

Speaking In Tongues Part A **A close look at 1 Cor. 13:8-13.**

This section is referring to the Timeline in the video. A Timeline is on page 3 of the following PDF:
<http://www.christianissues.biz/pdf-bin/tongues/tongueschart.pdf>

The passage 1 Cor. 13:8-13 speaks about Tongues, Prophecy, Knowledge, Faith, Hope & Love. They are all shown here at the beginning of this Timeline which starts around 55AD, when 1 Corinthians was written. ... V.8 tells us that Tongues, Prophecy, and Knowledge will cease at some point in time ... and this leaves Faith, Hope & Love to remain as stated in v.13. As we move along in time, we reach a point where Jesus will return and when He does Faith & Hope will cease as I will now show.

Regarding Faith the verses in red tell us that ... *“faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see”* and that *“we live by faith, not by sight”* so when we see Jesus our Faith will be fulfilled and come to an end (Heb. 11:1 & 2 Cor. 5:7). Also, 1 Pet. 1:9 says, *“you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls”* so when Jesus returns, and we are changed into His likeness, our Faith will cease because the goal of our Faith, that is, our salvation, will be completed.

Regarding Hope, the verses shown here tell us that ... *“we wait for the blessed hope - the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ”* so when we see Jesus our Hope will be fulfilled and cease because *“hope that is seen is no hope at all”* (Titus 2:13 & Romans 8:24). From these verses we can see that our Faith and Hope will both be fulfilled and cease when Jesus returns and Love, the greatest of all, will continue on eternally.

As we examine this Timeline, it is quite plain to see that this point in time when Tongues, Prophecy & Knowledge cease is before ... this point in time when Jesus returns and Faith and Hope cease. 1 Cor. 13:11 gives further proof of this.

V.11 says, *“When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me”*. There is a very obvious connection between the putting away of the three items in this verse and the cessation of the three gifts of Tongues, Prophecy & Knowledge mentioned in v.8. When we take this connection into account, we see that this verse is saying, *“When I was a child, I talked like a child [Tongues], I thought like a child [Knowledge], I reasoned like a child [Prophecy]. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.”* Putting away childish ways and becoming a man is referring to maturing in the Faith which happens as we study the Bible and grow in our Faith. We are not waiting for Jesus to return to suddenly mature. So we can see that Paul is saying that he put away the so called childish gifts of Tongues, Prophecy and Knowledge as he was coming to maturity in the Faith. Clearly, this must have happened otherwise no one, including Paul, would have ever matured in the Faith. That is, we would all remain immature babes in Christ until Jesus returns. So this verse solidly backs up the Timeline in showing that Tongues, Prophecy and Knowledge cease before Jesus returns.

The final verses to look at are vs.9,10 and 12 and we need to take note of a few things before examining them.

Firstly, the coming of the perfect is only relative to Prophecy and Knowledge and has nothing whatsoever to do with any other gifts, including Tongues. Tongues was included in v.8 but is excluded from vs.9-10. Secondly, the Bible is wholly Prophecy and Knowledge. It starts out with the Knowledge of creation in Genesis and finishes with the Prophecy of end times in Revelation and in-between it is purely Prophecy and Knowledge. Thirdly, the word perfect in v.10 is neuter, so it can't be referring to Jesus, and it can be translated as 'complete'. And lastly, when 1 Corinthians was written around 55AD the Bible was incomplete. It was 'in part' and this of course means that Prophecy and Knowledge were in part also.

With these points in mind, it is not hard to see that the *“perfection”* of vs.9-10 pointed to the yet-to-come, complete Bible so I will read and interpret the verses in that context. 1 Cor. 13:9-10 say, *“For we know in part [because Knowledge is incomplete] and we prophesy in part [because Prophecy is incomplete], but when perfection comes [that is, when the perfect, completed Bible comes], the imperfect [in part] disappears [that is, the in part gifts of Prophecy and Knowledge cease].”* The cessation of Prophecy and Knowledge fits perfectly with the fact that the Bible cannot be added to today.

The last verse to look at is 1 Cor. 13:12 which 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.”* Let us now look at the reference to a mirror, seeing face to face and knowing fully.

