

The Charismatic Movement

⚙⚙⚙⚙⚙⚙⚙ 35 DOCTRINAL ISSUES ⚙⚙⚙⚙⚙⚙⚙

INTRODUCTION

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."
(1 Thessalonians 5:21)

The believer in Christ is to prove or test all things, and this includes the modern Charismatic movement. We are to test all things by the Word of God which is our only infallible rule and measuring stick. How does the Charismatic movement line up with God's inerrant Word?

Our approach will be a doctrinal approach. We will be looking at 35 doctrinal issues. Our key question will be, "WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES?" (see Romans 4:3). We will compare what the Charismatic movement teaches with what the Word of God teaches in order to see if there is a difference. Any teaching that is out of harmony with the Word of God or which contradicts the plain teaching of Scripture we must label as erroneous and false.

We must form our conclusions based upon objective truth, upon the plain facts of God's Word. We will not and must not form our conclusions based upon subjective feelings and personal experiences: "It must be true because it happened to me." "I know that speaking in tongues is for today because I have spoken in tongues." "I know that speaking in tongues is valid because I know someone who speaks in tongues." "I know that God has special healers today because my best friend was healed by one of them."

Our conclusions will not be based on subjective experiences but upon God's objective truth: "**I know so because God said so!**" Regardless of my personal experiences, I am going to test all things by the Word of God and I am going to agree with what God has said even if it seems to contradict what I have experienced or what I have felt or what has happened to me or others whom I know.

We agree fully with the following quote which has been attributed to Martin Luther:

Feelings come and feelings go and feelings are deceiving. My warrant is the Word of God, naught else is worth believing. Though all my heart should feel condemned for want of some sweet token, there is One greater than my heart whose Word cannot be broken. I'll trust in God's unchanging Word 'till soul and body sever, for though all things shall pass away, His Word shall stand forever!

Positive Aspects of the Movement

In fairness we should recognize that there are some positive aspects of the modern Charismatic movement. While in this paper we want to clearly see and discern many of their doctrinal errors, at the same time we do not want to be blind to the positive aspects of this movement. Even though we do not approve of the Charismatic movement in general and even though we cannot participate with Charismatic people in their error and in their experience-orientated way of living, yet we can still learn from them and recognize some things that are commendable.

For the most part these people have an enthusiasm for the things of God. They have a freedom and a boldness to praise the Lord in public and in private. They are not ashamed to speak of the Lord before both Christians and non-Christians.

They are usually excited about spiritual things. They are often enthusiastic about sharing what they have found with others: "My friend, I want you to have what I have."

They seem to have a spiritual dynamic which is sadly lacking among some Bible believers. When you think of Charismatic people you normally do not think of deadness. These people are lively and enthusiastic and excited and emotional and vibrant. They often have a zeal for serving the Lord, though, as we shall see, their zeal is often not according to knowledge. Should not Bible believers be excited and enthused about the things of God? Often this is the way we were when we first came to know Christ as our personal Saviour, but as the years pass by we tend to lose some of this. It is easy to leave our first love. As we grow in knowledge we must be very careful not to lose our zeal for Christ and our enthusiasm to make Him known to others.

Often Charismatic people exhibit a type of joy and happiness. They seem to be enjoying what they are doing. Their religion is not a dead ritual. It is personal and real to them. They do what they do because it is meaningful to them and because they enjoy it.

They often show a warmth and concern for one another. They are friendly and outgoing and are generally not afraid to talk to others about the Lord and what He has done for them.

The Bible and prayer are important to them. They like to get together in their small prayer groups and Bible study times. They enjoy getting together for fellowship and prayer and praise and singing. The major problem is that they let their subjective personal experiences govern how they interpret the Bible, but we commend them for their interest in the Scriptures and for their desire to have a personal and real relationship with the Saviour.

We can learn from those who are Charismatic. As we test this movement by the Word of God, we should recognize what is commendable and exemplary about the movement. We can learn from the positive aspects of this movement. May God help us to be orthodox (on a **straight** line doctrinally), but may we avoid a **dead orthodoxy** (being doctrinally correct but lacking a real and right relationship with the Saviour that transforms DOCTRINE into LIFE). We do not want to have doctrine without life and we do not want to have life without doctrine. True doctrine will always be "according to godliness" (1 Tim. 6:3), that is, according to God-fearing conduct.

The following pages are based upon a four hour teaching session on the Charismatic Movement which used to be given annually at the Burlington Bible Institute, Church of the Open Bible, Burlington, Massachusetts (this school is no longer in operation). These studies have been updated in light of recent developments whenever possible.

35 DOCTRINAL ISSUES

1. Have you received the Holy Spirit?

This is a question Charismatic people often will ask. What they really mean by the question is this: "Have you had the baptism of the Spirit, the Charismatic experience of speaking in tongues, etc.?"

Let's go back to the basic question, "Have you received the Spirit?" What is the Bible answer? In 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 we learn that the Corinthians, even the carnal Corinthians (1 Cor. 3:1-3), had the Holy Spirit in them: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which [who] is **IN YOU**, which ye have of [from] God, and ye are not your own?" How could the Holy Spirit have been **in them** if they had not received Him? Obviously they had received the Holy Spirit the moment they were saved.

John 7:38-39 is a key passage. Notice carefully what it says about receiving the Spirit. Those who BELIEVE are those who RECEIVE. If you have believed on Christ then you have received the Spirit. There is no such thing as a believer who has not received the Spirit. Thus, the key question is not, "Have you received the Spirit?" but it is "Have you received the Lord Jesus Christ?" (see John 1:12).

2. How do you know that the Holy Spirit dwells within you?

The Charismatic answer:

"How do I know that the Holy Spirit dwells within me?" Charismatic Renewal offers an answer to this question—the baptism of the Holy Spirit, a powerful experience that convinces the recipient that God is real.¹

In other words, "I know that it is true because I have experienced it. I have felt it. It has happened to me! I have spoken in tongues."

The Biblical answer is found in Romans 8:9--"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now **if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of HIS.**" If a person does not have the Holy Spirit, then he is not His. He does not belong to Christ. He is not a Christian. If I am a saved person, then I have the Holy Spirit. How do I know? **I know so, because god says so!** All who believe on Christ have received the Spirit (John 7:39). Paul said, "The Holy Spirit dwelleth in us" (2 Timothy 1:14) and this is true of every blood-bought child of God. According to God's definition (1 Cor. 6:19; Rom. 8:9; John 7:39; etc.), a Christian is one who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit and thus has received the Spirit. There is no such thing as a person who is justified by faith but who has not received the Spirit.

¹ Richard Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics*, original edition, page 2.

The fact of the Spirit's reception and indwelling presence is not based on some subjective and questionable experience. It is based upon the plain statements of the Word of God.

3. Did your salvation package include the gift of the Holy Spirit?

Do you have a full and complete salvation or are there certain things that are missing? The Word of God teaches that our salvation package is full and complete. When you received Christ by faith (John 1:12), you also received all that comes with Christ, including the following:

Complete forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7)
Membership in the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13)
Entrance into the family of God (John 1:12)
Peace with God (Romans 5:1)
The gift of eternal life (1 John 5:11-12)

AND SO MUCH MORE!!! ²

Is the blessed Person and Presence of the Holy Spirit included in our initial salvation package or is the reception of the Spirit something not to be realized until some later time? This is answered in Romans 5:5--"And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the **Holy Ghost which is [past tense, "was"] given unto us**" (Romans 5:5). The Holy Spirit was given to us at the point of salvation.

Our Charismatic friends often speak of a "**full gospel.**" By using this term they imply that others do not have a full gospel: "The simple preaching of Christ and the cross is not enough. Simple salvation in Christ is not enough. There is more that you need. You need to have the Pentecostal experience of speaking in tongues, etc." Compare 1 Corinthians 2:2.

To counter this, we would suggest that Charismatics do not have a FULL and complete salvation package. It is deficient. It is lacking. It is missing some very important items. They say you can be saved but not have the Holy Spirit. They say you can be saved but not have the baptism of the Spirit. They say that you can be saved and not have certain gifts that you need.

The salvation that is found in Jesus Christ is full and complete, lacking nothing. When a person receives Christ he receives everything else that comes with Christ: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, **how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?**" (Rom. 8:32). The key to the Christian life is not trying to get additional gifts and additional blessings. The key to the Christian life is to grow in Christ and to discover all that we already have in Him. The key to the Christian life is to learn how rich in Christ we really are! We are spiritual billionaires and often we don't even know it!

A challenge to our Charismatic friends: "Could you tell me one thing that I need as a believer that is not found in Jesus Christ? Can you think of one thing that I really need that I do not already have in Christ?"

² See our paper, *215 Things That are True of Me Now That I Am Saved*, 25¢.

4. Should believers look for a second blessing?

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS in heavenly places IN CHRIST" (Eph. 1:3). Every spiritual blessing is ours, and it is found in Christ. To get a glimpse of some of these blessings, see our paper, *215 Things That Are True of Me Now That I Am Saved* (25¢). One believer said, "If you are only on your second blessing, I pity you!"

How richly blessed are believers? Christ became poor so that we could become rich in Him (2 Cor. 8:9). Paul told the Corinthians, who had problems with carnality, that they were ENRICHED by Christ, so that they came behind in no gift (1 Cor. 1:5,7). The believer is "complete in Him" (Col. 2:9).³ If we are complete in Christ, then how can we be lacking a second blessing? The Bible teaches in Romans 8:32 that along with Christ God has freely given us ALL THINGS. We are not missing a second blessing experience, but as believers we often fail to claim the riches that we already have because of the riches of God's grace. We fail to possess our possessions!

5. What is the evidence or proof of having received the Spirit?

What evidence or proof can you provide that indicates that you have received the Holy Spirit? Our Charismatic friends often point to speaking in tongues (the baptism of the Spirit) as the evidence that one has received the Spirit. But what saith the Scriptures?

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23).

If you truly have received the Spirit, then should we not expect to see the fruit of the Spirit in your life? If you claim to be an apple tree, SHOW ME SOME APPLES! If you claim to have the Holy Spirit of God, show me the fruit of the Spirit!

"For this is the will of God, even your **sanctification** [holiness, same word as in verse 7], that ye should abstain from fornication... For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto **holiness**. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit" (1 Thess. 4:3,7,8). The evidence of having received the Holy Spirit is when a person lives a holy life. If I have truly received the Holy Spirit, should I not live a holy life? Compare 2 Timothy 2:19--"Let those who name the Name of Christ depart from iniquity."

"And **grieve not the HOLY SPIRIT of God**, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30). If you have received the Holy Spirit and you are a child of God, how do you feel when you are disobedient to the Lord and not doing those things that are pleasing in His sight? Are you not bothered and convicted and troubled and miserable? Compare righteous Lot in 2 Peter 2:7-8. The indwelling Holy Spirit makes His grieved presence felt.

³ See our paper, *Ye Are Complete In Him*, 5¢.

