

The miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit are temporary.

The miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit are identified in Mark 16:17-18:

“And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”

And in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 27-28:

“4 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. 6 There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. 7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. 8 To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. ... 27 ¶ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. 28 And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.”

Also see Romans 12:6-8

“We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. 7 If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; 8 if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

There are four reasons why I am convinced that the Bible teaches that all the supernatural gifts listed in Mark 16:17-18, I Corinthians 12:4-11, 27-28 and Romans 12:6-8 were temporary, ceased long ago and are not available for us today.

Those reasons are: **I)** There is no need for spiritual gifts today. **II)** There is no Bible way to get the spiritual gifts today. **III)** Spiritual gifts were temporary and were to last only until the Bible was finished. **IV)** If spiritual gifts exist today there is no Bible way to distinguish between the “power and signs and wonders of falsehood according to the operation of Satan” (II Thess. 2:9-12) and the true spiritual gifts performed by the power of God.

I) There is no need for spiritual gifts today.

Does the Bible tell us why God gave the spiritual gifts to the church in the first century?

Yes! Mark 16:20 (read the context verses 15-19) tells us that the special gifts were for the purpose of "confirming the word." We know that Paul and Barnabas confirmed the word according to Acts 14:3

“So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders.

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Paul says in 1 Cor. 1:6-7

“because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you. 7 Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.”

To confirm this conclusion we have in Hebrews 2:3-4

“how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. 4 God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.”

When John wrote his gospel he said (John 20:30-31)

“Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”

The word has been confirmed, the written record of these miracles is enough to cause faith and "have life in his name." Therefore, we do not need the actual spiritual gifts today.

By God's command the prophetic *writings* provide all nations with the necessary information to *believe and obey*, Rom. 16:26:

“Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, 26 but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him.”

Actual spiritual gifts today would add nothing to what is offered by the written word.

2 Pet. 1:3.

“His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.”

This knowledge we can get through a study of The Word not needing the performing or witnessing of any spiritual gifts.

2 Tim. 3:16-17. The Bible will completely furnish us unto every good work.

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

This is just another scripture which tells us that we need nothing more than the scriptures to know how to serve God and to be godly.

Since the only specified purpose for the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12 has been fulfilled and everything we need spiritually is furnished by the scriptures, there is no need for the actual spiritual gifts to be performed today; their purpose has been fulfilled.

II) There is no Bible way to get the spiritual gifts today.

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In the first century the spiritual gifts (or gifts of the Holy Spirit) were received by only two methods. The baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2 and 10) or the laying on of hands (Acts 8:17) by someone who had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Neither on these methods is available to us today.

I say this for three reasons. **1)** The baptism of the Holy Spirit is only recorded twice, Acts 2:1-4 and Acts 10:44-47. (Since the apostle Paul had all the power and authority that the other apostles had, it can be inferred that he, too, received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, probably when he was in Arabia. Gal. 1:17) There is no Bible teaching that the baptism of the Holy Spirit would be for others. There is no command to receive it, no example that it will come to others, no hint that we should, could or would receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. How then can anyone say "I have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit" when the Bible does not teach that we, today, should, could or would receive it. Since the only result of receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a reception of the spiritual gifts (**and** the ability to give those gifts to others), and the spiritual gifts have ceased (see below), we can only conclude that the baptism of the Holy Spirit only occurred three times, as mentioned above.

To believe, practice or teach anything religiously, we must have a scripture that justifies this belief, practice or teaching (Gal. 1:6-9; 2 Tim.3:16-17). Since there is no scripture that says that we could, should or would receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit today, we can't.

2) In the beginning there were two baptisms, water baptism for the forgiveness of sins and Holy Spirit baptism which produced the ability to perform spiritual gifts for confirming the Word. Compare Acts 2:1-4 to Acts 2:36-39 (which happened about A.D. 33.) This clearly establishes two baptisms. Look at Acts 10:44-48 (which happened about A.D. 35)

"While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, 47 "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."

This also establishes that there were two baptism at that time.

We know that the two experiences in Acts 2:1-4 and 10:44-48 were the baptism of the Holy Spirit because Acts 11:15-17 says

"As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. 16 Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' 17 So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?"

But when Paul wrote the book of Ephesians in A.D. 54-57 he says in chapter 4, verse 4 that there is one baptism. Which baptism ceased? The permanence of water baptism is established in Matt. 28:18-20

"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 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, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

and Acts 2:38-39:

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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. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

Since water baptism for the remission of sins was for all people for all time water baptism MUST be the one baptism spoken of by Paul in Ephesians. The only conclusion is that the **baptism** of the Holy Spirit had ceased to be a part of the religious experience by the time Paul wrote Ephesians about A.D. 54-57.

