nor the majority of the audience knew. Both the speaking and the interpretation were miraculous. The hearing wasn't.

1 Cor. 12:7-10. For to one is given, by the Spirit, ... divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues.

The purpose of tongues in Congregation meetings was to provide validated new prophetic revelation that hadn't yet been incorporated into the New Testament.

1 Cor. 14:2. He that speaks in an unknown tongue ... speaks mysteries.

The Greek word for mysteries doesn't mean things hard to understand, but things previously unrevealed, but now revealed. The whole point of 1 Corinthians 14 is that prophetic revelation is worthless if it can't be understood, because that's not revealing anything.

1 Cor. 14:27-28. If any man [prophecy] in an unknown tongue, let it be ... at the most ... three, one at a time, and let one interpret. But if there's no interpreter, let him keep silence in the Congregation.

If Gaius, who knew only Greek and regularly attended a Greek-speaking Congregation at Corinth, prophesied in perfect Egyptian one week, perfect Persian the next, and perfect Phrygian the next, etc.; and Quartus, who also knew only Greek and also regularly attended the same Greek-speaking Congregation at Corinth, interpreted those

different languages every week, that would indeed be obviously miraculous, and thus would have validation value.

How would the brethren know Gaius wasn't just babbling, and Quartus wasn't just making up an interpretation according to his own feelings? Because actual languages have semantics, syntax, grammar, unique phonetics, etc. The brethren would notice Gaius' so-called tongues lacked these things, and sounded too similar each week. And they would notice over time that Quartus' so-called interpretations kept repeating his favorite themes. And if occasionally a genuine native speaker was in the meeting, and the speaking and interpretations were sometimes written down and verified with brethren from other areas, Gaius and Quartus would only have to be caught deceiving the brethren once, to put a quick end to their supposed ministry, and apart from sincere repentance, to their being allowed to gather with the Congregation.

Oss would like to know ...

Oss. If the gift always took the form of the human language of the hearers, why were interpreters necessary in order to make the utterance comprehensible?⁴

Because while the tongues at Pentecost were spoken to “men out of every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5), tongues at weekly Congregation meetings are spoken in languages that are not known by most of the congregation. Acts 2 is the only place in the Bible

⁴ Oss in Grudem, *Miraculous Gifts*, 280.

that actually describes people speaking in tongues, and they're clearly foreign languages.

Babbling can't validate prophecy, because it's not miraculous. Even genuinely speaking in the tongues of angels, if angels didn't speak Hebrew, can't validate prophecy, because no one can verify it. The tongues we hear today have already been proven not to be miraculous, because it's been proven that anyone can do it.

Spanos. Spanos et al. (1986) demonstrated that 70% of college students with minimal training could produce tongue-speaking that was indistinguishable, as judged by blind raters, from that of spontaneous speakers. This supports the theory that glossolalia is socially-learned and in that sense is unexceptional in origin.⁵

Tongues are also proven not to be miraculous because unbelievers do them as well as believers. Most tongues speakers in the world today are Roman Catholic, and thus unbelievers. No one who believes Roman Catholic doctrine is born-again or justified, because salvation is not by works. Catholicism teaches justification by works - that you actually have to become righteous, rather than be counted as righteous by faith per Romans 4, to be justified.

Rom. 4:3-8. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. ... To him that works not, but believes on him that justifies [declares to be righteous] the [actually] ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describes

⁵ Spanos, Glossolalia, 21-3.

the blessedness of the man, to whom God counts righteousness without works, saying, ...
“Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not count sin.”

Do Pentecostal and Charismatic ecumenicists now consider Catholics to be believers because Catholic doctrine changed? No, simply because they now speak in tongues and sing Protestant songs.

