

The extraordinary gifts of revelation were ceasing in Paul's day

written by Alfred Persson | June 26, 2023



Can you show from the scriptures where to find the gifts of special revelation ended in the 1st century?-JLB

“Not explicitly” but the extraordinary gifts of revelation were ceasing in Paul's day as can be inferred from 1 Cor. 13:8-13

8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.

9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Cor. 13:8-13 NKJ)

The question you posed asks: “Can you show from the scriptures where to find the gifts of special revelation ended in the 1st century?” The

scriptures may not explicitly state this, but a careful interpretation of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 suggests the cessation of the extraordinary gifts of revelation.

In this passage, Apostle Paul speaks of love as a constant, unfailing force, but he foretells that prophecies, tongues, and knowledge will eventually cease or vanish. He describes these revelatory gifts as “partial”, indicating they are temporary and will be replaced when the “perfect” or “complete” comes. This has often been interpreted as a reference to Christ’s return. Paul, along with many early Christians, believed this return could be imminent.

Paul uses the metaphor of childhood and adulthood in verses 11-12 to illustrate this transformation. As he puts it, “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.” These “partial” gifts of revelation can be seen as the “childish things”, becoming obsolete as we transition into spiritual “adulthood”, a time when we will see God “face to face” and “know just as I am known”.

It’s conceivable that as these gifts began to fade, it might have prompted fears of abandonment by God among the Corinthians. This might explain why Paul starts his letter with words of reassurance, emphasizing God’s faithfulness and the grace given through Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 1:3-9).

As this transition took place, it led to divisions within the Corinthian church, separating those seeking “signs” from those pursuing “wisdom” (1 Cor. 1:17-24). The majority, seemingly focused on non-charismatic issues, appeared less concerned about the cessation of the gifts (1 Cor. 14:39). Paul’s expectation of the imminent arrival of “the Perfect” or “Complete”, combined with historical records that suggest a gradual disappearance of the extraordinary gifts after the 1st century, lend support to the cessationist view. Furthermore, passages such as Hebrews 2:2-4 refer to the extraordinary gifts as past events, bolstering the notion that the era of special revelation ended sometime after the apostolic age.

While the cessation of these extraordinary gifts isn’t explicitly declared, careful interpretation of the scriptures, in combination with early Christian tradition, strongly supports the cessationist position over continualism.

Are they a demonic manifestation?

Although it is reasonable to conclude demons inspire the wild sensual excesses we see in “Charismania” among the TARES (Mt. 13:24-30; 36-43) in the church, demons can only deceive true believers, they cannot work signs and wonders through them (Mt. 7:9-11; 1 John 4:4; 5:18).

It could be demonic. It could be satanic; I think it was in Corinth in some cases. It could be that. Ecstatic speech is a part of many pagan religions in Africa, East Africa. Tonga people of Africa, when a demon is exorcised, sing in Zulu, even though they say they don’t know the Zulu language. Ecstatic speech is found today among Muslims, Eskimos,

Tibetan monks. It's involved in parapsychological occult groups. Did you know that the Mormons – even Joseph Smith himself – advocate speaking in tongues? It could be demonic.

Secondly, it could be learned behavior. You just learn how to do it. If you can go to the Hunter's seminar, they'll jump start you. It could be psychological; it could be a kind of a self-induced hypnosis, a kind of a trance where you just yield up all of your will and you yield up your vocal chords, and you empty out your brain. And the power of suggestion takes over, and you become psychologically induced. And once you've had that experience, you then learn to do it and just do it. Many studies have been done to show that it is psychological.-Pastor John F. MacArthur, Grace Community Church

Does 1 Corinthians 1:7 and 1 Corinthians 13:10 prove Continuance of the Revelatory Gifts

Baptism In The Spirit: The Experience

In the last days, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy

Was the New Testament Church like a modern Pentecostal Church?

What did the apostle John reveal when he said: “It is the last hour”?

The Coming False Christ and His Followers Revealed

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The “Baptism in the Spirit” or “New Birth” Has Continued without change since Pentecost

written by Alfred Persson | June 26, 2023



The “Baptism in the Spirit” or “New Birth” is the same today as on the Day of Pentecost

On the day of Pentecost two separate groups received the **Baptism in the Spirit**, numbering 120 (Ac. 1:15; 2:1-4) and 3,000 (Ac. 2:38-41).

The First Group (Ac. 1:15-22; 2:1-4) were followers of Jesus from the days of John the Baptist to His resurrection (Ac. 1:21-22). A sound from heaven like rushing wind filled the house, and tongues of fire sat upon each of their heads and they spoke in languages of Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Cyrene, and Rome (Acts. 2:8-10).

