

## Charismatic Errors 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 and 14:21-25

The pronoun "THAT" in Greek, describing the perfect, is **neuter**. The **Bible** is neuter. This fits the context perfectly. Christ is **masculine**, not neuter, so "that which is perfect" cannot refer to Christ.

2. "**Perfect**" in Greek means "**complete, finished**". The N.T. by 96AD was completed and finished as God's revelation for this Church age. Jesus Christ is never called the complete or finished one.
3. **James 1:25 describes the perfect as the Bible, the perfect law of liberty.**

The meaning of "perfect" in scripture can be determined by its use in other passages of scripture. "Teleion", the "perfect" or "completed" was already in the New Testament when Paul wrote. James had already referred to the Word of God as the "**perfect law of liberty**" in James 1:25.

"But be ye doers of the **word**, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

But whoso looketh into the **perfect law of liberty**, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." James 1:22,25.

The word "**perfect**" (Greek: "teleion") in James 1:25 is the same as "**perfect**" in I Corinthians 13:10. In James 1:25 "perfect" law of liberty clearly refers to the soon completed Bible, same as I Cor 13:10.

**Summary question:** If James 1:22-25 says, **Perfect** (v.25) = **Mirror** (v.23,24) = **Bible** (v.22,23,25) then what is 'perfect' in I Corinthians 13:8-13, **Perfect** (v.10) = **Mirror** (v.12) = ?

4. **James 1:23 and 1 Corinthians 13:12 both describe the Bible as a mirror/glass to see our face in.** "If any be a hearer of the **word**, & not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a **glass**" Jas 1:23 "Now we see through a **glass** darkly; but then (when the perfect, completed Bible comes) face to face" 1 Cor 13:12 As a **mirror** shows our face's **physical** condition, so the **Bible** mirrors our life's **spiritual** condition. **Therefore, GLASS MIRROR = the PERFECT thing = the WORD OF GOD.**

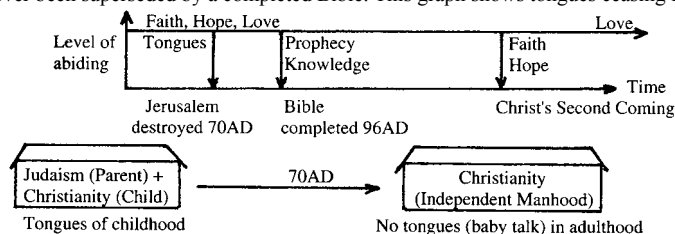
**13:11** 'When I was a child, I **spake** as a child (tongues), I **understood** as a child (knowledge), I **thought** as a child (prophecy is verbalised thoughts): but when I became a man, I **put away childish things**."

**Q14:** What have **childish things** got to do with **temporary gifts** of prophecy, tongues & knowledge?

**Answer:** Paul is comparing a **human** advancing from childhood to adulthood, with the **church** passing from **infancy** in the first century marked by prophecy, tongues and knowledge gifts, to **maturity** marked by believers depending on the Bible, faith, hope and charity from 96 AD to the rapture. By 96 AD the childish gifts of prophecy, tongues and knowledge had ceased, and church manhood had been reached. So Paul used **2 illustrations** to show the **passing** of prophecy, tongues and knowledge, and the **permanence** of the completed Bible, along with faith, hope and charity for the church age:

a) A **person** growing from **childhood to adulthood** and **putting away** the childish temporary things of prophecy, tongues and knowledge in I Corinthians 13:11. b) Seeing our condition in the Bible **mirror**. Paul is telling the Corinthian believers to "**put away** the childish things of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge, because manhood will soon be reached." In the first century, a **boy** was recognised as a mature man when he got married, left his parents home and established his own home. In the first century, **Judaism** was regarded as the parent religion, where **Christianity** (the child) resided. The early Christians enjoyed the protection of Judaism as an officially recognised religion. Christianity seemed like another Jewish sect. Sulpicius Severus in discussing Titus' destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, states that: "Titus formed the deliberate purpose to destroy Christianity and Judaism in one blow, believing that if the Jewish root were torn up the Christian branch would soon perish". [F. Farrar "The Early Days of Christianity" p.326.] **Judaism** was the parent/home religion and **Christianity** was the child religion. With the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD, the church moved out of its childhood home. It became a separate, independent, distinct religion, able to grow without the Jewish temple and without the protective umbrella of the Jewish religious system. Christianity had left the Jewish parents home, left childhood behind and had reached manhood. This was another reason for putting away childish tongues.

