

Pastor Leaves Pentecostal Error

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[0 : 00] My message today is really a bit of a testimony as well as a teaching session on why I now reject Pentecostal teaching and practice.

! So it's a bit of a controversial yet a needful teaching and I'm giving this not by way of criticism but really it's intended as a scriptural examination to help in understanding on the issue.

And as I say this is a subject I've got lengthy personal involvement with not just a mere theoretical kind of knowledge. So I'm speaking from experience here today. It really includes my personal testimony.

I was in the Pentecostal church for 16 years. I was Bible school trained by a very Pentecostal group called the Apostolic Church. I served as a preacher, a pastor and an elder in the Pentecostal movement.

Having now left that movement some have criticized me saying you deny the Holy Spirit. Your church isn't Spirit filled. These are all untrue statements. Let me start by saying that I do believe in revival, in the Holy Spirit, in the healing power of God, in spiritual gifts and in speaking in tongues according to the Bible.

[1 : 17] I no longer hold though to some of the fundamental tenets of the Pentecostal movement because I see them as flawed and unscriptural.

I see the Pentecostal and charismatic movements as really one and the same movement in their teaching and practice. So let's compare Bible truth with current Pentecostal teaching.

Firstly, a foundation. Let's lay a foundation. Let's start with the foundation stone. Do we trust in Bible truth?

Or is our basis personal experience or new revelations? Now, as I say, I am speaking from personal experience, but I've measured that now and tested that now and examined my beliefs in the plain light of the Word of God, which is really what we all must do.

Is the canon of Scripture closed? Or can we nowadays have a sort of revelation in addition to that reliable, infallible, inspired Word of God?

[2 : 28] Can today's prophetic words be written down and added to our Bible? Modern day so-called prophecies are a general assortment of exhortations.

But do we really rely on the sufficiency of Scripture, on biblical authority? Or must we supplement that with subjective experience, feelings and personal extra-biblical revelations?

I put to you that we now have the completed written Word of God. We no longer need signs as such to give an authority to what is preached.

We actually have it, the final authority, the Bible. That which is perfect is come. 2 Peter 1 verses 19 through 21 teaches us that now we do have the written Word of God.

It's a more sure word. It's important to check the foundation. Paul described the Corinthian church as carnal and childish.

[3 : 34] They exalted speaking in tongues above prophecy and they were misusing it. Paul brought correction and laid down some strict regulations for the proper use of this gift.

For example, if used in the church, it must always be translated. The people had to understand what was being said.

That's 1 Corinthians 14, 27 and 28. Another rule was that there was never to be more than two or three to speak in any service.

And another rule, only one person was to speak at a time, in sequence, never at the same time. Also, any meeting where tongues caused confusion was clearly not of God because it's the devil that's the author of confusion, not God.

And also, under no condition was a woman to speak in an unknown tongue in the church. Paul insisted, verse 37, that these regulations in 1 Corinthians 14 were to be accepted as a fundamental commandment of the Lord.

[4 : 55] Absolutely fundamental. Surprisingly, these key scriptural regulations are almost totally disregarded by the modern tongues movement.

Even if the gift of tongues were for today, which it is not, these same rules must apply. These are scriptural regulations.

These are pre-dens. Pentecostal teachings. Pentecostal teachings are not based on the foundation of Scripture. As I hope you'll see as I recount some of my experience and what I've found through my research and reading of the Word of God.

To try to understand these things. Another aspect is filling. One of Pentecostalism's foundational teachings, in contrast with the Bible, is the view that the evidence of being baptized with the Spirit is speaking with tongues.

However, the Bible actually teaches us that every member of Christ's body is baptized with the Spirit. As we read in 1 Corinthians 12, verses 12 and 13, as we see in Romans 8, verse 9, 1 Corinthians 12, 13, it says, For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.

[6 : 21] And Paul asks shortly after this, do all speak with tongues? 1 Corinthians 12, verse 30, this says clearly, all believers are baptized by the Holy Spirit, yet all believers do not speak with tongues.

There's 16 Bible references to Spirit filling. In 10 separate instances of Spirit filling, we find tongues on only one occasion.

Pentecostals believe in what they call a second blessing theology. I believe that too. Yes, we can and should seek ongoing fillings with God's Spirit.

We can receive a second blessing and a third and a fourth. It talks in Ephesians 5, 19, be being filled with the Spirit.

Now, I no longer believe that this is a one-off baptism of tongues. We must get the scriptural foundation right and be clear about what the Bible means by the filling of the Spirit.

