



# Walking with the Spirit through the Book of Acts

Pastor Michael Cranford

Copyright © 2024 Michael Cranford

# Schedule

- April 7 The Holy Spirit
- April 14 Acts 1:1-9
- April 21 Acts 1:10-26
- April 28 Acts 2:1-13
- May 5 Acts 2:14-47; 3:1-10
- May 12 BREAK (Mother's Day)
- May 19 Acts 4



# Tongues in Acts & Paul

1. Tongues differ between Acts and I Corinthians in function. In Acts, it is spontaneous as the Spirit is first given to believers. In I Corinthians, it is a voluntary exercise that occurs in the context of worship. These aren't two types of tongues; they are different contexts and purposes. In Acts, the gift is the Spirit (Acts 2:28) and tongues is a result of a "filling" by the Spirit (2:4). In I Corinthians, tongues is a gift from the Spirit (I Cor 12:4, 10-11) for the common good of building up the body of Christ.
2. There is no definite, notable difference between the manifestation of tongues in Acts and I Corinthians except that, in Acts, there is no gift of interpretation (but it is not necessary because the tongues are known languages that are understood by some of the people present).

# Tongues in Acts & Paul

3. Nothing follows from this about the linguistic nature of tongues (whether a known language or not), though Paul indicates that tongues requires supernatural interpretation (which implies that it is not a known language, normally), and he uses the expression “the tongues of men or of angels” (1 Cor 13:1) which implies that while tongues is a language, the language may not be human.

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. (1 Cor 13:1)



# Tongues in Acts & Paul

4. The Spirit is given as a second work in Acts as the Spirit moves out to different groups of people (e.g., Acts 10:44-48). But every indication is that this baptism occurs directly in connection with receiving the Spirit at the point of salvation (Acts 2:38; 1 Cor 12:12-13), not as a secondary work of the Spirit subsequent to salvation.

For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. (1 Cor 12:13)



# Tongues in Acts & Paul

5. Scripture doesn't instruct believers to be baptized in the Spirit but rather to be filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18).

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18).



# Tongues in Acts & Paul

6. Gifts of the Spirit can apparently be given at any time after salvation (see 1 Cor 14:1, where Paul instructs them to desire the gifts, cf. also 1 Cor 12:31). Gifts are distributed according to the will of the Spirit, which implies he can give them at any time (1 Cor 12:11). Paul wishes they would all receive tongues (1 Cor 14:5), which implies they may yet receive the gift. In other words, the gifts of the Spirit are not the same as the baptism of the Spirit.

Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. (1 Cor 12:30-31)

I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified. (1 Cor 14:5)

# Tongues in Acts & Paul

7. There are no biblical grounds for asserting that tongues (or any other gift) cannot manifest in today's world. Such a claim limits the Spirit's ability to do what he determines (1 Cor 12:11). The only indication of a time when the gifts will end is the state of perfection which will occur in eternity, after the return of Christ (1 Cor 13:8-10). In such a state, the gifts would not be needed.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. (1 Cor 13:8-10)





# Tongues in Acts & Paul

8. All this said, the gift of tongues can be counterfeited, like any of the gifts, but without a clear way to establish its validity. An unnatural preoccupation with this gift (or any gift that does not have an explicit point of validation) is suspicious. Paul's emphasis is therefore on gifts that tangibly build up others (1 Cor 14:17-19). The validation to the work of the Spirit is the edification of his people.

Otherwise when you are praising God in the Spirit, how can someone else, who is now put in the position of an inquirer, say "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since they do not know what you are saying? You are giving thanks well enough, but no one else is edified. (1 Cor 14:16-17)



# The Spirit in Your Life vs. Gifts in Your Life

1. When you trust in Christ, you are given the Holy Spirit. This gift is the key to the life you need, a life that never ends. But you still have the ability to grieve the Spirit (Eph 4:30), resist the leading of the Spirit (Gal 5:16-18, 25), and let something other than the Spirit fill (control) your life (Eph 5:18).



# The Spirit in Your Life vs. Gifts in Your Life

2. Gifts are special capacities for the Holy Spirit to work through your life for the edification of God's people. These gifts are distributed the way the Spirit determines, and your role in the church is typically related to the gift(s) you are given (1 Cor 12:7-31). We are not all given the same gifts.)