Paul said, “Love never fails, but ... tongues ... shall cease” (1 Cor. 13:8). The indwelling Holy Spirit gives every born again believer a new mind that changes his walk more and more over time. It’s not outwardly snazzy, fast, or exciting. It doesn’t attract huge crowds, or bring incompatible religions together, like tongues and healings do. It doesn’t give a person the feeling of being in some ‘higher’ relationship with God. But indwelling-Spirit induced love is truly miraculous and edifying. When the so-called revivals leave only memories of holy laughter, animal noises, a lighter wallet, and discouragement while waiting for the next fix, the next emotion-induced high; the true indwelling Holy Spirit quietly continues to cause us to supernaturally walk in love and righteousness in contradiction to all the philosophies of the world.

Is Pentecost Normative?

A major question relating to guidance is whether the things that happened at Pentecost are normative for the entire period before the Lord's return, or are part of the once-for-all progression of God's plan on earth.

In considering this question, we should remember 'spiritual gifts' are 'spiritual' because their source is the Spirit, but they are part of the changeable, physical realm, since they are "the manifestation of the Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:7). They are not part of the eternal, unchangeable realm that is true for all people and all times, or they would have existed for all peoples and all times, and not have started at Pentecost.

In the physical realm, even Jesus is not "the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). First he was God, then he continued to be God while also becoming mortal man at the incarnation. First he was a small baby, and then an adult man. Sometimes he was thirsty, and sometimes not. Finally, he continued to be God, and became immortal man at the resurrection. But spiritually, he was always righteousness and love.

Pentecostals, Charismatics, and many others, say Acts 2 is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies of the coming of the Spirit for both internal sanctification and for external manifestation until the Lord returns, based on Peter quoting Joel's words at Pentecost.

Acts 2:6-21. Every man heard them speak in his own language, ... and they were all amazed.

... But Peter, ... said to them, ... “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, I will pour out of my Spirit on all flesh. And your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. ... And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come. And it will come to pass, that whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.’”

Oss (wrongly says). The hope for the universalization of charismatic activity takes on more specific form in Joel 2:28–32. ... In contrast to the old era, when the Spirit’s empowering work was restricted to select individuals, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in this future age will extend to all of God’s people and will be characterized by the Spirit’s empowering work.⁶

The problem with the Charismatic interpretation is that Joel’s prophecy is about the end times, when Israel will be physically regathered to the land after the second coming of Messiah, and Gentiles will never rule over them again. In context, the “all flesh” of Joel 2 refers to all physical, Jewish flesh. Joel 2 can’t be fulfilled until all living Israelites prophesy.

Joel 2:17-31. Spare thy people, O Lord, and don’t give your heritage to reproach, that the Gentiles should rule over them. ... Then will the Lord be jealous for HIS LAND, and pity HIS PEOPLE. Yes, the Lord will ... say to his

⁶ Douglas A. Oss in Grudem, *Miraculous Gifts: 4 Views*, 248.

people, ... “I won’t any more make you a reproach among the Gentiles. ... Fear not, O land. ... And my people will never be ashamed. You will know that I am in the midst of ISRAEL, ... and my people will never be ashamed. And it will come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; and YOUR sons and YOUR daughters shall prophesy, YOUR old men shall dream dreams, YOUR young men shall see visions. ... And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke, ... before the great and terrible Day of the Lord come.

Israel has been ashamed since the Babylonian captivity, and has even been scattered to all nations in the diaspora after the 70 AD destruction of the temple. Joel 2 refers to a future time when “all Israel shall be saved” (Rom. 11:26). God will allow 2/3 of the Jewish people to perish just before the Messianic Kingdom is set up, so that only Jewish Messianic believers will be left among the Jewish people of that generation. That’s when Joel’s prophesy that “all [Jewish] flesh” will prophesy will be fulfilled.

Zech. 12:9; 13:8. In that day, ... all the nations [will] come against Jerusalem. ... In all the land [of Israel] ... two parts therein will be cut off and die, but the third shall be left therein.

Ezk. 20:37-40. I will cause you to pass under the rod, ... and I will purge out from among you the rebels. ... I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn [in the diaspora], and they will not enter into the land of Israel. ... For in my holy mountain ... shall ALL the

house of Israel, ALL of them in the land, serve me.