The Holy Spirit filled (Ac. 2:4) their spirit (Rom. 8:5-16), God breathing into their souls the breath of lives (Gen. 2:7), they became “new creatures” (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15) risen in Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12), born “from above” (John 3:7-8; 1 Pet. 1:3) .The “washing of regeneration and renewing” (Tit. 3:5) gave birth to their “inner man” (Eph. 3:16; Col. 3:10). They became partakers of divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4) passing from death into life (John 5:21, 24-26).

Only their soul was made alive, all of this was Spirit to spirit (Rom. 8:5-16) because our Holy God cannot abide with sin and touches no unclean thing (Rom. 7:18; 8:7-13). The flesh must wait for the resurrection yet future (1 Cor. 15:12, 51-55; Rev. 20:5).

Of these 120 unique followers of Christ only the Twelve Apostles did signs and wonders (Ac. 2:42-43).

When the Second Group received the Holy Spirit (Ac. 2:38-39) there was no sound from heaven like a rushing wind. Tongues of fire did not rest upon their heads. They did not speak foreign languages.

Precisely as the Holy Spirit filled the 120, so did He the 3,000 just as

Peter promised (Ac. 2:38; Rom. 8:5-16). God breathed into their souls the breath of lives (Gen. 2:7), they became “new creatures” (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15) risen in Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12), born “from above” (John 3:7-8; 1 Pet. 1:3) .The “washing of regeneration and renewing” (Tit. 3:5) gave birth to their “inner man” (Eph. 3:16; Col. 3:10). They became partakers of divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4) passing from death into life (John 5:21, 24-26).

Confirming the 3,000 saved that day did not manifest revelatory gifts is the fact these were so uncommon they were deemed a “sign from God” of something new (Acts 10:44-47; 15:7-8). God also employed this sign to confirm salvation is only by public confession Jesus is LORD (Acts 19:1-7; 4:12). That this was a special group of Jews who received the revelatory gifts is evident by it being specially noted these were “Twelve” in number (Acts 19:7), clearly implying they were part of this exclusive group of Jews who would establish the Church (1 Cor. 12:28). “Salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22)

The “outward physical evidence” the 3,000 were filled with the Holy Spirit was their changed heart and mind towards God and His Truth, and love for His people (Acts. 2:42-47 Compare 1 Pet. 1:22-23).

That the “outward physical evidence” was the SAME for BOTH the 120 and 3,000 organically follows from it being a function of “the One Body of Christ”, “the One Spirit who regenerates”, “the One Faith all belong to”, “the One Baptism common to every believer”. Every believer is baptized in the Holy Spirit of God whether they “feel” Him or not.

Just as the “soul” cannot be “physically felt”, neither can the soul’s regeneration into a new creature be “physically felt”, it happens in the dimension of the spirit senses cannot sense. That is why Scripture is silent about “physical sensations in body or brain” as though any could indicate when the Holy Spirit is working. *They do not exist.*

Because this radical change in the “spirit in the machine” may cause the brain produce electromagnetic pulses or an Adrenaline/Endorphin cocktail causing experiences, some mistake those as caused by the Holy Spirit. But that is like “putting the cart before the horse”.

The regeneration of the human soul into a “new creature” can only be *spiritually discerned* (1 Cor. 2:14) and logically inferred from many lines of evidence in the Holy Scriptures.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal. 5:22-23 NKJ; Eph. 5:8-10; Mt. 7:16-18).

Unless God specially reveal the experience of the new birth nothing will be “felt” as the Holy Spirit communicates to the human spirit Divine Nature, quickening it with eternal life. Then one is “born again”, “born from above” (γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν). What formerly was like “a shade” is now a

“new creature in Christ” born of the regenerative power of the Holy Spirit. This new reality can only be spiritually discerned, the changes in personality and perception are clearly evident. Now they “KNOW” God is their Father! Bible Truth that formerly was obscure is now wonderfully illuminated. The beauty and necessity of Christ’s sacrifice, the Incarnation of God the Son now understood beyond natural understanding.

To prove this conclusion we must see the same evidence of the “New Birth” in the 120 who received special empowerment and the 3,000 saved who did not. Then compare that with what happens today in Christian churches throughout the earth.

Both the 120 and 3000 show “holy fear” at the signs done by the Twelve Apostles, and BOTH manifest the Holy Spirit is in them by their devotion to God’s Truth and His people:

43 Then fear came upon EVERY soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

*44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,
45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.*

46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,

47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:43-47 NKJ)

The “outward physical evidence” they were baptized in the Spirit was in their changed perception, their love for God, His Truth, and His children. Being baptized in the Spirit, the “washing of regeneration” is the SAME for every born from above believer from the Day of Pentecost until today:

4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;

5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism;

6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (Eph. 4:4-6 NKJ)

The one Spirit Personally indwells every member of the body of Christ, BUT to “each one” was given “the grace” (ἡ χάρις) to accomplish the work God appointed they do (Eph. 2:10):

But unto each one of us was the grace (ἡ χάρις) given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (Eph. 4:7 ASV)

The church receives gifts (Eph. 4:10-13) according to God’s will (Eph. 4:7; 1 Cor. 12:11), but the One Spirit Personally indwells every member of the church equally so all are “the children of God”.