# The Spirit in Your Life vs. Gifts in Your Life

3. Possessing and using a gift can be a blessing to you, as you see God work in and through you. But not all gifts are the same with regard to their role and significance in the body of Christ. Gifts that strengthen the body are more desirable than ones that merely encourage you as an individual. Paul therefore downplays tongues, which has a limited role in encouraging others, and elevates those which bring understanding. I would go so far as to say (and I think Paul would agree) that tongues is perhaps the least important gift in the list (in practical terms), and yet it is one that has a veneer of supernaturalism, which can lead to pride.



# The Spirit in Your Life vs. Gifts in Your Life

4. Paul puts all the gifts as secondary to love (1 Cor 13). Love is the focus of God's essence and the expression of the Spirit's power in and through us. When the gifts go away in eternity, love will remain. Any expression of the Spirit which does not occur as an outpouring of love is therefore misdirected. What God wants for each of us is that we become a certain kind of person. The Spirit actively works to change us.



# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

1. When the Spirit is given, it happens in a context where the word is proclaimed.  
(Acts 2:14-36)

I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue. (1 Cor 14:18-19)



# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

2. In the first stage of his sermon, Peter explains that the outpouring of the Spirit was always part of God's plan (Acts 2:17-21, quoting Joel 2:28-32). In other words, a supernatural manifestation of God's power among his people was part of the plan for the last days.

<sup>17</sup> “In the last days, God says,  
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,  
your young men will see visions,  
your old men will dream dreams.

<sup>18</sup> Even on my servants, both men and women,  
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  
and they will prophesy.

# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

2. In the first stage of his sermon, Peter explains that the outpouring of the Spirit was always part of God's plan (Acts 2:17-21, quoting Joel 2:28-32). In other words, a supernatural manifestation of God's power among his people was part of the plan for the last days.

<sup>19</sup> I will show wonders in the heavens above  
and signs on the earth below,  
blood and fire and billows of smoke.

<sup>20</sup> The sun will be turned to darkness  
and the moon to blood  
before the coming of the great and glorious **day of the Lord**.

<sup>21</sup> And everyone who calls  
on the name of the Lord will be saved.' (Acts 2:14-21).



# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

## The Day of the Lord

<sup>6</sup> Wail, for the day of the LORD is near;  
it will come like destruction from the Almighty.

<sup>7</sup> Because of this, all hands will go limp,  
every heart will melt with fear.

<sup>8</sup> Terror will seize them,  
pain and anguish will grip them;  
they will writhe like a woman in labor.

They will look aghast at each other,  
their faces aflame.

<sup>9</sup> See, the day of the LORD is coming  
—a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger—  
to make the land desolate  
and destroy the sinners within it.

# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

## The Day of the Lord

<sup>10</sup> The stars of heaven and their constellations  
will not show their light.

The rising sun will be darkened  
and the moon will not give its light.

<sup>11</sup> I will punish the world for its evil,  
the wicked for their sins.

I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty  
and will humble the pride of the ruthless. (Isa 13:6-11)



# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

## The Day of the Lord

<sup>29</sup> “Immediately after the distress of those days

“the sun will be darkened,

and the moon will not give its light;

the stars will fall from the sky,

and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’

<sup>30</sup> “Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.” (Matt 24:29-30)



# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

## The Day of the Lord

Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, <sup>2</sup> for you know very well that **the day of the Lord** will come like a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup> While people are saying, “Peace and safety,” destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. . . . <sup>8</sup> But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. <sup>9</sup> **For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath** but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess 5:1-3, 8-9)



# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

3. In the second stage of his sermon, Peter relates Jesus' ministry (including signs and wonders) to a fulfillment of prophecy regarding the Messiah. For David's words in Ps 16:8-11 and Ps 110:1 to be true, Messiah had to die and ascend to God.

“Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.” (Acts 2:22-24)



# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

Peter's sermon confirms that even the Jews present knew

- Jesus did miracles (v. 22)
- Jesus died on the cross (v. 23)
- He came back from the dead as a testimony to the power of God (v. 24)



# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

<sup>25</sup> David said about him:

“I saw the Lord always before me.  
Because he is at my right hand,  
I will not be shaken.