If Joel 2 was fulfilled at Pentecost, where were the “wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke” (Joel 2:30). Pentecost was a foretaste of Joel 2. Peter never said Joel 2 was fulfilled by Acts 2, but only “this is that which was spoken” (Acts 2:16), and it is. It’s the same kind of thing as Joel 2; God pouring out his Spirit on people, and them prophesying; and God giving signs, wonders, and miracles, but not the ones mentioned in Joel.

Oss, in defending the Pentecostal view, says:

Oss. The phrase “history of salvation” refers to the historical unfolding of the central events in God’s plan of salvation, e.g., creation, fall, history of Israel, incarnation, the cross, resurrection, ascension and exaltation, Pentecost, second coming, and new creation.⁷

Gaffin agrees with Oss’ list, but says:

Gaffin. What is telling in this summary is the noticeable gap ... between Pentecost and [second coming]. ... The present time of the church is “between the times,” a hiatus in Christ’s one redemptive-historical work, bracketed by his resurrection and return. ... First Thessalonians 1:9–10 neatly captures the essence of this interim: The church [for the Gentile part anyway] consists of those “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” ... [while we] “wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead.” ...

⁷ Douglas A. Oss in Grudem, *Miraculous Gifts: 4 Views*, 283.

Thus, if church history (with the exception of its apostolic era) is not redemptive history, we may not simply extrapolate from the latter [redemptive history] to the former [church history]. We may not conclude that, unless there is explicit indication to the contrary, ... all that is true of the process continues into the interim period (postapostolic church history), bounded by the two events that constitute that consummation (Christ's first coming, culminating in ... the founding of the church, and his second coming).⁸

Gaffin. D. A. Carson has observed, "The essentially salvation-historical structure of the Book of Acts is too often overlooked." [Carson, *Showing the Spirit*, 150.] ... The events in the history of salvation (such as Christ's death and resurrection) are finished, nonrepeatable events that have importance for all of God's people for all time. ... Pentecost is at the heart of Christ's finished work. ... Pentecost, then, is no more capable of being a repeatable paradigm event than are the other events. ... Too often Acts is read as a more or less random collection of episodes from the primeval glory days of the church. ... Acts intends to document a completed history, a unique epoch in the history of redemption - the once-for-all, apostolic spread of the gospel "to the ends of the earth."⁹

Before we leave the topic of Pentecost we should take a look at Acts 2 in the SLV.

⁸ Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. in Grudem, *Miraculous Gifts: 4 Views*, 285-286.

⁹ Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. in Grudem, *Miraculous Gifts: 4 Views*, 31-38.

Acts 2. Spirit-Led Version. When the day of Pentecost was fully come, Peter lifted up his voice, and said to the crowds that were gathered in Jerusalem, “Hearken to my words. These men aren’t staggering around and falling over from alcohol, but from Holy Ghost cocktails.” At this point, some people in the crowd began howling with laughter. Peter went on, “Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs,“ But now he couldn’t continue because of all the laughing and roaring and barking. So he had the other apostles line people up and stand behind them to catch them, because although God is powerful enough to knock people over, he doesn’t seem to protect them when they fall. Whenever Peter got near someone with sin in his life, his hand swelled up and turned purple. If it turned blue and vibrated, Peter healed them, like if they had one leg shorter than the other, or headaches, or had come in a wheelchair. Peter kept one eye on an angel in a pillar of cloud that only he could see, and whenever it hovered over someone, it would tell him their address and occupation, which he then announced to the crowd. The finale was when gold dust filtered down from heaven on everyone, and those who had any tooth decay miraculously received gold fillings. Peter closed the meeting with, “This Jesus has God raised up, and being exalted at the right hand of God, has shed forth this, which you now see and hear.” When they heard this, they said, “Men and brethren, how can we bring these miraculous displays back to our own cities?” Then Peter said, “These miracles are promised to you, and your children, and to all people!” And he continued the Jerusalem revival for three years, and thirty three thousand souls visited the meetings during that time, and then

for some reason they petered out. But great excitement had come upon many people. And the Lord continued to give new and more impressive phenomena each year to various charismatic preachers.