The 120 unique followers of Christ who received special grace to establish Christianity while the New Testament was still being written, were precisely like the 3000 born from above on that day. Never is it said they were superior in any way, to the 3,000 saved that day. Therefore, every born-again believer in Christ is just as much a child of God, as the apostles and prophets who founded the Church.

Today's "born again experience" is the exactly the same believers experienced on the Day of Pentecost, the time of the maximum manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit. All perceive they are changed, loving God, His Truth and His People like never before.

According to Romans 8:5-16 the Holy Spirit bypasses carnal nature and communes directly with the human spirit, bypassing the flesh entirely. Therefore, everything is beyond physical sensory detection. Without special revelation by God, the "new birth" cannot be physically experienced. We can only spiritually discern the reality of our translation from death into life by love for God as our Father (Rom. 8:15-16), God's Truth and God's people (John 13:35; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; 1 Pet. 1:22)

As it is "Spirit to spirit" communion, the flesh is bypassed entirely:

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: (Rom. 8:16 KJV)

This "bearing witness" isn't to body or brain, it is to the human spirit and so manifests itself as conscience:

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor. 2:14 KJV)

I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, (Rom. 9:1 NKJ)

The realm of the spirit is beyond physical senses (1 Cor. 2:13-14). God speaks to us "face to face" through our conscience (Rom. 9:1) as we read the Word of God the Bible—the "sword of the Spirit" (Heb. 4:12):

12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. (Heb. 4:12-13 NKJ)

27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

28 "And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither

shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. (Jn. 10:27-28 NKJ)

Therefore, no born-again Christian is a “second class citizen” because the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were reserved for the Twelve Apostles and founding prophets (Acts 1:1-5; 21-22), and not given to them.

If anyone still feels like a foreigner among His people, a “dry tree”, hear the Word of the LORD:

3 Let no foreigner who is bound to the LORD say, “The LORD will surely exclude me from his people.” And let no eunuch complain, “I am only a dry tree.”

4 For this is what the LORD says: “To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant—

5 to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will endure forever.

6 And foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant—

7 these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.”

8 The Sovereign LORD declares— he who gathers the exiles of Israel: “I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered.” (Isa. 56:3-8 NIV)

END NOTE

It is alleged I am a “Cessationist” because I never experienced a Pentecostal Church service. That is not correct. I was baptized in Bethany Christian, a four-square “full gospel” Pentecostal Church. “We can’t throw the Baby out with the Bathwater” is what I often said when everyone could discern a “tongues and prophecy” was “of the flesh” and not “of the Spirit.”

Jesus’ and His Apostles miracles are impeccable, modern “manifestations” are not. The facts show *their miracles have not continued in churches today.*

It is written:

“We ought to obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29 NKJ)

God commands we “test the spirits”

*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits, whether they are of God**; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1*

Jn. 4:1 NKJ)

We are commanded to “test whether the supernatural in church is of God”, and “hold fast what is good” abstaining from every form of evil:

21 Test all things; hold fast what is good.

22 Abstain from every form of evil. (1 Thess. 5:21-22 NKJ)

God commands all “Examine yourselves” to be certain spiritual experiences are “in the faith”:

Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. (2 Cor. 13:5 NKJ)

A Personal Testimony of “Testing myself”:

As a Pentecostal I believed the Holy Spirit would respond to questions with “a leading” that was either “yes” or “no”. I believed that 100% for a couple of years.

Over time it became clear I often went in circles accomplishing nothing for Christ. I decided to “test” the “leading”, I walked to the corner and asked “should I turn left or right?” The “leading” indicated “turn right”, but I turned “left”. As I walked I justified turning left was the only correct thing to do, and as I did this the “leading” reassured me “you are correct!”

That’s when I realized it was all experiential self-delusion, a fabrication of my mind. At first I was heartbroken as if I lost a companion.

The despair was soon replaced by a sense of liberation! What a slave I was! How many times did it “lead me to nowhere without the resources even to live!” (comp. Isa. 8:21). As the “brain fog” lifted, my critical thinking skills returned restoring autonomy.

“Oh, what a feeling! Free at last, Free at last! Freedom! Nothing can replace it!”

As I evaluated the “fact pattern” of modern “Pentecostalism” their claim of “continuity with NT Church” became impossible. Whatever is occurring among Pentecostalism today is “something different” than what was in the New Testament Church.

That is why I am a “Cessationist.” In 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 Paul discusses the cessation of the revelatory gifts because they were already ceasing everywhere in the Church, and he had to reassure them God still loved them (1 Cor. 1:4-9). The Reader must factor in the fact Paul believed Christ could return in the 1st century, so the time of their cessation would be seen as “near” to that date. Because “tongues prophecy knowledge” were “partial revelation” it logically follows they would end

as the complete revelation of God appears with Christ’s second coming.