[7 : 34] What then is the scriptural focus? Here's another aspect, the focus. As believers, we always need to be wary of our focus.

It's easy to focus on experience, extra-biblical revelation, or on signs and wonders and manifestations. Should our central focus be on the Saviour or on the Spirit?

Of course, the Spirit's work is to glorify Christ, to put Him in the spotlight. Christ, not the Spirit. Charismatics place an unbiblical priority on tongues.

The Bible does not emphasize this gift. In fact, it's clearly one of the lesser gifts, as you read the context of 1 Corinthians 12, 27-31.

Tongues are only mentioned in three books of the Bible. Mark, one time in chapter 16, verse 17. In Acts, three times.

[8 : 41] In Acts 2, 10 and 19. And then in 1 Corinthians. In all Christ's teachings, there is just one reference to tongues. They shall speak with new tongues.

Which was fulfilled at Pentecost. In the book of Acts, which covers the first 30 years of church history, there's only three recorded instances of speaking in tongues.

chapters 2, 10 and 19. Paul wrote 13 or 14 of the 27 books in the New Testament, and in only one of these, 1 Corinthians, does Paul mention tongues, correcting its abuse.

Paul says he would rather speak five words with his understanding than 10,000 words in a tongue. That's 2,000 to 1 against tongues.

Eight of the New Testament epistles were written by Peter, James, John and Jude. These inspired writers make absolutely no reference to tongues. Little or no emphasis was placed on tongues, even in the apostolic era when the gift was operative.

[9 : 53] So, what is tongues exactly? This is a very important point to contemplate. Foreign languages.

Foreign languages. In the science of biblical interpretation, hermeneutics, the law of first mention states that the first mention of any given subject gives the key to its subsequent meaning.

Acts chapter 2 records that first instance of men speaking with other tongues. Acts 2, verses 8 through 11 lists 16 known languages and dialects.

True biblical tongues are known languages and dialects. The multitude came together, it says, in Acts 2, verse 6.

They were bewildered. Each of them were hearing them speak in his own language. It wasn't gibberish. It wasn't angel talk. It wasn't celestial speech.

[11:00] It was just different languages. It was an ability to speak a language you hadn't learnt. And in that language, they were declaring, it says, the wonderful works of God.

And everybody was hearing them. Tongues means languages. Foreign languages. Nowhere does the Bible teach that the gift of tongues is anything other than human languages.

Now, some would talk about speaking in the tongues of angels. But it's very clear and plain in Scripture that angels don't ever appear in Scripture talking in anything other than human language. It's not some unintelligible gibberish, some babble. It's human languages. The so-called tongues of today is unlike the biblical gift.

The gift of tongues of the New Testament were clearly various known languages, and the language of the language. Readily recognized by those familiar with them, and requiring an interpreter only when the hearers were unacquainted with the dialect.

[12:11] Today's tongues have never been verified as actual languages. Repeated objective tests by linguists have found them to be nothing but babble.

They don't have language characteristics, no sense of grammar or sentence structure, no correlation between their length or wording and the supposed interpretation.

So, why were these foreign languages given? What was their divine purpose? We see that there's a fulfillment here.

There's a sense of fulfillment about tongues. In the three specific cases of speaking in tongues as recorded in the book of Acts, we see Acts 2, verse 4, and they, the disciples, were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, languages, as the Spirit gave them utterance. It tells how God-fearing Jews from at least 15 different nations were present, and they were utterly amazed. How is it that each of us hears these things in his own native language?

[13:27] It tells how they heard them declaring the wonders of God in their own tongues, their own languages. That's Acts 2, verses 5 through 11. Tongues were unlearned, known languages, which could be understood by Jews from their various backgrounds.

Acts 10, verses 44 through 46 says that while Peter was still speaking these words, the Gospel, it says the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message.

Tongues were a confirming sign of the Gospel message, this time by the Gentiles, showing the equality of Gentile believers with Jews through faith.

In Acts 19, verse 6, it says that Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. In the Gentile city of Ephesus, after John the Baptist's disciples were instructed about the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit confirms through tongues again the truth of the message, and that believers of every background are equal by faith.

It was a sign, a sign of acceptance. The accounts of tongues in the Scriptures took place in the cities of Jerusalem, Caesarea, Ephesus, and Corinth. These cities all had large Jewish populations, and through the gift of tongues, God signified to the Jews that his blessing and power was upon those who claimed Christ as Saviour and Lord.