<sup>26</sup> Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;  
my body also will rest in hope,

<sup>27</sup> because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,  
you will not let your holy one see decay.

<sup>28</sup> You have made known to me the paths of life;  
you will fill me with joy in your presence.’

<sup>29</sup> “Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. <sup>30</sup> But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. <sup>31</sup> Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. <sup>32</sup> God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. <sup>33</sup> Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

<sup>34</sup> For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

“The Lord said to my Lord:

“Sit at my right hand

<sup>35</sup> until I make your enemies  
a footstool for your feet.”

<sup>36</sup> “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” (Acts 2:-25-36)





# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

4. The combination of these two components (the Spirit coming and the Messiah leaving) forms the basis for the church age. To participate in the great work of God, one must repent and receive the gift of the Spirit. Peter adds to this the need to be separated from the corruption of the current generation (Acts 2:38-40).

<sup>37</sup> When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

<sup>38</sup> 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. <sup>39</sup> The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” <sup>40</sup> With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” (Acts 2:37-40)

# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

## Messiah (Anointed One)

“Here is my servant, whom I uphold,  
my chosen one in whom I delight;  
I will put my Spirit on him,  
and he will bring justice to the nations.

<sup>2</sup> He will not shout or cry out,  
or raise his voice in the streets.

<sup>3</sup> A bruised reed he will not break,  
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.

In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;

<sup>4</sup> he will not falter or be discouraged  
till he establishes justice on earth.

In his teaching the islands will put their hope.” (Isa 42:1-4)

# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

Messiah (Anointed One)

The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.” (John 4:25-26)



# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

5. The result was that the church increased to more than 3000 people. This number increased through the ministry of the apostles and the unity of the church (Acts 2:41-27).

Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. (Acts 2:41-43)



# Prophecy and the Outpouring of the Spirit

6. Prophecy and power continue to be the basis for our vision, faith, and behavior as we wait (together, in unity) for the return of our Lord and Savior.

All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:44-47)



# The Man Lame from Birth as a Case Study in the Power of the Spirit

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!” So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. (Acts 3:1-5)



# The Man Lame from Birth as a Case Study in the Power of the Spirit

Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. (Acts 3:6-10)



# The Man Lame from Birth as a Case Study in the Power of the Spirit

I. When God is preparing to work powerfully, he controls all the precedents.

As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.

“Who touched me?” Jesus asked.

When they all denied it, Peter said, “Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you.”

But Jesus said, “Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me.” (Luke 8:42-46)



# The Man Lame from Birth as a Case Study in the Power of the Spirit

2. The man had a need and expressed a desire for help.

When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. (Acts 3:3)

Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.” He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. He was amazed at their lack of faith. (Mark 6:4-6)

“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him.

The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.”

“Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road. (Mark 10:51-52)

# The Man Lame from Birth as a Case Study in the Power of the Spirit

3. God drew Peter and John's attention to this man (Acts 3:4). They saw something in him that led them to act.

Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" (Acts 3:4)

"Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy."

Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

(Mark 10:20-21)



# The Man Lame from Birth as a Case Study in the Power of the Spirit

4. God's intention and power surpassed the man's need and expectation (Acts 3:3-6). The absence of their ability to help him monetarily meant room for the Spirit to work and bring attention to himself.

So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. (Acts 3:5)

And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in distresses, in persecutions, in difficulties, in behalf of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Cor 12:9-10; NASB)

# The Man Lame from Birth as a Case Study in the Power of the Spirit

5. What happens occurs through the name (authority) of Jesus (Acts 3:6; see 3:16, 4:7, 4:10, 12, 17-18, etc.).

Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” (Acts 3:6)

“In that day you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.” (John 16:23)

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (Matt 28:19)

# The Man Lame from Birth as a Case Study in the Power of the Spirit

6. The outcome is that attention is drawn to the power of God. (Acts 3:9-10)

When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. (Acts 3:9-10)

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. (2 Cor 4:7)



# The Man Lame from Birth as a Case Study in the Power of the Spirit

7. Peter confirms that this has nothing to do with him but rather God. (Acts 3:11-13).

While the man held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade. When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?" (Acts 3:11-12)

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. (1 Cor 15:10)