

## FAQ's Topics

### Charismatic movement

#### 1. What is the Charismatic Movement?

The Charismatic Movement is based on the belief that the sign gifts given to the apostles were not temporary.

#### 2. What were the sign gifts and how do we know if they've ceased?

**1 Cor. 12:8** For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; **9** To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; **10** To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; **11** But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

- gifts of healing: The apostles clearly had the gift of healing (Mat. 10:1). At one point, people could be healed by handkerchiefs or aprons brought from the Apostle Paul's body (Acts. 19:11-12). However, we can say with certainty that this gift ceased.

For starters, Paul was incapable of healing his thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. 12:7-10). When Epaphroditus visited Paul in prison, Epaphroditus became ill to the point where he almost died, and Paul was not able to heal him (Phil. 2:25-27). Paul's disciple, Timothy, had a stomach ailment, but Paul was also unable to heal him (1 Tim. 5:23). Clearly, the gift of healing was temporary.

Now, God can and does heal people as He chooses. Therefore, it is not wrong for believers to pray and believe God for physical healing. It must be understood though, apart from the rapture, all believers will physically die. Ultimately, healing for the believer is found in the atoning work of Christ:

**Isa 53:5** But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

The healing in view here is not healing from cancer or congestive heart failure. The healing in view here is healing from the disease of sin that warrants eternal death and damnation (Rom. 6:23).

- working of miracles: Whether it was the prophets or the apostles, the purpose of miracles was always authentication and validation. The ability of the prophet or the apostle to perform miracles authenticated them as a prophet or an apostle of God. The working of miracles also validated that their message was from God. What set Elijah apart as a true prophet of God from the false prophets of Baal, was his ability to work miracles and their inability to do so (1 Ki. 18:20-40). These are the same reasons Jesus worked miracles (John 5:36, 10:25).

It is of concern when people seek miracles. The Pharisees sought of Christ a sign from heaven, but Jesus' response to them should caution everyone from placing an emphasis on signs/miracles (Mat. 12:38-39; Mk. 8:11-12).

Ultimately, God has magnified His word above all His name (Psa. 138:2). Therefore, the emphasis of the believer should be placed on that, not miracles. That is not to say that God is incapable of performing miracles or that He no longer does them. We know that He still performs miracles! Some will say, "*But miracles help unbelievers to believe.*" It's interesting to note that the Pharisees demanded a sign, but Jesus had already given them plenty and they still did not believe! It is the gospel of Christ that is the "power" of God unto salvation to every one that believes (Rom. 1:16), not miracles.

- *divers kinds of tongues*: **IT MUST BE ESTABLISHED THAT TONGUES REFER TO LANGUAGES NEVER LEARNED BUT WERE SUPERNATURALLY SPOKEN.** The Bible does not recognize or endorse gibberish or babbling as tongues. "Unknown tongues" were still languages. They were just unknown to certain hearers.

Acts 2 is often used as a proof text to justify the usage of tongues today. It is undeniable that every man was heard speaking "in his own language (Acts 2:6)." Trying to justify the usage of tongues for the church today calls for the blatant disregard for biblical teaching:

**1 Cor. 1:22** For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

**1 Cor. 13:8** Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

**1 Cor. 14:22** Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

Tongues were a sign for unbelieving Jews that God was adding Gentiles to the household of faith. This is why in 1 Cor. 14:21, Paul quoted from Isa. 28:11-12 where God stated He would speak to Israel through another tongue. This also explains why each time tongues were used in the book of Acts, Jews were present (Acts 2:6-11, 10:44-46, 19:1-6).

It is biblically evident, that as the Word of God progressed, the sign gifts decreased. After 1 Corinthians, Paul does not address tongues in any other writings. Not to mention, when speaking of the fruit of the Spirit, Paul did not mention tongues as a trait of that (Gal. 5:22-23). Additionally, when Paul spoke of being filled with the Spirit, tongues were not mentioned as an evidence of that (Eph. 5:18-21).

