Subject: Cessationism isn't biblical
Posted by Mark L on Sat, 28 Jun 2025 02:49:12 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

I very rarely post over at christian Forums as I always feel I have to stick around and defend or discuss or debate what I said but sometimes . . .

Cessationism isn't biblical

One teacher defines cessationism as "the gifts and senior ministries have ceased as normative following the apostolic age". In other words they are not part of the church anymore.

I think that defies common sense. Why would the Holy Spirit put all this instruction and teaching in the bible if 99% of the church would never have any benefit from it? It could easily have been taught in the early church without taking up all this room in the bible.
Why did the early church get these blessings but not us? Is God playing favourites?

I've heard some say they were only to get the church going. My response is what do the gifts of 1 Cor. 12 & 14 have to do with getting the church going

The same teacher said this:
Those who believe the gifts have continued up till today say there is nowhere in the bible that says they will stop. His answer was there is nowhere it says they will continue either. My response is both are specious. The very fact they are in the bible is the evidence they will continue.

My question is why are we encouraged to seek the best gifts, be zealous for and stir up excel and desire the gifts if the gifts are no longer there for us? It just simply defies all logical explanation.

The history of the church shows these gifts and ministries have continued right down through history A good book on that subject is:
2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity By Eddie L. Hyatt Its available on Thrift Books as well as Amazon.

I sometimes hear that there were only three main times in history when God moved supernaturally on the earth. However it would be more true to say that whenever the bible takes a detailed look at the world we see God moving supernaturally.

John Knox, George Fox, Martin Luther, The Wesleys, All functioned to some degree in the supernatural with some being considered prophets by their contemporaries. I think Saint Patrick

of Ireland and some of those who followed him were Apostles.

Lets look at Apostles and Prophets.
Did they cease at the end of the apostolic age.?That belief really shows a serious lack of understanding of the purpose and role of these ministries. We're told that Apostles "were there" to get the church going. My contention is they "are there" to keep the church going.

Just to point out one issue among many.

Eph. 6/12
Apostles deal with the powers in the heavens. They have authority to to deal with the spiritual rulers of this world. One reason the early church was so successful is they overcame principalities and powers that keep this world in darkness. They also have authority to protect the church. I think it was a common office in the early church and will be common again in the last days. An apostle is all 5 of the ministry gifts.
What about prophets? Just an abysmal lack of understanding on their role in the church. Again just one issue.
 One of the ways God brings his will to pass in this world is through the prophesying of a prophet. He (or she) is not just foretelling the future but causing it to happen. There is a reason why Amos 3/ 7 says . . . "Surely the Lord God will do nothing except he reveals his secrets unto his servants the prophets"

Revelation 10/8-11
Notice verse 11 "thou must prophesy" MUST. The Greek word is the same as the English. Meaning: obliged, required, commanded, necessary, compelled, urged. In other words it had to be done. It was important and necessary.
Here's another one.
Jeremiah 1/5 ordained a prophet unto the nations
Jeremiah.1/10 set thee over nations kingdoms, to root out to pull down to destroy to throw down to build to plant"
You also see that said in various ways in the rest of the prophets.
Both 1 Cor. 12/28 and Eph 4/11-14 show God has set these ministries in the church "until" we get to the same maturity Jesus walked in. Where does someone get the authority to take them out? Let alone the common sense!

What about the gifts? Have they passed away? Why have all this info and instruction in the bible that does not apply to 99% of the church age. Cessationism shows a serious lack of understanding of the purpose of the gifts. They are there to edify the church and help those who are part of it. Do you enjoy helping your kids? Do you think God is any different? Everyone gets a gift. Contrary to what I've read over the years these gifts are 100% supernatural. They are not innate abilities or talent or wisdom as useful as that is.

There are different kinds of gifts and different ways they happen. Paul said having gifts differing. So there are no hard and fast rules. What Paul gives is a general outline with some mostly general thoughts. 1 Cor 12/7 Why would he say its given to every man if its only given to all in the early church? Here are a few thoughts on some of the gifts and again these are supernatural gifts. Not someones talents or abilities.

Romans 12/6-8
The gift of mercy. Someone I know found out he had this gift. A very manly fellow. Someone was in a painful physical trial and very little the medical could do. He sat with him sharing scripture and praying and comforting. Obviously anyone could do that out of a compassionate christian heart but this was a supernatural ability with supernatural results. He found out he had this gift. He used it to help and minister to another member of the church.

1Cor 12/28
The gift of Helps. Again a supernatural gift. It not a paid position by a junior minister in a mega church to take care of all the mundane tasks. Picking up visiting teachers from the airport for eg. Someone in a church I'm familiar with has this gift. He would be going about his business and being prompted by the Holy Spirit in some way. Would get in his car drive out to some back road where there was a sister in the church with a flat tire no phone and no idea what to do. Gift of helps is a supernatural gift

1Cor 12/8
How about word of wisdom/knowledge. Word of wisdom deals with the future while word of knowledge deals with the past or present. On occasion this has happened to me. The Holy Spirit wanted me to be aware of something and so be careful. Or to see clearly a problem with someone to help them. These are absolutely clear supernatural understandings not some vague sense or feeling or impression or thought. It is a definite action of the Holy Spirit that you can clearly see and understand

1Cor 12/9
Then there are gifts of Healing. Its in the plural as there are many diversities and kinds. A good eg is Acts 8/7. Phillip had gifts of healing for palsies and lameness. It has often happened in meetings I was in that someone would have word of knowledge that God wanted to heal something. It was always right on and sometimes for multiple people. I've seen the same thing with someone having a vision.