"The person who is living sinfully who knows he is living sinfully, who enjoys living in such a manner, who intends to continue that sinful way of living—that person does not have the Holy Spirit living within Him. The very fact that he is comfortable about his sin is proof of the Spirit's absence!"⁴

6. What is the evidence or proof of being filled with the Spirit?

What evidence or proof can you provide that indicates you are filled with the Spirit?

Charismatic Answer: "I have spoken in tongues. I have had this experience."

The Biblical Answer: See Galatians 5:22-23 again. The FULLNESS of the Spirit is evidenced by the FRUIT of the Spirit. If there is no fruit there is no filling.

In Ephesians 5:18 we have the command to be filled with the Spirit. The context of this passage clearly shows what the Spirit-filled life is all about and how it is evidenced. Notice what the verses do not say: "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but **BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT; speaking to yourselves IN STRANGE ECSTATIC UTTERANCES.**" No, nowhere in this context are we told that the gift of tongues is the evidence of being filled with the Spirit. Here is what we are told:

Verse 19--**A Song in the Heart!**

The Spirit-filled believer is a joyful believer. The Holy Spirit is the Master Musician that creates beautiful melody in the heart of the trusting believer. See 1 Thessalonians 5:16.

Verse 20--**A Thankful Heart!**

The Spirit-filled believer is a thankful believer. If you are **unthankful** then you are **unfilled**. See 1 Thessalonians 5:18.

Verse 21--**A Submissive Heart!**

Where should we look to find submission? According to Ephesians 5:22-6:9 we should find submission in the basic relationships of life--husband/wife, parents/children, employer/employee, etc. To find a submissive, Spirit-filled believer, where should I look? Not on Sunday morning when everyone is on their best behavior. Not during a Charismatic prayer/praise session in a home when everyone seems to be on a "spiritual high." The best place to look is right where the believer lives during the week. How does the believing employee react when the boss is having a bad day? When the husband comes home from work after a long and hard day and interacts with his wife and children, do we see him under the influence and control of the blessed Holy Spirit then? That is the real test, right where the rubber meets the road.

The Greatest Test

Help me to walk so close to Thee that those who know me best can see
I live as godly as I pray and Christ is real from day to day.

⁴ R.Gene Reynolds, *Assurance of Salvation*, page 73.

I see some once a day, or year; To them I blameless might appear;
'Tis easy to be kind and sweet to people whom we seldom meet.

But in my home are those who see too many times the worst of me.
My hymns of praise were best unsung if He does not control my tongue.

When I am vexed and sorely tried and my impatience cannot hide,
May no one stumble over me because Thy love they failed to see.

But give me, Lord, through calm and strife a gracious and unselfish life;
Help me with those who know me best, for Jesus sake, to stand the test.

Barbara C. Ryberg

Argument from church history: Think of the godly men of the past who obviously knew the power and filling of the Holy Spirit and yet they never spoke in tongues: John Chrysostom, John Huss, Martin Luther, John Calvin, George Whitefield, John Bunyan, Jonathan Edwards, George Muller, Robert McCheyne, D.L.Moody, C.H.Mackintosh, just to name a few.

7. What is the gift of tongues: real languages or unintelligible utterances?

Let us first consider the speaking in tongues that is taking place today. What actually is being spoken? Is it a real language or is it nonsense gibberish?

Charismatics see their tongues as God-given prayer language, perhaps angelic. But to those who would only ever address God intelligibly, and who know from professional linguistic scholars (who are unanimous on this) that glossolalia has no language-character at all ("Charismatic Renewal" by J.I.Packer in *Christianity Today*, March 7, 1980, pages 16-17).

William Samarin, professor of linguistics at the University of Toronto wrote: "Over a period of five years I have taken part in meetings in Italy, Holland, Jamaica, Canada and the United States. I have observed old-fashioned Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals. I have been in small meetings in private homes as well as in mammoth public meetings. I have seen such different cultural settings as are found among Puerto Ricans of the Bronx, the snake handlers of the Appalachians and the Russian Molakans of Los Angeles...I have interviewed tongue speakers, and tape recorded and analyzed countless samples of Tongues. In every case, glossolalia turns out to be linguistic nonsense. In spite of superficial similarities, glossolalia is fundamentally not language" (Cited by John MacArthur, Jr. in *The Charismatics*, page 162).

Linguistic scholars work with precise definitions of what constitutes a natural human language. Glossolalia (speaking in tongues) fails to meet the criteria of these definitions. Specifically, the work by Charles F. Hockett (in Joseph H. Greenberg, ed., *Universals of Language*, 1963) details sixteen criteria for language. The research of linguists clearly reveals that the spoken utterances of glossolalists do not meet these criteria. For a careful account of why glossic utterances cannot be human languages, see Dr. Eugene A. Nida's *Glossolalia: A Case of Pseudo-Linguistic Structure*. The works by Dr. William

J. Samarin, especially "The Linguisticity of Glossolalia," are helpful in explaining the differences between glossolalia and natural human languages.⁵

In other words, go to a Charismatic gathering where people speak in tongues, record the tongues speaking on a tape recorder, bring the tape recorder to the best linguistic scholars you can find, let them study the tongues utterances, and what will their conclusion be? They will conclude that the utterances are linguistic nonsense and not any language at all.

How different from the tongues speaking that we read about on the pages of the Bible. The key passage on this is Acts chapter 2 where we have the first historic occurrence of the gift of tongues. What was spoken on the day of Pentecost? There is no question but that it was real languages: "Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language....And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? (Acts 2:6,8).

From this passage we can formulate a definition of the Biblical gifts of tongues: **THE GIFT OF TONGUES WAS THE MIRACULOUS ABILITY TO SPEAK A LANGUAGE WHICH THE SPEAKER HAD NEVER LEARNED.** It was miraculous because "the Spirit gave them utterance" (verse 4) and apart from Him it could never happen. It was a real language "because every man heard them speak in his own language" (verse 6). The speakers had never learned the languages which they were speaking: "And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?" (verse 7).

Another key chapter is 1 Corinthians 14. From this chapter we find two strong arguments to support the fact that tongues consisted of real languages:

1) Argument #1--The fact that tongues could be interpreted (translated).

See 1 Corinthians 14:5,13,27,28. The way to interpret a foreign language is to translate it. Thus the interpreters at the United Nations are expert translators. In Matthew 1:23 we see that the word "interpreted" means "translated" (the Hebrew "Immanuel" translated into English is "God with us").

Our argument is simply this: You can only interpret or translate a real language. Ecstatic utterances or nonsense syllables or meaningless gibberish cannot be translated. Let us illustrate this by two songs that are sung at the Christmas season. "Gloria in excelsis Deo" can be translated because it is a real language (Latin). It means "Glory to God in the Highest." On the other hand, "FA LA LA LA LA, LA LA, LA LA" (from "Deck the Halls") cannot be translated. These are meaningless syllables, perhaps the emotional expression of a person who is jolly.

Conclusion: Only a real language can be interpreted or translated. Tongues in 1 Corinthians 14 could be interpreted. Thus tongues in 1 Corinthians 14 were real languages.

⁵This quotation is taken from *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues* by John P. Kildahl (Harper & Row, 1972), p. 47.

2) **Argument #2--The fact that tongues consisted of words.**

See 1 Corinthians 14:19--"Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand **WORDS in an unknown tongue.**" This verse makes it very clear that the gift of tongues consisted of "words." What are words? Words are sounds which symbolize and communicate meaning. Tongues in the Bible were not ecstatic utterances, they were WORDS. They were not nonsense syllables, they were WORDS. They were not meaningless gibberish, they were WORDS. They were not *ecstatic utterances*, but rather they were *rational utterances*.

For further argumentation that the gift of tongues consisted of real languages that were spoken on earth, see *God's Gift of Tongues*, by George Zeller, pages 107-110, "Twelve Reasons Why Biblical Tongues Were Real Languages." ⁶

8. In New Testament times was every believer expected to speak in tongues?

Was the gift of tongues something that every believer was given? Was tongues speaking something that every believer was expected to do?

In 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 we learn that every believer has a spiritual gift (or perhaps more than one) but not every believer has the same gift. Some believers had the gift of tongues (verse 10) but not all. In 1 Corinthians 12:30 the question is asked, "Do all speak with tongues?" It is a rhetorical question that requires a negative answer: NO! All do not speak with tongues. It was a gift that some had but not all. Thus in New Testament times the gift of tongues was given to some but not to all.

Why is it then that in Charismatic circles *everyone* is encouraged and persuaded to speak with tongues? Why is it recommended to all if it was only given to some?

9. Where in the Bible does God tell the believer to speak in tongues?

Is there any such command? There is a command to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). There is a command to "walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16). But nowhere is there a command to speak in tongues. We would not expect to find such a command. How can God command all believers to do something that He has only gifted some believers to do?

Challenge to our Charismatic friends: "I will gladly speak in tongues if you can show me one command from the Word of God which tells me to do so."

What instruction is given by Charismatic leaders to try to help people learn to speak in tongues? Here is one example:

Determine not to speak a word of English at this time (for you cannot speak two

⁶ This book, published by Loizeaux Brothers, is out of print, but we have copies available for \$2.50 plus postage.

languages at once). Lift up the sound of your voice and the Holy Spirit will give you utterance in a new language supernaturally. Do not be concerned about what to say, as the language is spoken supernaturally and does not come through the mind or intellect but through your spirit quickened by the Holy Spirit. In faith, put your speech faculties into operation (vocal chords, tongue, lips) as in speaking any language, and the Holy Spirit, now indwelling you, will give the utterance.⁷

Here is another example from the pages of early Church history:

Marcus: "Open thy mouth, speak whatsoever occurs to thee." She then, vainly puffed up and elated by these words, and greatly excited in soul by the expectation that it is herself who is to prophesy, her heart beating violently (from emotion), reaches the requisite pitch of audacity, and idly as well as impudently utters some nonsense as it happens to occur to her, such as might be expected from one healed by an empty spirit.⁸

Don't think about what you are saying and don't use your mind! Does that sound like sound advice?

10. In New Testament times how important was the gift of tongues?

I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue (1 Corinthians 14:18-19).

What a comparison! Five words that can be understood are better than *ten thousand* words in a tongue! Imagine telling a preacher to limit his Sunday morning sermon to five words! (1) Very (2) little (3) can (4) be (5) said! But those five words are better and more edifying than ten thousand words in a tongue.⁹

It takes about one and a half hours to speak ten thousand words.¹⁰ It takes only two seconds to speak five words. Paul would rather take two seconds to say "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor. 15:3), than to speak two hours in words not understood. Tongues is of no value at all if it cannot be

⁷ From a tract published by Dr. Hobart Freeman, Faith Ministries and Publications, (Warsaw, Indiana).

⁸ Irenaeus *Against Heresies*.

⁹ This same principle can be applied to Bible study. It is better to read two or three verses that you understand and can apply to your life than to quickly read through 10 chapters and get nothing out of it.

¹⁰ Perhaps some women are even more verbose. Astronaut Michael Collins, speaking at a banquet, quoted the estimate that the average man speaks 25,000 words in a day and the average woman 30,000. Then he added: "Unfortunately, when I come home each day, I've spoken my 25,000--and my wife hasn't started hers."

understood. This is why the interpretation of tongues was essential.