3) Acts 8:1-25 tells us a very interesting story. Philip was in Samaria preaching and doing many mighty miracles, verses 5,6,13. But "the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them," verse 16! Why? There are only two possibilities: A) Philip could have given spiritual gifts to others and yet, didn't. That is, he had the power and/or the ability to pass on the gifts (that he himself had) to other people, but chose not to, or B) He couldn't. That is, he did not have the power or ability to pass on the gifts, that he himself had, to another person.

Is this first alternative a reasonable possibility? Philip, a Jew, had taken the gospel to the people the Jews hated, the Samaritans. He had taught them, baptized them, accepted them as brothers, healed their sick, and performed many miracles among them, thereby demonstrating his love for them. He had plenty of time and opportunity, yet he didn't give the Holy Spirit to any of them. What reasonable justification is there for his not giving them the Holy Spirit?? *The only reasonable explanation is that Philip did not have the power or the ability to pass on to others the miraculous gifts that he himself had.* To strengthen this conclusion, there is no teaching or example in the Bible that anyone, other than the apostles, could give the miraculous gifts to others, by the "laying on of hands" or any other method.

But when Peter and John came down to Samaria, they *did* give "spiritual gifts" to the people by "placing their hands on them," Acts 8:17. This power or ability is, of course, possible for both Peter and John because both had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit as recorded in Acts 2:3-4.

Since only those who had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit could give spiritual gifts to others by the laying on of hands, and all those who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit are long since dead, there is no **Bible way** to receive these spiritual gifts today.

I know there are many people today who say that they have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. My response to them is "show me your **Bible** evidence!" I have not seen the scripture that says that we (or anybody) can or will, under any circumstances, receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit today. If the baptism of the Holy Spirit had been promised to everyone like water baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38-39; Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15-16) then anyone could receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit today and everyone who did could perform miracles today and give that gift to anyone they chose. But this is so foreign to the teaching of the New Testament that not everyone had the miraculous gifts and certainly not everyone could pass on this gift, for example Philip in Samaria, Act 8. Because there is no scripture that teaches otherwise we must conclude the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the ability to give miraculous gifts to others has ceased and is **not** available today.

In the first century each Gift was distributed to man at the pleasure of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11), or at the pleasure of God (Heb. 2:4). There is no indication the person who received any of the Gifts could do anything to qualify for, or be selected for, any of the Gifts. All the Gifts were distributed to people by divine discretion and only by divine discretion. This **distribution** ceased at the death of the last person who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is verified by the story of Philip in Samaria recorded in Acts 8:4-25, as mentioned above.

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III) The Bible teaches that the spiritual gifts were temporary and have ceased.

Please read the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians before proceeding. This chapter teaches that all spiritual gifts were temporary and would cease. Chapters 12, 13, and 14 of 1 Corinthians deal almost exclusively with spiritual gifts. Chapter 12 identifies the gifts, and emphasizes that although the gifts are different, they are all from the same Spirit. Chapter 13 emphasizes that the gifts are of no value without love (verses 1-3) and that although “love never fails” all the gifts will “cease,” “be stilled” or “pass away” (verse 8) because they are incomplete (verse 9), temporary, (verse 11) and distort our vision (verse 12a). Almost everyone agrees with these conclusions.

The only point of disagreement is **when** will the “imperfect disappear...”? First Corinthians 13:8-12 plainly teach that the gifts are incomplete, temporary and distort our vision. Why then would anyone want them to last forever (or until Christ comes again, which is the same thing)? Wouldn't we (and God) want them to last *ONLY* until they had served their purpose?

Why would God want this system of incomplete, temporary and distortive “gifts” to last forever? The word he was delivering was perfect, every word of it! But God had decided to take about 50 years to have His word completely delivered (the first book was written *about* 50 A.D. and the last one *about* 100 A.D.). So He decided to give the people of the first century a system of teaching the word and confirming the word that better met the needs of the day until the perfect word (James 1:25) was perfectly completed.

We are told in chapter 13 verse 10 that the “but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.” When is that? When will “perfection” come? Although people may suggest many things as the “perfection” spoken of here, there are only three reasonable possibilities, **1)** Jesus, or **2)** Heaven, or **3)** the New Testament.