\* In Revelation 22:18,19 God finished prophecy and knowledge revelations by giving us the completed Bible with a warning against new prophecies. There would be **no more partial revelations** given by prophecies or knowledge. They had forever been superseded by a completed Bible. This graph shows tongues ceasing in 70, proph/know in 96.



**Aim:** To show that **tongues** was a warning to Israel & ceased in 70AD with the **destruction of Jerusalem**. To show that **prophecy** and **knowledge** gifts ceased in 96AD when the **New Testament was completed**. **Introduction:** If these three gifts ceased in the first century, then the modern tongues movement is not of God and should be rejected as unbiblical. Prophecy and knowledge gifts were God's temporary means of revelation to the early Church until the completed New Testament had been given. Today, God speaks through His Word, not through some person claiming to give a prophecy from God. How do we know that tongues, prophecy and knowledge gifts ceased in the first century?

**Question 1: What was the purpose of tongues?**

Ans: "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, **not to them that believe**, but to them that **believe not**." 1 Cor 14:22 Therefore, tongues are a sign for **unbelievers**, not for believers.

**Question 2: Which kind of unbelievers are tongues a sign for?**

Answer: a) Not for **gentile unbelievers** who were **unlearned** in the Old Testament because they would think the tongues speaker was mad. (I Corinthians 14:23).

b) It was for **Jewish unbelievers**. "In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people (Jews); and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord." (I Cor 14:21). Tongues were a warning to Jews to repent of rejecting Christ or God would judge them. They ignored the tongues warning of the apostles, so God judged them in 70AD by Titus destroying Jerusalem.

**Question 3: Why did the Jews see tongues as a warning to repent?**

Answer: Because it reminded them of two past experiences of foreign tongues spoken as a warning of coming judgment. This was by the Assyrian invaders in 721 BC and Babylonian invaders in 606 BC.

**Event 1: Assyrian tongues in 721BC.** God first spoke to them through Isaiah's clear message which they ignored. God next spoke to them in judgment through stammering Assyrian lips. Note the pattern:

- a) God has a **message** for the people. "Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest." (Isaiah 28:1,12)
- b) The people **refuse to listen** to God: "yet they would not hear." (Isaiah 28:12)
- c) God caused **tongues** to be heard as a **sign of judgment**: "For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people." (Isaiah 28:11)
- d) **Dispersion** follows: "that they might go, & fall backward, & be broken, & snared, & taken (*captive*)" v13

**Event 2: Babylonian tongues heard by disobedient Judah in 606 BC.** (Jeremiah 3:22-5:19)

- a) God has a **message** for the people: "Return ye backsliding children, & I will heal your backslidings." Jer 3:22
- b) The people **refuse to listen** to God: "they have refused to receive correction. they have refused to return" Jer 5:3
- c) God caused **tongues** to be heard as a **sign of judgment**. If Israel would not heed Jeremiah's warnings, then God would speak to them by strange tongues and swords of an invading nation. "Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far ... a mighty nation ... a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say." (Jeremiah 5:15)
- d) **Dispersion** follows: "As ye have forsaken Me, and served strange gods in your land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not yours." (Jeremiah 5:19).

**Event 3: New Testament tongues to Israel from 33-70 AD.**

Israel did not learn from the tongues warnings that led to the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities in 721 and 606 BC. God warned them again of coming judgment by Christians speaking in tongues from 33-70AD. Judgment came when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in 70AD. We see the same pattern:

- a) God has a **message** for the people: "**Come** unto me....and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28. "We do hear them speak in our **tongues** (v.11). Peter said unto them, **Repent** (v39)." Acts 2:11,38,39.
- b) The people **refuse to listen** to God: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." Matthew 23:37.
- c) God causes **tongues** to be heard as a **sign of judgment**.