In 1 Corinthians 14 Paul put more value on the gift of prophecy than he did on the gift of tongues (see verses 1-5). In 1 Corinthians 12:28 Paul lists certain gifts, apparently in order of importance: "And God hath set some in the church, **first** apostles, **secondarily** prophets, **thirdly** teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." Tongues is the last to be mentioned.

11. Are some of the gifts temporary?

Are there some gifts that God no longer gives today? Here are two examples of temporary gifts:

1) The gift of APOSTLESHIP. There are no apostles in the church today, a fact that is acknowledged by most, even by many Pentecostal scholars. The Mormons believe there are still apostles today and so do other fringe groups, but most would acknowledge that the apostles were a very unique and special group of chosen and gifted men of the first century. In 1 Corinthians 9:1 there is an indication that a true apostle was a man who actually saw the RISEN Christ. This could not be true of believers today (John 16:10; 1 Peter 1:8).

2) The gift of PROPHECY. There are no God-gifted prophets in the church today, although there are many false prophets. Most Charismatic people believe that the gift of prophecy is still for today. We will discuss this further under #13.¹¹

12. What is a prophet?

WRONG DEFINITIONS OF PROPHECY:

[Prophecy is] the ability to understand and to engage in the exposition of the Word of God.¹²

The gift of prophecy was actually the ability to proclaim God's Word...The gift (of prophecy), then, is the ability to speak before people, to proclaim God's Word, sometimes with a predictive element.¹³

¹¹ For a discussion of the temporary nature of many of the gifts, see *God's Gift of Tongues* by George Zeller, pages 113-116.

¹² Billy Graham, *The Holy Spirit*, page 139.

¹³ John MacArthur, Jr., *The Charismatics*, p.164. John MacArthur teaches that God gives some believers the gift of prophecy today but that there are no prophets today. He teaches that the office of the prophet (Eph. 4:11) is no longer to be found in the church today but the gift of

These definitions are inadequate and faulty. According to these definitions, any gifted Bible teacher, any gifted pastor would have the gift of prophecy. Every pastor should have the ability to proclaim God's Word and to engage in the exposition of the Word of God, but this does not make the pastor a prophet.

These definitions fail to make a proper distinction between the gift of prophecy and the gift of teaching. See 1 Corinthians 12:28-29 where a clear distinction is made between those gifted as teachers and those gifted as prophets.

GOD'S DEFINITION OF PROPHECY:

"And thou shalt speak unto him, and PUT WORDS IN HIS MOUTH: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be THY SPOKESMAN unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee **instead of a mouth**, and thou shalt be to him **instead of God**" (Exodus 4:15-16).

"And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a GOD to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy PROPHET. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land" (Exodus 7:1-2).

Aaron was to be the spokesman for Moses. As the PROPHET was to GOD, so Aaron was to Moses. What did this mean? Aaron spoke the words of Moses, even as the prophet speaks the words of God. Aaron was to be the MOUTH of Moses even as the prophet is to be the MOUTH (mouthpiece) of God. Aaron was Moses' SPOKESMAN, even as the prophet is God's SPOKESMAN, serving as God's mouth, delivering God's message ("Thus saith the LORD!"). This is God's definition of a prophet. Thus prophecy is the God-given gift whereby the person is able to deliver God's message and speak forth God's Word. Every true prophecy would have this seal stamped upon it: "For the MOUTH of the LORD hath spoken it!"

There are New Testament passages which help us to understand the gift of prophecy: "For the PROPHECY came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). The prophets spoke (and wrote) as they were moved (carried along) by the Holy Spirit, so that what they spoke (and wrote) was exactly what God intended. It was God's message, God's Word. "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying..." (Matthew 1:22). God is the one who spoke it, but how did He speak it? He used the prophet's mouth (in this case, the prophet Isaiah). It was God's message and God's Word, but it was delivered by way of a human mouth.

A prophet had to be 100% accurate (see Deut. 18:21-22). Why? Because God is 100% accurate and the true prophet is God's mouthpiece. It is God's message delivered through the prophet's mouth and it is 100% accurate. This illustrates the difference between a prophet and a teacher. The prophet, when speaking as a prophet, speaks forth the Word of God ("Thus saith the Lord!") and the message

prophecy is. See his commentary on *1 Corinthians* (pages 322-324) and *Ephesians* (pages 141-142). Thus a person can have the gift of prophecy and can prophesy, but this person is not a prophet. This would be like saying that a person can have the gift of teaching but not be a teacher, or have the gift of pastoring but not be a pastor.

is infallible and 100% accurate. The teacher (or pastor/teacher) explains the Word of God which has already been given. Even the best Bible teacher is fallible and may err.

What is prophecy? Prophecy is inspired speech! It is nothing less than the Word of God in spoken or written form. See Micaiah's definition of prophecy in 2 Chronicles 18:13.

What is a prophet? A prophet is God's mouthpiece through whom God spoke and gave His perfect, infallible revelation.

13. Are there true prophets today?

Many insist that the gift of prophecy is still being given today. Think of the implications of this. This would mean that God is still giving His Word today and that the canon of Scripture is not closed. The Bible we have would thus be incomplete. The 66 Books of the Bible are not enough if added revelation is still being given today by God through modern day prophets. The Bible would be missing vital information and crucial truths which these modern day prophets must supply. The Bible is not enough! We need the Bible plus the new prophecies!

This kind of teaching is a serious attack on the sufficiency of the Bible as our final and only authority for faith and practice. We need to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Matthew 4:4) and these words are found in the 66 books of the Bible.

No, the church doesn't need new revelation from heaven today! We already have a completed Bible and the Holy Spirit of God to interpret and apply it. What the church needs is a new confrontation with the whole counsel of God, proclaimed in the power of the Holy Spirit with authority and love, by men who know their God and who honor His only written revelation. Then, and then only, may we expect our deepest needs to be supplied, and God's purpose for His Church to be accomplished in our day.¹⁴

There are clear indications in the New Testament that the gift of prophecy was a temporary gift needed in the days of the early church, but no longer needed after the Bible had been completed.

In 1 Corinthians 13:8 we learn that prophecies would be done away, whereas faith, hope and love would remain. This prediction came to pass at the end of the first century.¹⁵

In Ephesians 2:20 we learn that apostles and New Testament prophets were foundational men: "And are built upon the **foundation** of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." A foundation is laid only once at the beginning of the building project. You do not keep laying a foundation. These men were foundational because it was through them that we received the New Testament Scriptures. We do not need to lay the foundation again, but we need to build upon it. It is possible that God's building project has reached the "steeple stage," as it were, and soon the last "living stone" (1 Peter 2:5) will be laid in place and Christ will then come to receive the church unto

¹⁴ Dr. John C. Whitcomb, *Does God Want Christians To Perform Miracles Today?* (BMH Books, 1973), pages 12-13.

¹⁵ For a more detailed study of this passage, see our paper, *First Corinthians 13 and Temporary Gifts*, 10¢.

Himself (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).

In 2 Peter 2:1 there is the possible hint that the true gift of prophecy would be done away: "But **there were** false prophets also among the people, even as **there shall be** false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."

Notice carefully:

"there **were** false prophets"

"there **shall be** false teachers"

The devil counterfeits the true. When Peter wrote these words there were true prophets and the devil countered with false prophets. After the gift of prophecy was done away there were no longer any true prophets for the devil to counterfeit. There were, however, true teachers, and so the devil countered with false teachers.

14. When did the gift of tongues cease?

CHARISMATIC ANSWERS:

- 1) Tongues have not ceased. God is still giving the gift of tongues today just as He did in New Testament times.
- or**
- 2) The gift of tongues ceased early in the history of the church, perhaps at the end of the first century. However, in these last days the gift of tongues has reappeared and God is once again giving this gift.

COMPROMISING ANSWERS FROM EVANGELICALS:

Dr. Billy Graham in his book, *The Holy Spirit* (Word, 1978) says, "I personally cannot find any biblical justification for saying the gift of tongues was meant exclusively for New Testament times" (p. 172). It is significant that in his chapter entitled "The Sign Gifts" in which he discusses the gift of tongues, he does not even mention 1 Corinthians 13:8, the verse where Paul predicts that tongues would cease.

Popular author Hal Lindsey teaches that there is a genuine and bona fide spiritual gift of tongues which God is still giving today. On page 147 of his best selling book, *Satan Is Alive and Well On Planet Earth*, he writes, "I believe there is a genuine gift of tongues which God is giving today." His position is that tongues did in fact cease (as history proves) but in these last days the gift of tongues has reappeared (see pages 140-141).

John D. Jess, popular radio preacher on "The Chapel of the Air" speaks of the "ridiculously extreme position that denies the gift of tongues altogether" and which asserts that "the gift of tongues is no longer available to the Church" (p.40 in his book, *Divide and Conquer*).

THE ANSWER FROM FUNDAMENTAL BIBLE BELIEVERS:

This is well stated by the New England Bible Conference Doctrinal Statement (originally the

IFCA Doctrinal Statement): "...speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles gradually ceased as the New Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority established."¹⁶

THE BIBLICAL ANSWER:

"Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; **whether there be tongues, they shall cease**; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away" (1 Cor. 13:8).

Paul predicted that the gift of tongues would cease (stop). God would stop giving this gift. The only problem is that Paul, in this verse, did not tell us *when* tongues would cease. He did not say, "Tongues will cease in 70 AD" or "Tongues will cease in 1000 years" or "Tongues will cease at the Lord's second coming."

There are three approaches that can be followed to determine WHEN tongues did in fact cease. We shall now consider each of these approaches.

1) THE HISTORICAL APPROACH¹⁷

There is overwhelming historical evidence that the gift of tongues ceased early in the history of the church. Richard Quebedeaux, a friend of the Charismatic movement, admits this very fact:

*Evidence for the appearance of glossolalia, at least from the late second century to the eighteenth or nineteenth century, is scarce and frequently obscure....Origen, in the third century, and Chrysostom, in the fourth, both disparaged the accounts of speaking in tongues, and rejected its continued validity. Augustine, early in the fifth century, asserted that glossolalia was a sign adapted only to biblical times.*¹⁸

The comment by the great preacher Chrysostom is worthy of note: "This whole place is very obscure [commenting on the references to tongues in 1 Corinthians] but the obscurity is produced by our ignorance of the facts referred to and by their cessation, being such as then used to occur, but now no longer take place."¹⁹ In other words, Chrysostom writing in the 4th century recognized that the gift of tongues described by Paul was something that used to occur in Paul's day but which no longer took place in Chrysostom's day. He refers to the "cessation" of this gift.

Cleon Rogers wrote the following: "It is significant that the gift of tongues is nowhere alluded to, hinted at or even found in any writings of the Post Apostolic Fathers"²⁰ It is significant to note that

¹⁶ A complete copy of this doctrinal statement is available, including a clarifying statement on DISPENSATIONALISM (25¢).

¹⁷ See *God's Gift of Tongues* by George Zeller, pages 60-61.

¹⁸ Richard Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics*, pp. 20-21.