Conclusion

Bible teachers keep telling the brethren they ought to be having direct revelation and performing miracles like we read about in the Bible. Such pressures often cause sensitive people with a great desire to obey God to mistake their own inward impressions for direct revelation and their actions as miraculous, even though they actually fall far short of the truly miraculous, as found in the Bible.

Prince Frederick III protected Luther from the Catholic Holy Roman Emperor in 1521; William Tyndale used the printing press to mass produce his English New Testament in 1526; and the Anglican Church was established in England in 1534. The combination of English speakers being able to read the scriptures for themselves, and the existence of some safe places from Roman Catholic persecution, opened the door to every imaginable biblical interpretation and the creation of a multitude of 'dissenter' groups, like George Fox's Quakers in 1650, that interpreted scripture passages out of context, and therefore thought everyone should live like the prophets and apostles of the Old and New Testaments.

Groups claiming to experience miracles and speaking in tongues occurred in small numbers sporadically over the centuries since the New Testament was written, but there could never have been the Pentecostal and Charismatic explosion the world has seen since 1900 without the groundwork being laid by the Sinless Perfection movement. Great numbers of people first had to be duped into believing they were experiencing miracles that couldn't be seen (sinless perfection) before great

numbers could be duped into believing they were experiencing miracles that could be seen, but which looked much less miraculous than the miracles of the Bible. (For more information, see my booklet “Brief History of the Charismatic Movement, Christian Mysticism, and Let-Go-Let-God.”)

Scripture Index

1 Cor. 1:22	40	Acts 1:4-5	15
1 Cor. 12:1	26	Acts 1:8	16, 21, 40
1 Cor. 12:1, 7	22	Acts 10:1-2, 22	19
1 Cor. 12:10	25	Acts 10:43-44a	19
1 Cor. 12:13	13, 15, 24	Acts 10:44	45
1 Cor. 12:28	29	Acts 10:44b	19
1 Cor. 12:29-30	29	Acts 11:15	44
1 Cor. 12:30	45	Acts 11:15-17	19
1 Cor. 12:7	51	Acts 11:19-21	39
1 Cor. 12:7-10	46	Acts 12:1-2	31
1 Cor. 12:8-10	29	Acts 13:1	29
1 Cor. 13:1	44	Acts 13:7, 12	39
1 Cor. 13:8	49	Acts 13:8, 11	39
1 Cor. 13-14	29	Acts 14:10	40
1 Cor. 14:2	46	Acts 14:1-3	40
1 Cor. 14:27-28	46	Acts 14:21	30
1 Cor. 14:37	30	Acts 14:21-23	40
1 Cor. 2:12	30	Acts 14:3	33, 40
1 Jn. 2:27	21	Acts 14:5-6	40
1 Pet. 5:1	30	Acts 14:7	30
1 Sam. 10:10-12	17	Acts 14:8-10	33
1 Sam. 3:1	37	Acts 15:12	33
1 Ths. 2:10	21	Acts 15:32	29
2 Cor. 12:12	33	Acts 15:8	45
2 Cor. 8:16-24	40	Acts 16:13-14	40
2 Cor. 8:23	29	Acts 16:18	40
2 Tim. 4:10-12	40	Acts 16:23	40
2 Tim. 4:16-20	34	Acts 16:26	33
2 Tim. 4:6	34	Acts 16:30-32	40
Acts 1:12-14	9	Acts 19:11-12	33, 40
Acts 1:14	11	Acts 19:2	24
Acts 1:15	10	Acts 19:5-6	24
Acts 1:3	10	Acts 19:6	23
Acts 1:3-5	9	Acts 19:9-10, 20	40
Acts 1:4	10	Acts 2:1	11, 18