The Bible alone is 100% reliable and true, experiences are subjective and possibly self-deception (Jer. 17:9; 23:26; Jas. 1:26-27).

“Extraordinary claims require extraordinary proof”-Carl Sagan, “The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark,” Carl Sagan.

Pentecostals have failed to provide extraordinary proof. The burden of proof is on Pentecostals.

The supernatural events in churches today must be authenticated by rigorous investigation and examination of their “fact-pattern” by a team of experts as truly “supernatural”.

Moreover, Lovers of God’s Truth must insist the “fact pattern” is 100% consistent with scriptural data and teaching.

For example, it is impossible the “fallible prophecy” appearing in Pentecostal churches today is the same “word of the Lord” spoken in the Bible because Scripture declares “fallible prophecy” is “the thing which the LORD has not spoken.”

21 “And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?’—
22 “when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him. (Deut. 18:21-22 NKJ)

So why haven’t Pentecostal churches authenticated the supernatural in their churches?

Without it, Bible Believers cannot accept their claims as true.

Was the NT Church like a Modern Pentecostal Church?
Paul’s Teaching about Tongues Ceasing implies they were already ceasing
Have we not prophesied in your Name?
Does 1 Corinthians 1:7 and 1 Corinthians 13:10 prove Continuance of the Revelatory Gifts
The Coming False Christ and His Followers Revealed

Will the real Continualist Please Stand Up? The Alleged Continuance

of the Revelatory Gifts

written by Alfred Persson | June 26, 2023



From Frame 5:15

John MacArthur explains Continuationist vs. Cessationist

“I think the argument is when you read the chapter and you see how unique the apostles were and when they passed away what finality that was; that defines cessationism when you cease to have apostles you cease to have the signs that were unique to the apostles. So when someone says he’s Cessationist...[he doesn’t] mean the Holy Spirit ceased to work or Christ ceased to work. I only mean that the things that attended the apostles have ceased when the apostles ceased.” -John MacArthur

[Host]

“One of the arguments I’ve made is that every charismatic except the really bizarre quirky ones if you take the better charismatics the ones whose theology are more on the sound end of the spectrum they’re all Cessationists as well because and in fact they would admit this. Wayne grudem says contemporary prophecy the prophecies we’re hearing today are fallible; everybody would acknowledge that the tongues people speak today are not like the tongues at Pentecost, they’re not translatable languages. So clearly something has changed and unless you want to deny that you’ve embraced the kind of Cessationism.” – Interviewer

[John MacArthur resumes]

“Yeah you just put your finger on what I think is the knockout punch in the final chapter of the book. The last chapter is an open letter to my continuationist friends—and my continuation friends are my friends even friends theologically in many cases, and they want to be continuationist. But in that chapter and exactly what Phil said is the case:

1) they believe in tongues that aren’t languages whereas clearly in the

New Testament they were languages.

2) they believe in miracles that aren't necessarily like the miracles Jesus and the apostles did.

3) and they say that they believe in revelation divine revelation but not infallible revelation.

So, they have miracles that aren't the same as the New Testament miracles; terms that aren't the same as the New Testament tongues; prophecies that aren't the same as the New Testament prophecies; that's not continuation that is cessation and inventing something else.

So, we need to come up with a new name for them, you know they are "inventionists". I don't know what but that that is not a continuity—once you say it's not what was then you're not really a continuationist. So I try to back them into a corner and make them admit that they're not really continuationist but rather they're guilty of putting the stamp of divine approval and labeling the work of the Holy Spirit on things that have no biblical parallel."-John MacArthur

Does 1 Corinthians 1:7 and 1 Corinthians 13:10 prove Continuance of the Revelatory Gifts?

4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus,

5 that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge,

6 even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you,

7 so that you come short (ὕστερεῖσθαι) in no gift (μηδενὶ χαρίσματος), eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

8 who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

11 For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household , that there are contentions among you.

...

22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; (1 Cor. 1:4-11, 22 NKJ)

Continualists claim the words "ANY [3367 μηδεὶς medeis lit., not one] GIFT" in 1 Corinthians 1:7 requires all gifts remain till our LORD comes. However, that does not logically follow because then those manifesting those gifts would continue till Christ come also. The verse does not separate them. However, Paul only spoke about their present situation without regard to the future, the verb 5302 ὕστερέω hustereo is in the present tense. At that time they were like all other churches, not behind

in spiritual gifts, as they eagerly waited for the LORD.

Nor does “[God] will also confirm you to the end” imply the gifts will continue because the apostle always wrote as though Christ would return soon even though he knew it could be a long time off (Mt. 24:42-51). Moreover, this “confirmation” must refer to something apart from the revelatory gifts as both those who manifested gifts and those who wanted to forbid some of them (1 Cor. 14:39) receive this promised confirmation.