¹⁹ *Homilies*, XXIX, 1.

²⁰ John MacArthur, Jr., *The Charismatics*, p.169.

the gift of tongues is mentioned in 1 Corinthians, one of Paul's earliest epistles, but it is not mentioned in any of Paul's later epistles. This suggests that the gift of tongues may have ceased even before the canon of Scripture was closed.

2) THE CONTEXTUAL APPROACH ²¹

This approach seeks to determine when tongues ceased by examining the context of 1 Corinthians 13:8 ("tongues...shall cease"). The main message of this chapter can be summarized as follows:

- 1) There are three things that will fail (verse 8).
- 2) There are three things that will remain (verse 13).
- 3) There is one thing that will never fail (verse 8); it will remain forever (verse 13).

This indicates three time periods:

- 1) The time when the gifts of prophecy, tongues and knowledge are in force. These are special revelatory gifts given by God in the days of the early church.
- 2) The time when the gifts of prophecy, tongues and knowledge have *failed, ceased* and *vanished away* (verse 8) and the virtues of faith, hope and love *remain* (verse 13). This is the present age.
- 3) The time when only love remains but faith and hope do not remain. Faith is replaced by sight (2 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 11:1) and hope is replaced by realization (Rom. 8:24-25). This is the eternal state.

Thus the passage clearly teaches that there must be a period of time prior to the eternal state when the gifts of tongues and prophecy are no longer in effect and when the virtues of faith and hope are still in effect. This contradicts the teaching of those who insist that the gift of tongues has been given by God throughout this present age.

For a more detailed study of 1 Corinthians chapter 13, see our paper entitled *1 Corinthians 13 and Temporary Gifts* (10¢).

3) THE PURPOSIVE APPROACH

What was the purpose of the gift of tongues? If the purpose for tongues is known, then it is possible to determine *when* tongues ceased. The purposive argument may be thus stated: *Tongues ceased when they no longer served the purpose for which they were given.*

There is only one place in the New Testament where Paul tells us the purpose of the gift of tongues: "Wherefore, *tongues are FOR a sign...*" (1 Corinthians 14:22). The preposition translated "for" (eis) denotes *purpose*. Paul's explanation in verse 22 concerning the purpose of tongues is actually an

²¹ See *God's Gift of Tongues* by George Zeller, page 60.

inference based upon his words in verse 21. Verse 21 begins with these important words, "In the law it is written..."

In verse 21 Paul cited an Old Testament passage, Isaiah 28:11-12. Paul knew that the *key* to understanding the Biblical purpose of tongues is found "in the law," that is, *in the Old Testament Scriptures*. What does the Old Testament teach concerning tongues? What was the significance and purpose of tongues in Old Testament times? When foreign tongues were spoken, what did this mean?

Isaiah 28 is not the only passage in the Old Testament which deals with the significance of foreign tongues. Several such passages together set forth a very sobering Biblical principle—a principle which has been demonstrated repeatedly in history. As we consider foreign tongues in the Old Testament, a very sobering and sad pattern becomes evident:

GENESIS 11

God has a message for the people (Genesis 9:1,7).

The people refuse to listen to God (Genesis 11:4).

GOD CAUSES TONGUES TO BE HEARD AS A SIGN OF JUDGMENT (Genesis 11:7).

Dispersion follows (Genesis 11:8).

DEUTERONOMY 28

God has a message for His people (Deut. 28:1).

The people refuse to listen to God (Deut. 28:15).

GOD CAUSES TONGUES TO BE HEARD AS A SIGN OF JUDGMENT (Deut. 28:49).

Dispersion follows (Deut. 28:64-65).

JEREMIAH 5

God has a message for His people (Jer. 4:1).

The people refuse to listen to God (Jer. 5:3).

GOD CAUSES TONGUES TO BE HEARD AS A SIGN OF JUDGMENT (Jer. 5:15).

Dispersion follows (Jer. 5:19).

ISAIAH 28

God has a message for His people (Isaiah 28:12a).

The people refuse to listen to God (Isaiah 28:12b).

GOD CAUSES TONGUES TO BE HEARD AS A SIGN OF JUDGMENT (Isaiah 28:11).

Dispersion follows (Isaiah 28:13).

COMPARE THE OPPOSITE TAUGHT IN ISAIAH 33

The context is the millennium. *God causes tongues to not be heard indicating that Israel would enjoy the blessing of God (verse 19). There would be no more dispersion!*

THE PATTERN REPEATED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

God has a message for the people (Matt. 11:28; compare Jer. 4:1; Isa. 28:12).

The people refuse to listen to God (Matt. 23:37).

GOD CAUSES TONGUES TO BE HEARD AS A SIGN OF JUDGMENT (Acts 2,10,19, etc.).

Dispersion follows (Matt. 23:38; 24:2).

* * * * *

The gift of tongues served as a sign of judgment for unbelieving Israel. The sign of judgment is no longer needed after the judgment has come. In 70 AD the Romans under General Titus brought the Christ-rejecting nation Israel to its final ruin. Ever since A.D. 70 there has been no question that Israel as a nation is under the judgment of God. Therefore it must be concluded that tongues as a *sign gift* were no longer needed after 70 AD. The last historical mention of the gift of tongues is found in 1 Corinthians which was written about 55 AD. There is no evidence historically that the genuine gift of tongues ever occurred after 70 AD. Tongues served their purpose, and *tongues ceased*, even as God predicted through the Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 13:8).

Space does not allow for a more detailed development of the above points in this paper, but for a more lengthy discussion see *God's Gift of Tongues*.²²

15. Can unsaved people speak in tongues?

The Biblical gift of tongues was the supernatural ability to speak in a foreign language which the speaker had never learned. An unsaved person would not have the God-given ability to do this. Spiritual gifts are given to believers at the point of salvation, not to unbelievers.

The modern day phenomena of speaking ecstatic utterances (glossolalia) is something quite different. There are countless examples of unsaved people speaking in tongues. Here are but a few:

1) In the second century the Montanists spoke in tongues. This was a heretical group especially noted for their heresies concerning the Holy Spirit. The following is a description of Montanus and his followers by Eusebius in his *History of the Church*:

Montanus, in his unbridled ambition to reach the top, laid himself open to the adversary, was filled with spiritual excitement and suddenly fell into a kind of trance and unnatural ecstasy. He raved, and began to chatter and talk nonsense, prophesying in a way that conflicted with the practice of the Church handed down generation by generation from the beginning. Of those who listened at that time to his sham utterances some were annoyed, regarding him as possessed, a demoniac in the grip of a spirit of error, a disturber of the masses. They rebuked him and tried to stop his chatter, remembering the distinction drawn by the Lord, and His warning to guard vigilantly against the coming of false prophets....Then he secretly stirred up and inflamed minds closed to the true Faith, raising up in this way two others—women whom he filled with the sham spirit, so that they chattered crazily, inopportunistly, and wildly, like Montanus himself.

According to Eusebius, this practice of tongues speaking was totally contrary to the practice of the Church. Indeed, Montanus and his followers were excommunicated from the Church.

2) Irenaeus wrote the following concerning the second century heretic Marcus:

Marcus to a woman, "Receive first from me and by me the gift of Charis..." Woman: "I have never at any time prophesied, nor do I know how to prophesy." Marcus: "Open thy mouth, speak whatsoever occurs to thee, and thou shalt prophesy." She then, vainly puffed up and elated by these words, and greatly excited in soul by the expectation that

²² George Zeller, *God's Gift of Tongues*, pages 77-98.

it is herself who is to prophesy, her heart beating violently (from emotion), reaches the requisite pitch of audacity, and idly as well as impudently utters some nonsense as it happens to occur to her, such as might be expected from one healed by an empty spirit" (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*).

The orthodox leaders of the early church recognized that such emotional outbursts of tongues speaking were not of God. It was a phenomena encouraged by the heretics.

3) The Cevenol priests who lived in France in the late 17th century also spoke in tongues. They were branded heretics because their prophecies went unfulfilled.²³

4) The Shakers originated in 1747 by a woman. Doctrinally she was all mixed up and held heretical views especially concerning the Person of Christ. "It is said that in order to mortify the flesh she instituted the practice of men and women dancing together naked while they spoke in tongues."²⁴

5) Examples of speaking in tongues are found within the Mormon church (cult): "Right from the beginning with Joseph Smith, Mormons have accepted tongues as a valid gift for modern times. When their temple was dedicated in Salt Lake City, hundreds of elders spoke in tongues."²⁵

6) The followers of Edward Irving (19th century) spoke in tongues. These people had revelations that contradicted Scripture, prophecies that went unfulfilled and promoted various erroneous teachings.²⁶

7) Today it is a known fact that people who do not even profess to be Christians speak in tongues:

Today shamans (witch doctors, priests, or medicine men) in Haiti, Greenland, Micronesia, and countries of Africa, Australia, Asia, and North and South America speak in tongues. Several groups use drugs to aid in inducing the ecstatic state and utterances. Voodoo practitioners speak in tongues. Buddhist and Shinto priests have been heard speaking in tongues. Moslems have spoken in tongues, and an ancient tradition even reports that Mohammed himself spoke in tongues.²⁷

8) Sad to say, there are many people today involved in the modern Charismatic movement who have spoken in tongues and yet they do not have any clear understanding of salvation or the gospel of grace or what it means to be born again. They have had an experience but they do not have eternal life

²³ John MacArthur Jr., *The Charismatics*, p. 169.

²⁴ Charles Smith, *Tongues in Biblical Perspective*, pages 17-18.

²⁵ Charles Smith, *Tongues in Biblical Perspective*, page 18.

²⁶ See John MacArthur Jr., *The Charismatics*, p. 170 and see also Arnold Dallimore's excellent biography, *Forerunner of the Charismatic Movement--The Life of Edward Irving* (Moody Press, 1983).

²⁷ Charles Smith, *Tongues in Biblical Perspective*, pages 20-21. For further documentation of unsaved people speaking in tongues, look up the article on "glossolalia" in *The Encyclopedia Britannica*.

16. What is wrong with modern day tongues speaking? (A SUMMARY)

1) In Charismatic circles speaking in tongues is set forth as something that everyone should seek, but in the New Testament, tongues was a spiritual gift that was not given to every believer (1 Cor. 12:8-11,30). Tongues was a relatively unimportant gift (listed last in 1 Cor. 12:28), though it did have edificational value if it was used rightly and interpreted properly.

2) The Bible gift of tongues was the supernatural and God-given ability to speak in a language which the person had never learned. The modern so-called gift of tongues is an ecstatic, emotional experience of uttering nonsense gibberish which cannot be translated and which does not have any real language content.

3) There is not one command in the entire Bible which tells a believer to speak in tongues and 24 out of 27 books in the New Testament say absolutely nothing about the gift of tongues.

4) The facts of history indicate that the true gift of tongues ceased very early in the history of the church and there is no verse in the Bible indicating that this gift will reappear in the last days.

