

Can We Still Be Pentecostal?

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Session Description

In a day when so much of the experiential nature of our Pentecostal faith is being challenged, where do we find ourselves in relation to the gifts of the Spirit and most particularly the evidence of speaking with other tongues? Do they have a place in our weekend services? What we believe about speaking in tongues as the evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit has an effect on how we teach it and how we practice it in the Church. Maybe it is simpler than we think. Come with all of your questions and with your Bibles in hand.

The Current Challenge

In a day when there is a strong emphasis on methods, styles and technology we can have a tendency to downplay the importance of the Holy Spirit moving among us and effecting change in people's lives. In an effort to become less traditional we create our own traditions or ways of doing things that are deemed successful.

- A certain auditorium vibe (lighting, dark walls, smoke machines, screens everywhere)
- A certain platform fashion statement (T-shirts, ragged jeans or skinny jeans, leather jacket)
- Minimalistic pulpit or no pulpit at all
- A reliance on tech support (iPads, power points)
- A totally scripted experience (down to the minute or even second)
- Resistance to altar calls or even recognition of visitors
- A de-emphasis on biblical preaching (apologizing for reading the word)
- Mini-membership and discipleship programs for assimilation (new-convert follow-up)

It is as if we see these forms as the key to our success.

Along with this we feel the need for everyone to have a comfortable experience where even the sinner can feel at ease. To do this we often hide the things that might cause people to react or the things that might make the service messy. Speaking with other tongues, the operation of the gifts of the Spirit, spontaneous expressions of exuberant worship, and preaching that challenges to move on to greater maturity are often hidden from view.

Question: To what extent can we put forth our churches as Pentecostal or Charismatic? In what way are they different from a non-Pentecostal or non-Charismatic church?

I believe that there is a diminishing of emphasis on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit especially as it relates to speaking with other tongues. We may talk to people about repentance (to a degree), we may talk to them about water baptism (but not right away), we may talk to them about tithing, but we are not as bold to talk about and pray with people to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

My Testimony

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit was a major change point in my life. The promises associated with it are great. "You shall receive power" when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. When I was prayed for I received the evidence of speaking with other tongues.

Devaluation of Tongues

There is a strong trend among Pentecostals and Charismatics to shift their understanding or doctrine of speaking in tongues. Some might say that it is not for everyone based on question that Paul posed, "Do all speak with tongues?" (1 Cor. 12:30). Or some might say that speaking with tongues is one of evidences of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but there are others signs based on Acts 4:31 where the disciples were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.

Parham's school in Kansas in early 1900's (See Holiness Pentecostal Movement of the US, Vinson Synan)

Laying the Groundwork

Before we can talk about tongues as the evidence we need to understand a few other things.

1. The relation of the gifts of the Spirit to the other gifts from God.
2. The distinction between gifts, ministries and motivations (1 Cor. 12-14).
3. The three primary experiences of the believer with the Holy Spirit and the purpose and evidences of each.
4. The various kinds of tongues or languages that are referenced in the Bible and the distinction between them.

As we look at these areas, we have to be sure that we do not interpret the scripture based on emotions, or on our personal experiences, or on our preconceived ideas or on what causes no problems. We must be true to the Word of God which is the basis for all of our spiritual experiences in God.

Gifts from God (*Charisma*)

The Greek word for "gifts" is "*charisma*". It occurs 17 times in the Greek New Testament (Rom. 1:11) and is etymologically connected to the word "*charis*" meaning "grace or unmerited favor." As such, it always refers to a free and unearned gift (Rom. 5:15-16; 12:6; 1 Pet. 4:10) and is always referred to as coming from God as the source and the giver. This word literally means "a gift freely and graciously given" or "a favor bestowed." It is used in a variety of ways to refer to...

- Our eternal salvation (Rom. 6:23).

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- It can refer to special endowments by God consistent with our calling (1 Cor. 7:7). Paul spoke of his gift of singleness that was vital for him to do what God had called him to do.

For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.

- It can refer to our ministries or callings from the Lord (Rom. 11:29; 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:28, 30, 31; 1 Tim. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6; 1 Pet. 4:10).