Rather than “Continualism”, the entire epistle implies Cessationism, that the tide of gifts was ebbing and that caused divisions among the majority “have nots” against the minority of “haves”. Paul’s reference to those “who seek wisdom versus those who seek signs” also implies this general division (1 Cor. 1:22). The “have-nots” must have been the majority because only a majority could successfully “forbid the speaking of tongues” compelling Paul’s direct intervention (1 Cor. 14:39). Most of the epistle treats other concerns. In context Paul’s greeting has the appearance of “reassurance” not to believe the ebbing gifts indicated God was displeased with them. On the contrary, the same situation was evident in other churches.

Paul devotes almost an entire chapter to end the schism caused by the ebbing of the gifts, rising to the defense of those suffering spiritual abuse because of their lack of gifts. As God gifts as He wills it is not their fault:

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.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,

9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,

10 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.

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

12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body— whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free— and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.

15 If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the

body," is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling?

18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.

19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be?

20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.

21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

22 No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.

23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty,

24 but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it,

25 that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.

26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles?

30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? (1 Cor. 12:4-30 NKJ)

That would explain why Paul felt compelled to discuss the cessation of these gifts in 1 Corinthians 13:8-13, they were already ceasing causing divisions in the church (1 Cor. 12:3-12). It is noteworthy he begins this discussion reminding Corinthians of their former occult practices and how it led them by the nose to idols who can neither speak or hear (1 Cor. 12:1-3), and giving them objective means by which to identify when a demon spirit was inspiring the prophecy (1 Cor. 12:4). After Pastoring to restore unity in the body, Paul seeks to lessen their dismay over the ceasing of the revelatory gifts noting that was always inevitable.

Paul believed Christ might return in the 1st century. Therefore, the implied date for the cessation of tongues prophecy and [supernatural] knowledge is the 1st century.

8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.

9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect (5046 τέλειος teleios) has come, then that which is in part (3313 μέρος meros) will be done away.

*11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.
12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.
13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Cor. 13:8-13 NKJ)*

Continualists misread this text, what must remain until the *teleios* is the *meros*, not any particular item in it.

Paul did not say WHEN prophecies tongues and [supernatural] knowledge would cease, he only says “it will happen” once the “complete revelation” arrives possibly in the 1st century. Paul only says there is no need for partial revelation once the complete has arrived. Just as childhood things are no longer needed in adulthood.

To illustrate, Paul is not promising the continuance of these gifts: Some in the audience had ice cream cones that were melting in the hot sun. They were sad about this, so Paul consoles them: “When the ice cream factory comes, which only sells ice cream by the gallon, ice cream cones will cease, vanish, be done away. No one will miss the partial portions of ice cream once the complete portions have arrived.”

Paul’s three-two arrangement confirms this.

8) prophecies tongues knowledge: 9) know in part, prophesy in part

11) spoke...understood...thought as a child: became a man, put away childish things

12) see in a mirror dimly, then face to face; know in part: know... as I am known

13) Now abide faith hope love: but the greatest is love. Love is repeated twice.

As neither “faith” nor “hope” are revelatory gifts verse 13 does not imply continuance, rather this reinforces the universal thought of “cessation.” No need for “faith in” and “hope for” the Kingdom to come after it has arrived. Only love remains.

Therefore, in context Paul seems to be saying “Pursue love because it will remain unlike prophecy tongues and knowledge (which are failing), but while these are still available like faith and hope, desire them to edify the church.

1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.

2 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.

3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. (1 Cor. 14:1-3 NKJ)

The NT is a “non-charismatic book”, the universal born-again experience was manifested by the 3000 saved on the Day of Pentecost, and it is

precisely what believers manifest today. No mention of tongues or prophecy, rather the “outward physical evidence” is a changed heart, sincere devotion to God’s Word and love for their fellow believers:

38 Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

39 “For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.”

41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

*44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,
45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.*

46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,

47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:38-47 NKJ)

Passages cited FOR the gift of tongues (Ac. 10:46-47; 19:4-7) actually prove how unusual it was, for these are cited as signs. In the first that the Way was open to Gentiles (Ac. 11:1-18), and the second that salvation can occur only in the name of Jesus (Ac. 19:3-6; 4:12).

That these gifts passed from the scene as the New Testament was being written is clear from a chronological survey of the data. About 67 A.D. these special revelatory gifts are spoken of in the past tense:

*3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and **was confirmed** unto us by them that heard him;*

*4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?
(Heb 2:3-4 KJV)*

We see the “timeline of cessation” quite clearly in this survey of the NT data. While some will object “this is an argument from silence, therefore unsound”, that wouldn’t apply when “silence is impossible”. The NT writers made it a point to record all extra-ordinary events, it is impossible they not do so. To illustrate this principle, if a body is silent for hours not breathing, to a high degree of probability it is dead, a corpse. That deduction would not be unsound.