1) Does the “perfection” of 1 Corinthians 13:10 refer to Jesus? Let us consider this possibility. **First**, this assumption requires that the Greek words translated “perfection” refer to Christ. But this is impossible because the Greek words are “**το τελειον.**” The noun, τελειον is both accusative, masculine gender and nominative, neuter gender. That is to say, if the word τελειον is the subject of the sentence (nominative case) then it is neuter gender. If τελειον is the object of the verb or a preposition then the gender is masculine. In 1 Corinthians 13:10 - “..when perfection (το τελειον) comes, the imperfect disappears” our key word “perfection” is the subject of the verb “comes.” Since it is in the nominative case it must also be in the neuter gender. To strengthen this conclusion the associated article “the” (το) is always neuter gender and another rule of the Greek language is that the article must always agree with the noun in gender. To any who are influenced by God's word this evidence shows conclusively that “perfection” is in the neuter gender and therefore must refer to a “thing,” as the rules of Greek clearly say. Το τελειον cannot refer to a person, therefore it cannot refer to Christ.

Second, the word “perfection” of 1 Corinthians 13 cannot refer to Christ because if Paul were referring to Christ, he should rightly say “when perfection comes **again** (or returns),” since Christ has already been here once, lived thirty-three years, died on the cross and went back to heaven (Acts 1:10-11). Since Paul did not say nor infer “when perfection comes **again**” we have every reason to believe that he could not be referring to Jesus.

Third, “perfection” of 1 Corinthians cannot refer to Christ because the text of 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 is talking about two different time periods. One period is “now” meaning the time that Paul wrote the letter (about 57 A.D.), the second period is “then” meaning when “perfection comes,” except in verse 11 where the two time periods are, figuratively, childhood and adulthood. The context reads, starting at verse 8:

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NOW, about 57 A.D.

THEN, when perfection comes

¶ 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 perfection comes

the imperfect disappears

When I was a child,

I talked like a child,

I thought like a child,

I reasoned like a child.

When I became a man, I

put childish ways behind me

Now we see but a poor reflection

as in a mirror;

then we shall see [*clearly, as if*]

face to face

Now I know in part;

then I shall know fully, even

as I am fully known.

The whole point of these verses is to show the inadequacies and temporary nature of spiritual gifts. Paul used three examples to clarify this idea.

a) Verse 9 says "...we know *in part* and we prophesy *in part* (v.10) but when perfection comes the imperfect disappears." This plainly says that the spiritual gifts are imperfect (know in part, prophesy in part) and will disappear when perfection comes. If "perfection" refers to the second coming of Christ then this condition of knowing in part and prophesying in part will last until the end of time but his conclusion contradicts 2 Timothy 3:16-17, John 20:30, Romans 16:26. Therefore this "knowing in part" had to terminate sometime before the scriptures were finished, which happened *about* 100 A.D.

b) Verse 11 talks about childish things that Paul "put away" when he became a man. Since the context is spiritual gifts in verses 8, 9 & 10 this verse means that the spiritual gifts were of an immature nature, and that when the church matured the gifts would be put away. This clearly shows that the spiritual gifts were immature, and therefore temporary like the childish things that every person has in their life which are put away when they mature.

c) The spiritual gifts are compared to the imperfect image given by a mirror, especially the mirrors of that day. Paul says "now" we see poorly, but "then... face to face." Some want to take the last phrase "face to face"

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literally, as if they could not **then** literally see face to face, but only after the perfection comes. Of course they, at that time, could see face to face as any two people do when facing each other.

Seeing face-to-face is in contrast to seeing *now* (a poor reflection as in a mirror), simply meaning that *then* (when perfection comes) we will see “more clearly” as we do when talking “face to face.”

The mistaken belief that Christ is the “perfection” mentioned in verse 10, has led some to think that “face to face” means seeing Christ face to face when He comes again. But this is impossible because if it is taken literally then the seeing “face to face” can only happen after the “then” experience, which is when perfection comes, meaning they could not literally see each other face to face at that time, which is contrary to common sense. Again, if the “face to face” refers to seeing Christ then the previous phrase “Now we see but a poor reflection...” means that now (about 57 A.D.) the people could see only a poor reflection of Christ. This is contrary to reality because many of the people who read this letter had physically seen Christ “face to face” before his death and ascension. And these very people had all the Spiritual Gifts to assist them in their “seeing.” And this letter was written to all Christians who could or would “see but a poor reflection” until the “perfect” came.