Regarding the reference to a mirror, the mirrors in Paul's day were made of polished brass and gave a poor reflection compared with today's mirrors. In James 1:23-24 it says, *“Anyone who listens to the word [the Bible] but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like”*. In this verse, James likens listening to the Word of God to looking in a mirror. Then in v.25 he says, *“But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom [the Bible], and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it - he will be blessed in what he does.”* In this verse, the Bible is described as *“the perfect law that gives freedom”* and the word perfect is the same Greek word that is used in 1 Cor. 13:10 where it talks about the coming of the perfect. So, we can see that mirrors are associated with the perfect Word of God and just as the brass mirrors of that time gave a poor reflection, the incomplete Bible gave a relatively poor reflection of God's salvation plan.

Regarding seeing 'face to face', Exodus 33:11,20 tell us that Moses talked to God 'face to face' without actually seeing His face. In the same way, the Bible brings us face to face with God and our sinful soul, without us seeing His face. Heb. 4:12 says, *“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”* The living Word of God and the witness of the Holy Spirit bring us face to face with God and gives us a clear reflection of our sinful soul just like the clear reflection we get from today's mirrors.

Regarding knowing fully, this has nothing to do with knowing God fully as that will never occur. The verse does not say that we will know God fully but that we will know [something] fully. That something is God's full revelation of His plans and purpose for mankind as well as a full knowledge of ourselves and what God requires of us. Through the Bible, we can fully know these things just as we are fully known by God.

With these thoughts in mind, 1 Cor. 13:12 can be seen to say, *“Now [in 55AD] we see but a poor reflection as in a [brass] mirror [because the Bible is in part]; then [when we have the perfect Bible] we shall see face to face. Now [with an incomplete Bible] I know in part; then [with the full Bible] I shall know [God's plan and myself] fully, even as I am fully known [by God].”*

So we can see that Prophecy and Knowledge ceased when the last book of the Bible was written but when did Tongues cease? We know from the Timeline that Tongues must cease before Jesus returns and 1 Cor. 13:11 tells us that Tongues, Prophecy and Knowledge would cease with the early church because Paul was talking about putting them away as he went on to maturity. The verb used in 1 Cor. 13:8 regarding Tongues ceasing is in the Middle Voice (Greek) and this means that Tongues would cease automatically. Because Tongues was simply a sign (of judgment) to the Jews, as stated in 1 Cor. 14:21-22, the gift would have ceased automatically when the sign had served its purpose. Some say that the gift would have ceased in 70AD when Jerusalem was destroyed, or even earlier, but if not then, then the gift would certainly have ceased when the Bible was completed because the sign would have well and truly served its purpose by then. No one can give a date of its cessation but it would certainly have been in the first century.

In the next video I would like to look closer at Tongues being a sign as well as the thought that Tongues is a prayer or angelic language and also look at some objections such as “Paul said not to forbid speaking in Tongues.” May the Lord bless you as you walk with Him.

A small PDF including the Timeline can be downloaded from <http://www.christianissues.biz/tongues.html>

This video and others can be seen on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/christianissues>

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Speaking In Tongues Part B

Answering some common objections to the cessation of Tongues, Prophecy & Knowledge.

In this video I would like to comment on the following points -

Why Paul said, “do not forbid speaking in tongues”.

The word perfect and the coming kingdom of God.

Tongues being a prayer or angelic language.

Praying in the Spirit.

Tongues being simply a sign of judgment and

Tongues being known languages.

So, let's begin with what Paul said. In Mark 16:17, Jesus said that believers would speak in tongues and this did occur as the book of Acts shows. But, about 20 years after Jesus died, Paul wrote 1 Corinthians and said that tongues would cease (1 Cor. 13:8). He also said “do not forbid speaking in tongues” (1 Cor. 14:39) and this causes some confusion but the simple reason he said not to forbid tongues was because AT THAT POINT IN TIME speaking in tongues was still a gift and it was to remain a gift for many more years until the sign had served its purpose ... then tongues ceased.

This section is referring to the Timeline in the video: Regarding the 'perfect' of 1 Cor. 13:10, some say that it is referring to the kingdom which Jesus will establish when He returns and that Tongues, Prophecy & Knowledge remain with us until that time. The following Timeline shows that this is not possible.

