# The Charismatic Movement

## A Biblical Critique

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### Introduction

The Charismatic movement is one of the most popular and growing forces within Christendom today. The major doctrinal distinctives of the Charismatic movement—the baptism in the Holy Spirit, tongues-speaking, prophecy, the gift of healing and the emphasis on having a personal experience—are primary reasons for the movement's growth and popularity. While growth and popularity are certainly desirable, they cannot be used as a test for truth-claims, because various cults (e.g., Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons) and false religions (e.g., Islam, Eastern mysticism) have also witnessed great popularity and growth. The Charismatic movement is a twentieth-century phenomenon. Since the teachings and practices of the Charismatic movement are different than what orthodox Christians have taught for 19 centuries, we believe it is wise to examine these teachings under the light of Scripture. We are not saying that Charismatics are not Christians. And we are not examining their distinctives because we dislike Charismatics personally (the author was a Charismatic for over three years, and many of his friends are still Charismatic). God commands us to "Test all things; hold fast what is good" (1 Th. 5:21 [1]). We are commanded to "hold fast the faithful word" and "refute those who contradict" (Tit. 1:9 NASB). Thus, we offer this booklet in the spirit of Christian love—love for our brethren, and above all, love for

God's truth. In examining any issue, the most important question is, "What saith the scripture?" (Gal. 4:30 KJV).

**Baptism in the Holy Spirit**

One of the hallmarks of the Charismatic movement is what is called Spirit-baptism or the "baptism in the Holy Spirit." The baptism in the Holy Spirit is regarded as an experience that usually happens after conversion. Most Charismatics would say that at conversion a Christian receives the Holy Spirit. But only at the subsequent baptism in the Holy Spirit does the Christian receive the fullness of the Spirit, the full empowerment for Christian service. Many but not all Charismatics believe that Spirit-baptism is always accompanied with the gift of speaking in tongues as evidence for the baptism. Spirit-baptism is considered a *second* work of grace; that is, one can be a genuine Christian yet not be baptized in the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit as a second work of grace after conversion is the cornerstone of Pentecostal theology. If this doctrine is unbiblical, we should regard the Charismatic movement as unbiblical.

The Bible is the only infallible rule for faith and practice. Thus, our experiences, impressions and feelings must be subordinated to what the Bible teaches. Does the Bible teach that every Christian should seek the baptism in the Spirit? Or does the Bible teach that the outpouring of the Spirit was a unique historical event related to Christ's enthronement at the right hand of God the Father? If the outpouring was a crucial aspect of salvation history (like the resurrection and ascension), then we must regard it as a non-repeatable, once-for-all event. Pentecost marked "the final transition from the old era of shadows and types to the new era of fulfillment. Pentecost was the birthday of the Christian church, the beginning of the age of the Spirit. In this sense, therefore, Pentecost can never be repeated, and does not need to be repeated." [2]

The first reason that Pentecost should be regarded as a unique

historical event in salvation history is the fact that the outpouring of the Spirit was a prophesied event. Peter specifically says that Pentecost is the direct fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32: "*This is* what was spoken by the prophet Joel." John the Baptist said of Christ, "This is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit" (Jn. 1:33; cf. Mk. 1:7-8, Lk. 3:16). Jesus Himself said that the Spirit would be poured out after His ascension: "It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you" (Jn. 16:7; cf. Ac. 1:5).

The second reason Pentecost should be regarded as a unique historical event is the way Scripture connects Pentecost with Christ's glorification or enthronement at the right hand of God. Jesus Christ, as the divine-human mediator, humbled Himself, obeyed the law in exhaustive detail, and suffered and died as a vicarious atonement for the sins of His people. After His resurrection, God exalted Christ and glorified Him as the divine-human mediator (in His divine nature, Christ could not receive any more glory or exaltation, because He was God). An aspect of Christ's glorification is His baptizing His church with the Holy Spirit. "But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for *the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified*" (Jn. 7:39). In his sermon on the day of Pentecost, Peter explains what occurred: "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He [Christ] poured out this which you now see and hear" (Ac. 2:33). The participles "being exalted" and "having received" are both aorist [3]; the verb "poured out" is also aorist. Thus it is evident that Peter was talking about a historical fact not an ongoing process. Christ's death, resurrection, ascension and pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the church are all treated in Scripture as historical events in salvation-history, *never* to be repeated.