For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Romans 11:29

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

- It can refer to the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 1:7; 12:4, 9).

The Gifts of the Spirit

The "Gifts of the Spirit" are to be distinguished from other gifts of God. They are distinguished from the other gifts of God in at least two ways:

1. These gifts are **given by the Spirit** (1 Cor. 12:4, 7-11). These gifts are distinctly attributed to the Holy Spirit as opposed to the Lord Jesus or God the Father (1 Cor. 12:1-6).

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

2. These gifts are called a **manifestation** of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:7). The word "manifestation" means "shining forth". These nine gifts are the ways in which the indwelling Spirit shines forth or reveals (manifests) Himself through believers.
3. These "Gifts of the Spirit" are **supernatural** in character. They are not simply an extension or refinement of natural abilities or powers. They are not natural abilities or aptitudes plus some help from God. These gifts cannot be developed by man by a systematic approach or study.
4. These "Gifts of the Spirit" are **distributed** at the direction of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11).

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

5. These "Gifts of the Spirit" are **not permanent** endowments, but they are given by the Spirit to meet specific needs at specific times.

In the context where these gifts are described, Paul is talking about their gatherings. As they are gathered together, the Spirit will give someone an expression and He will give someone else another expression.

6. These "Gifts of the Spirit" are not to be confused with **ministries**.

Ministries deal with a person's life as a whole. A man possesses a ministry ability from Christ and that ministry ability is irrevocable (Rom. 11:29). Believers may disqualify themselves for a particular expression of that ministry, but the gifts enabling them to minister are still present in their lives.

Note: The list in 1 Corinthians 12:28-30 is referring to these ministry callings and not to the "gifts" of the Spirit mentioned earlier.

For more information on this subject consult the Holy Spirit course available at www.churchleadershipresources.com. Lesson 15-17 covers the Gifts of the Spirit.

Gifts, Ministries and Motivations

Paul makes it clear that the Godhead is involved in giving of spiritual things in relation to the believer. In 1 Corinthians 12-14 he outlines three areas relating to the three members of the Godhead.

1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-6

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant...4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

The three areas include:

1. The Holy Spirit provides the **gifts** through which divine ability is imparted (vs. 4).

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

2. The Lord Jesus provides **ministries** to believers including the five leadership ministries and other body ministries (1 Cor. 12:5). Christ gave these ministry gifts after He ascended (Eph. 4:7-16). He distributed the fullness that was in Him to His body (Eph. 1:20-23).

There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.

3. The Father God **energizes** the believer or provides the impetus to make the gifts and ministries effective (1 Cor. 12:6). The word "operations" or "activities" is also rendered "workings". It is the Greek word from which we get the word "energy."

And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

Source	Holy Spirit	Jesus	Father
Grace Given	Gifts or Manifestations	Ministries or Functions	Motivations or Energies
Greek Word	<i>Charisma</i>	<i>Diakonia</i>	<i>Energeima</i>
English Equivalent	Gift of Grace or Favor	Ministry, Service or Function	Workings, Activities or Energies
Key Verses	1 Corinthians 12:7-11	1 Corinthians 12:12-30; Ephesians 4:7-16; Romans 12:1-8	1 Corinthians 13-14
Examples	Word of Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healings, Miracles, Prophecy, Tongues, Interpretation, Discerning of Spirits	Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, Teacher, Giver, Shower of Mercy Exhorter, Helper, Healer, Etc.	Love Edification
Distinctions	An outshining of the Holy Spirit made available to all believers when needed at the direction of the Holy Spirit.	A lifetime call or ministry that is to be recognized, developed and fulfilled by each member of the Body of Christ.	The effectual power that is to operate behind all of the gifts and ministries in the Body of Christ. That which makes them work.

If we do not distinguish what category we are referencing it can create confusion. On the one hand, we can all speak with tongues, but we do not all have the ministry of tongues.

Different Kinds of Tongues

There are different expressions of "speaking with tongues" mentioned in the New Testament. The Bible actually refers to four different expressions of tongues or languages. There are natural languages that we speak from our mind (Rev. 5:9). These languages can be learned and studied.