Pentecost was the time of maximum manifestation of the special gifts. If we calculate those present on that day, 120 receive the gifts while 3,000 do not ($120/3120=.038$) only 4% of the church manifested these gifts. Everything in the NT indicates this percentage decreased as the Bible grew, as Holy Scripture began to take the place of the revelatory gifts.

A.D.30 According to Scripture only 3.85% ($120/(3000+120)$) percent of believers spoke in tongues when they received the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost-Acts 1:15, 2:1ff; 41-47.

A.D.49 Paul lists fruits of the Spirit rather than special gifts-Galatians 5:2-23.

A.D.51 Timothy brings Paul news about faith and love, not charismata-1 Thessalonians 3:6.

A.D.51 Paul says love is evidence of God's choosing, not special gifts-2 Thessalonians 1:3-5.

A.D.51 "May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance."-2 Thessalonians 3:5 NIV

A.D.53 The unusual is recorded: Twelve followers of John the Baptist receive the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues and prophesy-Acts 19:1-7.

A.D.55 Paul appeals to the Corinthians desire to excel in every sign of spirituality to add to their zeal generosity 2 Corinthians 8:7.

A.D.55 New birth confirms one is in Christ, not revelatory gifts-2 Corinthians 5:17.

A.D.55 Paul exhorts unto righteousness and holiness, not revelatory gifts-2 Corinthians 7:1.

A.D.56, Only prophecy is mentioned in a way that implies it is rare and the other gifts surprisingly are not named at all-Romans 12:4-13.

A.D.60 The absence here of revelatory gifts in this context is very conspicuous; it should be here in a number of places. The text lists prophets with apostles, signifying they are few in number-Ephesians 4:2-5:21.

A.D.60 This context would have been perfect to mention the revelatory gifts, he doesn't Colossians 2:9-18.

A.D.60 Paul neither hears about revelatory gifts nor does he pray for Philemon to receive them-Philemon 1:4-7.

A.D.62 Renewing of the Holy Ghost connected to holy lifestyle and God's grace, not gifts-Titus 3:1-8.

A.D.62 Revelatory gifts not part of the requirements for the office of overseer or deacon-1 Timothy 3:2-13.

A.D.62 Paul had to exhort Timothy to use his gift (ministry? cp. 2 Tim. 1:6f) and the example he is to set is for holy living, not gift seeking-1 Timothy 4:12-16.

A.D. 62 Neither Paul or others can heal Timothy: Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities. (1Ti 5:23 KJV)

A.D.67 The special gifts are referred to in the past tense-Hebrews 2:3-4. [That is consistent with tongues being a sign to the Jews 1 Cor. 14:20-22 that would organically end with the 70 A.D. destruction of all alternatives to Jesus' sacrifice with the destruction of the Temple with all its genealogical records necessary for Mosaic sacrifice and identification of the Messiah].

A.D.67 Spur one another unto love and good deeds, not tongues-Hebrews 10:24-25.

A.D.67 Peter does not mention these gifts amongst those who share the divine nature and this is in contrast to the false prophets in next chapter-2 Peter 1:4-9.

A.D.90 God's love shown not by gifts but by Christ ransom sacrifice-1 John 4:9-10.

A.D.90 Evidence of having the Spirit is love and true doctrine-1 John 4:12-17.

Some argue Revelation may have been written as early as A.D.68 If the earlier date is accepted, it would better fit our survey chronicling the cessation of these gifts for they seem to have ceased about this time.

A.D.94 The seven churches in the book of Revelation make no mention of these revelatory gifts at all, only to a false prophetess called Jezebel (Rev. 2:20f).

A.D.94 Testimony of Jesus is spirit of prophecy-Revelation 19:10.

A.D.94 If prophecy were still in operation in the church, Revelation 22:18 would not forbid adding to the book.

A.D.94 Ethical imperatives not gift seeking-Revelation 22:11.

Satan has been known to step into a Christian void (John 14:30). With the decline of true Prophets the false increased. (2 Cor. 11:3-12:13) They became numerous enough to upset the Church to the point where believers were despising prophecy altogether. About A.D.51, five years before Paul wrote 1 Corinthians Paul had to stop the Thessalonians from despising prophecy. Notice Paul calls for testing it which implies enough of it was false prophecy to make the Thessalonians despise it:

20 Do not despise prophecies.

21 Test all things; hold fast what is good.

22 Abstain from every form of evil. (1 Thess. 5:20-22 NKJ)

This was probably the reason why the majority in Corinth wanted to forbid speaking in tongues (1 Cor. 14:29; cp. 2 Pet. 1:20-2:1ff).” By A.D.90 the apostle John says: “do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1 Jn. 4:1 NKJ)

Although this is an “apples to oranges” comparison (what is true of an Apostle many not be true of ordinary believers), parallel to the decline of the revelatory gifts is the ebbing of miraculous healing in Paul’s ministry. Around 60 A.D. while Paul was in Ephesus we read God worked “unusual miracles” by the hands of Paul:

*11 Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul,
12 so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them. (Acts 19:11-12 NKJ)*

However, not too long after this Paul evidently cannot heal his fellow worker Epaphroditus nor did he do anything for Timothy’s “frequent infirmities” and still later we read Paul had to leave Trophimus behind in Miletus when he got sick:

*25 Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need;
26 since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.
27 For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. (Phil. 2:25-27 NKJ)*

No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach’s sake and your frequent infirmities. (1 Tim. 5:23 NKJ)

Erastus stayed in Corinth, but Trophimus I have left in Miletus sick. (2 Tim. 4:20 NKJ)

Acts 28:3-8 doesn’t contradict this ebbing of Paul’s healing ministry, it clearly is a special case being an entirely new mission field and God stepped in to save his life.

To sum up, the cessation of the revelatory gifts can be deduced from the New Testament data where Paul doesn’t mention tongues again after 1 Corinthians, and prophecy only once in Romans in a context that is consistent with the ebbing of these gifts. The absence of tongues and interpretation of tongues is glaring:

4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not

have the same function,
5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.
6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;
7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;
8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.
9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good (Rom. 12:4-9 NKJ)

Nor do tongues appear in any of the Bible books written later. John doesn't mention tongues, Jude doesn't mention tongues. Tongues seem to vanish until the second century Montanus cult.

It is reasonable to deduce these revelatory gifts became redundant as the Scripture took their place. Scripture is far superior to these revelatory gifts. Whereas prophecies tongues etc. had to be "judged" because "false prophecy" was always present, Holy Scripture can be trusted completely to make the man of God fully equipped for every good work:

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,
17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim. 3:16-17 NKJ)

END NOTE:

14 **Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.**
15 **And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.**
16 **"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.**
17 **"And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;**
18 **"they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."**

[As individual Pentecostal and Non-Pentecostal believers today DO NOT DO ALL the signs (cast out demons, speak with new tongues, take up serpents, drink deadly poison) must we conclude there are no believers today on planet earth?

Of course not.

*There is a transition implied by the context, **from believers preached to in the world, to the special group of “believing preachers”** Christ is sending thousands and these signs will distinguish them from unbelievers (con men) who feigned belief. Therefore, the pronouns “they, them” in Mark 16:17-18 refer to this group who uniquely establish the Christian faith in all the earth.*

The Eleven would know if they truly believe, they would do all the signs that confirmed their word was from God (Comp. Heb. 2:3-4).

After teaching the eleven, the writer confirms the prophecy was fulfilled in the first century Mark 16:19-20). In the NT book of Acts we see Paul claimed to do all these signs of an apostle specially sent by Christ (2 Cor. 12:12; Compare Acts 16:18; 20:9-12; 28:3-5, 8; 1 Cor. 14:18).]

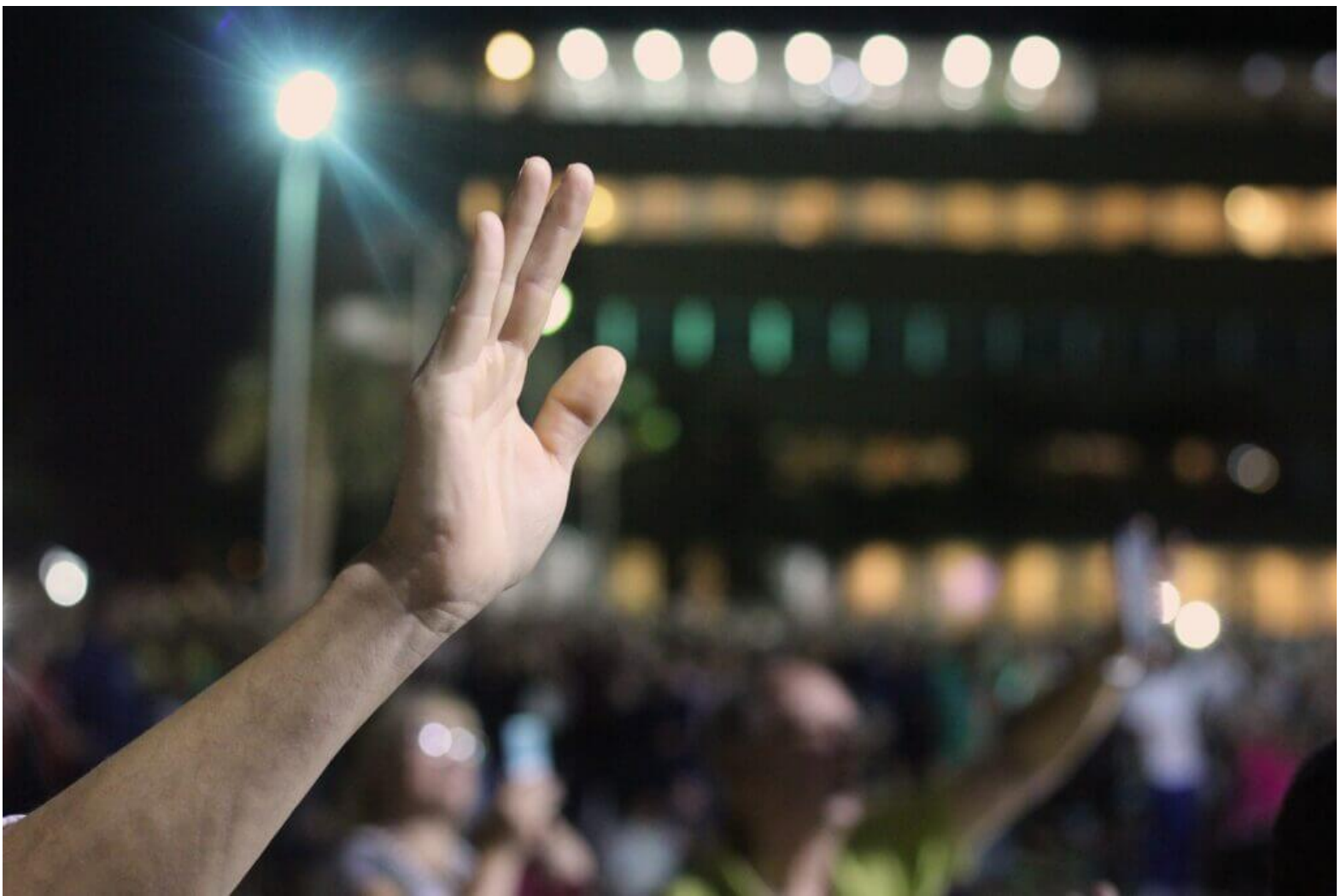
*19 So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.
20 **And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.**
(Mk. 16:13-20 NKJ)*