[15:14] It was a sign that God had brought the Spirit and the Church was born. Gentiles and Jews together would form one body in Christ, and the Spirit confirms the one body of Christ with the first believers from four distinct groups.

Jewish believers, in Acts 2. Samaritan believers, chapter 8, verse 17. Gentile believers, chapter 10, verses 45, 46.

And the disciples of John the Baptist, in Acts 19, verses 1 through 6. So the gift of tongues was specifically a sign to unbelievers.

In Acts 2, verses 1 through 13. It was to those unbelieving, unregenerate Jews present, confirming the gospel preached by the apostles.

In Acts 10, verses 44 through 48. It was addressing, again, unbelieving Jews. This time saved Jews. Confirming salvation was extended to Gentiles.

[16:23] And in Acts 19, verse 6. It was to unbelieving Jews that these Jews thought they were saved, confirming that salvation was not through a work, but through Christ.

It was assigned to the disciples of Christ, empowering them. In Acts 1, verses 6 through 9. It was assigned to confirm the word. In Mark 16, verses 17 through 20.

It was assigned to Jewish believers of the Gentiles' acceptance by God. Acts 11, 12 through 18. Also, it was assigned to endorse the apostolic office in the early church.

In 2 Corinthians 12, verses 11 through 12. Ephesians 2, verse 20. Acts 2, 43. And Hebrews 2, verses 3 and 4.

Clearly, it was assigned for unbelievers. The gift of tongues was never intended for Christians for themselves. It was intended as a sign for the unbelievers.

[17 : 30] Tongues, then, are assigned, not for believers, but for unbelievers. That's 1 Corinthians, chapter 14, verse 22. It was assigned for Jews.

The Jews of that time were brought up to have faith in signs. Thus, Jesus said in Matthew 12, verse 39, that a wicked and adulterous generation looks for a sign.

At the very beginning of his letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes in chapter 1, verse 22, that the Jews require a sign. Signs are always connected with Israel, not with the church.

The word sign occurs 46 times in our King James Bible, and 27 times more in the Greek for a total of 73 times.

It seems to carry the basic thought of an indication. In 1 Corinthians 14, verse 21, Paul quotes Isaiah 28, verses 11 and 12, and says that through men of strange tongues, through these lips of foreigners, he says, God will speak to this people, this people, but even then, they will not listen.

[18 : 42] God had spoken to Israel in clear language for centuries, and yet she did not listen, and ultimately executed her own Messiah. Now God shows that he has turned from the Jews to the Gentiles with the message of salvation.

He gave the gift of tongues to Christians to serve as a rebuke against unbelieving Israel. Nowhere in the Bible is the gift of tongues mentioned as occurring apart from the presence of Jews.

Also, it was a sign of judgment. Tongues is symbolic of judgment, as with the Tower of Babel.

Genesis 11, verse 7, God through the prophet Isaiah said, The day is coming when, because you don't hear me when I talk your language, I'm going to talk a language that you don't understand.

I'm paraphrasing there. That stands where God will speak in another tongue, another language to the Hebrews. They had rejected and crucified their Messiah.

It was a sign to them, a sign to unbelieving Israel, that they were going to be set aside, put aside, and that God who spoke once to them in a language they could understand and gave them covenants and promises in the Hebrew tongue would now speak in a language that they did not understand as a judgment.

[20 : 07] The sign of tongues was to be a specific warning of imminent judgment upon Israel at various times in their history. It says in Deuteronomy 28, verses 49, verse 64, The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth, a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand.

And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other. And there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.

Isaiah 28, verse 11, For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.

Isaiah 33, verse 19, Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive, of a stammering tongue that thou canst not understand.

Jeremiah 5, verse 15, Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the Lord. It is a mighty nation. It is an ancient nation.

[21 : 22] A nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say. Back to 1 Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 14, 21 and 22.

It says, In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people, and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.

Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not. This would have been very hard for a Jew to accept. God is going to talk in a Gentile language?

Absolutely unthinkable to a Jew. But that was God rebuking Israel in their unbelief, and therefore, in order to be a meaningful sign of judgment to the Jew, it had to be a Gentile foreign language, because it was the Gentiles that the Jews despised, and they thought that God would never speak through a Gentile.

Isaiah had prophesied prior to, and during the carrying away of the northern kingdom of Israel into Assyrian captivity, he delivered the prophetic messages of God to both Israel and Judah.