The third reason Pentecost must be regarded as a unique historical event is the fact that after Pentecost (with the exception of Ac. 8:14-

17, which will be discussed later) believing in Christ and receiving the Holy Spirit are simultaneous. The account of Peter's preaching the gospel to the Gentiles in Acts 10:34-48 reveals that the Gentiles received the Holy Spirit the moment they believed. At the climax of Peter's sermon, the Gentiles received the Holy Spirit. That Peter equated their baptism in the Spirit with their salvation is clear from the fact that Peter immediately "commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Ac. 10:48). "The norm is salvation and the Spirit *at the same time*. The Apostle Peter was present and therefore he could report to the church council (made up of Jews) that the Gentiles were true believers. At the same time, the Gentiles would recognize apostolic authority because Peter had been with them and indeed [was] the one who led them to Christ. And both groups knew they had the same Holy Spirit." [4] Note that the focus of Acts 10 and 11 is not how to receive the Holy Spirit or how to receive a second blessing, for the Gentiles did not ask for or seek Spirit-baptism. The point of both chapters is to show that "God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life" (Ac. 11:18).

A passage which has been often used as a proof text for receiving Spirit-baptism subsequent to believing is Acts 19:1-7. The use of this passage by Pentecostals is based on a faulty translation in the King James Version: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (v. 2). The passage literally says in the Greek, "The Holy Spirit did you receive, having believed?" The New King James accurately translates the passage: "Did you receive the Holy Spirit *when* you believed?" This passage is actually an excellent proof text *against* the Charismatic doctrine of receiving the Holy Spirit as a second work of grace after salvation. Why? Because Paul's question *assumes* that in the normal course of events, salvation and Spirit-baptism occur at the *same* time. The fact that the disciples of John the Baptist had not even heard of the Holy Spirit indicated that they had not received Christian baptism and were still Old Covenant believers and not yet Christians. The problem for these followers of John the Baptist was not that they

needed a second work of grace but that they needed to believe in Jesus Christ. After believing and being baptized they were baptized with the Holy Spirit. Why was it necessary for the Apostle Paul to lay hands on these men? The laying on of hands in Acts 19:6 (like that in Ac. 8:17) is related to the unique authority of the apostles. Otherwise there would have been no need for the Samaritans to wait for the apostles (Ac. 8). “It seems he did it to show them as Jews that it was no longer John the Baptist’s teaching they were to follow but the teaching of the Apostles.” [5]

What about Acts 8:14-17? Does not this passage record that the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit *after* believing in Christ? Yes, it does. But this passage still does not support the Charismatic doctrine of subsequence as a normal state of affairs. This passage is an excellent proof text *against* the Charismatic movement. For if what Charismatics teach is true, the evangelist Philip would have encouraged these new believers to pray and seek the second blessing. Philip, who was a great miracle worker (unlike modern Charismatics), did not teach anyone to seek, or plead, or empty himself in order to receive Spirit-baptism. The fact that God did not baptize the Samaritans with the Holy Spirit until the laying on of the hands of the apostles is clearly due to the unique historical situation at that time. Because of the racial hatred between the Samaritans and Jews, it was necessary for both the Jewish apostles and the Samaritans that the laying on of hands take place. The apostles approved the Samaritans as accepted by God in Christ and full partners in the kingdom. The Samaritans recognized that the Jewish apostles were the authoritative leaders in the church. If this passage were normative for the modern church, then we should teach that all believers must wait for the laying on of hands by an apostle before receiving Spirit-baptism. Thus, the only passage which could be used to support a doctrine of Spirit-baptism as a second work of grace after salvation proves too much. If Charismatics were consistent, they would not seek Holy Spirit-baptism but simply wait for an apostle to stop by. The last genuine

apostle died almost 1900 years ago.

Not only does the book of Acts *not* support the Charismatic doctrine of subsequence, the epistles explicitly deny such a doctrine. “For by one Spirit we were *all* baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have *all* been made to drink into one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:13). Paul says that all Christians have been baptized in the Spirit. “You don’t need to seek a Spirit-baptism as a post-conversion experience, Paul is saying to the Corinthians and to us; if you are in Christ, you have already been Spirit-baptized!” [6] Some Charismatic writers have attempted to circumvent the clear teaching of this passage by an appeal to the Word “by” in the KJV. They argue that “by one Spirit” is different than “in one Spirit.” The only problem with this argument is that the Greek word *en* (translated “by” in v. 13) can also be translated “in” or “with.” Thus the baptism *in* the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12:13 is identical to *every* occurrence in the book of Acts. [7] Other Charismatic writers claim that the first part of the passage refers to conversion and the second part to Spirit-baptism. This interpretation is rendered impossible by Paul’s use of the word “all.” Paul says that *all* members belong to *one* body. If Paul was referring to two separate groups, he could not have used the word “all.” “Verse 13, then, plainly teaches (1) that all believers share in the gift of the Spirit and (2) that they do so from the time of their incorporation into the body of Christ. This verse is the hard rock which shatters all constructions of the Holy Spirit baptism as an additional, post-conversion, second-blessing experience” [8]