Baptism In The Spirit: The Experience

*Was the NT Church like a Modern Pentecostal Church?
Paul’s Teaching about Tongues Ceasing implies they were already ceasing
Have we not prophesied in your Name?
The Coming False Christ and His Followers Revealed*

Was the New Testament Church like a modern Pentecostal Church?

written by Alfred Persson | June 26, 2023



Was the New Testament Church like a modern Pentecostal Church?

Former cessationist Dr. Jack Deere believes “Yes” is the obvious answer:

If you take a new convert, who prior to his conversion knew nothing about the history of Christianity or the New Testament, and you lock him in a room with a Bible for a week, he will come out believing that he is a member of a body that is passionately in love with the Lord Jesus Christ and a body that consistently experiences miracles and works miracles. It would take a clever theologian with no experience of the miraculous to convince this young convert differently.-Deere, Jack. Surprised by the Power of the Spirit (p. 114). Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.

Dr. Jack and most everyone else assumes the Corinthian “prophets” were like the prophets in the book of Acts. But in context, Paul says **everyone in Church “can all prophesy one by one.”** Later, he explicitly says the “Word of God” came to the Corinthians [through the apostles like him], **not from any of the tongues prophecy or revelations the Corinthians were giving:**

29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge (1252 διακρίνω diakrino).

30 But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent.

31 For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

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36 Or did the word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached?

37 If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.

38 But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant. (1 Cor. 14:29-38 NKJ)

Everyone can “judge/discriminate/separate” (1252 διακρίνω diakrino) prophecy, if it is of the flesh or really some great insight given by the Holy Spirit into the Word of God.

Whoever “forth tells” Scripture is a prophet in the truest sense of the world, speaking the word of God. Any believer can do that. When the pews are filled with on fire believers, this could easily describe them as they share their testimonies and do Bible readings:

How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. (1 Cor. 14:26 NKJ)

Every believer receives revelations from God the Holy Spirit while reading Scripture, psalms or teaching and we share that with each other in church and during Bible Study.

So apart from tongues, which were a sign to the Jews (1 Cor. 14:21-22) that Jesus Christ is now the way the truth and the life; That sign was no longer needed once the Temple was destroyed and with it Judaism because the genealogical tables that made the Levitical Priesthood possible were destroyed with it.

The Corinthian Church actually resembles a Cessationist church MORE than a modern Pentecostal Church. The majority in Corinth wanted to forbid the speaking in tongues but Paul wouldn’t let them (1 Cor. 14:39). That don’t sound like a Pentecostal Church where everyone is speaking in tongues, at all. But one can easily see its like a modern Cessationist Church.

Does 1 Corinthians 1:7 and 1 Corinthians 13:10 prove Continuance of the Revelatory Gifts

Baptism In The Spirit: The Experience

What did the apostle John reveal when he said: “It is the last hour”?

The Two Phases of Antichrist: Man of Sin and Son of Destruction