5) The gift of tongues was a temporary sign gift which served its purpose and then was no longer needed, and thus no longer given. It served as a sign of judgment to unbelieving Israel and an indication that God was putting the nation Israel aside and beginning a new program, even His CHURCH. There is no mention of the genuine gift of tongues in the Bible or in secular history after 70 AD (the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans).

6) As previously discussed, the kind of speaking in tongues that takes place today is a known psychological phenomenon which has been practiced by heretical groups, pagans, cultists and non-Christian people throughout the centuries. "Glossolalia or speaking in tongues is not restricted to Christian experience. Ecstatic utterances of a divinely inspired nature are mentioned in early Egyptian writings. The oracles of Delphi, Dodona, and Epirus among many others, which laid claim to prophecy, sometimes through the spirits of the dead, appear to be related to glossolalia. Plato extolled 'four kinds of irrational experience, the divine madness of love, prophecy, Dionysian ecstasy, and poetic intuition,' and both Plutarch and Virgil recorded phenomena similar to glossolalia."²⁹

7) One expert on the psychological phenomenon of speaking in tongues has come to this conclusion:

I am skeptical of the sociological and psychological aspects of tongue-speech as exhibited in public. Too much of it has been harmful rather than helpful when measured

²⁸ We also recognize that there are people involved in the Charismatic movement who may truly know Christ as Saviour, having trusted Him and Him alone for their salvation. It is possible to be truly saved and yet be doctrinally confused.

²⁹*The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues* by John P. Kildahl (Harper & Row, 1972), p. 11.

by the criterion of edifying the whole group....Tongues-speaking does not look very uniquely spiritual to me after many experiences of watching people teach other people how to speak in tongues. I have observed the same routine everywhere I have been: (1) a meeting devoted to intense concentration on tongue-speaking, followed by (2) an atmosphere of heightened suggestibility to the words of the tongue-speaking leaders, after which (3) the initiate is able to make the sounds he is instructed to make. It is the same procedure that a competent hypnotist employs. Like the hypnotist, the tongue-speaking leader succeeds with some subjects and with others does not. I have reached the conclusion that tongue-speaking is a learned phenomenon.³⁰

It is our thesis that hypnotizability constitutes the sine qua non of the glossolalia experience. If one can be hypnotized, then one is able under proper conditions to learn to speak in tongues. While glossolalia is not the same as hypnosis, it is similar to it and has the same roots in the relationship of the subject to the authority figure.³¹

8) Much of the speaking in tongues that takes place today is found to be contrary to the rules set forth in 1 Corinthians chapter 14 which is another indication that it cannot be of God. Here are some of the regulations set forth by the Apostle Paul:

No more than three people could speak in tongues on any one occasion (1 Corinthians 14:27).

The tongues speakers must speak one after another in succession, not all at once (1 Cor. 14:27).

Whenever tongues speaking occurs, there must also be the interpretation of the tongues (1 Cor. 14:28).

The women were not to speak in tongues in the assembly (1 Cor. 14:34-35).

Go to almost any Charismatic assembly and you will find these rules being violated.

17. What is Spirit baptism?

Charismatic Answer:

"The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a definite, personal experience subsequent to salvation and confirmed to the believer with the evidence of speaking in a new language or tongue

³⁰ *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues* by John P. Kildahl (Harper & Row, 1972), p. 74.

³¹ *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues* by John P. Kildahl (Harper & Row, 1972), pages 54-55.

supernaturally as the Holy Spirit gives utterance." ³²

"The baptism of the Holy Spirit as a separate, distinct experience subsequent to salvation, providing enduement of power for life and service, accompanied by speaking in tongues." ³³

The Biblical Answer:

"For by one Spirit are [were--past tense] we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13).

Spirit baptism is that supernatural work of God whereby the believer is immersed or placed into the body of Christ which is the Church. This baptism was predicted by John the Baptist in Matthew 3:11 (Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16) and by the Lord Himself (Acts 1:5). It first took place on the Day of Pentecost (Acts chapter 2), the day the Church began (Acts 11:15-17). It takes place today whenever a person believes on the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is important to note that 1 Corinthians 12:13 is a fact to believe, not a command to obey. It is something that God has done, not something that the believer is to do. God never commands the believer to be baptized in the Spirit or to seek this baptism.

It is important to note that many fine believers of the past have confused the FILLING of the Spirit with the BAPTISM of the Spirit (R.A.Torrey is one example out of many). See our paper entitled, *The Filling and Baptism of the Spirit (A Chart)*, 5¢.

18. When does Spirit baptism take place?

Charismatic Answer: "subsequent to salvation" (see quotes under #17). If it happens after salvation, then this means a person could be saved who has not yet had this experience of Spirit baptism.

Biblical Answer: The moment a person is saved.

Paul told the Corinthians that they **ALL** had been baptized into the body. This baptism is something that is true for every believer and thus it must have taken place at the point of salvation.

It is interesting to note that the charismatic movement says "ALL" when God says "NOT ALL" (1 Cor. 12:30--NOT ALL speak in tongues) and the charismatic movement says "NOT ALL" when God says "ALL" (ALL believers have been baptized into the body).

³² From a Charismatic tract written by Dr. Hobart Freeman and published by *Faith Ministries & Publications*.

³³ From the doctrinal statement of the Rock Church (the name of certain charismatic churches in Connecticut and perhaps elsewhere).

19. Who has been Spirit baptized? Have you had this baptism?

Charismatic Answer: Only those Christians who have had the "Pentecostal" experience of speaking in tongues.

Biblical Answer: "ALL" (1 Corinthians 12:13). You cannot be a member of Christ's CHURCH apart from this baptism! It is the only way to gain entrance into His Body!

20. Must a person "tarry" for the Holy Spirit?

The tarrying experience, as often practiced in Charismatic circles today, is described as follows:

The tarrying procedure for seeking tongues goes like this: Following the sermon, the preacher invites those who want the tongues experience to come to the altar and kneel. Then those who already have received this experience join the seekers to pray with them and offer help and advice. In a relatively short time, some of the seekers begin talking in tongues. For others, it is a much longer ordeal. In an evening service, it is not unusual for seekers to pray until after midnight, even though few of the "altar workers" may remain. And if a seekers doesn't succeed on this particular night, he is encouraged to keep trying. I tarried many nights; I spent many hours in prayer at altars but no matter how long I prayed, I went without success.³⁴

Biblical tarrying is quite different. It is found in only two passages:

"And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but **TARRY** ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

"And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but **WAIT** [tarry--same word as in Luke 24:49] for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me" (Acts 1:4).

The word TARRY simply means to WAIT. Prior to Pentecost the disciples were told to WAIT for the promise of the Spirit. Once He came on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) the waiting period was over. In the Bible we find no command to wait or tarry for the Holy Spirit after Pentecost.

Suppose you go to the airport to wait for the arrival of certain family members whom you love. You may wait for some time at the airport, but once the plane arrives the waiting time is over. Your loved ones have come and it is time to enjoy their presence. So also, the Comforter has come. How foolish to wait for Him to come if He has already come! Let us enjoy His blessed Person and Presence and Power (Acts 1:8).

³⁴ Wayne A. Robinson, *I Once Spoke in Tongues*, pages 37-38.

21. What must a person do in order to receive the Spirit?

Charismatic Answer: The person must tarry and pray and sometimes go through a long ordeal, and if not successful, try, try, try again (see quote under #20 describing the "tarrying" procedure).

Biblical Answer: John 7:38-39 Those who BELIEVE are those who RECEIVE the Spirit!

Galatians 3:2--"This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law (tarrying, praying, going through an ordeal, trying, etc.), or by the hearing of faith?" The obvious answer is "by the hearing of faith." It is not the result of fleshly effort. It is the result of simple faith in the Saviour.

22. What is the Holy Spirit's primary ministry and function?

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me" (John 15:26). The Holy Spirit's ministry is to testify or bear witness of Christ, to point to Christ. The Holy Spirit does not draw attention to Himself, but to the Lord Jesus.



What do you see in the illustration above? Your first response would probably be to say, "A turtle!" But actually it is *an arrow* and a turtle. The arrow does not want to be seen. The arrow merely bears witness to the turtle and points to the turtle. The arrow is a witness. It draws attention away from itself and wants you to focus on the turtle.

The Spirit of God bears witness of Christ. He wants us to see Him and Him alone. When the Holy Spirit is at work in an assembly of believers, Christ will be exalted and magnified. If the main focus is on the Holy Spirit, then something is wrong. The Holy Spirit does not promote Himself.

"He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you" (John 16:14). The main ministry of God the Holy Spirit is to GLORIFY THE SON. When the Spirit of God is at work in my life, what will be the result? The Lord Jesus Christ will become more precious to me and so will His Word, the Bible. The Spirit-filled person is the person who is filled with Christ--occupied with Him, delighted in Him, rejoicing in Him, resting in Him, trusting in Him. The Spirit of God's ministry is to make believers more and more Christ-like: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed [are constantly being changed] into the same image from glory to glory, **even as by the Spirit of the Lord**" (2 Cor. 3:18).

23. Is it God's will for every sick person to be healed?

Consider four New Testament examples of people who were sick:

1) 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Paul was afflicted with a painful ("thorn") bodily ("in the flesh") ailment. Paul prayed three times that God would remove this thorn in the flesh from him, but God did not do this. God did something better. He taught Paul the sufficiency of His grace, that God's grace was enough even to enable him to endure such a physical affliction. Sometimes God allows sickness or pain in order to teach us of His all-sufficient grace.

2) Philippians 2:25-30

Epaphroditus was seriously sick, to the point where he was near death. It is interesting to note that Paul did not heal this faithful brother. God had mercy on him and raised him up.

3) 1 Timothy 5:23

"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." Timothy had a stomach problem and he was often sick and ailing and infirmed. Paul did not tell him to see a healer, nor did Paul tell him that his physical problems were due to sin or a lack of faith. Paul merely gave Timothy a common sense prescription.³⁵

4) 2 Timothy 4:20

"Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick." There is no indication that Trophimus had a spiritual problem (sin, lack of faith), but he did have a physical problem and Paul did not heal him. It is sometimes the will of God for His children to be sick in this life, but never in the next life (Rev. 22:4).

Consider godly people of the past who were sick or who suffered with seriously bodily ailments. For example: John Calvin was afflicted with rheumatism, intense headaches and a weak body. Fanny Crosby was blind. Robert McCheyne was very sickly and died at age 30. George Muller certainly did not have a lack of faith, but had a lifelong struggle against bodily infirmity and ills including head troubles and an operation at the hands of a skillful surgeon. Read almost any biography of godly saints of the past and you will in most cases read of certain physical afflictions which God allowed them to

³⁵ It is possible that Paul was recommending unfermented wine to Timothy rather than alcoholic wine. Athenaeus, the Grammarian (280 AD) wrote the following: "Let him take sweet wine, either mixed with water or warmed, especially that kind called *protropos*, the sweet Lesbian *glukus*, as being good **for the stomach**; for sweet wine [*oinos*] does not make the head heavy" (Athenaeus, *Banquet* 2,24). This is an example from ancient literature showing that unfermented wine was recommended as a remedy for stomach problems.

endure.³⁶

There are some Charismatic people who think that if you are sick you are out of the will of God. For example, Kenneth Hagan Jr. wrote: "My belief is that it is indeed God's will that His children walk in complete health....It is always God's will to heal His children."³⁷ To such people we must ask these questions: Do any of you wear glasses (Kenneth Hagan Jr. does)? Do any of you ever catch the common cold or the flu? Do any of you ever take aspirin or other pain medicines? And most significantly, **do any of you ever die?**

Take for example the case of faith-healer Oral Roberts. He once bypassed his own multi-million-dollar City of Faith medical complex to have eye surgery in California. But why didn't he go to a faith-healer or why didn't he heal himself? Also if faith healing is really effective, why do you need a multi-million dollar medical complex? The Lord Jesus and the apostles healed hundreds of people without any such facilities.