The teaching that all Christians are baptized in the Holy Spirit at conversion is supported by other passages. Paul spends much of Romans chapter 8 discussing the Holy Spirit. Does Paul ever hint at the idea that receiving the Holy Spirit is a two-stage process? No. Paul clearly says that if you are a Christian, you have the Holy Spirit. If you are not a Christian, you don’t. “Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His” (Rom. 8:9). “To suggest, as our neo-Pentecostal friends do, that the Spirit comes into one’s

life only in a small trickle when one is first converted and does not come in His totality until some later time contradicts the plain teaching of this verse. If you're a Christian, Paul says to us all, the Spirit is dwelling in you. What more can He do than dwell? Can He double-dwell or triple-dwell?" [9] Paul says, "Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you" (1 Cor. 6:19). He also says, "You are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them...'" (1 Cor. 6:16). We must base our doctrine of Spirit-baptism on the plain teaching of the epistles. Doctrine must be based on the clear, didactic passages rather than on a unique historical event.

While the Bible teaches that everyone who becomes a Christian is baptized in the Holy Spirit, it also teaches that Christians need to be continually filled with the Spirit. We must not confuse these two concepts. Spirit-baptism refers to what occurs when we become part of the body of Christ (the Holy Spirit dwells within us). The filling or fullness of the Spirit refers to the Spirit's ongoing activity within the believer *after* conversion. Believers are dependant on the Holy Spirit's transforming power for growth in godliness and sanctification. The only passage in the New Testament where Christians are commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit is Ephesians 5:18: "Be filled with the Spirit." The verb "be filled," in the original language, is a command (imperative) in the present tense. This means that Christians are commanded to *continually*, day by day, be filled with the Spirit. How are we to be filled with the Holy Spirit? Is it some mystical experience only for "super-spiritual" believers? The Bible teaches that we are filled with the Holy Spirit by believing in and obeying the Word of God.

> You should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind.... But you have not so *learned* Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been *taught* by Him, as the *truth* is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be

> renewed in the spirit of your *mind*, and that you *put on* the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:17, 20-24).

It is not an accident that the parallel passage to Ephesians 5:18, which says, “Be filled with the Spirit,” is Colossians 3:16, which says, “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.”

> In view of the parallelism involved we are bound to conclude that filling of the Spirit and the richly indwelling Word of Christ are functionally equivalent. That indwelling Word is not some specialized or restricted truth granted only to some in the congregation but “everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20), faithfully believed and obeyed.... The reality of the Spirit’s filling work is the reality, in all its breadth and richness, of the ongoing working of Christ, the life-giving Spirit, with His Word. To look for some word other than His Word, now inscripturated for the church, is to be seeking some Spirit other than the Holy Spirit. [10]

Jesus stressed the importance of the Scriptures: “Sanctify them *by Your truth*. Your word is truth” (Jn. 17:17).

Charismatics teach that believing in Jesus Christ is not enough for the fulfilled Christian life. They believe that a second work of grace (the baptism in the Holy Spirit) is necessary for spiritual fullness. This teaching is a subtle denial of the sufficiency that we have in Christ; it detracts from the glory due to Jesus Christ and clearly contradicts Paul’s teaching regarding the fullness we have in Christ. “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are *complete* in Him...” (Col. 3:9-10). “The work of the Spirit is not some addendum to the work of Christ.... The Spirit’s work is not a ‘bonus’ added to the basic salvation secured by Christ. Rather, the coming of the Spirit brings to light not only that Christ *has* lived and *has* done certain things but that he, as the source of

eschatological life, *now* lives and is at work in the church. By and in the Spirit Christ reveals himself as present." [11] Paul's teaching is supported by Peter's: "[Christ's] divine power has given to us *all things* that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us..." (2 Pet. 1:3). Both apostles assume that we receive everything we need when we believe in Christ. If a second work of grace is needed beyond Christ, these passages simply could not be true. Thus you need to decide whether to follow the teaching of the Word of God or the teaching of Pentecostalism.

Why is it that Jesus Christ is sufficient? Why is it that, in the epistles, receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit is never separated from believing in Christ? Why is it wrong to think of Spirit-baptism as something added on to the work of Christ? Because Christians are justified in Jesus Christ. The full guilt of sin that every believer incurred is imputed or placed on Jesus Christ on the cross. And Christ's perfect righteousness is imputed to the believer. The believer is clothed with Christ's perfect, sinless life. Thus we ask the question: Does God's verdict of righteousness upon the fallen sinner qualify him to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit? Yes, absolutely! The person who believes in Jesus Christ receives Christ's perfect righteousness as a gift from God. In God's sight he is just as righteous as Jesus Christ. Is Jesus Christ righteous enough to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit? If Christ's work which renders the Christian perfect, sinless, and absolutely righteous (before God the Father *judicially* in the heavenly court) is not enough to receive Spirit-baptism, then what else is required? Paul says, "Having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13). He asks, "Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. 3:2).

