

Speaking In Tongues And Face To Face

What does face to face mean in 1 Cor. 13:12?

Regarding 1 Cor. 13:12 and the term "*face to face*", in Ex. 33:11 we are told that God talked to Moses "*face to face, as a man speaks with a friend*". We know this is figurative language because Ex. 33:20 tells us that Moses did not actually see God's face. The same thing happens to us today when God speaks to us through His Word. Heb. 4:12 tells us that the Bible is living and active and that it judges the thoughts and attitudes of our hearts. As we read the Bible, even though we don't see God's face, we feel and know that we have personally come "*face to face*" with Him.

To understand 1 Cor. 13:12, we first need to look at James 1:21-25 and 2 Cor. 3:18.

- i) James 1:21-25 liken reading the Bible to looking into a mirror. Just as a mirror reflects our physical condition, the Bible reflects our spiritual condition – a mirror is being used as a symbol for the Bible.
- ii) James 1:21-25 refer to the Bible as "*the perfect law that gives freedom*" and, in the next paragraph, there is a link to a PDF showing that "*the perfect*" in 1 Cor. 13:9-10 is speaking about the Bible also.
- iii) 2 Cor. 3:18 also speaks figuratively about looking into a mirror (the Bible) and being changed into Jesus' image. The Holy Spirit changes us from glory to glory as we continue to look into the Bible.

This tells us that Mirror = the Perfect = the Bible.

1 Cor. 13:12 is a continuation of the discussion on the cessation of prophecy and knowledge and it uses figurative language similar to James 1:21-25 and 2 Cor. 3:18. It says, "*Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known*". This verse speaks of "*now*" and "*then*" - "*now*" being the time when Paul was writing 1 Corinthians and "*then*" being the time when "*the perfect*" was to come. Therefore, our interpretation of this verse depends upon what "*the perfect*" is. In the following link, I show why I believe that the coming of "*the perfect*" refers to the time when God would give His final revelation for inclusion in the Bible, making it complete; this revelation being the book of Revelation - <http://www.christianissues.biz/pdf-bin/blogarticles/tonguesandthep perfect.pdf>

The following interprets 1 Cor. 13:12 in the light of "*the perfect*" being the completed Bible - "*Now [with an incomplete Bible] we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror [prophecy was limited]; then [when we have the completed Bible] we shall see face to face [figuratively speaking]. Now [with an incomplete Bible] I know in part [because knowledge is in part]; then [when we have the completed Bible] I shall know fully, even as I am fully known*".

Regarding "*mirror*", the polished metal mirrors used in Paul's day gave a poor reflection. This speaks of the poorer understanding of things like our spiritual condition, Jesus' sacrifice, End Times etc., that we get when we only read the Old Testament. But, just as today's glass mirrors give a clear reflection, the New Testament gives us a clear, "*face to face*" understanding of God's Will.

Knowing fully is not referring to knowing God fully as even in our eternal state we will not know Him fully or be all-knowing like He is. We will never be omniscient. Knowing fully simply means having a full knowledge of God's Will, Plans and Purposes as revealed in "*the perfect*", complete Bible. Through the New Testament we can come to a much deeper knowledge of these things than through reading the Old Testament alone. God's Will for man is fully known from the beginning to the end, from Genesis to Revelation. With this in mind, the verse is saying,

"Now [with an incomplete Bible] I know in part [because knowledge is in part]; then [when the completed Bible comes] I shall know [God's Will] fully, even as [that is, in the same manner as] I am fully known [by Him]".
[I will fully know God's Will just as He fully knows me].

So, through the Bible, we can figuratively come face to face with God and as we continue to look into this spiritual mirror we will come to know His Will fully and be transformed into Jesus' likeness, going from one degree of glory to another (2 Cor. 3:18).

The following books on the cessation of Tongues, Prophecy and Knowledge are free to download.

All About Speaking In Tongues by an ex-Pentecostal Pastor -
<http://www.christianissues.biz/pdf-bin/tongues/allaboutspeakingintongues.pdf>

Today's Tongues by Bryce Hartin a Baptist Pastor involved in deliverance -
<http://www.christianissues.biz/pdf-bin/tongues/todaystongues.pdf>

Sola Scriptura – very good, author unknown -
http://www.christianissues.biz/pdf-bin/tongues/tongues_solascriptura.pdf

The Doctrine Of Tongues written by a New Zealand Barrister in the 1960s -
<http://www.christianissues.biz/pdf-bin/tongues/tonguesbywgbroadbent.pdf>

Other free books and articles -
<http://www.christianissues.biz/tongues.html>

This article can be downloaded as a PDF or an MP3 from -
<http://www.christianissues.biz/downloads2.html>

The video of "Speaking In Tongues And Face To Face" can be seen on YouTube at-
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01FrXFi1OHA>

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