24. Does the New Testament teach a "PROSPERITY GOSPEL"?

This is the very popular and very appealing message often heard today that if you trust Christ you will have HEALTH and WEALTH. That is, you will have physical health and material prosperity. Your body will be free from sickness and your bank account will be loaded. The ones who really prosper financially from this kind of teaching are the false teachers themselves, the prosperity gospel preachers.

THE HEALTH AND WEALTH GOSPEL

"It doesn't matter how many times we've heard it—we need to be continually reminded that it is God's will for us to be well and healthy and to have good things *in this life*" (Kenneth Hagin)

"That's ridiculous," says Kenneth Copeland about the belief that Jesus' ministry was poor. "It would have been impossible for Jesus to have been poor! All the way through the Old Testament God promised material blessing to anyone who would walk perfectly and uprightly with Him. If God had failed to bless Jesus financially, He would have been breaking His own Word" (*Charisma*, 9/90).

It is true that those who trust in Christ will prosper spiritually. They are able to prosper and have good health in their soul (3 John 2). They are able to enjoy every spiritual blessing that is found in Christ (Eph. 1:3). They are able to be RICH in Him (2 Cor. 8:9). But God never promised robust physical health and material, financial prosperity in this life for His children.

³⁶ For an excellent discussion on the subject of SICKNESS, see *Practical Religion* by J.C.Ryle, his chapter on "Sickness." It is well done and would be a great encouragement to any saint suffering through a time of sickness.

³⁷ Personal letter from Kenneth Hagin Jr. to me dated 7/16/87.

Indeed, the message of the entire New Testament is that God's people will be a suffering and afflicted people, even as sheep led to the slaughter (Romans 8:18,35-36). They will be hated and persecuted by the world (John 15:18-20). In the world they will have tribulation and affliction and pressure (John 16:33). All who live godly in Christ will suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:12) and every Christian is to suffer hardship as a good soldier of Christ (2 Tim. 2:3). Paul's answer to the prosperity gospel is perhaps best summed up in 1 Thessalonians 3:3-4, "That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know."

Apparently the Apostle Peter was unaware of the prosperity gospel when he said, "Silver and gold have I none" (Acts 3:6)! The Apostle Paul was also unaware of this teaching. He characterized believers as being poor, having nothing (2 Cor. 6:10)!

25. Is it unspiritual to go to a doctor? Does this show a person's lack of faith?

An extreme Charismatic group in Indiana ("the Glory Barn") taught that believers should never go to a doctor but that they should trust God for healing instead. Certain expectant mothers had difficulties in child-birth because of the lack of medical attention and their babies died. To make matters worse, the members of this community prayed over these dead babies hoping that God would raise them from the dead. The local media got hold of these stories and it was a great shame to the name of Christ. It was wrong practice due to wrong teaching.

"But when Jesus heard that, He said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matthew 9:12). Those who are whole and healthy do not need a doctor or physician. This implies that those who are sick do need a doctor. Indeed, one of Paul's companions who was also one of the gospel writers was a medical doctor: "**Luke, the beloved physician**, and Demas, greet you" (Colossians 4:14).

26. Were Christ and the apostles able to heal?

The Lord Jesus Christ healed all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people: "And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and He healed them" (Matthew 4:23-24).

The disciples (apostles) were given authority "to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease" (Matthew 10:1).

The Apostle Paul was able to heal in a remarkable way: "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them" (Acts 19:11-12).

27. Are modern "faith healers" able to heal?

A noted doctor, William A. Nolen, objectively examined a noted faith healer, Kathryn Kuhlman. At first he was skeptical but willing to believe. Here are some of his comments:

Occasionally Miss Kuhlman would turn to the audience and say, "Someone with a brace—a brace on your leg—you don't need that brace any more. Take it off. Come and claim your cure." The first time she called for a brace, no one came forth. Finally a very pretty young girl came up on the stage. She was waving her leg brace and standing, with her pelvis tilted badly, on one good leg and one short, withered leg.

Kathryn Kuhlman questioned her. "How long have you worn this brace?" "Thirteen years. Since I had polio at seven." "And now you're cured. You don't need it any more. You've taken it off." "Yes," she said. "I believe in the Lord. I've prayed, and He's curing me." Everyone applauded. The girl cried.

This scene, to my mind, was utterly revolting. The girl's leg was just as withered as it had been ten minutes earlier. Now she stood in front of 10,000 people, giving praise to the Lord—and indirectly to Kathryn Kuhlman—for a cure that hadn't occurred and wasn't going to occur. I could imagine how she would feel when the hysteria of the moment had left her and she again had to put on the brace she had worn for 13 years—and would wear for the rest of her life.

Finally with a hymn and a final blessing, the show ended. All the desperately ill who had been in wheelchairs were still in wheelchairs. As I watched them leave, seeing the tears of the parents as they pushed their crippled children to the elevators, I wished Miss Kuhlman were with me. I wondered if she really knew how much sadness those disappointed patients and parents suffered. I couldn't believe that she did.

During the service, as those who had "claimed a cure" came down off the stage, two legal secretaries I had enlisted to help me wrote down the names, addresses, phone numbers and diagnoses of everyone who was willing to cooperate in a follow-up study. We got 82 names. A few weeks after the service, letters were sent to the names on the list, inviting them to come to Minneapolis on Sunday, July 14, and tell us about their experiences. Twenty-three people showed up, and I made arrangements to interview them individually over the next few months.

In talking to these people, I tried to be as honest, understanding and objective as possible, but I couldn't dispense with my medical knowledge and my common sense. I listened carefully to everything they told me and followed up every lead that might have led to a confirmation of a miracle. I was led to an inescapable conclusion: Of the patients who had returned to Minneapolis to reaffirm the cures claimed at the miracle service, not one had, in fact, been miraculously cured of anything.³⁸

³⁸ William A. Nolen, M.D., "In Search of a Miracle," *McCall's Magazine*, September 1974. Dr. Nolen has also published his findings in a book which is also called *In Search of a Miracle*.

Richard Quebedeaux, a friend of the Charismatic movement, writes the following about Kathryn Kuhlman, who for many years was considered one of the foremost faith healers in the world:

She cites the ailment—everything from terminal cancer to allergies (though amputated limbs never reappear; teeth are not miraculously filled with gold)—and asks those who feel they are healed to come forward to the platform to testify about what has happened. (Trained ushers try to screen cases and verify healings as much as possible beforehand.) Quite often, there are physicians on the platform who themselves may be asked for confirmation; and everyone is urged to confirm an apparent cure with his or her own doctor. Some individuals, of course, testify, but are not healed; others seem to get better, but later regress; probably most in attendance are not cured at all.³⁹

28. How do modern "faith-healers" explain their failures?

"It's not our lack of power as a healer; the sick person simply did not have enough faith!" When all else fails, blame the sick person!

29. Did Christ and the apostles only heal those who had enough faith?

In Matthew 12:15 great multitudes followed the Lord Jesus and "He healed them ALL" whether they had faith or not. In Acts 5:16 a multitude of sick folk were brought to the apostles, "and they were healed EVERY ONE." The healing was for all without any faith requirement. Not one sick person went away disappointed.

In Acts 3:1-8 we have the healing of the man who was born lame. This beggar was hoping to receive some money from the hand of Peter. Being healed was the last thing this man expected. He certainly did not have faith that he would be healed. He might have believed Peter would give him some money (v.5) but he did not believe Peter would heal him. The reason God performed this healing miracle had nothing to do with this man's faith or lack of faith.⁴⁰

In Acts 20:9-12 we find Paul healing a man from the most serious ailment of all, death itself. Here was a young man who actually had died. Certainly a dead man cannot exercise faith! How silly it would be for a modern day faith-healer to say, "I was not able to raise that man from the dead because he did not have enough faith!" This raises an interesting question: If modern day faith healers have the same healing powers as Christ and the apostles, then why do they not raise the dead?

³⁹ Richard Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics*, page 86.

⁴⁰ The faith mentioned in Acts 3:16, in connection with this same miracle, must be a reference to Peter's faith in Christ, not to the lame man's faith.

30. How can we describe the healing miracles of Christ and the apostles?

1) INSTANTANEOUS

The Lord Jesus touched a leper and IMMEDIATELY his leprosy was cleansed (Matthew 8:3). Jesus touched the eyes of two blind men and IMMEDIATELY their eyes received sight (Matthew 20:34). Peter took a lame man by his right hand and lifted him up and IMMEDIATELY his feet and ankle bones received strength and he started leaping around. Such healings were done instantly. There was no need for any prolonged period of recuperation or therapy.

2) PERFECT AND COMPLETE

"And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto Him all that were diseased; And besought Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment: and as many as touched **were made perfectly whole**" (Matthew 14:35-36). "And His Name through faith in His Name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by Him hath given him **this perfect soundness** in the presence of you all" (Acts 3:16). Contrast this with Dr. Nolen's observation of a girl claiming to be healed at a Kathryn Kuhlman service, standing on one good leg and on one short, withered leg with her pelvis tilted badly. Hardly a whole and complete and perfect cure!

3) EVERYONE HEALED

"But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed Him, and **He healed them all**" (Matthew 12:15). "There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and **they were healed every one**" (Acts 5:16).

4) UNDENIABLE

"Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and He healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And **all the people were amazed**, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils" (Matthew 12:22-24). The Lord's enemies could not deny the miracle. Instead they accused Him of doing this great miracle, not by the power of God, but by the power of Satan.

"And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, **they could say nothing against it**....Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed **a notable miracle hath been done** by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and **we cannot deny it**" (Acts 4:14,16). These men hated the apostles and their message but they could not deny the remarkable miracle which had been done.

5) SPECTACULAR

The lame leaping, the blind seeing, lepers cleansed, demon possessed men delivered, a cut-off ear instantly restored and even the dead raised back to life! According to Matthew 11:5, such

spectacular miracles proved that Jesus was indeed the Messiah: "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matthew 11:5, read the context and compare Isaiah 35:5-6).