The doctrine of Spirit-baptism as a second work of grace subsequent to salvation does *not* have biblical support. The unique outpouring of the Holy Spirit from heaven by Christ was an aspect of Christ's glorification and, like the resurrection and ascension,

is *never* to be repeated. The New Testament epistles teach that believing in Christ, becoming a part of His body, the Church, and receiving Spirit-baptism all occur at the *same* time. There are several discussions of the Holy Spirit's ministry in the epistles, yet in each discussion, Spirit-baptism is *never* mentioned. Nowhere in the epistles are believers told to seek Spirit-baptism. The Bible teaches that receiving Jesus Christ and submitting to His Word are all the Christian needs to be *complete*. The Charismatic doctrine of the second blessing (i.e. Spirit-baptism) is a deviation from Protestant orthodoxy. It was not taught by the Spirit-filled Protestant Reformers (e.g., Luther, Zwingli, Bucer, Calvin, Knox, etc.). It was not taught by any of the great theologians of sixteenth, seventeenth or eighteenth centuries (e.g., Gillespie, Rutherford, Owen, Edwards, Turrentin, Hodge, Dabney, Warfield).

The doctrine of Spirit-baptism as a second work of grace grew directly from the heretical soil of the second-blessing holiness movement of the nineteenth century. Many holiness teachers in the eighteenth century rejected the orthodox doctrine of sanctification as a lifelong process of spiritual growth, in which sin is never completely eradicated in the believer. Methodistic holiness teachers taught that Christians could receive a "second blessing" which gave the Christian in one moment "entire sanctification." The sinful nature was completely eliminated in the believer. And, thus, the believer was perfect and sinless. The second blessing doctrine of entire sanctification, of sinless perfection, is condemned by the Apostle John: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves; and the truth is not in us" (1 Jn. 1:8). The original Pentecostals took the second blessing doctrine one step further and taught the "baptism of the Spirit" as a third blessing. Although most Pentecostals eventually rejected the idea of entire sanctification, nevertheless the fathers of modern Pentecostalism were heretical.

> In 1901 Charles F. Parham carried the prevalent "Pentecostal" insistence on "baptism of the Holy Spirit" (as described in Acts 2) to the conclusion that tongues

> should still be the sign of a Pentecostal experience. Parham's student, W. J. Seymour, popularized this *new* Pentecostalism beginning in 1906 at the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles, after which this movement grew into its many varieties.... The *original* Pentecostal teachers, Parham and Seymour, taught a Methodistic Holiness view of a "second blessing" of entire sanctification in which the sinful nature was eradicated. This, they said, was followed by a third blessing, "baptism of the Spirit," accompanied by tongues. [12]

Within twenty years of the founding of modern Pentecostalism by Charles Parham, many people became Pentecostal who had Baptist rather than Methodist holiness backgrounds. These new Pentecostals rejected the second blessing idea of entire sanctification. Thus, the third blessing, "the baptism of the Spirit" [13] became the "second blessing." Pentecostal theology has retained the second blessing idea to the present. Pentecostalism and the modern Charismatic movement did not grow out of the careful exegesis of God's Word but rather out of heretical holiness revivalism.

It is ironic that Charismatics, who consider themselves experts on the Holy Spirit, completely misunderstand the purpose of the Holy Spirit's ministry. Does the Bible teach that the Holy Spirit came so that we could have a wonderful, subjective experience? So that we could have wonderful religious sensations? So that we could feel electric current in our bodies? So that we could have an exciting, mind-blowing experience? So that our worship services would make people go, "Wow, how thrilling"? Does the Bible teach that the Holy Spirit came so that people would focus on the Holy Spirit? So that people would hang banners with representations of doves in their churches and have seminars on Spirit-baptism, etc.? No, not at all. Listen carefully to what Jesus Christ says about the Spirit's ministry: "When He, the Spirit of truth, has come...*He will glorify Me*, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you" (Jn.

16:13-14). The Holy Spirit came to point men to Christ and to glorify Christ. After Peter was baptized in the Spirit, did he stand up and tell the crowd about his wonderful experience? Did he say, “Men and brethren, I have just received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and I want to tell you how wonderful it is. When it came upon me, it was like being thrilled with a vital electric current. I felt such a beautiful love and peace course through my whole body, right down to the balls of my feet”? On the contrary, Peter made no reference to himself or his feeling. His message was Jesus Christ and Him crucified: “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God...” (Ac. 2:22). [14]

**Tongues**

One practice that all Pentecostals and Charismatics hold in common is the practice of speaking with tongues. Since there are differences of opinions regarding what tongues are and how they should be used in public worship and private devotions, we will deal only with views which are common within the Charismatic movement.