i) **Christ warned Israel of soon coming judgment**, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.... There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Matt 23:38; 24:2

ii) God caused foreign tongues to be spoken and heard as a sign of judgment to unbelieving Israel in Acts 2,10,19; I Cor 12-14. When God caused believers to speak in tongues, the Jews understood the message. Tongues were a sign gift to unbelieving, Christ-rejecting Israel. "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them (Christians) that believe, but to them (Jews) that believe not." I Cor 14:22

d) **Dispersion** follows: Jesus Christ correctly foretold this in Luke 21:20-24. "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh (v.20). They shall be led away captive into all nations." (v.24). This happened in 70AD when Titus destroyed Jerusalem.

**Question 4: When did tongues cease?**

**Answer:** Since foreign tongues were a sign of coming judgment on Israel, once this judgment had come in 70AD, the tongues sign gift was no longer necessary. The Biblical gift of tongues had ceased by 70AD. The last historical mention of tongues is in I Corinthians 14 written in 59AD. Tongues served their purpose and tongues ceased as God said, "tongues shall cease." I Corinthians 13:8.

**Question 5:** When did prophecy & knowledge gifts cease? To answer this we must ask another question.

**Question 6: When do Faith, Hope and Charity cease, as discussed in I Corinthians 13:8-13?**

**Answer:** I Corinthians 13:8-13 contrasts the temporary gifts of prophecy, tongues and knowledge with the permanent faith, hope and charity for the church age.

**13:8:** "Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail (Greek: Katargethesontai); whether there be tongues, they shall cease<sup>3973</sup> (Greek: pausontai), whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away" (Greek: Katargethesetai).

**Question 7: When does CHARITY (agape love) stop?** **Answer:** "Charity never faileth" (v.8). This means that love will continue on forever. It is the only one of the 6 phenomena discussed here that continues forever. This means that faith, hope, prophecy, tongues and knowledge all stop, but when?

a) I Corinthians 13:13 tells us "And now abideth faith, hope and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." This tells us that faith, hope and charity all continue through the church age.

b) This means that prophecy, tongues and knowledge are not abiding (will not continue) through the Church age, but cease sometime before the second coming (rapture) of Christ.

**Question 8: When does FAITH stop?** **Answer:** When Christ returns to catch the church up to heaven.

\* II Corinthians 5:7 "For we walk by faith, not by sight." When we get to heaven, faith will give way to sight.

\* I Peter 1:9 "Receiving the end (Greek: telos 5056) of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

This tells us that faith will end when we get to heaven, thus enjoying salvation or deliverance from the presence of sin. "Telos" means "end, termination, ultimate fate, completion in respect to time."

\* Hebrews 12:2: "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher (Greek: teleiotes 5047) of our faith."

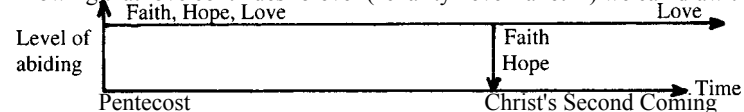
Jesus Christ finishes our faith when He returns for us at His second coming, and we "reach our goal" (Greek: "teleiotes") of heaven in our resurrected, glorified bodies. Faith ends for believers at the rapture.

**Question 9: When does HOPE stop?**

**Answer:** When we get what we are hoping for in heaven. For example, married people are not hoping to get married because they possess what they hoped for. Believers are hoping for Christ's second coming (Titus 2:13) and the resurrection of the dead (Acts 23:6). When we have what we hope for, then hope finishes. "...of the hope and resurrection of the dead am I called in question." Acts 23:6 and Acts 26:6. "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God & our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13. "...hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" Romans 8:24.

Hope only remains until we see Christ and receive our resurrection bodies at His second coming.

Knowing that love continues forever ("charity never faileth") we can draw the following graph:



**Key:** Hence faith will be lost in sight; hope will be lost in reality; and love continues for all eternity.

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." I Corinth. 13:13. Because **only** faith, hope and charity are abiding throughout the church age, these three alone, then prophecy, tongues and knowledge must have ceased sometime **inside** the church age. The time these (and the other temporary gifts) ceased had to have been before the completion of the New Testament.

