

PENTECOST = “50th day”

In the OT – the 50th day after Passover, an agricultural celebration of 1st fruits
For the Jews today (since 1st century) - Feast of Weeks = Shavuot

50th day after delivery from Egypt (Passover) – giving of the gift of the
Law (Torah) at Mt. Sinai

In the NT (and for Christians today)– 50th day after the Resurrection (Passover)

The “Birthday of the Church” – the beginning of the indwelling Holy Spirit

God the Father – FOR US

God the Son - WITH US

God the Spirit – IN US

as told in Acts 2

Key Scriptures Preceding:

Jeremiah 31:31-33 *Behold, days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them, declares the Lord. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord. I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

Joel 2:28-29 *And it will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will see visions. And even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.*

John 14:16-20 *[Jesus, in the upper room:] And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. After a little while the world will behold Me no more; but you will behold Me; because I live, you shall live also. In that day [Pentecost] you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.*

Acts 1:4-5, 8 *And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, “Which,” He said, “you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” ... But*

you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.

**Acts 2: 1-13 The dramatic coming of the Holy Spirit to the 120
14-36 Peter's prophecy and first sermon by the Holy Spirit
37-41 The gift of the Holy Spirit for all who believe**

NOTE: 50 days after the Resurrection and 10 days after the Ascension
120 waiting in the Jerusalem upper room in as Jesus had commanded them

The long celebrated "feast of first fruits" and giving of the Old Testament

AND THEN IT HAPPENED!

(cue wind sound)

1. First – there came from heaven a NOISE (audible) like a VIOLENT, RUSHING WIND

- a. remember, in Greek WIND and SPIRIT are both "pneuma"
- b. Jesus had told Nicodemus that the Spirit was like the wind that one could not see but could feel
- c. WIND speaks of unseen POWER and MOVEMENT
- c. The wind FILLED THE WHOLE HOUSE – it was to be for all and consumed all

2. Second – there were tongues as of fire (visible) which came to rest on each one of the 120

- a. the tongues of fire "distributed" themselves on each – like the distributing of the "spirituals"
- b. FIRE speaks of seen POWER and PASSION and potential DESTRUCTION
i.e. "our God is a consuming fire" (*Hebrews 12:29*)
- c. FIRE is how John the Baptist said Jesus would baptized us – w/ HS & fire (*Matthew 3:11*)
- d. WORDS travel like FIRE by the tongue – thus, tongues of fire (*James 3:6 "the tongue is a fire"*)

3. Third – the 120 were filled with the H.S (unseen) and spoke in unlearned languages

("glossalalia" - same as the gift mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12)

a. The filling of the H.S. was the MIRACLE – the wind, fire and tongues were SIGNS to attest

- b. HERE WAS
 - a. the promised NEW COVENANT of Jeremiah
 - b. the promised POURING OUT OF THE SPIRIT of Joel
 - c. the promised RETURN OF JESUS by the H.S. Helper of John

- c. HERE WAS a. the celebration of FIRST FRUITS of the CHURCH
 - b. the celebration of the GIVING OF THE LAW – the New Covenant
 - c. the celebration of the RESURRECTION purpose – the new life of God in us

4. Fourth – the first “Sunday morning sermon” by Peter – the gift of PROPHECY

- a. Peter spoke as he had never done before – by the gift of the indwelling Spirit
- b. He undoubtedly surprised himself, as well as the other 120
- c. He spoke SIMPLY but POWERFULLY of the death and resurrection of JESUS
- d. The miraculous RESPONSE: some 3000 were saved - THE CHURCH WAS UNDERWAY
- e. “What shall we do?” Peter: “REPENT (change your life direction) and BE BAPTIZED (immersed) in the name of Jesus Christ “for” (“as a sign of”) the forgiveness of your sins
- e. The miraculous RESULT – the 3000 received the GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT – God IN each

Notice that there is no mention of “tongues” coming upon the 3000
 This was their “personal Pentecost” – the Holy Spirit coming to dwell (ours as well)

(The WIND SFX stops)

THE GREAT MISUNDERSTANDING and DIVIDING: “The Gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38)

Most all Pentecostals and many Charismatics believe that “the gift of the Holy Spirit” of Acts 2:38 is the gift of TONGUES. Therefore they encourage each who has been saved to receive “the gift” as a “second blessing” or “full gospel.” I believe Paul wrote to the Corinthian church to correct this interpretation error for then and for now.