In addition, there are three different spiritual expressions of speaking with tongues. In each verse the reader must determine from the context the expression of tongues to which it refers.

1. The Evidence: Speaking in tongues as a private prayer language (1 Cor. 14:18).

I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.

2. The Gift: Speaking in tongues as one of the nine gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:10).

...to another speaking in different kinds of tongues

3. The Ministry: Speaking in tongues as a ministry given to some members of the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:28-30).

And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

Study the following chart for further distinctions between these three expressions.

Speaking with Tongues
The Evidence, the Gift and the Ministry

Evidence	Gift	Ministry
<p>Defined: The initial evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit that becomes an ongoing ability used for the purpose of communion with God in private prayer and the edification of the one speaking.</p>	<p>Defined: One of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit available to every believer from time to time at the impulse of the Spirit. It is most often used in conjunction with the Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues and is used for the edification of the church just as prophecy.</p>	<p>Defined: A ministry that is given to some individual members in the Body of Christ to be used regularly in conjunction and harmony with the other body ministries for the purpose of ministering to the church and the world.</p>
<p>Characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For all believers • Permanent endowment • To be used often • To be used privately • No one understands • Communion with God • Edification of speaker 	<p>Characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available to all believers • Temporary endowment • To be used on occasion • To be used publicly • To be accompanied by interpretation • Edification of the church 	<p>Characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available to a few • Permanent ministry • To be used regularly • To be used publicly • To be accompanied by interpretation • Edification of the church
<p>Key Verses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark 16:17 • Acts 10:46 	<p>Key Verses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Corinthians 12:10 • 1 Corinthians 13:1, 8 	<p>Key Verses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Corinthians 12:28, 30 • 1 Corinthians 13:1, 8

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts 19:6 • 1 Corinthians 14:2, 4, 5, 6, 14, 18, 19, 23, 31 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Corinthians 14:5, 13, 22, 26-27 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Corinthians 14:26-27
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Tongues as the Evidence

We do not have time in this study to take an individual look at each of these expressions of tongues. For the sake of this study we want to take a closer look at tongues as the evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The only way to arrive at a conclusive answer to this question is by examining every case where individuals or groups of people received this experience in the New Testament. If you were a forensic scientist you would look at every case and try to find the common element. You would interpret the unclear from the clear.

1. On the day of Pentecost, the waiting disciples were all “filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:4).

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

2. In Samaria, when Peter and John laid hands on those who were converted under Philip’s ministry, we are told that “Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given...” (Acts 8:18). Evidently, there was a visible sign that Simon saw, which is alluded to in Verse 21 when Peter informed Simon that he did not have “part nor lot in this matter (lit. speech or utterance).
3. The Gentiles experienced an outpouring of the Spirit after Peter’s sermon at the house of Cornelius and everyone present knew it “for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God” (Acts 10:44-46).

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.

4. The disciples that Paul encountered in Ephesus “spoke with tongues, and prophesied (Acts 19:6) when Paul laid hands on them. In every case where we have people experiencing the Baptism of the Spirit, we find a common denominator. There was an immediate evidence of “speaking with other tongues.”

And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

Ernest Gentile puts it this way, "The Bible does not say that you MUST speak in tongues to have the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, but it does teach us by illustration that if you have the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, you will be given the immediate evidence of speaking in tongues."

Benefits of Praying in Tongues

Praying or speaking in tongues is the same as praying in the spirit (1 Cor. 14:14-15).

For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.

Praying in the Spirit should be an integral part of your time with the Lord. Even though when you pray in tongues you do not fully understand what you are saying (1 Cor. 14:2), it is important to do so because when you pray in tongues several things take place.

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

Praying or speaking in tongues or in the Spirit offers many benefits.

1. When you pray in tongues, you build yourself up in your faith (1 Cor. 14:4; Jude 20).

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit...

Jude 20

2. When you pray in tongues, your spirit connects directly with God's Spirit (1 Cor. 14:2, 14-15).

For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God... 1 Corinthians 14:2a

3. When you pray in tongues, you dispel doubt created by Satan's lies (Eph. 6:17-18).

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints...