**Question 10: When do PROPHECY and KNOWLEDGE gifts cease?**

**Answer:** "Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail (Greek 2673: Katargethesontai);

whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away (Greek 2673: Katargethesetai)."

**Meaning:** "Katargeo" means to render inoperative, to make inactive, to be done away, to supercede, put an end to. With Paul it always denotes a complete cessation, not a temporary or partial ceasing.

Every occurrence of "Katargeo" in I Cor. 13:8,10 is in the passive voice, indicating that something shall make prophecy and knowledge inactive. (That something is the coming of the completed New Testament in 96)

**Question 11: What are prophecy and knowledge?**

1. The gift of prophecy in the apostolic church was speaking new revelation from God, to instruct and edify. Prophecy has a secondary meaning of forthtelling God's Word to teach and comfort the Church. Bible teaching has replaced first century prophecy. A person knew, then prophesied.

2. The gift of knowledge in the apostolic Church was the ability to understand and know the mind and will of God. It was revealed truth, not learned. It is seeing as the Holy Spirit sees. It was used to teach believers certain doctrines which had not as yet been written as part of the New Testament. eg: **Peter** knew who Jesus really was. Mat 16:17. **Paul** knew the demonised damsel's message to be false. Acts 16:18

**Agabus** knew and then prophesied about Paul being bound at Jerusalem. Acts 21:10-12.

Such knowledge, like prophecy, was as authoritative as the Scriptures in the early church.

Prophecy and knowledge were twin gifts. Each of these gifts can refer to either:

- a) an **action** - exercising the gifts in the church where he prophesies or gives a word of knowledge.
- b) **content** - in Matthew 13:14,15 Christ quotes Isaiah 750 years earlier, which was now part of Scripture. When prophecy or knowledge became codified as scripture, they stood alone, no longer as the "act" of prophecy and knowledge, but as the "content" of prophecy and knowledge, now become written Scripture.

3. The gift of tongues (unlearned languages), was similar yet inferior to prophecy & knowledge in that the tongues speaker needed to be translated. Paul said "In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." I Cor 14:18,19. Speaking in a tongue & having it translated only allows the speaker to say half as much in a given time, as could a prophecy or word of knowledge in the common tongue. Tongues were cumbersome. Something will happen to prophecy, tongues and knowledge. None of them will abide thru the Church age, as will faith, hope and love. They were transient gifts.

**13:8** "Whether there be tongues, they shall cease" (Greek (3973): pausontai). Here "pausontai is used in an absolute sense, to cease, to come to an end." [The Complete N.T. Word Study Dictionary, S. Zhodiatos, p.1132.] "Pausontai" is in the middle voice, indicative mood, meaning that the action of ceasing will come from within, rather than from outside. "Cease" means that tongues would fulfil their function (of warning Jews of coming Judgment), and render themselves obsolete, unneeded, ended. Literally it means "tongues shall make themselves to cease, or automatically cease of themselves." [A.T. Robertson Vol.4, p179].

**13:9** "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part." Since v.9 omits tongues, it means that tongues would cease before prophecy & knowledge. "In part" (quantity) is opposite to "perfect" (complete). Knowledge of doctrine in the pre-canon period of the Church Age was fragmentary. The 14 NT mystery doctrines had not yet been completely given. They could only teach from the OT & by direct revelation from God via prophecy and knowledge. They knew in part, and consequently, they prophesied in part.

**13:10** "But when that which is perfect (Greek: "teleion" meaning complete) is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." (Greek: "Katargetheseta" meaning to render inoperative). Prophecy and knowledge, both being "in part", will be done away with when the perfect shall come.

**Question 12: When does the PERFECT come?**

a) If it is the completed New Testament Scriptures of 96AD then tongues, prophecy and knowledge have all ceased in the first century and are not for today.

b) If it is the second coming of Christ, then prophecy, tongues and knowledge are allowable today.

**Question 13:** To answer Question 12, we must ask another question: **What** is "that which is perfect?"

**Answer:** Two main opinions are, Jesus Christ at His second coming and the completed New Testament.

**Reasons why the "Perfect" (v.10) is the completed New Testament:**

- 1. "When that (Greek: To Teleion) which is perfect is come."