[22 : 34] In chapter 28, verses 1 through 13 of Isaiah, the Lord is rebuking the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel, here called Ephraim, for their failure to hear the word of the Lord, the message of the Lord.

This message had been sent repeatedly and in the simplest form, and of course in their own language, through the Hebrew prophets. Their repeated rejection of the divine message was now about to lead their being carried away into Assyria.

The stammering lips and another tongue of their captors would be God's message in judgment to them. They would not hear God's call to repentance, to refreshing and rest in their own tongue. Now they must hear his message of rebuke in a foreign tongue. It is this verse that the inspired apostle Paul quotes in 1 Corinthians chapter 14, verse 21.

The foreign tongue of the Assyrians was God's sign to Israel of his rejection of them in Isaiah's day. This was a message of judgment. The foreign tongues heard on the day of Pentecost, and there were possibly 14 of them, was God's sign to Israel that they were again rejected.

[23 : 50] And the message of the gospel was now to go out to the Gentiles in their tongue. The unbelievers of 1 Corinthians chapter 14, verse 22, were the Jewish people.

So God spoke in judgment through the Assyrians. The strange tongue of their conquerors was a sign to them of their unbelief and rejection against God and his discipline of them.

Paul refers in verse 21 to the words of Isaiah 28, verses 11 and 12. The tongues at Pentecost in Acts 2 should have served as a warning to unbelieving Israel that God was about to set them aside because of their continued unbelief.

Tongues signified that God had begun a new work which encompassed the Gentiles. It was a sign that the Spirit of God had come, that God was speaking from heaven, his truth.

And it was also a sign to unbelieving Israel that when they wouldn't listen in the language they could speak, God would now begin in judgment to speak a language that they could not understand.

[24 : 59] So the gift of tongues when given to believers was not given for the purpose of being assigned to believers. In the modern charismatic movement, this is completely reversed.

Charismatics say that the gift of tongues is a sign of the Spirit baptism. Wrong. They say that the gift of tongues is a sign of a second work of grace in believers.

Wrong. They say that the gift of tongues is a sign to other believers that they have not progressed as far spiritually as those who have received this gift. Wrong.

The sign has been fulfilled. In 70 AD this judgment came. Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans and the nation was dispersed. There is no biblical record of any sign manifested after this date.

When the sign was fulfilled the sign ceased. In AD 70 the Romans put the Jews out of the land. A judgment from God for rejecting their Messiah.

[26 : 02] The early church tongues was a sign to the Jew of this coming judgment from God which was the fulfillment of 1 Corinthians chapter 14 verse 28 and Isaiah 28 verse 11.

The gift of tongues is no longer necessary today. It serves no useful purpose. According to 1 Corinthians chapter 14 21 and 22 tongues were originally given as a sign to unbelieving Israel. This purpose has been fulfilled. Israel as a nation has been set aside and the gospel is going out into all the world in many tongues. The Bible in whole or in part has been translated into hundreds of different languages and dialects.

Let me give you a fact. Tongues have ceased. It is an undeniable fact of history that miraculous sign gifts ceased at the end of the apostolic age when the canon of scripture was completed when we had the whole Bible.

According to 1 Corinthians chapter 13 verse 8 tongues shall cease literally cease permanently. It states that tongues will die out on its own.

[27 : 24] The time will come that it will cease permanently and it has ceased it has passed away ceased permanently. Tongues ceased in scripture.

The last recorded New Testament miracles Acts 28 verses 3 through 9 occurred around AD 58. The gift of tongues disappears from scripture after Paul's discussion of their misuse in 1 Corinthians 14. Miracle gifts like tongues and special healings are mentioned only in 1 Corinthians a very early letter. Two later letters Ephesians and Romans both discussed spiritual gifts but neither mentioned these sign gifts.

The Bible was written the revelatory gifts had ceased to have a purpose and so they passed away. Tongues ceased in history.

In 1 Corinthians Paul talks about tongues and says that tongues would cease and according to history they did. Tongues begins to cease after 1 Corinthians they don't appear anymore.

[28 : 35] Peter, James, John and Jude never mention tongues. There's a definite decrease of sign gifts after the first 25 years of the church age. By the end of the book of Acts about 30 years after Pentecost Paul is in prison at Rome no angel is sent to deliver him.

Epaphroditus who visited him was sick nigh unto death. Philippians 2 verse 27 but Paul does not miraculously heal him.

From prison Paul writes four epistles Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon but in them there is no mention of tongues as in his earlier writings to Corinth.

