

Grace Bible Church
Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries

The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.
The Tree of Life from the week ending 12/20/09
The new things that have come;
The Royal Ambassadorship and the Royal Priesthood. Part 2.

As a part of “the new things” that have come from 2 Co 5:17, we have been noting the ten unique asserts that believers in other dispensations did not possess which are in view.

We have seen the first four:

- a. The baptism of the Spirit which results in the creation of a new spiritual species and the royal family of God.
- b. The PPOG and a personal sense of destiny which is unique for the royal family of God only.
- c. You also have a phenomenal portfolio of invisible assets which belongs to you as a member of the royal family of God.
- d. The principle of equality. For the first time in history, every believer, regardless of background or personal history has equality given by God.

We are now on the fifth principle which is the two unique royal commissions: **The Royal Ambassadorship and the Royal Priesthood.** Among the many benefits of our spiritual royalty are these two divine commissions. In union with Christ, every Church-age believer belongs to the most exalted priestly order of all time. Every believer in the Church-age is under the High Priesthood of the resurrected Jesus Christ.

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: (2Ti 4:1-4)

Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were thus occupied were not benefited. We have an altar, from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. (Heb 13:9-10)

We have begun a study on some of these different and strange doctrines that have infiltrated the Church-age. For example:

1. A-Millennialism - the false belief that there will be no one thousand year reign of Christ and His saints on earth.
2. Annihilation - the strange doctrinal belief that Hell does not exist.

3. The false teaching of the Apostolic Signs and Wonders, movement as we noted in Mar 16:17-18.

“And these signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly {poison,} it shall not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” (Mar 16:17-19)

This movement is made up of those who operate under the false assumption that these signs (in Mar 16:17-18), are still in effect today and that it is their duty to fulfill them.

In Heb 2:3-4, the Bible teaches that signs were used to confirm that the word being preached by what EPH 4:11 calls the apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers,

Eph 4:12, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

These signs were used by God to confirm the mystery doctrine of the Church-age. In Heb 2:3, signs are spoken of in the past tense. Heb 2:3, **how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed not is confirmed or will be confirmed, but was confirmed** [aor-pass-ind of *bebaioo*, meaning past tense] = *has been confirmed*. Heb 2:4, **God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.**

They are also spoken of in the past tense in 2Co 12:12, **The signs of a true apostle "were performed" among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles.** The phrase *were performed* is an aor-pass-ind of *katergazomai* meaning to accomplish, perform, work. The aorist tense speaks of that point in the past when the verb was accomplished. The passive voice, the subject, the apostles, received (not produced, but received) the action of the verb. The indicative mood is the dogmatic statement of fact. Those who insist that we should practice the signs today because they were practiced throughout the New Testament haven't been truly studying the word of God. They were not practiced throughout the New Testament.

In Acts 5:16, early in the apostolic age when the church was just getting started, we read: **And also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits; and they were all being healed.** Twenty-five years later Paul, the greatest of all the apostles, could not be delivered from his own pesky thorn in the flesh, (2Co 12:7-10). At one time, Paul had the ability to heal others at will (Act 28:8), but as Paul neared the end of his life he showed no evidence of such a gift. In fact, in 1Ti 5:23, the apostle Paul gave Timothy medical advice instead of healing him. **No longer drink water exclusively, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.**

Timothy had infirmities of his own from which he could not be healed. Paul advised Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach's sake, a common way of treating illness in that day. Later on, at the very end of his career, Paul left Trophimus SICK at Miletum; He surely would have healed him if he could. Why all this sickness if the Apostolic Signs were still in effect? Answer: They were not still in effect because they were only needed in the early ministry of the Apostles for the purpose of confirming the truth to Israel.

We firmly believe that God can still work miracles and heal anyone He chooses. we believe that the prayers of God's people can move Him to work miracles. But, let's not confuse answered prayers with Apostolic Signs, because there's a vast difference. We believe in healing; we just don't believe in healers.

Back in Mar 16:17, **“And these signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues;”** As for new tongues or unknown tongues, people have done this for thousands of years. The Tower of Babel in Genesis 11 was the first instance, but this was certainly no outpouring of the Holy Spirit. When the Church of Satan speaks in unknown tongues (which they do), is that a work of the Holy Spirit? Most any good psychologist can teach you to speak in unknown tongues, but this isn't a work of the Holy Spirit! Too many people have the idea that if something is highly abnormal or miraculous that it must be of God. In fact, we are told that the coming Antichrist will have a field day with such feeble minded people, because he will work such *signs and lying wonders* that the entire world will follow after him (2Th 2:8-12; Rev 13:13-14). The time will come when the lawless one will no longer be held back, but will be let loose. But don't worry. The Master, the Lord Jesus Christ, will slay him with the breath of His mouth, He'll be right on his heels and blow him away.

That is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, (2Th 2:9)

The Anti-Christ coming is all Satan's work. All his power and signs and miracles are fake, **and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, (2Th 2:10-11).** Since they're so obsessed with evil, God gives them what they want. **In order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness. (2Th 2:12).** Since they refuse to trust truth, they're banished to their chosen world of lies and illusions.

speaking of the second beast, Satan and the And he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, (Rev 13:13-14)

Nowhere in the New Testament did God command anyone to speak with unknown tongues. We do read about *new tongues*, Mar 16:17, *other tongues* Act 2:4, and *different kinds of tongues*, 1Co 12:10, but these are all foreign Languages, not senseless gibberish!

There are no unknown tongues in Act 2, and there is no baptism of the Holy Spirit in 1Co 14. Instead of rightly dividing the word of truth, the careless emotional holy roller crowd are in view when Peter says:

Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. (2Pe 3:14-16)

And so the Apostolic Signs are not for today, because they were only for confirming the word of God

to the unbelieving Jews in the first century. In fact, the Bible warns us to beware of anyone who professes to practice these signs today (Mat 7:15; 24:11; 1Ti 4:1-2), 2Co 11:13-15, **For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds.**

The Lord commends the church at Ephesus for trying out some professing apostles and finding them to be liars (Rev 2:2). Today, most Charismatic or Pentecostal groups teach that a person receives the Holy Spirit sometime after they've received Christ as Savior, but this is plain heresy. Rom 8:9 tells us that a person does not even belong to Christ if that person doesn't have the Spirit of God, so salvation and the baptism of the Holy Spirit are synonymous, not separate.

However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. (Rom 8:9)

To further the confusion, such groups also refer to this event as a *baptism of fire*. The only baptism of fire in the Bible is the one that John spoke of when he spoke of Christ burning sinners in unquenchable fire, **“As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. And His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” (Mat 3:11:12).**

The only time a person is baptized in fire is when he is cast into the lake of fire. **And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire (Rev 20:14-15).** Believers are baptized with the Holy Spirit, but sinners are baptized with fire. The baptism of fire is defined as the judgment of the Tribulational unbelievers at the Second Advent. They are removed from the earth and placed in fire for 1000 years until the Last Judgment.

Both Jews and Gentiles who are Tribulational unbelievers are involved in this Second Advent judgment. This judgment results in the Millennium beginning with believers only, Mat 3:11-12; Luk 3:16. The analogy to the baptism of fire is found in Mat 24:36-41.

“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. Then there shall be two men in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women {will be} grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left.” (Mat 24:36-41)

The one left in the field is the mature believer; the one taken is the unbeliever. The Second Advent is compared to the days of Noah when people had no time for doctrine because they were too distracted by the pleasures of normal living.