

Collected Bible Studies For Christians Like You



CHRISTIANS LIKE ME

UK English Version

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**Cover background image from a painting,
'The Empty Tomb'
by Steve Zomok
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The 'Christians Like Me', Bible Studies resulted from an idea from Pastor Rolf Anderson, who is also the Administrator of the CLM web-site, and to whom this book is dedicated for all his hard work, dedication and help to me and the members of the Christians Like Me community,

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Foreword

Thank you for downloading this collection of Bible Studies, all of which have been posted on the Christian web-site: www.christianslikeme.net/ over the past year. They appear in chronological order, but a linked index is available by subject.

Bible Translations:

The Bible translation, or version, used in these studies is primarily the English Standard version (ESV), however two other translations are used for certain studies, those are; the Young's Literal Translation (YLT) and the King James Bible (KJV). It is recommended that the studies are used as a guide and that the reader uses their own Bible to understand the context of the verses used. All verses and references to scripture are printed in red, for clarity. If the reader has access to the internet all these Bible versions, as well as many more, are available at www.biblegateway.com/ a fully searchable site.

All of these Bible Studies have appeared on a weekly basis on the CLM website linked above and are the result of prayerful searching. Sometimes, one study seems to follow on from the previous one when the Spirit points something out to me that inspires the next study. Generally, however, they start with many of my 'Arrow Prayers' asking for guidance and asking what the Spirit wants me to focus upon. Sometimes, He gives me something early on in the week and when this happens many more 'Arrow Prayers' follow and I write down thoughts that come into my mind, from the Spirit. On other occasions He holds back until Saturday morning before He inspires me with a thought. Whatever God wishes, the studies themselves are written and constructed on Saturday, and they are posted after sunset on Saturday night. Why is this important, you may ask? Well my wife and I both believe that the Lord's Day is the seventh day of the week, sunset Friday to sunset on Saturday, and we do our best to observe the Sabbath as God instructed us. We do no arduous work,

other than what is necessary, getting food and drinks for instance, and writing the Bible Study is my way of dedicating this day to my God and honouring His day. Jesus seems to have approved of doing this on the Sabbath, when he asked who would not go out to find/rescue a lost lamb. Of course, Jesus used this example to justify His healing of someone on the Sabbath, but it also applies to our spiritual rescue. So, I pray that what I write in each Bible Study starts every brother and sister thinking of the true meaning of God's word.

Like anyone I am not immune to making mistakes, and if you think that I have said something wrong or incorrect, I would ask that you respond and tell me, I will not feel hurt by it, I am not precious, I promise. We are, after all, charged to check out (test) everything we hear or read, and hold on to what is good.

I hope that the studies bless you.

In God's love,

Derek



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“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3And God said, “Let there be light”, and there was light. 4And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. 5God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.” [Genesis 1:1-5]

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If I Speak in the Tongues of Men and of Angels . . .

In **Acts 2:4** (YLT) we find what is possibly the first mention of ‘Tongues’ in the Bible, this was at Pentecost, what we used to call Whitson, a holiday that has mostly been forgotten, certainly here in the UK. But what are Whitson, Pentecost and Tongues?



- ⁴
• *"and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, according as the Spirit was giving them to declare."*

Whitsun, or Whit-Sunday (meaning White Sunday) is a Christian feast celebrated mainly in Britain and among Anglicans across the world which commemorates Pentecost on the seventh Sunday after Easter Sunday. This is another feast invented by man, although in this case there seems to be little evidence that it had previous pagan roots. There seems to be no date of origin but it was mentioned by Berno of Reichenau around 1048, but was well established by the 1300s. Indeed there some evidence that it was originally a Jewish feast. In the UK the feast continues to be observed, mainly in the northern towns and cities, with Whit Walks, walks of witness by people of local churches. However in 1978 the British government decided to abandon this Christian holiday and ordered an alternative about a week later called Spring Bank Holiday. This was the first obvious move by the British government to move away from state sponsored Christianity.

But what about Tongues, what are they? Tongues are split into two basic types those of man and those of angels, called ‘glossolalia’, which Webster’s Dictionary defines as:

“prayer characterized chiefly by incomprehensible speech, originating in primitive Christianity and now practised by Pentecostal groups in ecstatic forms of worship.”