After his release Paul writes his first epistle to Timothy and advises him to use a little wine for his oft infirmities. 1 Timothy 5 23 During his second imprisonment Paul pens a second letter to Timothy in which he mentions leaving Trophimus sick at Miletus.

2 Timothy 4 verse 20 Was the gift of healing not still operative? This is about AD 68 just 35 years after Pentecost.

[29 : 50] There is no mention of tongues by early church writers. In AD 95 Clement of Rome's letter to Corinth gives no mention of tongues. Early Christians viewed tongues as absolutely obsolete and non-existent.

During the first 500 years of the church the only time you really see any claim to tongues are the followers of Montanus who was branded a heretic.

The next time any significant tongue speaking arises as in the late 17th century. Such miracles have been absent for centuries. These miraculous gifts of the New Testament age did cease and did not occur for almost 1900 years of church history.

In church history there's no notable evidence of tongues. There's a massive gap. This is a modern movement the Pentecostal movement that traces its roots to Azusa Street in 1901.

A careful examination of the Azusa Street meeting shows that this group was far from being a sound biblical movement. Another aspect to consider is falling away.

[31 : 03] Falling away. Christ doesn't promise an end-time outpouring of his spirit. He talks of rather latter-day deception. Mark 13 verse 22.

Paul's last writings also warn of end-time apostasy and deception. 1 Timothy 4 verse 1 2 Timothy 3 1 and 5 verses 13 through 17 and 2 Timothy chapter 4 verses 1 through 5.

Look really honestly for yourself at today's poor counterfeit. We don't see the same demonstration of miracles and science today as occurred in the book of Acts. All were healed in Acts.

Chapters 5 verses 12 through 16 chapter 19 verses 11 through 12 We don't see missionaries blind their opponents as Paul did. We don't see church leaders discern hypocrisy and pronounce the immediate death of members.

Evangelists don't amaze an entire city with miracles as did Philip. They aren't taken to another place of ministry by the Holy Spirit. In time multitudes aren't healed by merely being in the shadow of the healer.

[32 : 16] Prophets don't give specific prophecies which come to pass soon after. Those heralded today as the modern day apostles and prophets are frequently noted for track records of false prophecies and questionable doctrines and practices.

I do not know of any, not one, of the Pentecostal pioneers that I could say is a modern day example of a biblical apostle or prophet.

There's just absolutely no comparison. Another point to make is folly. Folly.

Tongues is not a prayer language. 1 Corinthians 14 verses 14 through 17 Paul teaches us that when we pray we must pray both with our spirit and with our minds.

We pray with a language understandable to our minds and to others who may hear us. They go together. The spirit and the understanding. Tongues were given to edify others.

[33 : 22] 1 Corinthians 14 verse 5 1 Corinthians 14 15 goes on to say I will pray with my spirit but I will also pray with my understanding.

They go together. Stressing one's need to be aware of what one is saying in prayer as well as being led by the spirit. There is not one instance in the Bible of the use of tongues in private devotions.

There are no inspired instructions for such a use of the gift. Of the three instances recorded in the book of Acts where there is a record of tongues none of these occurrences were in private.

Tongues was always for a public sign. Paul in context does not recommend tongues for personal devotions. He does not support the use of tongues for self edification which is actually in violation of its purpose.

Tongues should never be operated except they be interpreted. Charismatics advocate a private prayer language to converse with God.

[34 : 26] Jesus says when you pray don't be like pagans babbling on. They think they'll be heard because of their many words. He goes on to say this is how we should pray.

Our Father who are in heaven. Matthew 6 7 through 9 The word vain repetitions or babbling the Greek word literally means to speak with a stammering stuttering gibberish.

The Lord Jesus gives us rather an example of how to pray. Our Father notice that it is in the language of the people not a spiritual prayer language. Consider fruits.

Fruits. Tongues has a long-standing connection with false teaching and practice down through history. Today's Pentecostal leaders promote ecumenical unity and disobedience to scripture.

It makes the basis for Christian fellowship to be experience not doctrine and common practice. The Pentecostal movement is divisive and leads to disorder and confusion.

[35 : 31] The Bible says that God is not the author of confusion. Matthew 7 verse 20 our Lord says, Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

In conclusion, friends, I urge you to search the scriptures, come to a scriptural understanding of the scriptural purpose of tongues, and then you'll see that modern day so-called tongues are not biblical tongues, and the Pentecostal movement is astray from the Word of God and should be rejected.

May the Lord bless you and guide you in your search for the truth. Amen.