Therefore, we must conclude that Christ cannot be the “perfection” which will come, and seeing “face to face” cannot be understood literally, but instead, it means seeing and understanding Christianity more clearly when the gospel will be completed in about 100 A.D. This is verified by 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and 2 Peter 1:3.

In other words, the spiritual gifts give an imperfect image of the spiritual world of Christ, which will be corrected when the “perfect Law of liberty” (James 1:25) is finished, about 43 years after Paul wrote this letter.

Paul used these three examples in verses 8-12 of 1 Corinthians 13 to show the inadequacies and temporary nature of spiritual gifts. These three examples are meaningless if the gifts are to last until the end of time. To conclude that “when perfection comes” refers to Christ and that the “gifts” will last until the end of time contradicts the fact that they are temporary. If the “gifts” are to last until Christ comes again, when time will end, Paul would be contradicting himself by saying something like this: “the gifts are temporary, they will only last until the end of time.” This conclusion is untenable. Therefore the “perfection” in verse 10 cannot refer to Christ.

Fourth, “perfection” of 1 Corinthians 13 cannot refer to Christ because of verse 13. ***“And now these three remain; faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”*** The Greek word translated “remain” is μένει from the root word “μένω.” This word refers to, according to the best Greek authority (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, v. IV, p. 575), “πιστις (faith), ἐλπις (hope), ἀγάπη (love) as things which remain (abide), 1 Cor. 13:13.

In our context faith, hope and love remain, compared to the spiritual gifts which, according to verse 8, do not remain. In our context “remain” means to stay longer than some event or longer than other things mentioned. This same word is used by Paul seven other times in this book of 1 Corinthians: 3:14; 7:8, 11,20,24,40; 15:6. Let us look at each passage.

I Corinthians 3:13-14

“his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work. 14 If what he has built survives, [μένει] he will receive his reward.” (continue after some event; the testing of fire)

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I Corinthians 7:8

“Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay [μενει] unmarried, as I am.” (remain in their current state of being unmarried. The widows should remain unmarried after the event of becoming widowed)

I Corinthians 7:11

“But if she does [separate -cb], she must remain [μενει] unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband.” (continue unmarried after some event; the separation)

I Corinthians 7:20

“Each one should remain [μενει] in the situation which he was in when God called him.” (continue after some event; the calling)

I Corinthians 7:24

“Brothers, each man, as responsible to God, should remain [μενει] in the situation God called him to.” (continue after some event; the calling)

I Corinthians 7:39

“A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord. 40 In my judgment, she is happier if she stays [μενει] as she is...” (continue after some event; husband's death)

I Corinthians 15:6

“After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still [μενουσιν] living, though some have fallen asleep.” (continue after some event; His appearance)

In each case Paul is talking about something lasting past some event. This idea is very important in our text of 1 Corinthians 13:13. Paul is saying that “faith, hope and love” remain longer than some event. What is that event? The context clearly shows us that the event is the cessation of the spiritual gifts. But if “the perfection” is Christ, then Paul is saying that faith, hope and love will remain, i.e. exist after Christ comes. But this can't be so because when Christ comes, time will end, hope will end (Romans 8:24), and faith will also end because faith *“is the being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.”* (Heb. 11:1) But when Christ comes our hope will be fulfilled and we will see the things not previously seen (heaven, God, etc.). “Faith, hope and love” will exist after the spiritual gifts end, verse 13. But faith, hope and love will not ALL exist **after** Christ comes. Therefore the two events of the cessation of spiritual gifts and the second coming of Christ *cannot* occur at the same time. Therefore, “the perfection” (verse 10) cannot refer to Christ.

Any one of the four reasons discussed above is adequate to prove that the “perfection” of 1 Corinthians 13:10 cannot refer to Christ, but when taken together they present overwhelming evidence to any who love the truth.

2) Does the “perfection” of 1 Corinthians 13:10 refer to **Heaven**? Let us now consider this possibility. First: Heaven will never come! Heaven doesn't move. I Thess. 4:13-18 describes in detail what will happen when Jesus comes again. It says that Jesus will come, not heaven. This passage says that *“...we will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so we will be with the Lord forever.”* (verse 17) We will be taken **to** heaven, heaven will not be brought to us. Second: All that is said above about faith, hope and love remaining after spiritual gifts cease, apply here. If “the perfect” is heaven then that event will bring Jesus at

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the same time. At that time, time itself will end and so will faith and hope. The same reasoning applies, therefore "the perfect" cannot refer to heaven.

