

Dealing with Controversies around the Holy Spirit

What Controversies?

- Speaking in Tongues
- Ongoing Prophecy
- Miracles / Healings
- Baptism in the Holy Spirit / 'two sorts of Christian'
- Other Manifestations
- ?

Remember Your Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

1. He is the *Holy Spirit*

⇒ Beware anything that promotes or tolerates unholiness

⇒ Look for the Spirit's fruits:

Galatians 5v22-23: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control...”

Remember Your Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

1. He is the *Holy* Spirit

2. His goal and delight is to *glorify Christ*

John 16v14: “He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”

⇒ Be cautious of anything where the focus is on the Spirit

⇒ ...or which distracts from the gospel of the Lord Jesus

Remember Your Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

1. He is the *Holy Spirit*
2. His goal and delight is to *glorify Christ*

3. He has invested in inspiring *the Bible*

Acts 1v6; 4v25; Hebrews 3v7; 10v17; 1Peter 1v11; 2Peter 1v21

- ⇒ Beware of anything which undermines the Scripture
- ⇒ ...or downplays its importance, or replaces it

Remember Your Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

1. He is the *Holy* Spirit
2. His goal and delight is to *glorify Christ*
3. He has invested in inspiring *the Bible*
- 4. He is one of the great *uniting* realities of our faith**

Ephesians 4v3: “...eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit...”, v4
1Corinthians 12v4,7,13...

⇒ Beware all ‘two sorts of Christians’ theologies

⇒ Every Christian has the Spirit. [Ephesians 1v13+](#); [Romans 8v9](#)

Remember to interact 'Spirit'-ually

1. Be **Fair** – don't caricature
2. Be **Biblical**
3. Be **Self-aware**
4. Keep things in **Perspective**

Remember the Bible's Big Storyline

Two Examples

a) "Tongues" – a Theology of Language

b) Prophecy, Tongues, Healing & Miracles

What's different today?

Remember the Bible's Big Storyline...

Biblical Theology of Language

1. One language in a perfect world

- Genesis 2v20: naming the animals
- v23: poem of delight over Eve
- It should have been forever as in Revelation 4v11: "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."
- But...

Remember the Bible's Big Storyline...

Biblical Theology of Language

1. One language in a perfect world

2. One language united against God

- Blaming (Gen.3v12), Lies (4v9), proud about violence! (4v23-24)
- Scheming to exalt themselves in disobedience to God (11v4)
- And so...

Remember the Bible's Big Storyline...

Biblical Theology of Language

1. One language in a perfect world
2. One language united against God
- 3. Under God's judgment, splintered into many languages**

Genesis 9v5-6: The Tower of Babel

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3. Under God's judgment, splintered into many languages
- 4. One language (out of many) reclaimed for God**
 - Abraham called (Genesis 12v1+8; 18v19: "...I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household...")
 - Exodus 15 – a people to praise God, and speak of his good law (Deut.6v6f), the envy of the nations
 - But this too proved not to be; instead Israel rebelled and so...

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- 5. Foreign languages, a sign of judgment**

Foreign languages, a sign of judgment

- **Deuteronomy 28v49:** The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, swooping down like the eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand...
- **Jeremiah 5v15:** Behold, I am bringing against you a nation from afar, O house of Israel, declares the LORD. It is an enduring nation; it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language you do not know, nor can you understand what they say.
- **Isaiah 28v11-13:** For by people of strange lips and with a foreign tongue the LORD will speak to this people ... that they may go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

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 - Deuteronomy 28v49, Jeremiah 5v15, Isaiah 28v11,13b
 - The law covenant was broken, but the promise to Abram remained
 - OT prophecies => a great ingathering of the nations...

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- 6. God's mighty acts praised in many languages**
 - Acts 2: The Day of Pentecost
 - Jerusalem (ch.2), Samaria (ch.8)?, Judea/Gentiles (ch.10), Ephesus (ch.19) – see Acts 1v8

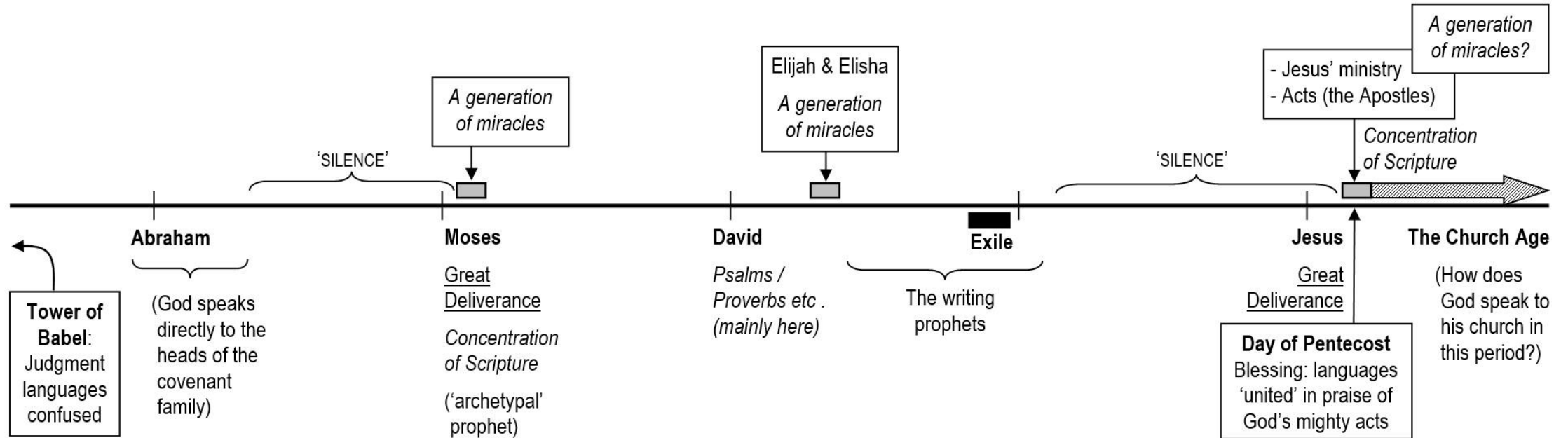
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6. God's mighty acts praised in many languages
- 7. All languages reunited in unbroken praise to God**

Remember the Bible's Big Storyline...

Prophecy, Tongues, Healing & Miracles



What's Different Today

- The Apostles have laid the foundation
- We have the complete Scripture
- The Church is actually and uncontroversially international!
- Hebrews 2v3-4; 2Corinthians 12v12
- Supernatural gives way to natural... **Exodus 16v35, Joshua 5v11-12**

But...

Don't let controversy / theology blind you to your need for the Holy Spirit! (We have him... but we need him! Acts 4v31)

How much we need his work

- Convicting
- Reassuring
- Empowering for service & testimony

Luke 11v13: “If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”