Most Protestants (and Catholics) correctly understand that “the gift of the Holy Spirit” of Acts 2:38 is the Holy Spirit – come to dwell in each believer. This is our hope of glory, spiritual fruit and “spirituals.” The gift given at Pentecost was not a specific “spiritual” but the indwelling Holy Spirit

This divide in understanding “the gift of the Holy Spirit” continues in the divide of the “lifespan” of the 4 sign gifts: miracles, healings, tongues and interpretation of tongues.

√ Those who believe “the gift of the HS” in Acts 2:38 is TONGUES, tend to believe that the 4 sign gifts are still available to us today.

√ Those who believe “the gift of the HS” is the HOLY SPIRIT, tend to believe that the 4 sign gifts have ceased with the apostolic age, as the New Testament is completed. These (as I do) believe that the 4 sign gifts were

VERIFYING or ATTESTING signs to the WORD and WORK of God before the New Testament was completed.

Note: This does not mean that miracles, healings or tongues by the H.S. no longer occur, but that the GIFT of these through an individual who can manifest them at (God's) will has ceased.

(PP slides 1 and

2)

The 4 Sign Gifts - verifying God's Word and work (1 Cor. 12:8-10) *(PP slide 3)*

MIRACLES

The supernatural enabling to verify the word and work of God by acting as a human intermediary through whom God regularly performs acts that alter the ordinary course of nature

HEALINGS

The supernatural enabling to verify the word and work of God by acting as a human intermediary through whom God consistently and completely cures human illness or disability in a person

TONGUES

The supernatural enabling to verify the word and work of God by speaking a divinely anointed message in a language one has never learned, and is able to be interpreted by one who knows the language or by one with the spiritual gift of interpretation

INTERPRETATION

The supernatural enabling to verify the word and work of God by being able to accurately translate the message of one who speaks in tongues without having ever learned the language spoken

THE BIG QUESTION: Are these attesting signs for today? *(largely debated)*

I have come to believe the following: (at the risk of offending those who disagree)

1. The spiritual gift of tongues, as well as the other "sign" gifts of miracles, healings and interpretation of tongues have ceased with the ending of the apostolic age and the completion of the New Testament. Neither the Word of God nor the work of God needs to be verified by attesting miracles as in the Old Testament or apostolic age. God's completed Word and the sacrificial work of Jesus is all the verification that is needed.

2. Miracles and healings, as determined by God, still exist today – though not as spiritual gifts performed through specific human agents with supernatural gifting. In the same way, speaking in tongues and their interpretation apparently still exists today, though they also are not a "spiritual gift" but a Divine enabling for a specific person or circumstance – not for the edification of the body as a

whole.

3. Speaking in tongues, as in the first century, are not for every believer, are not a “second blessing” nor the mark of a “full gospel” and are to be used with very specific guidelines as outlined in 1 Corinthians 14. We must also be leery of counterfeit manifestations of the Spirit. Yet, we are not to forbid to speak in tongues, for we must not “quench” the Spirit. God’s miraculous and manifold ways are ours to appreciate and bring praise to Him.

MY VIEW IS NOT A TRUE CESSATIONIST VIEW. True cessationists believe that supernatural miracles, healings and tongues ceased with the completion of the New Testament, which they see as the “perfect” of 1 Cor. 13. They believe that tongues have no place for today and that miracles and healings occur only occasionally as God wills.

Rather, I believe that supernatural miracles and healings happen often. They are always within the will of God, but they are allowed through the faithful prayers of God’s children. Tongues have had a resurgence in the last half century and are a supernatural provision of God for many of His children – though not for all and only for use in public worship with specific guidelines.