3) Does the "perfection" of 1 Corinthians 13:10 refer to the **New Testament**? Because of all the evidence just presented we must conclude that "perfection" cannot refer to Christ or heaven. Therefore "the perfection" must refer to the only other perfect thing: "the perfect law of liberty" referred to in James 1:25. The Bible was completed about 100 A.D. Before the scriptures were finished God chose spiritual gifts as the means to reveal himself to man and to confirm the word as it was being completed. This is the only explanation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit that harmonizes with scripture, logic and common sense.

There is yet a fourth reason for denying that the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12 will continue until Christ comes again.

IV) No Bible way to distinguish between the miracles of Satan and those of God

If spiritual gifts exist until Christ's return there is no Bible way to distinguish between the "*the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders,*" (II Thess. 2:9-12) and the true spiritual gifts performed by the power of God.

II Tim. 3:16-17 Paul says that The Bible will completely furnish us unto every good work. The Gospel was completely delivered in the first century (about 100 A.D.) and we must not change it in any way (Gal. 1:6-9). In II Thess. 2:9-12 Paul tells us that Satan will perform all kinds of miracles, signs and wonders, but he gives us no information about how to tell these false miracles from the true spiritual gifts. Let it not be thought that this is of little consequence. Those who follow the "work of Satan" will "perish" and "be condemned." So we must have some Bible way to distinguish between the works of Satan and the works of God. We certainly cannot rely on the false teachers (workers of counterfeit miracles) to tell us the truth, for they will lie and pretend to be "angels of light" (II Cor. 12:13-15). Since the Bible gives us no information about how to tell the difference, the only possible conclusion is that there are not two sources for the performance of spiritual gifts today. ***The spiritual gifts from God are not available today.*** Therefore all who claim to do miracles (or any of the gifts listed in Mark 16 or 1 Corinthians 12) are not doing them as a work of God, but are assisting in the work of Satan, whether knowingly or in ignorance.

This conclusion fits perfectly into the purpose of the spiritual gifts, which was to "confirm the word"(Mark 16:17-20, Heb. 2:3-4). After the Bible was completed, the evidence of the written word was sufficient to cause belief and to give us "life in His name." (John 20:30-31, Romans 16:26) The word will give us everything we need to do any good work. (II Tim. 3:16-17) And God "has given us everything we need for life and godliness THROUGH our knowledge of him..." II Pet. 1:3. This knowledge we get through a study of "The Word."

If all this evidence is true and all spiritual gifts from God have ceased, how then can the very next verse (1 Corinthians 14, verse 1) say: "...eagerly desire spiritual gifts..." and in verse 39 Paul says "...do not forbid speaking in tongues..." Do these two verses, and others that mention that "the gifts" were good, desirable and from God, mean that the aforementioned conclusion must be wrong??

We must consider one very important fact in order to answer this question correctly, namely ***The tense of the verbs used.*** All the evidence presented from I Corinthians 13 proves that spiritual gifts WILL cease. That is, some time after Paul wrote the book. Paul is saying that from the point of view of the writer (Paul) and the

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original readers (the Corinthians) the event of the cessation of the gifts would happen at a later time. We have proven that this happened when God's Word was finished, about 100 A.D. But this book (1 Corinthians) was written about 57 A.D. So for about 43 years after this book was written the spiritual gifts were still in effect, still active, still a blessing from God and accomplishing God's will. The whole fourteenth chapter of this letter tells the Corinthians (and, by implication, other Christians) how to use the gifts during those 43 years. This whole chapter is in the present tense, implying that all the instructions were to be followed immediately **and** until the *Gifts* ceased.

A general rule for understanding the Bible is: Everything written in the Bible is for all men for all time, ***unless the Bible itself*** specifically states a limiting condition. If we did not have I Corinthians 13 and Acts 8 and II Thessalonians 2, then we, today, would have to follow all the instructions and advice that Paul gives in this letter to the Corinthians. But we do have those scriptures (I Corinthians 13 and Acts 8 and II Thessalonians 2), and since they, too, were inspired by God, we must believe them also. We must allow God to put whatever limits He wants on anything He writes.

Summary

We have demonstrated that God has put a time limit on the use of spiritual gifts. It is not within our jurisdiction to question or deny God this right. We must just believe and obey **all** that God says. If you choose to believe that spiritual gifts are still operative today, then you must offer better evidence to support that idea than the evidence presented here, ***else you will be guilty of accepting a position with less evidence than the alternative.*** And someday God will ask you to explain that decision.