31. How can we describe the so-called "miraculous" cures of modern faith healers?

1) **DOUBTFUL**

We have already referred to Dr. Nolen's article in which he investigated a healing service of a prominent and nationally known faith healer (see #27). Suppose a medical doctor were to examine those who had been cured by Christ and the apostles. Suppose a doctor were to examine Lazarus after he had been dead for 4 days! Suppose an eye specialist were to examine Bartimaeus after he received his sight! Suppose an orthopedic surgeon were to witness the man born lame leaping about (Acts 3)! Suppose an ear doctor were to examine Malchus' after his sliced off ear had been healed (Luke 22:50-51). Would there be any doubt as to the genuineness of these miracles?

2) **DONE IN A CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT**

"But strangely enough, the people who claim to have the gift of healing never seem to get out of their tents, their tabernacles, or their TV studios. They always seem to have to exercise their gift in a controlled environment, staged their way, run according to their schedule. Why don't we hear more of the gift of healing being used right in the hospital hallways? Why aren't healers using their gift in places like India and Bangladesh? Why aren't they right out in the street where masses of people are racked by disease?"⁴¹

3) **DISAPPOINTING**

No one that came to Christ or the apostles for healing went away disappointed. In contrast to that we have the comment of Dr. Nolen: "All the desperately ill who had been in wheelchairs were still in wheelchairs. As I watched them leave, seeing the tears of the parents as they pushed their crippled children to the elevators, I wished Miss Kuhlman were with me. I wondered if she really knew how much sadness those disappointed patients and parents suffered. I couldn't believe that she did."⁴²

Richard Quebedeaux, a friend of the Charismatic movement, in evaluating the ministry of a prominent faith-healer concludes that "probably most in attendance are not healed at all."⁴³ This is certainly not a very encouraging evaluation for those who are hoping for a miracle of healing.

⁴¹ John MacArthur, Jr., *The Charismatics*, p. 134.

⁴² William A. Nolen, M.D., "In Search of a Miracle," *McCall's Magazine*, September 1974.

⁴³ Richard Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics*, p. 86.

32. Do we need added revelation today?

Do we need dreams, visions, prophecies, special revelation, etc.?

The Charismatic Answer:

Neo-Pentecostals maintain that biblical authority (the word written) must always be subservient to the authority of the living, "dynamic" word of God made known through the present activity of the Spirit himself...The subservience of Scripture—the word written—to the Holy Spirit's authority is also illustrated by the acceptance in Charismatic Renewal of the validity of the gift of prophecy in the life of the contemporary Church. For the Neo-Pentecostal (no less than his Classical counterpart), God speaks today just as authoritatively as he spoke to the biblical authors. This [is an] existential understanding of the Word of God (in which revelation did not cease with the closing of the canon). Catherine Marshall puts it another way: "Jesus' promise of 'further truth' gives us clear reason to believe that not all the truth and instruction Christ has to give us is contained in the canon of the Old and New Testaments." In Neo-Pentecostalism, then, spiritual authority rests ultimately in the present activity and teaching of the Holy Spirit at least as much as in the Bible itself...God does not restrict his revelation to the Bible (i.e., a closed canon).⁴⁴

According to this, charismatics believe that the Biblical canon is not closed, and thus the written Word of God is not the final authority. They believe that God gives added revelation to the church today and that this new revelation is just as authoritative, or even more authoritative, than the Bible itself.

The key issue then is the SUFFICIENCY of the Word of God. Is the Bible really sufficient? Is it really all that we need, or do we need something additional? Is God's communication to man found in the Bible alone, or must we look somewhere else? Is the Bible complete, or does it lack vital information that believers need to know?

- 1) Christ promised the Apostles that the Spirit of truth would guide them into ALL TRUTH (John 16:13). The Spirit did guide them into all truth and this truth was incorporated into the New Testament Scriptures. What more do we need?
- 2) Paul tells us that the God-breathed Scriptures are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Timothy 3:16-17). What more do we need?
- 3) Peter says that we have a more sure word of prophecy than even the eyewitness account of an apostle, namely the Spirit-moved, infallible Word of God (2 Peter 1:15-21). What more do we need?
- 4) Jude tells us that we are to earnestly contend for "the faith" (the body of truth) which was once for all delivered to the saints. This body of truth was once for all delivered to the saints in the first century and is found in written form in our Bible today. What more do we need?

⁴⁴ Richard Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics*, pages 110-113.

- 5) John puts the final "PERIOD" at the close of God's completed revelation, warning us not to add to or to subtract from this book (Revelation 22:18-19). When the final word was penned by John in the book of Revelation, this marked the time when the Bible (all 66 canonical books) were in completed form. What more do we need? The canon of Scripture is closed and what God hath closed, let no man open. If God says, "The Bible is enough!" let not man say, "We need more!"

That many should be claiming to have received visions and revelations from the Lord is not surprising in light of 1 John 4:1-3; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:13; 4:2-4; Matthew 7:15-24; 24:4-5. In these last days before the coming of the Lord Jesus for His church (1 Thess. 4:13-18), we can expect an increase of subjective, experiential religion: "It must be true because it happened to me!" What we need is revelational religion, based upon objective and absolute truth: "It must be true because God said so in His Word."

Today we need humble men who will tremble at the Word of God (Isaiah 66:1-2). We do not need new revelation today. We need to obey and walk worthy of the revelation that we already have! We do not need more light today. We will stand before Christ and give an account for the way we responded to the light that we had!

There is a sense in which the church is in desperate need of a vision today. We need a fresh vision of God. We need to see the Lord high and lifted up (Isaiah 6:1-9). We need a glimpse of all that GOD IS (Isaiah 43:10-11). The more we see Christ as He really is, the more we will be like Him (1 John 3:2). As we fix our eyes upon Christ as He is seen in the written Word and as we look unto Jesus (Heb. 12:1-2) with a steady gaze, we will reflect the glory of the Lord as our lives are conformed to His image, from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18).

EXAMPLES OF CHARISMATIC VISIONS:

Example #1--Oral Roberts

At one time Oral Roberts claimed he had a talk with a 900-foot-tall Jesus and the account of that "vision" generated millions in donations from the faithful so that he could open his 60-story diagnostic clinic and 30-story hospital. Later Roberts claimed to have received another message from God. This time God wanted people to give Oral Roberts \$4.5 million in "quick money" to finish an \$8 million fund drive. If he did not raise this money, God would call him home to heaven. Thanks to Florida race track money (an owner, Jerry Collins, coughed up the last \$1.3 million), the ransom money was all raised and Oral was given a new lease on life so that he could dream up new promotional schemes for the future.

According to the *St. Petersburg Times*, Oral Roberts does not lack when it comes to personal finances. The newspaper stated that Roberts has a \$285,000 home in Palm Springs, a \$2.4 million dollar home in Beverly Hills, his exclusive house in Tulsa, and a \$35,000 country club membership.

Example #2--Dr. Percy Collett

Dr. Collett, a medical doctor, worked almost 50 years with the people in the Amazon River Basin of South America. He claims to have been transported to heaven in 1982 for 5½ earth days. He talked with God the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, Elijah, Elisha, Abraham, Moses, Paul and others.

He viewed the mansions of the saints and toured the buildings now under construction. He was taken to "his" mansion 700 miles up from the city's foundation. He toured each level of heaven and viewed its different departments and activities. Jesus talked with him about events soon to occur on earth—the battle of Ezekiel 38, the rapture, and Armageddon. He was sent back to earth with instructions to take a leave of absence from the mission field and declare what he had seen and heard.

For a contribution of \$100.00 one can receive a video tape presentation of this trip to heaven. The promotional flier which promotes this video had this to say, "Dr. Collet was `caught up in the third heaven' even as Paul was. The difference being, Paul was not allowed to utter the things he saw and heard, while Dr. Collett, almost 2000 years later, was commanded to do so." Contrast this with 2 Corinthians 12:1-10. Many others are claiming to have had trips to heaven or visions of heaven, including Dr. Paul Yonggi Cho, "pastor of the world's largest church" in Seoul, Korea, who claimed to have spent 3 hours in the third heaven.

33. What is the philosophy of "Charismatic Renewal"?

Charismatic Renewal is, moreover, thoroughly reformist in character. There is very little if any interest in separating from old ecclesiastical structures and building new ones according to the classical Pentecostal pattern. Rather, present institutions are to be "renewed" by the Charismatic activity of the Holy Spirit as it affects the membership of a church or other group through the continued presence within that structure of individuals who have been baptized in the Spirit.⁴⁵

Charismatics do not want to separate from the churches that they are a part of. Instead they wish to stay in these churches and to seek to renew these churches by their continued presence within. They seek to bring life and vitality to churches that were once very formal and dead. The principles of Biblical separation from apostasy are sadly ignored.

34. Are believers commanded to "renew" apostate churches or to separate from them?

2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1	COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM
2 Timothy 3:5	FROM SUCH TURN AWAY
Romans 16:17	AVOID THEM
Titus 3:10	REJECT
2 John 10	RECEIVE HIM NOT ⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Richard Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics*, page 9.

⁴⁶ For further study, see our paper on *The Biblical Doctrine of Separation* (25¢).

35. What is it that unites God's people?

Charismatic Answer: A COMMON EXPERIENCE

The modern charismatic movement has been able to suspend doctrinal questions and unite around a set of experiences. Doctrine divides. Experience unites.⁴⁷

Biblical Answer: It is TRUTH and DOCTRINE that should unite God's people.

"And they continued stedfastly **in the apostles' doctrine** and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). Our UNITY is based upon our common knowledge and understanding of the Son of God.

It is true that doctrine divides, but it also unites. If I believe in the deity of Jesus Christ and you do not, then we are divided. If I believe in the deity of Jesus Christ and you do also, then we are united based upon this great truth that we both believe and understand. True Biblical unity is based upon a common understanding and practice of God's truth. The more we believe and practice the truths of the Word of God, the more united we will be.

Beware of the popular philosophy that emphasizes "love" at the expense of God's truth and which emphasizes "unity" at the expense of sound doctrine.⁴⁸

* * * * *

We have examined 35 doctrinal issues as they relate to the modern Charismatic Movement. If you have further questions about any of these matters, feel free to write or call:

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⁴⁷ Stephen Board, "Are Catholic Charismatics `Evangelicals'?" *Eternity*, July 1978, page 13.

⁴⁸ Such is the philosophy of the Promise Keepers Movement as well as many other groups and ecumenical movements. See our paper, *The Importance of Doctrine and the Biblical Concept of Love--A Campus Crusade Critique* (10¢).

Appendix 1

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PENTECOSTALISM (The Three Waves)

From the second century to the nineteenth century there is no historical evidence that godly, orthodox believers spoke in tongues. We do have instances of tongues speaking in these centuries, but in every case the people speaking in tongues belonged to heretical groups. See our discussion under #15 in this paper. From Montanus (2nd Century) to Edward Irving (19th century), instances of "tongues" within the church were never considered to be part of genuine Christianity. Also we should note that these "heretics" who spoke in tongues were speaking some kind of emotional, nonsense gibberish and not real languages as was the case in Acts chapter 2.

Wave #1

Old Pentecostalism or Classic Pentecostalism

In 1901 at Bethel Bible College, Topeka, Kansas, Agnes Ozman received what she called the baptism of the Spirit and spoke in "tongues." The practice then became part of the Holiness movement of the church in the United States. In 1906 tongues were spoken on Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California, and out of these two events in 1901 and 1906 grew the mainline Pentecostal denominations which are still with us today (Assemblies of God, etc.).