Charismatics generally hold to three different uses of tongues. First, most Charismatics argue that speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit. [15] They regard the historical occurrences in the book of Acts (ch. 2, 10, 19) as normative for the church for all ages. Second, tongues are to be used in public worship for the edification of the body. These public tongues must be interpreted or translated, so that the edifying message can be understood by all. (In many Charismatic churches, people blurt out “tongues” which are never interpreted.) Charismatics differ over whether or not “tongues” in the assembly are a form of direct revelation from God. The third use of tongues is speaking in tongues for private edification. This is based on a false interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:1-4. This form of tongues is considered a private prayer language to God.

There are a number of questions relating to tongues that we want to

answer. What are biblical tongues? Are tongues real human languages or unintelligible, ecstatic gibberish? Are there two types of tongues in the Bible: one for the church and one for private prayer? Are tongues revelational in nature, like prophecy, or just another method of uninspired exhortation?

The only way to define tongues biblically is to study the usage of the term by biblical writers. The Greek word *glossa*, translated "tongue" (pl. *glossais*), when not referring to the actual bodily organ called the tongue, refers either to an ethnic group (that is, a group separated by *language*) or to actual human languages. "The word *glossa* is used some thirty times in the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint) and always its meaning is normal human language" [16] Our primary concern is what the term refers to when speaking of the New Testament spiritual gift of tongues. The Bible clearly teaches that the spiritual gift of speaking in tongues *always* refers to real, known human languages.

On the day of Pentecost, the disciples "began to speak in other tongues" (*glossais*, Ac. 2:4). Were they babbling unintelligible nonsense or speaking in real human languages? Because this first instance serves as a paradigm or pattern for all subsequent tongue speaking, the Holy Spirit carefully defined the nature of tongues, It is clear that the disciples were speaking real, known languages. They even spoke different dialects of the same language (e.g., the Phrygians and Pamphylians spoke different dialects of Greek).

> There were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak *in his own language* (*dialektos*). Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each *in our own language* (*dialektos*) in which we were born?"

(Acts 2:5-8).

As if to emphasize that the disciples were speaking real languages and not gibberish, Luke even lists the peoples which heard their native tongues: “Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—*we hear them speaking in our own tongues* (*glossais*) the wonderful works of God” (Acts 2:9-11). In Acts 2, *glossais* is used by Luke interchangeably with *dialektos* (“the tongue or language peculiar to any people,” J. H. Thayer). The biblical account records that on three occasions the multitude said that they heard their own *language* being spoken. Luke even records the different national languages and regional dialects which were spoken by the disciples.

In Acts, tongues are always real, human languages. This fact is confirmed when we examine the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles in Acts 10:44-48. Peter says that the Gentiles “received the Holy Spirit just as we have” (v. 47). He tells the Jerusalem church that “the Holy Spirit fell on them [the Gentiles], as upon us at the beginning” (Ac. 11:15). Peter says that God gave the Gentiles “the same gift as He did unto us” (v. 17). Peter is saying that the gentiles experienced the same thing as the Jewish disciples did at Pentecost, “This likeness of experience extends not only to the fact of receiving the Spirit but to the nature of tongue-speaking in foreign languages” [17] Thus, there is not a shred of evidence within the book of Acts that tongues-speaking is anything but *real foreign languages*. But what about 1 Corinthians?

In 1 Corinthians, tongues are also real foreign languages. Let us first examine the clear passages regarding tongues and then examine the passages which are quoted by Charismatics as a justification for non-foreign language, ecstatic, private-prayer

language to God.

> Paul designated the gift of tongues as *gene glossen*, translated as “kinds of tongues” (1 Cor. 12:10) and “diversities of tongue” (1 Cor. 12:28). This term *genos* refers to a family, offspring, race, nation, kind, sort, and class in New Testament usage. It always designates items which are related to each other. There are many “kinds” of fish (Mt. 13:47) but they are all fish. There are several “kinds” of demons in the world (Mt. 17:21), but they are still demons. There are many “kinds” of voices (1 Cor. 14:10), but they are all voices. From this it can be concluded that there are many “kinds” of languages, but they are all languages. There are several families of languages in the world—Semitic, Slavic, Latin, etc. These are all related, in that they have a definite vocabulary and grammatical construction. Paul could not have possibly combined known, foreign languages with unknown, ecstatic utterances under the same classification. They simply are not related to each other. [18]

Thus, if there were two completely different tongue-types—known languages on the one hand, and ecstatic, babbling, private-prayer language on the other hand, as many Charismatics assert—then the Holy Spirit who cannot lie would *not* have used the word *genos* to describe tongues in 1 Corinthians chapter twelve.

Another passage which disproves the Charismatic position is 1 Corinthians 14:21-22: “In the law it is written: ‘With men of other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people; And yet, for all that, they will not hear Me,’ says the Lord. Therefore tongues [Greek: *the* tongues] are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers....” Here, tongues are compared to a real, foreign language (Assyrian [19]), showing that the Apostle Paul considered tongues to be actual languages.