In verse six of chapter two of Acts we are told:

“And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.”

So it seems that in this case the tongues that were heard were earthly tongues, or at least that is how they were heard. The premise that the disciples were actually speaking in foreign tongues is supported by the Greek grammar. The written phrase in **Acts 2:6** “in their native language” modifies the verb “speaking” and not the verb “hearing.” So we can gather that they were speaking in foreign tongues, rather than the crowd just hearing what was being said in their own language. Tongues were unknown during Old Testament times, the first ever mention is in **Mark 16:17** when Jesus tells His disciples:

“And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues;”

There are few subjects that have generated greater conflict and discussion in the church than the manifestation of tongues. Many of the mainstream denominations still deny them and frown on their use. But here in **Mark 16:17** Jesus states quite clearly that tongues are a gift for those who believe. Tongues are not a natural occurrence; they only come as a gift for believers who would wish to use such a gift. Tongues are not forced on any believer, whoever

uses this gift does so by submitting themselves to the Holy Spirit. They are not there to edify unbelievers, in truth they are more likely to frighten an unbeliever off, rather than to attract them to Christ's church. 1 **Corinthians 14:6-11** warns us of this:

"Now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? ⁷ If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or the harp, do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know ⁸ what is played? And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who ⁹ will get ready for battle? So with yourselves, if with your tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what ¹⁰ is said? For you will be speaking into the air. ¹¹ There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning, but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me.

However, tongues have a purpose; and because of that there are different kinds of tongues. Made clear in **1 Corinthians 12:10**:

"to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various (or diverse) kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues."



So, what are these diverse tongues? I guess that many of them will be human languages, however there are several types of glossolalia tongues, the tongues of angels.

I believe those tongues to be, a tongue of praise and worship, a prayer tongue (which is divided into ordinary tongues and intercessory tongue), a tongue of prophesy, and a tongue of warfare. Those who have regularly heard tongues being given will have recognised several different sounds, each has its place. I have heard some beautiful singing in worship using a tongue, a truly angelic sound, I have both used and heard the harsh tongue of spiritual warfare and the commanding tongue of deliverance. I have also heard the total cacophony that comes when the Spirit is not in it. Many place the importance tongues higher than they should, they are useful, just as speech is useful, they are also an audible manifestation of the presence of the Spirit. The apostle Paul puts tongues in the context of their importance in **1 Corinthians 12:28**, where he lists the gifts in order of importance:

“And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues.”

So in the list of gifts, Paul says it is the least, nevertheless according to Jesus and to Paul, all followers should have this gift and like all gifts it should be exercised.

So why have tongues if they are of least important? Paul also has the answer to that question, **1 Corinthians 14:5** tells us:

“Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who

speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.” (My emphasis added)

So tongues are generally to build up the Church but only through interpretation, if there is no interpretation then it only builds up the one who speaks the tongue, Paul says in verse four:

“The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.”

So often church members will stand and speak a tongue, but there is no interpretation, that person may as well stand and beat his or her chest while hollering like Tarzan

Do not worry about tongues, as Paul says, look more to the other gifts listed

- Become an apostle.
- A prophet.
- A teacher.
- A miracle worker.
- A healer
- A helper of people, or
- An administrator of the church

So how do you feel about tongues, important or not?

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My Faith's a Knockout?

Back in the late seventies, we started to attend missions and celebration evenings around the region where we lived. These were great faith builders, not only hearing the word from some great speakers and



evangelists that were a joy to listen to, but there was also the great Praise and Worship times when people just worshipped in total freedom. These times also attracted some of the best Christian musicians in this country, we so enjoyed those meetings. I remember one meeting we attended at a Pentecostal Church in our town, the singing was wonderful, and a speaker shared the word in a wonderful way that enthused us all. Then after the sharing of the word, people were invited to come forward for prayer, or searchers to receive the Holy Spirit. We were watching what was going on, when suddenly someone fell down on the ground; I thought that someone had collapsed with some sickness or something. It was only minutes before another also collapsed onto the floor, and was surrounded by people attending them. It crossed my mind that there was some sort of gas leak or the like.