Wave #2

New Pentecostalism or Charismatic Renewal

This is sometimes referred to as the New Charismatic Movement. It was like the old charismatic, Pentecostal movement in that it gave special emphasis to certain gifts, most notably the gift of tongues. It was a new movement in the sense that it crossed denominational lines and barriers.

In 1960, in Van Nuys, California, the modern Charismatic movement began in an Episcopalian Church (St. Mark's, with Dennis Bennett as rector). There was an outburst of tongues speaking in this church. This event was so significant that both *Time* and *Newsweek* covered the story. After that the movement spread like wildfire in the Episcopalian Church and then among Lutherans and Presbyterians as well.

The movement soon entered the universities. This began in New England. In October of 1962 the glossolalia phenomenon broke out at Yale University, among members of the Evangelical Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. Included in this new-Pentecostal revival were Episcopalians, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists and even one Roman Catholic. Five were members of Phi Beta Kappa, and some were religious leaders on campus (they were soon called "GLOSSO YALIES"). Thereafter the movement spread to Dartmouth College, Stanford University and Princeton Theological Seminary.

Even more significant than these events is what happened in 1967. All roads lead to Rome. At the time of Easter vacation, in the Spring of 1967 there were in the Notre Dame area about 30 zealous Catholics who had received the "baptism of the Holy Spirit." In 1968 about 100 to 150 met for a Catholic Pentecostal conference. In 1969 there were about 450 Catholic Charismatics who met including about 25 or 30 priests. In 1970 the increase was more spectacular. Almost 1,300 attended the conference, including Catholics from Canada. In 1973 22,000 Catholic Charismatics met together at Notre Dame, including Catholic participants from at least 10 foreign countries. In 1974 the Notre Dame conference was attended by 30,000 people. And finally, the 1975 international conference held in Rome, attracted 10,000 pilgrims from 50 countries to hear Pope Paul VI express his warm appreciation for the movement. The movement was mushrooming not only in the Roman Catholic Church but in all of the major protestant denominations.

The Kansas City Charismatic Conference was held in the summer of 1977. All three wings of the Pentecostal movement were present: 1) Old Pentecostals (sometimes called "classical Pentecostals"); 2) Protestant Charismatics; and 3) Catholic Charismatics. This was the biggest and most inclusive gathering of "baptized in the Spirit" believers in modern

history. There were nearly 50,000 participants in this 5 day conference. One speaker proudly hailed this conference as "the largest and most inclusive ecumenical assembly in the history of American Christianity." Almost half of the participants were Roman Catholics.

A newspaper article published in 1977 (AP) reported that there were 10 million charismatics in America (5 million Classical Pentecostals and 5 Million New Pentecostals). Thus the new charismatic movement grew to 5 million in only 17 years (1960 to 1977)! Today the movement is still very much alive and growing, although we probably will not see the same kind of mushrooming growth as we saw in the 60's and early 70's. *Christianity Today* (January 7, 1983) reported that the Assembly of God denomination (Pentecostal) is the fastest growing American denomination. At that time there were 1.6 million Assembly of God adherents and the number was growing fast.

The New Charismatics are not separatist but rather reformist in character. They are not interested in separating from old ecclesiastical structures. Rather they are told to stay in these churches and to *renew them* by their continued presence within. This is what is meant by Charismatic Renewal.

Wave #3 The Signs and Wonders Movement

The term "third wave" was first coined by C. Peter Wagner in 1983:

I see historically that we're now in the third wave. The first wave of the moving of the Holy Spirit began at the beginning of the century with the Pentecostal movement. The second wave was the charismatic movement which began in the fifties in the major denominations. Both of those waves continue today.

I see the third wave of the eighties as an opening of the straight-line evangelicals and other Christians to the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit that the Pentecostals and charismatics have experienced, but without becoming either charismatic or Pentecostal. I think we are in a new wave of something that now has lasted almost through our whole century.⁴⁹

This movement is also called the Signs and Wonders Movement and the Vineyard Movement. It has been a rapidly growing movement, drawing adherents from both charismatic and non-charismatic churches. The movement stresses "power evangelism" whereby the gospel is explained and demonstrated by way of supernatural signs and wonders.

There are three key leaders of this movement: 1) **John Wimber**, probably the central figure of the movement. He was the founder of the Vineyard church movement and he taught with C. Peter Wagner at Fuller Seminary. The course was entitled "Signs, Wonders and Church Growth." 2) **C. Peter Wagner**, professor at Fuller Seminary School of World Missions where he co-taught with John Wimber. 3) **Paul Cain**, an influential modern day prophet, a disciple of William Branham whom Cain called "the greatest faith healer of our time" and the "greatest prophet of all time." Branham was a heretical false prophet who held erroneous view on the Godhead and on the Trinity.⁵⁰

In the Signs and Wonders movement, tongues speaking can be found but the gift of tongues is not stressed as much as it is in the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. The Signs and Wonders movement (Vineyard movement) does stress the gift of prophecy (insisting on the importance of modern day prophets) and the gift of healing.

⁴⁹ Peter Wagner, "The Third Wave?" *Pastoral Renewal*, July-August 1983, pages 1-5.

⁵⁰ For more detailed information about the Signs and Wonders Movement, see the article by Robert Dean, "Don't Be Caught by the Undertow of the Third Wave," *Biblical Perspectives*, May-June 1990 and also other of Dean's very helpful articles in this series.

The "Holy Laughter" Movement

Note: The following information, printed in *italics*, is quoted directly from an article by Albert James Dager, "Holy Laughter," printed in *Media Spotlight*, P.O. Box 290, Redmond, WA 98073. The entire article is well done and recommended.

Many churches are reporting spontaneous, uncontrollable laughter erupting from their congregations, even during times of solemn ceremony or messages from the pulpit. Some report uncontrollable weeping, falling to the floor in ecstatic trances, and animal noises such as barking like dogs and roaring like lions. Some stagger and reel like drunken people, unable to walk a straight line. For simplicity's sake, all these have come to be called "holy laughter," since laughter is the pre-eminent phenomenon displayed.

It is unthinkable that the Lord Jesus or any of the apostles would have gone around barking like dogs or roaring like lions or reeling like drunk persons or laughing uncontrollably.

One of the most famous outbreaks of "holy laughter" took place in Toronto in 1994. "Worshippers are overcome by laughing, weeping, groaning, shaking, falling and, to the chagrin of some, noise-making that has been described as `a cross between a jungle and a farmyard.'"⁵¹

One of the leaders of the "holy laughter" movement is Rodney Morgan Howard-Browne, a burly, 6-foot charismatic preacher from South Africa. In 1979, at age 18, while praying for hours seeking a deeper spiritual experience, he challenged God: "Either You come down here and touch me, or I will come up there and touch You." Suddenly, his whole body felt like it was on fire. He began to laugh uncontrollably. Then he wept and began to speak in tongues. "I was plugged into heaven's electrical supply," he later wrote. "And since then my desire has been to go and plug other people in."⁵²

The philosophy behind "holy laughter" is this: Why should people sit in church and be sad and mad and get headaches? Why not have some fun? The movement is a reaction to churches that are dead and lifeless and boring. One joke is told about the man in the back of the church who had a heart attack. The emergency medics arrived on the scene but since everyone else in this man's pew were sound asleep, they could not tell the difference between the heart attack victim and the other sleepers. If the others were laughing instead of sleeping, this would have helped the medics.

One example of a "holy laughter" service: *At first a few hoots and laughs can be heard emanating from the audience, but there is still relative order. After a time of teaching, Howard-Browne calls a pastor forward who, the night before, had said he was ready to check himself into a mental clinic. Promising a double dose of the Holy Spirit this night, Howard-Browne lays his hand on the man, who promptly falls to the floor.*

Howard-Browne then puts one foot on the man's stomach and pronounces that he will go forth forever changed. Someone said, "Why'd you put your foot on him?" "Because I didn't feel like bending down and putting my hand on him." The audience erupts in laughter and from this point things begin to

⁵¹ Daina Doucet, "What is God doing in Toronto?" *Charisma*, February, 1995, page 20.

⁵² Julia Duin, "Praise the Lord and pass the New Wine," *Charisma*, August, 1994, p. 22.

roll. Bending over the man he says, "Go ahead; let that bubble out your belly." The man laughs a little harder. "More!" Harder laughing. "More!" The man tries harder yet. "More!" He begins to force a laugh that sounds like cackling. "More!" The man kicks his legs up and pedals his feet, laughing, "Hoo! Hoo! Hoo!" Howard-Browne states, "That's called Holy Ghost aerobics."

This same kind of thing continues with other people. For example, Howard-Browne kicks one man in the foot and says, "You need to let that joy bubble out your belly! Stop praying, let the joy bubble out." etc.

Howard-Browne quotes Peter in Acts 2: "These are not drunk as you suppose..." He lays his hand on a lady in the front pew, causing her to shriek repeatedly, shaking her hands as if she had palsy. He points out that she is a pastor's wife.

He repeats, "These are not drunk as you suppose," and then the drunkard begins his routine: While sitting in his pew a man throws his head back and laughs heartily, kicking one leg up in the air. Suddenly he bolts from his seat and does a locomotive-action shuffle in a tight circle. Then he faces Howard-Browne, kicks one leg out in front and does a prat-fall. Another man jumps out of his seat, does the same sort of locomotion shuffle, arms falling wildly, and falls on the floor. Shortly afterward the first man gets up and staggers around with a mock drunken smile on his face, salutes Howard-Browne and plops down in the pew again. It is obviously contrived, but Howard-Browne and the audience eat it up.

Things continue in the same vein for the rest of the evening. Howard-Browne likes to call himself a "Holy Ghost bartender" who dispenses the "new wine" of charismatic fervor. He teaches that if there is drunkenness in the physical realm there must be drunkenness in the spiritual realm. His mission in life is to make people spiritually drunk.

On one occasion Howard-Browne said this: "One night I was preaching on hell, and (laughter) just hit the whole place. The more I told people what hell was like, the more they laughed."⁵³ Every truly saved person ought to know that hell is certainly no laughing matter.

There is seldom any true teaching from God's Word in these meetings. And when there is it is interrupted by laughter. One charismatic writer said, "No one doubts that having vast numbers of listeners convulsed in laughter can make whatever is being said from the pulpit irrelevant."⁵⁴ Think of your own local assembly. How much learning would take place if every 5 minutes during the preaching of God's Word people break out into uncontrollable and loud laughter? Could any learning take place in such a circus atmosphere?

God's Word says that all things in the assembly must be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40). Women and men flopping on the floor, acting drunk, hooting or making animal sounds is certainly not decent conduct in God's assembly (compare 1 Timothy 3:15). "Holy laughter" is not holy at all, and only confuses and contradicts God's order.

⁵³ Reported in the *Calvary Contender*, c/o Calvary Baptist Church, 1800 Sparkman Dr., Huntsville, Al 35816.

⁵⁴ Ibid., page 42.

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