> This is further confirmed by the usage of the article of previous reference (*hai*) and the function of the inferential conjunction "therefore" (*hoste*). If Paul considered speaking in tongues to be an unknown utterance, he would not have used the same word twice in these two verses, especially since the meaning of *glossa* was clearly established in the first usage. [20]

Our contention that tongues refer to real foreign languages is supported by the Greek word used by Paul when he says that tongues must be *interpreted* (cf. 1 Cor. 12:10; 14:26, 28). When the word *hermeneuo* is not used to describe the exposition of Scripture, it simply means "to translate what has been spoken or written in a foreign language into the vernacular." [21] When the word is used of the exposition of Scripture (e.g., Lk. 24:27) it is translated *expound*. When the word *hermeneuo* is used with regard to tongues it is translated *to interpret*. An interpreter is someone who translates a foreign language into a language understandable to the present audience.

> The position is sometimes taken that the gift of interpretation is a kind of intuitive, empathetic capacity by which the mindless utterance of one member of the congregation is given intelligible meaning by another, a gift by which the preconceptual dimension in man voiced by one member is given rational, conceptual shape by another. But such a view is not only foreign to the Biblical usage of "interpret" elsewhere (*hermeneuo* and its compounds) but also presupposes the view of tongues we have already discussed and rejected as unbiblical. The only reason tongues-speech is unintelligible to the listeners is that they do not understand the *language* being spoken. [22]

But are there not passages which teach that there is a private prayer use for tongues—that tongues are to be used for private prayer to

God and for private edification? The three passages commonly used to argue for two types of tongues are: Romans 8:26, 1 Corinthians 13:1; 14:2-4. The first passage actually has nothing to do with tongues: "The Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings *which cannot be uttered*." Unutterable or unuttered groanings obviously cannot refer to tongues.

But what about 1 Corinthians 13:1? Doesn't this passage teach that we can pray with the tongues of angels? "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels" (1 Cor. 14:1). It is clear from the Greek grammar (*ean* with the subjunctive) and the context that Paul is speaking hypothetically. "He raises it hypothetically to the most magnificent realization of it possible" [23]—that is, to make a point. Paul is not telling the church to pray in the tongues of angels. He is saying that no matter how great your gift is, you need love. And even if it were possible to speak in the tongues of angels, it would still be a real, translatable language, not a bunch of gibberish. Linguists have the ability to look at language structure and determine noun phrases, verb phrases, adverbs, and so on. Thus, if people were really speaking in the tongues of angels, it could be determined if a real (although heavenly) language were being spoken.

The best proof text for private prayer tongues is 1 Corinthians 14:1-5.

> Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may

receive edification.

The first thing that needs to be noted regarding this passage is that, regardless of one's interpretation of "edifies himself" (v. 4); the tongues spoken of throughout chapter 14 are definite, real foreign languages. There is nothing within the passage or within the broader context that teaches that the tongues spoken of in verses two through four are peculiar (e.g., ecstatic gibberish), unique, or different. The tongues spoken of in verse four are real, foreign languages, just as the tongues in verse 21 and 22 are real, foreign languages. This fact is important; if one believes that 1 Corinthians 14:2-4 justifies the private use of tongues in devotions, then there is an objective test to determine if the speaker is speaking gibberish (i.e., syllabic nonsense) or a real foreign language: the private tongue-speaking could be tape-recorded and submitted to any competent linguist for verification.

Does this passage teach the private use of tongues? No. Paul is discussing edification in the assembly during public worship. He argues that he prefers prophecy over tongues because of its superior capability for the edification of the church. [24] When he says, "He who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but God, for no one understands him," he is not telling the Corinthians that they should be praying in tongues to God in private; he is emphasizing that without an interpreter, no one in the assembly understands *except* God. [25] Likewise, when Paul discusses praying and singing with the Spirit, he makes it clear that it must be interpreted, since it takes place in public worship: "Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uniformed say 'Amen' at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say?" (1 Cor. 14:16). There is simply not a shred of biblical evidence for the idea of private devotional tongues.

But, then, what does Paul mean when he says, "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself"? The context indicates that Paul is describing someone who speaks in tongues in church without an

interpreter. Paul is *not* saying that Christians should pray in tongues in private to be edified. Throughout this chapter, Paul argues again and again for the need to *interpret* tongues; otherwise, the church is not edified: “Since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel. Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret” (1 Cor. 14:12-13). Since the whole thrust of chapter 14 is the edification of the body, it is probable that “edifies himself” is meant to be taken in a negative sense. To speak in tongues without an interpreter merely calls attention to oneself and does not benefit the body. Speaking in tongues in the assembly without an interpreter is a form of self-glorification.