Let's say that Tongues, Prophecy, Knowledge, Faith, Hope & Love all still exist today as shown here. Then when Jesus returns to establish His kingdom at this point in time, Tongues, Prophecy & Knowledge cease. Next, after Tongues, Prophecy and Knowledge cease, 1 Cor. 13:13 tells us that Faith, Hope and Love will remain so I have shown them here remaining after Jesus returns.

Now, from the previous video we know that Faith & Hope will cease when Jesus returns because they will be fulfilled at that time so I have shown them ceasing here after remaining for a period. So, the resulting Timeline shows two returns of Jesus separated by the period of time when Faith, Hope and Love remain. Obviously this can't occur so the perfect in 1 Cor. 13:10 cannot be the kingdom established when Jesus returns.

Regarding tongues being a private prayer language, EVERY reference to speaking in tongues in 1 Cor. 14 is in respect to a PUBLIC situation and interpretation was insisted upon for the edification of the hearers because all gifts, including tongues, were for the common good of the church, as it says in 1 Cor. 12:7. In 1 Cor. 14:14-17 Paul said, “if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful ... If you are praising God with your spirit, how can one who finds himself among those who do not understand say 'Amen' to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying? You may be giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified.” So we can see that this passage is talking about public prayer in tongues, requiring interpretation to allow the others to agree with the prayer, and has nothing to do with private prayer.

Some say that 1 Cor. 14:2 is referring to a private prayer language where it says, “anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit.” Firstly, the fact that it says “no one understands him” tell us that this is not a private situation but public. Secondly, it is obvious that without interpretation, tongues would have been mysterious to the hearers and only God would understand. 1 Cor. 14:28 clears up the question about speaking to God in tongues where it says, “If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and God”. Once again this is referring to a church setting where, without interpretation, tongues speakers were to keep it between themselves and God. The idea of tongues being a private prayer language can't be found in the Bible as EVERY mention of tongues is in reference to a public or church setting where interpretation was required.

Regarding angelic languages, a misunderstanding of 1 Cor. 13:1-3 has led some to believe that tongues is an angelic language. A close look at these verses shows that Paul is using exaggerated speech to show that love is greater than any gift. For example, in v.2 he talks about having “all knowledge” yet later on in v.9 he says that knowledge was “in part” so he wasn't saying that he could have all knowledge. He is using exaggerated language and effectively saying, “Even if I could jump over the moon or do or have anything else and do not have love, then I have nothing.” So, Paul is saying that even if he could speak in an angelic language but didn't have love then he had nothing. He is telling us that love should be our emphasis, not signs and wonders.

It's often said that praying in the Spirit means to pray in tongues. In Eph. 6:18, believers, that is ALL Christians, are instructed to “*pray in the Spirit on ALL occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests*”. Now, we know from 1 Cor. 12:29-30 that not everyone would speak in tongues. So, if praying in the Spirit is praying in tongues, and not everyone spoke in tongues, then the Lord had given an impossible command to those who didn't speak in tongues. From this it is plain to see that praying in the Spirit is not praying in tongues. Rather it is praying according to God's will with the aid and guidance of the Holy Spirit as opposed to self-generated, fleshy prayers, where we seek our own ends. It really is a misinterpretation to say that tongues is for private prayer and also, how can anyone pray intelligently with “*all kinds of prayers and requests*” if they are praying in tongues and don't know what they are saying?

Now I'd like to look at the purpose of tongues. 1 Cor. 1:22 tells us that “Jews demand miraculous signs” and 1 Cor. 14:21-22 tell us that speaking in tongues was a sign. In these verses God said that He would speak to ‘this people’, the Jews, in strange tongues and that tongues was a sign to unbelievers. So we can see that tongues was a sign to unbelieving Jews. The Jews were unbelieving in two respects: Firstly, that Jesus was the Messiah and secondly, that the Gentiles were part of God's salvation plan.

Acts confirms that tongues was a sign to the Jews as Jews were present on the three occasions where tongues occurred. Firstly, in Acts 2, the Jewish disciples spoke in tongues to the Jews visiting Jerusalem. Secondly, in Acts 10 & 11, Peter and his companions were present to hear the Gentiles speaking in tongues and this convinced them and the Christian Jews of Jerusalem that the Gentiles were part of God's salvation plan. And thirdly, in Acts 19, tongues was a sign to twelve Jews showing that salvation was not in John's baptism but in the Messiah they had rejected.