Finally, tongues are often presented as a gift that can be attained by all believers. There is no biblical evidence of that whatsoever:

**1 Cor. 12:28** And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. **29** *Are* all apostles? *are* all prophets? *are* all teachers? *are* all workers of miracles? **30** Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? **31** But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

Even before tongues ceased, not all believers had the gift of tongues. And as much as tongues are coveted today by many, Paul taught that they were not to be coveted.

- interpretation of tongues: If tongues have ceased, by default, this gift has as well. When it was applicable, it reinforced that tongues were languages. Gibberish or babbling cannot be interpreted. Proponents of the usage of tongues today routinely do so without an interpreter with more than three people (1 Cor. 14:27-28). Also, within the same context of 1 Cor. 14, women would have been prohibited from speaking in tongues (1 Cor. 14:34-35). Yet today, we see episodes of women supposedly speaking in tongues in church gatherings.

### 3. **What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit?**

Within the charismatic movement, the baptism of the Holy Spirit (aka the second blessing) is the belief that true salvation is accompanied by speaking in tongues. If tongues have ceased, this is hard to justify biblically. Another reason it's hard to justify is because the Bible does not present salvation as a two-step experience:

**Rom 10:9** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

**Eph 1:13** In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

The reality is, at salvation, we are baptized into Christ and sealed by the Holy Spirit:

**1 Cor. 12:13** For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

**2 Cor. 1:22** Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

### 4. **What is the baptism of fire?**

**Mat 3:11** I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:

As we've seen, all believers in Jesus Christ were baptized into Christ and sealed by the Holy Spirit at salvation. Tragically, an entire system of erroneous doctrine has been built through ignoring very basic rules of Bible study.

For starters, when John said, "he shall baptize **you** with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire," it is imperative that we identify the "you" in this verse. In the preceding verses, the "you" is clearly identified as the Nation of Israel. So, John did not have the church in view here. In the parallel passage of this where "fire" is mentioned (Luke 3:7-17), the context clearly refers to Israel as well.

Next, it cannot be ignored that Matthew 3:11 and Luke 3:16 end with a colon, not a period. If we read on in Matthew 3:12 and Luke 3:17, it is undeniable that "fire" refers to judgment associated with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, which as after the church age will have ended. Therefore, it is doctrinally reckless to teach that the baptism of fire is for believers in the church age.

## 5. Does God still use dreams, visions, and special revelations to speak to people?

In short, God can do anything He wants to do. However, one should never dismiss that God's greatest allegiance is ALWAYS to His Word (Psa. 138:2). Peter, who witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus Christ, emphatically stated we have something more sure than what he witnessed:

**2 Pet. 1:18** And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. **19** We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: **20** Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

Psalm 138:2 speaks to the premium that God Himself has assigned to His Word. Nothing is to be elevated above God's Word. And because God places a high premium on His Word, dreams, visions or special revelations possess no authority. Everything that God has to say to man (unbelievers and believers) He has said in His Word. In light of that, whatever God is going to reveal to us, He has already revealed it in His Word.

Now, before that which is perfect was completed (the Word of God – 1 Cor. 13:10), God revealed His Word through the fathers of Israel, prophets, and the apostles (Heb. 1:1, 2 Pet. 3:2; Jude 1:17). But since we have the perfect, completed Word of God, that practice is no longer necessary. Therefore, dreams, visions, and special revelations, are NEVER authoritative.

**6. Why are there differing accounts of how people received the Holy Spirit in Acts?**

Author and Bible teacher, David Cloud, said:

*“To say that we should receive the Holy Spirit like the Jews in the upper room on Pentecost did in Acts 2 or like the Samaritans did in Acts 8 or like the Gentiles did in Acts 10 or like the Ephesians did in Acts 19 is to ignore the fact that these were unique situations that contradicted one another and that were not repeated.”*

While the gospels transition us from the Old Testament to the New Testament, the book of Acts transitions from the gospels to the church. The acts of the apostles were historical acts as much as they were transitional. They were never meant to be used a doctrinal and ministry blueprint for the church today.

**7. Can someone who believes charismatic doctrine be a member of Midtown Baptist Temple?**

If after being presented with the above-mentioned doctrinal position, and they are in agreement, then yes. If not, it would be unwise for them to join until they have worked this out. What must be communicated is that this is our biblical position and there is no latitude to teach otherwise.