4. When you pray in tongues, the Holy Spirit helps you to pray when you do not know how to pray (Rom. 8:26).

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Romans 8:26-27

5. When you pray in tongues, the Holy Spirit helps you to pray according to the will of God (Rom. 8:27).

6. Praying in tongues is something that you can do throughout the day (1 Cor. 14:18).

I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all...

New Testament Experiences with the Holy Spirit

The believer has three significant encounters with the Holy Spirit that all help the believer to fulfill their destiny: Born of the Spirit, Baptized with the Spirit and Filled with the Spirit

If we are to receive the full benefit of these experiences we must understand the purpose and the distinction between each of them.

A. To be born in the Spirit

1. Necessary for entrance into the Kingdom of God.
2. Associated with the New Birth.
3. Occurs when we repent and receive Christ.
4. The Spirit enters our spirit and we become a child of God and the Temple of the Holy Ghost.
5. The evidence that we have been born of the Spirit is the inner witness of the Spirit.
6. The outcome or fruit of this experience is the growth of the fruit of the Spirit.
7. Primary focus: CHARACTER OF CHRIST

B. To be baptized with or in the Spirit

1. An experience subsequent to salvation.
2. An endowment with power from on High to fulfill the commission of God in our lives.
3. An experience that Christ wants every believer to experience.

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." Acts 2:38-39

4. An anointing upon the believer (Luke 4:18).
5. The evidence of this experience is speaking with other tongues.

The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Acts 10:45-46

6. The outcome or fruit of this experience is a greater release and security to the Gifts of the Spirit.
7. Primary focus: THE ABILITY OR POWER OF CHRIST

C. To be filled with the Spirit

1. Often confused with the Baptism of the Spirit.
2. Available to anyone who is born of the Spirit.
3. The Spirit fills the heart and mind of the Spirit so that every thought, determination and action is under the pervading influence and direction of the Holy Spirit.
4. It is to be a continual and daily experience of the believer.
5. The evidence of the filling of the Spirit is boldness.
6. The fruit is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.
7. May occur simultaneously with the other two.
8. Primary focus: DAILY ENDURANCE

Notice these three encounters in the experience of Jesus

1. Born of the Spirit.

Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. *Matthew 11:20*

2. Baptized with the Spirit.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.

Matthew 3:16

3. Filled with the Spirit (Luke 4:1).

Notice these three encounters in the experience of the Apostles

1. Born of the Spirit.

And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." John 20:22

2. Baptized in the Spirit.

For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:5

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Acts 2:4

3. Filled with the Spirit.

On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: "'Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.' Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. Acts 4:23-31

Paul commanded born-again, Spirit baptized believers to be filled with the Spirit

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord... Ephesians 5:18-19

Other translations:

...Instead, let the Holy Spirit fill and control you. –NLT

...but keep on being filled with the Spirit. –ISV

The tense of the verb in the Greek here literally means "keep on being filled with the Spirit."

This is not to be a one-time event in the life of the believer but something that is experienced over and over again in an ongoing way.

1. It is a command, imperative, "Be filled!"

2. It is to be continual, "Keep on being filled!"
3. It is much like the lampstand in the Tabernacle of Moses.
 - It has an initial filling with oil at its inauguration.
 - It had to be serviced daily with a refilling to ensure the light not go out.
 - The wick lasted indefinitely.

The believer's experience should be the same.

- We experience our initial filling with the oil of the Spirit.
- We need to experience a daily filling of the oil of the Spirit.
- We are to run on oil not the wick.

The need for continual filling

We need continual filling because:

- The routines of life can drain us.
- The attacks of the enemy can deplete our energy.
- The special challenges that each day holds can try us.
- The opposition from unbelievers can discourage us.

The path to continual filling

1. We must recognize our need.

Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus. *Acts 4:29*

2. We must take the initiative.

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18

3. We must hunger and thirst.

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. *Matthew 5:6*

4. We must ask.

If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! *Luke 11:13*

5. We must do this often.

Stop getting drunk with wine, which leads to wild living, but keep on being filled with the Spirit.
Ephesians 5:18, ISV

All these encounters with the Spirit are tools that God has given to us to help us fulfill our mission and purpose