The Jews violently rejected Jesus and violently opposed Gentiles becoming part of God's church. God knew that they would need a sign and speaking in tongues was a sign of forthcoming judgment against them which was fulfilled when Jerusalem was destroyed in 70AD. The very nature of tongues, foreign languages, would have made it very clear to the Jews what the sign was about because they knew how God had previously used foreign languages as a sign of judgment against them. At the end of this video I will put a link to a PDF which shows how foreign languages were a sign of judgment in the Old Testament. A point to note is that 1 Cor. 14:22 tells us that tongues was NOT a sign for believers (to know that they had received the Holy Spirit) but a sign to unbelievers.

A final point is that the Bible does not give a single case where tongues was not understood or did not have to be interpreted. 1 Cor. 14:10 says, “Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning.” We are told that tongues was simply a sign, and a sign without meaning is no sign at all.

In the next video I would like to comment on some other points such as -
The two types of Prophecy and Knowledge.
The Two Witnesses and prophecy.
Romans 8:26 and the Spirit interceding for us and
Today's Prophets.

May the Lord bless you as you walk with Him. Amen.

The following PDF has some other comments and more detailed comments on 1 Cor 14 -
<http://www.christianissues.biz/pdf-bin/tongues/1cor14.pdf>

This PDF outlines how tongues was a sign of judgment in the OT -
<http://www.christianissues.biz/pdf-bin/tongues/tonguesasasign.pdf>

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Speaking In Tongues Part C

Further comments on the cessation of Tongues, Prophecy & Knowledge.

In this video I'd like to comment on
The two types of prophecy and knowledge.
The Two Witnesses and new prophecy.
Apostles, Prophets and unity.
Today's Prophets.
Romans 8:26 and the Spirit interceding for us and
The work of the Holy Spirit.

Starting with the two types of prophecy, firstly, there is fore-telling prophecy which is prophecy about future events. The book of Revelation is a good example of future prophecy which God gave to John to be written INTO the Bible. God ceased giving future prophecy when the book of Revelation was written and warns us, in Rev. 22:18-19, not to add anything to it.

Secondly, there is forth-telling prophesy which is explaining the scriptures by preaching and teaching OUT OF the Bible and this of course continues today. The prophesying spoken about in 1 Cor. 14 is clearly referring to preaching. This is confirmed in 1 Cor. 14:24-25 where it says, "*if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everybody is prophesying, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, 'God is really among you!'*". We can see that this prophesying has nothing to do with future prophecy but is preaching to bring sinners to repentance.

So there is future prophecy which has been written INTO the Bible and preaching and teaching prophesy which comes OUT OF the Bible.

Regarding the cessation of knowledge, this is not referring to our personal knowledge because that will never cease. The knowledge that has ceased is the supernatural knowledge which came from God and was written into the Bible. This includes knowledge such as God's salvation plan, how to live a Christian life, how to run a church and His will etc. There is no need for further supernatural knowledge from God as the Bible already contains all we need. However, we all need to study the Bible and grow in our personal knowledge as we are given understanding by the Holy Spirit.

The cessation of supernatural prophecy and knowledge doesn't mean that God does not talk to us today. In fact, He witnesses to all believers through the Holy Spirit and if we don't listen to and follow His voice then we are not one of His disciples.

Regarding the Two Witnesses of Rev. 11, in v.3 Jesus refers to them as "*My witnesses*" just as He refers to us as His witnesses in Acts 1:8, so it is quite obvious that they will be preaching the gospel and witnessing about Jesus. They will be enormously powerful (vs.5-6) and will be preaching to the Jews and to the entire world (v.10), right in the heart of Israel. This will not be new prophecy but simply prophesying out of the Word and giving their testimony about Jesus (v.7) in order to bring Israel and the Gentile world to repentance.