A brief explanation and defense of my position is as follows:

BIBLICALLY

1. 1 Cor 13:8 - “tongues shall cease”
2. 1 Cor 14:22 - “tongues are for a sign ... to unbelievers”
3. Mark 16:17 - “And these signs will accompany those who have believed ...”

OBSERVATIONALLY

4. Modern miracle workers and faith healers appear to be counterfeit, not genuine
5. God teaches individual priesthood of faith rather than going to a gifted person
6. The use of “Sign gifts” today divide far more than edify

FOR TODAY – I want to close with a Pentecost CHALLENGE !

(Worship Team, come forward)

WIND The silent and powerful WIND of the Holy Spirit moves through each believer and each church today. We must “catch” that wind – using the giftedness he has given us (Spiritual Gifts) and radiating the characteristics of His person (fruit) – and be the servant of the Divine Helper and Comforter to our contemporaries. Just like the wind, we cannot see Him, but we believers can sense Him and must respond to His promptings.

FIRE We must allow the Holy Spirit to consume us – yet like the burning bush of old, we will not be destroyed but energized. Like the Pentecost experience of old, the fire comes to rest on each one. We must “burn” for Jesus. May we be living

examples of the PASSION of God - not “flaming out” but burning bright and strong.

TONGUES We must not be silent in a world that needs a voice for the Truth of God. The message of Pentecost is that we must ever be available to use our voice to echo God’s opinions, morality and virtues. Amidst a cacophony of worldly opinions, our “tongue” of God’s truth will be heard by the one He gives ear to understand. May we seek to speak in a “language” that will be understood – a language of authenticity, conviction and love.

WE MUST BE PEOPLE OF THE SPIRIT

- not grieving the Spirit by our disobedience but DELIGHTING Him by our YIELDING

– not quenching by the Spirit by our indifference, but BURNING with our PASSION

Let this closing song be our prayer:

(Sing) “Holy Spirit, Rain Down”

Explaining my position on (1) Biblical evidence and (2) observational evidence
BIBLICAL

1. *1 Cor. 13:8 (“tongues shall cease”)* argues for an earlier time of ceasing than prophecy or knowledge. That there is no Biblical mention of tongues after the letter of 1 Corinthians argues for a ceasing of the gift in the first century. This is strengthened by no mention of the sign gifts in Peter’s later written letter when he mentions the speaking and serving gifts (1 Peter 4:10-11).

2. *1 Cor 14:22 “So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to unbelievers, but prophecy is a for a sign , not to unbelievers, but to those who believe.*

Indicates a difference in audience and purpose for prophecy and tongues – and by reasonable extension that speaking and serving gifts are for the body and sign gifts are for unbelievers. God’s Word is now the verifying sign of God’s word and work and so the sign gifts are no longer necessary (or effective) for that purpose.

3. Mark 16:17 And these signs will accompany those who have believed ...

Reasons to believe that the 4 sign gifts are not in existence today

1. God gave attesting signs to the apostles that are no longer

1. These “verifying signs” are no longer necessary to attest God’s Word with the completion of the New Testament

1 Cor 14:22 So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to unbelievers . . .

Mark 16:17 And these signs will accompany those who have believed

2. Those with the gift of miracles and healings were human agents of God's supernatural working on a regular basis
Acts 2:43 ... and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles

Note the purpose of tongues distinct from prophecy

1 Corinthians 14: 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.

Though both tongues and prophecy are called "signs," tongues are an attesting sign to unbelievers. So also were miracles and healings attesting signs of God's Word and work to unbelievers

John 4:48 So Jesus said ... unless you see signs and wonders you simply will not believe

Acts 2:43 ... and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles

THE BIG QUESTION: Are these attesting signs for today?

I have come to believe the following:

1. The spiritual gift of tongues, as well as the other "sign" gifts of miracles, healings and interpretation of tongues (mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12) have "ceased" (1 Cor. 13:8) with the ending of the apostolic age and the completion of the New Testament. Neither the Word of God nor the work of God needs to be verified by attesting miracles as in the Old Testament or apostolic age. God's completed Word and the sacrificial work of Jesus is all the verification that is needed.