1Cor. 12/10
The discerning of Spirits .This is where you see into the spiritual realm to see personalities (good and evil) that normal eyesight won't give you. Here is a good eg. Some time ago I was sitting in my chair and a little girl my wife was watching ran down the hall in front of me. I saw with my eyes wide open clear as day a demon of child abuse following along behind her. Later when I was

praying I took authority over it. (Luke 10/17-19) Do you think that little girl and her family would be grateful if they knew the Lord had intervened on her behalf?

1Cor. 12/10
What about the gift of Prophecy. We're told in 1 Cor 14/39 to "covet" to prophesy.
Some well known theologians tell us these are the "very words of God" and need to be put on a par with scripture. The point being that prophecy today isn't valid. I'm not going to address that except to say I think it is nonsense. Why are we then encouraged by Paul to do it. Are all of us disciples going to add to scripture?
We ordinary disciples prophesy by inspiration. A prophet prophesies by revelation. They see and participate in their prophecies. Read the prophets in the bible. A simple prophecy is designed to edify encourage exhort and comfort. Two times that I can remember I came to church feeling very down and then a simple prophecy came that just encouraged and lifted me. As it was intended to. By some simple disciple.

Receiving the Holy Spirit.

He was poured out at Pentecost to start the church. They all received and spoke in tongues. Including Jesus mother.
Poured out in Acts 10 to bring the gentiles into the church.
From that point on in the bible every time it is the laying on of hands or a prayer of faith
Acts 19/1-7 disciples at Ephesus
Acts 8/15-16 Phillip in Samaria
Galatians 3/2 received by faith (or asking)
Paul himself received by the laying on of hands Acts 9/15
Jesus said he will give the Holy Spirit to those who "ask him" Luke 11/13

If the Holy Spirit comes automatically at conversion or salvation then when and where did this change occur? Where is it in the bible?
Praying in the Spirit
12 Cor. 14/2 praying in tongues is praying in the spirit
Eph. 6/11-18 The armour of God Do only some of us have the opportunity to pray in tongues as part of the armour.
Rom 8/26-27 Do only some of us have the right to have the Holy Spirit pray through us according to the perfect will of God?
Jude 20 Praying in the spirit (or tongues) builds/strengthens/helps ourselves
1 Cor. 12 & 14 is almost entirely giving guidance on the gift of tongues used in the church. He contrasts it several times with the simple ability to pray in tongues. His expectation is that everyone would be praying in tongues

Why would Paul say forbid not to speak in tongues? Probably because he and the Holy Spirit knew there would be so much opposition to it. The reason being it is a marvellous gift and the

Devil has no defence against it.

It is a known language. That is clearly said in Acts 2. Its not gibberish or ecstatic. It is a language that was, is or will be spoken in our world. Its just an unknown language to the person speaking it. My professor taught in a major seminary and prayed for many hundreds to receive the Holy Spirit. On occasion he would hear them speak Hebrew (which he taught) or Greek or German. Sometimes French or Arabic which he knew enough to recognize. My pastor visited a church with his family and Korean sister in law. Someone gave an utterance in tongues with the interpretation. She heard him speaking perfect Korean and the interpretation was the same. They are known languages.

Why did God intend us to speak in tongues?
One reason is so we know we have the Holy Spirit and not just some vague feeling.
Paul said in the Spirit we speak mysteries. It completely bypasses our mind and intellect so God can deal with deep things inside us. More time in tongues means less time in counselling. He can deal with issues that our mind can't comprehend. Or complicated issues so he doesn't have to give long explanations. In interceding for others he can deal with issues without giving us all the info we don't need about someones else s life. Paul said over and over in Corinthians that by praying in tongues we edify ourself.

The bottom line is God does not play favourites. If you are hungry for more of God. Then the Holy Spirit with tongues is available to all. Just as God intended.

Why don't some Christians want the Holy Spirit and especially tongues

They are wrongly taught that it is not for today.
They're not hungry and don't care.
One very big reason is they think it is low class.
They are too proud and don't want to be a peculiar people. 1Peter 2/9
They are educated and don't need it like the common rabble out there.
One very big reason is fear. That's what they are taught. Jesus said he wouldn't give you a snake if you ask for a fish. Luke 11/11-13
Some think it is unclean or of the devil.
One very well known minister's entire ministry is built on his anger at the charismatics usurping the teaching ministry of the church. He wrote an entire book on it.
Another well known minister fasted 40 days to get it and couldn't overcome the fear his Baptist upbringing taught him.
One very well known mega church minister was a tower of opposition to the charismatic experience. A hungry person close to him asked him about it. His response was (quote) "if you get this experience that will end our relationship" So he knew it was real. One can only wonder what was going on deep inside him.
The cost is too great` What will others think? Other ministers/family/friends!

Well I know what God will think! Its those who hunger that are filled. Losing friendships being put out of your church being peculiar or whatever simply won't matter anymore. You will be close to Jesus and the world will fade into insignificance!

Question remains: Why is all this in the bible if it is of no value to 99% of us in the church age?

Dwight Moody said (paraphrasing and going by memory here) When he first started preaching it was like carrying buckets of water out to the people. When he received the Holy Spirit he was carried along in a great river.

If you're hungry for more of God and interested here are several short messages on how to receive the Holy Spirit. Jesus himself said he will give the HS to those who "ask him" The laying on of hands isn't always necessary.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbNi8wShJhg&list=PLFZ7lqCs8NCYqEwz7Yifow81cnkFcpAbE&index=34