Why is it significant that tongues-speaking refers to foreign languages and *not* gibberish (e.g., “Yabba-dabba-doo”)? It is significant because it gives us an objective method to determine if modern tongues-speaking is genuine, or manmade nonsense. If the Charismatic movement is truly a work of God, then anyone should be able to verify it simply by recording people speaking in tongues and having it analyzed by linguists, to see what language was being spoken. If tongues were merely the gibberish one encounters in Charismatic churches and not real languages, then tongues are *not* a sign to unbelievers, as Paul clearly asserts. A sign is a publicly-verifiable miracle. “Speaking in foreign languages which were not learned would certainly constitute a divine miracle; however, speaking in gibberish or in unknown sounds could easily be done by either a Christian or an unsaved person.” [26] Every instance in the twentieth century where Charismatic tongues-speaking was taped and analyzed by linguists revealed that modern “tongues” were not real languages but gibberish. Modern tongues-speaking doesn’t even resemble any language, structurally. “The conclusion of the linguists indicates that modern glossolalia is composed of unknown sounds with no distinguishing vocabulary and grammatical features, simulated foreign features, and total absence of language characteristics. The essential character of this new

movement is therefore at variance with the biblical phenomenon of speaking in known languages." [27] Thus we conclude that modern tongues-speaking contradicts the clear testimony of Scripture, as well as objective empirical findings. Here is a challenge to any Pentecostal or Charismatic: tape your church service and have the "tongues" that are spoken analyzed objectively.

There are a number of other indicators that reveal modern tongues to be a fraud. Charismatics are *taught* how to speak with "tongues." They are told things such as, "Now pray audibly but don't speak English." Or, "Start to speak syllables—just let it flow." Many Charismatics learn how to speak in "tongues" (gibberish) by imitating others in their church or at a conference. Do we encounter anyone in the New Testament being *taught* how to pray in tongues? No, the exact opposite is the case. Those who speak in tongues in the book of Acts, for example, never ask what to do, and are never told to do or say anything. In the biblical accounts people speak in tongues spontaneously. In Acts 2:4, 10:46 and 19:6, those who spoke in tongues did so with no prompting or preparation. In fact, in each case, those who spoke in tongues, prior to the moment they spoke in tongues, did not know such a thing as tongues even existed! Thus, not only is modern tongues gibberatic nonsense compared with the real foreign languages spoken in the New Testament, but also the way in which Charismatics receive tongues is completely different than that in the biblical record. [28]

If modern "tongues" (i.e., gibberish) are completely different than tongues in Scripture (which were real, foreign languages), what happened to real, biblical tongues? The Bible teaches that tongues and the other supernatural sign gifts ceased.

> Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be *done away*; if there are tongues, they will *cease*; if there is knowledge, it will be *done away.* For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. When I was a child, I used to

> speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known (1 Cor. 13:8-12 NASB).

Paul contrasts the revelatory gifts of prophecy, special knowledge and tongues, which by nature are piecemeal and incomplete, with the complete canon of Scripture (which was completed with the 27 books of the N.T.).

> That which was to supersede the partial and do away with it was something designated "perfect." "But when the *perfect* comes, the partial will be done away." It is difficult to miss the antithetic parallel between the "partial" thing and the "perfect" ("complete, mature, full") thing. Since the "partial" speaks of prophecy and other modes of revelational insight (v. 8), then it would seem that the "perfect," which would supplant these, represents the perfect and final New Testament Scripture (Jas. 1:21). This is due to the fact that modes of revelation are being purposely contrasted. Thus, it makes the man of God adequately equipped to all the tasks before him (2 Tim. 3:16-17). In other words, there is a coming time when will occur the *completion* of the revelatory process of God. [29]

The primary objection used against this passage by Charismatics has to do with the phrase "face to face." They argue that this expression refers to seeing Christ "face to face" at the second coming; thus, the supernatural gifts are to continue until the second coming. The problem with this interpretation is twofold. First, "face to face" is an adverbial phrase; it does not have an object. [30] Second, "face to face" is contrasted with a "dim mirror." Since "face to face" is adverbial without an object, the idea that it refers to Christ must be assumed or inferred. And since Paul has been contrasting forms of revelation throughout verses 8-12, it

makes much more sense to interpret “face to face” in the sense of clearness (or perspicuity), in contrast to the dim mirror (the incomplete or piecemeal).

There are other problems associated with the Charismatics’ practice of speaking in “tongues.” Rather than desiring the best gifts (1 Cor. 12:31), they seek *the gift ranked dead-last* in the Apostle’s enumeration (12:28). There is often speaking in “tongues” *without proper interpretation* (contrary to 14:28); unless this requirement is met, it does absolutely nothing to edify the church (14:4-5). The biblical requirement of speaking *in turn* is frequently not observed (14:27, 30); rather, a number of individuals speak at the same time (this lapse in proper church order is inexcusable, for “the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets,” 14:32). Furthermore, the common practice in Charismatic churches is *to allow women to speak* in the assembly (not a few Charismatic churches are even pastored by women). Women are absolutely forbidden to speak or teach in church but are commanded to keep silent (14:33-34).