My vicar must have seen the expression on my face and came across and asked if what was going on was worrying me. I replied that I was certainly wondering. He explained that the people were being 'slain in the Spirit', when the Holy Spirit overcomes the person and renders them into a state where the Spirit can minister. During his explanation another person crashed to the floor and we all heard

their head hit the floor, and believe me it was a large hall containing around two-thousand people. I felt for sure the person had fractured their skull, ‘don’t worry’, I was told, they will not be injured. Sure enough they were fine, not even having a bruise or a lump on their head. I spoke to one of the people who had been ‘slain’ afterwards and they told me that they had had a wonderful experience, and now had faith, whereas they had had virtually none previously, and they had been ‘dragged’ along by a friend. Converted on the spot!

Me, being me, I wanted to know more about this phenomena, so I thought that I would share here what I found out. Is this being slain in the Spirit Biblical? Personally, I have never experienced this phenomenon myself, however I know many who have and I have seen it and heard of their experiences. Again this is a subject that generates much discussion in the various denominations, and people are even of different minds within the major ones. Many point to verses in **Ezekiel 1:28** (ESV)

“Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness all around. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of one speaking.”

Or **Daniel 8:17–18** (ESV)

“So he came near where I stood. And when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, “Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end.” ¹⁸ And when he had spoken to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground.”

However these are Old Testament verses which may or may not be associated with the present day being slain in the Spirit, and are more associated with prophesy. The phenomenon has many supporters, but there are many good Christians who regard it as demonic, where demons masquerade as the Holy Spirit. There are arguments both for and against being slain. Going back to the OT we find the verse **2 Chronicles 5:14** which speaks about priests not being able to stand in the presence of the Lord:

“so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God.”

We also have a verse in **John 18:6** that says: *“When Jesus said to them, “I am he”, they drew back and fell to the ground.”* The same event is recorded in **Matthew 17:6**. Also cited is the conversion of Saul to Paul on the road to Damascus in **Acts 9:3-6**, when a bright light came on him and he fell to the ground.

In majority of the instances cited in the Bible (9 verses), the people in question always fell on their faces (5 of those verses), not backward. In most all cases that I have witnessed people fell backwards or collapsed vertically, ending up usually on their sides. In the remaining four, the verse simply says that they fell to the ground. Is this significant? I could find no instance where Jesus laid hands on anyone who then fell on their faces or otherwise. It also seemed that the reason for being knocked down by God’s Spirit was some kind of judgement, as with Saul. It is however obvious that when this phenomenon occurs it is connected with a manifestation of God by His Spirit, and there are plenty of examples where God’s presence had dramatic effects on humans. For example, when Moses came down from the mountain, after talking to God and getting the replacement Ten Commandments [**Exodus 34:29-35**]. When there is

healing taking place in someone, there is obviously a great power involved and often the need to immobilise someone for this healing to take place. I have again seen several people healed whilst or during the time on the ground. There is of course a precedent for this in **Genesis 2:21** when God makes Adam fall into a deep sleep while He takes the rib from which He created Eve, almost the first anaesthetic. I have also seen people being slain who had a demon attachment, sometimes being unconscious for an extended period whilst others prayed or laid on hands. Here there is some New Testament support for, in **Mark 3:11** (ESV)

“And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, “You are the Son of God.”

As we have been given the authority over demons by Jesus Himself it is no wonder that this happens in these cases. In **Genesis 15:12** we see God putting Abraham into a deep sleep and in **Matt. 28:2-4** the soldiers guarding the tomb “*became like dead men.*”

So there is *some* support from the Bible but it seems to me that being ‘slain in the Spirit’ is very much a New Covenant phenomena. Although there are some that regard being slain as an occult practice there is little evidence of that. My own experience has been a very positive one, having spoken to many people who have experienced it; I have found most have reported everything from healing to conversion and from no faith to a full measure. However I must admit that I have seen some very doubtful practices from certain evangelists. One experience happened whilst I was producing a video for one local church’s mission. After the great Praise & Worship session and an over dramatic talk, unusually I decided to switch to the camera that was covering the congregation from the back and to the side of the dais. The camera recorded several people

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