Rev. 22:18-19 forbid anyone, including the Two Witnesses, from adding to or taking away from the book of Revelation. However, there is future prophecy which has been given by God but has not yet been revealed to mankind. This is the prophecy which John heard when the Seven Thunders spoke in Rev. 10 and he was told to seal it up. It will most likely be revealed during the last days and perhaps the Two Witnesses will be the ones to reveal it but this does not change the fact that God ceased giving new prophecy when the Bible was completed because the prophecy contained in the Seven Thunders was given before Revelation was completed. In any case, the Two Witnesses cannot bring new prophecy because, as already stated, Rev. 22:18-19 forbid everyone from adding to the book of Revelation.

Regarding Apostles, Prophets and unity, Eph. 4:11-13 say, "*It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up UNTIL we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature*" The King James says "*unto a perfect man*". These verses tell us that the early church had Apostles, Prophets and others to train God's people UNTIL they reached unity and became mature in the faith. The early church became united and mature under the leadership of the Apostles and Prophets as God had inspired these men with the knowledge to start up and oversee the church, and they passed this information on to us in letters which eventually brought the Bible to completion. Once the

Bible was completed, Apostles and Prophets were no longer needed as the Bible then contained all the knowledge that God had inspired them with. 2 Tim. 3:16-17 tell us, *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work”*. The King James says, *“That the man of God may be perfect”*. So the early church needed the Apostles and Prophets to perfect them because they lacked the completed New Testament but after that time the perfecting of the saints came through the Bible as it says in the verses just quoted.

Some people say that we have Prophets with us today and that they don't have to get it right all the time because the King James says *“whether there be prophecies, they shall fail”*. They say that the word 'fail' means that modern Prophets can sometimes get it wrong so it's OK to give false prophecy now and then. However, the Greek word translated 'fail' in the King James does not mean to get it wrong but means to cease or vanish away so the condemnation of false prophets, in Deu. 18:20-22, still applies to those who 'get it wrong' today.

Regarding the groans of Rom. 8:26, this verse is thought to be talking about speaking in tongues, where it says, *“the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express”*. The simple fact that the groans cannot be expressed in words makes it plain that it is not talking about tongues as speaking in tongues is an expression in words. Also, the Greek word that is interpreted 'groans' appears in only one other place and that is in Acts 7:34 where God said that He had heard the groaning of the Israelites in Egypt and came to set them free. Groaning is groaning, not speaking in tongues. In Rom. 8:26, it simply refers to the groaning of someone in agony of prayer.

Finally, regarding the work of the Holy Spirit, it's very common today for people to seek the Holy Spirit to bring glory to themselves through signs and wonders. The fact is, the Spirit's main work in our lives is to reveal our wicked hearts and convict us *“of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment”* as it says in John 16:8. The guilt of sin leads us to repent and this results in holiness and enables us to *“walk as Jesus did”* just as 1 John 2:6 commands us. 2 Thess. 2:13 says, *“God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and belief in the truth”*. Note that this verse says that we are *“SAVED through the sanctifying work of the Spirit”* so our salvation depends upon our ongoing response to the Holy Spirit.

God does not magically sanctify us. Sanctification is cleansing from sin and it only comes through heart-felt repentance whenever the Spirit convicts us. 1 John 1:9 sums it up in saying, *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness”*.

The process of sanctification is -

The Spirit convicts.

We confess.

The Spirit cleanses.

John 16:13-14 tell us that the Spirit will also lead us in all truth and bring glory to Jesus. The Lord is glorified when we live sanctified lives and love one another so showing that we are His disciples (John 13:34-35).

There is a free little book called The Calvary Road which clearly and simply shows believers how to hear and follow the Lord's voice. The Lord speaks to all believers all of the time but we are generally as deaf as posts to His voice. If you are hungry for righteousness then this book will teach you how to recognise the witness of the Spirit, leading you to Abide in the Vine and to yield your life to God by daily dying to sin and self, just as Paul said he did in 1 Cor. 15:31. We can have a moment by moment relationship with the Lord because He dwells within us and constantly calls on us to rely upon Him in thought, word and deed.

The Calvary Road can be downloaded from the link on your screen

<http://www.christianissues.biz/pdf-bin/sanctification/thecalvaryroad.pdf>

May the Lord bless you beyond measure as you seek to abide in Him. Amen.

I have several videos on what it means to be saved at

http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=8CABC7A6D3C4F813

This video and the rest of my videos can be seen on YouTube at

<http://www.youtube.com/christianissues>

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