

Part One: Rejecting Cessationism

Pastor Jeremy Richardson, July 5, 2026

Cessationists generally build their position on a handful of key passages. They acknowledge that the gifts existed in the New Testament but argue they were temporary. Here are the main Scriptures they use, along with the common Pentecostal response.

1.

1 Corinthians 13:8–10 (their primary text)

“Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease... But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.” (NKJV)

Cessationist interpretation:

- “That which is perfect” refers to the completed New Testament canon or the mature church.
- Therefore, prophecy and tongues ceased once the Bible was completed or the apostolic era ended.

Pentecostal response:

- The context is the return of Christ, not the completion of Scripture.
- Paul says we will then see “face to face” (v. 12), which has never described receiving the completed Bible.
- We still “know in part,” so “the perfect” has not yet come.
- Most Pentecostal scholars understand this to refer to Christ’s return.

2.

Hebrews 2:3–4

“...God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit...”

Cessationist interpretation:

- Miracles primarily authenticated the apostles and the initial gospel message.

Pentecostal response:

- The passage never says miracles would stop.
- It simply states that God confirmed the gospel through signs and wonders.

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3.

Ephesians 2:20

“...having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets...”

Cessationist interpretation:

- Once the foundation was laid, apostles and prophets were no longer needed.

Pentecostal response:

- A foundation is laid once, but that does not mean all spiritual gifts ceased.
- Ephesians 4 later teaches ministry gifts continue until the Church reaches maturity.

4.

2 Corinthians 12:12

“Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you...”

Cessationist interpretation:

- Miracles uniquely identified apostles.

Pentecostal response:

- The verse says apostles performed signs.
- It does not say only apostles performed miracles.
- Stephen, Philip, and others who were not apostles also performed miracles (Acts 6:8; Acts 8:6–7).

5.

Ephesians 4:11–13

Ironically, Pentecostals often consider this one of the strongest verses **against** cessationism.

“...until we all come to the unity of the faith... to a perfect man...”

Cessationists:

- Some argue certain offices (apostles and prophets) were temporary.

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Pentecostals:

- Paul says these ministry gifts continue **until** the Church reaches complete maturity.
- The Church has clearly not yet reached that point.

What is missing?

One of the strongest observations Pentecostals make is this:

There is not a single verse in the Bible that says:

- “The gifts will cease when the last apostle dies.”
- “The gifts will cease when the New Testament is completed.”
- “Miracles are only for the first century.”
- “The baptism in the Holy Spirit is no longer available.”

Those conclusions are inferred by cessationists rather than explicitly stated.

Strong continuationist Scriptures

If someone asked you, “Why do you believe the gifts continue?” these are among the strongest passages:

- Acts 2:39 — “The promise is to you, your children, and all who are afar off...”
- Mark 16:17–20 — “These signs will follow those who believe...”
- 1 Corinthians 14:39 — “Do not forbid to speak with tongues.”
- 1 Corinthians 12:7–11 — the gifts are given by the Spirit as He wills.
- Ephesians 4:11–13 — ministry gifts continue until the Church reaches maturity.
- Hebrews 13:8 — “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

A point often emphasized by Pentecostal scholars is that **the burden of proof rests with cessationism**. Since the New Testament clearly teaches and demonstrates the operation of the gifts, anyone claiming they have ceased should be able to point to a clear biblical statement saying so. No passage explicitly makes that claim; rather, the doctrine depends on interpreting several texts as implying the gifts ended after the apostolic age.