2. Miracles and healings, as determined by God, still exist today – though not as spiritual gifts performed through specific human agents with supernatural gifting. In the same way, speaking in tongues and their interpretation apparently still exists today, though they also are not a "spiritual gift" but a Divine enabling for a specific person or circumstance – not for the edification of the body as a whole.

3. Speaking in tongues, as in the first century, are not for every believer, are not a "second blessing" nor the mark of a "full gospel" and are to be used with very specific guidelines as outlined in 1 Corinthians 14. We must also be leery of counterfeit manifestations of the Spirit. Yet, we are not to forbid to speak in tongues, for we must not "quench" the Spirit. God's miraculous and manifold ways are ours to appreciate and bring praise to Him.

Note Mark 16: 17-18

These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast

out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.

1. Note that apparently these signs did not accompany ALL who believed (since all do not have all gifts, as taught in 1 Cor. 12) but ALL these gifts were found within the body of believers – again, consistent with the teaching of 1 Cor. 12.
2. Note that the specific miracles mentioned (casting out demons, picking up serpents and drinking deadly poison unharmed) are not found today in the greater body of Christ, or within each local body. This tends to lend strength to the argument that these gifts are no longer in effect today, and ceased at some time as implied in 1 Cor. 13:8. This verse argues for a possible different time of ceasing of tongues that of prophecy and knowledge which apparently from context will be superseded at the coming of Christ.

This verse gives us the category designation of “sign” gifts – namely, spiritual gifts that are a sign (or verifying act) to unbelievers of the word and work of God, and are not designed for the building up of the body (like the speaking and serving gifts)

Note also that Peter 4:11-12 does not mention sign gifts, but only speaking and serving gifts as those that are to be used for the benefit of the body.

1 Corinthians 8:11 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.

Personal Definition:

PP Slide #1

SPIRITUAL GIFT ✓ ***A ministry characteristic of the Holy Spirit,***
✓ ***which God has given me in special abundance,***
✓ ***through which I can supernaturally serve the body of***
Christ, the church

The 16 Gifts Mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 put into 3 categories:

Speaking (5)

PP

Slide #2

Prophecy, Teaching, Exhortation, Wisdom, Knowledge

Serving (7)

Faith, Discernment, Helps, Administration, Giving, Leading, Mercy

Sign (4)

Healing, Miracles, Tongues, Interpretation of Tongues

The 5 Speaking Gifts

PP Slide #

PROPHECY	(proclaiming the Word)
KNOWLEDGE	(understanding the Word)
WISDOM	(applying the Word)
TEACHING	(explaining the Word)
EXHORTATION	(ministering the Word)

The 7 Serving Gifts

PP Slide #

LEADING	(guiding God's work)
ADMINISTRATION	(coordinating God's work)
FAITH	(believing God's work)
DISCERNMENT	(protecting God's work)
GIVING	(funding God's work)
MERCY	(personalizing God's work)
HELPS	(aiding God's work)

LEADING

The supernatural enabling to **guide**, cast vision and motivate the body to harmoniously accomplish God's purposes

ADMINISTRATION

The supernatural enabling to **coordinate** the proper working of the body so as to accomplish its goals through planning, organizing and supervising

FAITH

The supernatural enabling to **believe** God for great things, praying and acting with confidence in God's ability to accomplish His purposes

DISCERNMENT

The supernatural enabling to **protect** God's work by being able to accurately distinguish truth from error and good from evil

GIVING

The supernatural enabling to **fund** God's work by joyfully and generously contributing finances and resources

MERCY

The supernatural enabling to **personalize** God's work by showing compassion and relieving suffering through practical actions that reflect the love of Jesus

HELPS

The supernatural enabling to **aid** God's work by cheerfully accomplishing practical tasks to meet the needs of the body and support the ministry of others