Acts 2:10.....	23	Acts 5:40.....	39
Acts 2:1-3.....	10	Acts 6:8.....	31, 32, 39
Acts 2:1-4.....	17	Acts 7:60.....	39
Acts 2:16.....	54	Acts 7:60-8:1	31
Acts 2:3.....	18	Acts 8:11.....	39
Acts 2:4.....	18, 45	Acts 8:12.....	23
Acts 2:4-11.....	43	Acts 8:12-18	23
Acts 2:43.....	31, 32	Acts 8:15.....	24
Acts 2:6-21.....	51	Acts 8:4.....	39
Acts 20:17-18.....	31	Acts 8:5, 12.....	39
Acts 20:20-21.....	40	Acts 8:6.....	39
Acts 20:4.....	40	Acts 8:6-7.....	32
Acts 20:9-12.....	33	Acts 9:33-41	32
Acts 21:10.....	29	Col. 4:7-17	40
Acts 21:10-11.....	29	Deut. 34:9.....	16
Acts 21:8.....	29	Eph. 1:20-23	20
Acts 21:9.....	29	Eph. 1:9-10	20
Acts 27:20-26.....	34	Eph. 2:11-18.....	20
Acts 28:10.....	40	Eph. 2:14-15	13
Acts 28:23-31.....	40	Eph. 2:19-20.....	30
Acts 28:5, 8.....	33	Eph. 3:4-6.....	20
Acts 28:8-9.....	40	Eph. 4:11	29
Acts 28:9.....	33	Eph. 4:7-14	28
Acts 3:11.....	39	Eph. 4:8.....	22, 25
Acts 3:12-28.....	39	Ex. 12:3-6.....	11
Acts 3:7.....	39	Ex. 12:6.....	11
Acts 3:8, 22	32	Ex. 16:29.....	12
Acts 4:1-4.....	39	Ex. 31:13-17.....	12
Acts 4:19.....	40	Ex. 31:2-4.....	16
Acts 4:3.....	39	Ezk. 20:12	13
Acts 4:31.....	17	Ezk. 20:37-40.....	53
Acts 4:8-10.....	17	Ezk. 47:1-12	25
Acts 5:12.....	31, 39	Gal. 1:8	44
Acts 5:12-14.....	39	Gal. 5:21-22.....	21
Acts 5:12-16.....	32	Gen. 2:24	21
Acts 5:15-16.....	31	Gen. 2:7	44
Acts 5:20-21.....	39	Gen. 3:20	45

Gen. 5:2	44	Mt. 15:21	36
Heb. 1:1-2.....	38	Mt. 16:13	36
Heb. 13:8.....	51	Mt. 16:29	18
Jdg. 15:14-15.....	16	Mt. 19:1	36
Jdg. 6:34	16	Mt. 22:15-46	11
Jer. 17:9.....	39	Mt. 8:16-17	22, 35
Jn. 14:16	21	Phil. 2:25-30.....	34
Jn. 14:16-17.....	15	Rev. 1:9-11	34
Jn. 14:16-18.....	10	Rev. 11:3-6.....	35
Jn. 14:17	21	Rev. 19:9	25
Jn. 15:26.....	21	Rev. 2:10	40
Jn. 16:13	21	Rev. 21:4	38
Joel 2:17-31.....	52	Rev. 22:18	34, 37
Joel 2:30	54	Rom. 1:11.....	22
Lev. 23:11	11	Rom. 12:7.....	25
Lev. 23:15-17.....	12	Rom. 16:1-12	40
Lev. 23:16-17.....	13	Rom. 3:4.....	39
Lev. 23:5.....	11	Rom. 4:25.....	11
Lev. 23:6	11	Rom. 4:3-8.....	48
Mal. 4:5	35, 38	Rom. 8:15.....	10
Mk. 1:1-2	38	Rom. 8:9-10.....	16
Mk. 16:17	31	Titus 1:2	36
Mk. 16:20	40	Titus 3:12-13	40
Mt. 10:2-4	29	Zech. 12:9.....	53
Mt. 10:8.....	7	Zech. 13:8.....	53
Mt. 11:20.....	36	Zeph. 3:9	45

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