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be *complete*, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Since we have a completed canon, and since the Bible is all we need for salvation, life and godliness, what purpose do modern tongues and prophecy serve? Speaking in tongues was one of the signs of an apostle (2 Cor. 12:12); once the apostles passed off the scene, there was no more need for their distinguishing signs. The historical fact that real tongues and prophecy ceased with the completion of Scripture, and the fact that modern tongues and prophecy bear no resemblance to what occurred during the days of the apostles, proves that the central distinctives of the Charismatic movement are unbiblical.

**Prophecy**

Is God still speaking to His church through direct revelation? Is the

office of prophet still operational in the body of Christ today? Charismatics teach that we are still receiving direct revelation from God. Many Charismatics are uncomfortable regarding the idea that modern prophecy is equal with Scripture. Therefore, they have developed the notion that New Testament prophecy is somehow a lesser revelation. In order properly to answer these questions, we must answer the question, what is prophecy?

In order to disprove the popular Charismatic conception of the New Testament prophet as giving forth revelation that is something less than Scripture, we must examine the continuity between the Old Testament prophet and the New Testament prophet. The passage which sets forth the divine legislation which defined the office of prophet is Deuteronomy 18. Note that the true prophet speaks the very words of God: whatever the Lord has commanded him to speak.

> The prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die. And if you say in your heart, "How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?"—when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him (Deut. 18:20-22).

There are two methods for determining a true prophet. First, the prophet must speak in the name of the true God—that is, the prophet must have correct theology. Second, whatever the prophet prophecies must come to pass with 100% accuracy—anything less demanded death by stoning. If someone claims to have the gift of prophecy yet never gives a *specific* prophecy by which that prophet can be objectively tested, we have absolutely no reason to believe or fear that so called "prophet." What gave the Old Testament prophets unique authority and objective validation, even to

unbelievers, was the fact that what they said truly came to pass. Without the specific predictive element, the prophets would have been no more than teachers of the law.

The test of a true prophet also applies to New Testament prophets, for there is a definite continuity between the Old Testament prophet and New Testament prophet. After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the church, Peter quoted the prophet Joel: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams.... I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophecy” (Ac. 2:17-18). Note that the New Testament prophet was involved in exactly the same phenomena associated with the Old Testament prophet: dreams, visions, and prophecy (cf. Num. 12:6). “Thus we have prophecy of the Old Testament type (familiar Old Testament prophetic modes) entering into the New Testament era, and in fulfillment of a specific Old Testament prophet’s word. And this is according to Peter’s divinely inspired interpretation of Joel.” [31] This continuation of Old Testament prophecy into the New is confirmed by the New Testament prophet Agabus. Agabus spoke the very words of the Holy Spirit. By speaking God’s words, Agabus, like the Old Testament prophet, revealed the future.

> A certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. When he had come to us, he took Paul’s belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, “Thus says the Holy Spirit, ‘So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver [him] into the hands of the Gentiles’” (Ac. 21:10-11).

That the New Testament prophet actually speaks direct words form God, and is not merely a teacher or preacher, is supported by Paul: “And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries...” (1 Cor. 13:2). The word “mystery” in the New Testament does not mean the same thing as our English word.

Edwards writes,

> In the NT the word occurs 27 or...28 [times]; chiefly in Paul.... It bears its ancient sense of a revealed secret, not its modern sense of that which cannot be fathomed or comprehended.... (2) By far the most common meaning in the NT is that which is so characteristic of Paul, viz., a Divine truth once hidden, but now revealed in the gospel.... (a) It should be noted how closely "mystery" is associated with "revelation"...as well as with words of similar import.... "Mystery" and "revelation" are in fact correlative and almost synonymous terms.... [32]

The prophet reveals to the church a mystery or mysteries from God. He reveals something previously unknown, something new revealed for the first time.

Paul specifically says in 1 Corinthians 14 that prophets receive "revelation": "Let two or three prophets speak, and let the other judge. But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent" (1 Cor. 14:30; cf. v. 26, "has a revelation").

> Revelation (*apokalupsis*), [is] a disclosure of something that was before unknown; and divine revelation is the direct communication of truths before unknown from God to men. The disclosure may be made by dreams, visions, oral communication or otherwise (Dan. 2:19; 1 Cor. 14:26; 2 Cor. 12:1; Gal. 1:12; Rev. 1:1). [33]

The fact that the New Testament prophetic office is revelatory like the Old Testament office is clearly taught by Paul's use of "mystery" and "revelation." Note how he pulls both terms together in Ephesians 3:3-5: "By *revelation* He made known to me the *mystery* (as I wrote before in a few words, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the *mystery* of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it

has now been *revealed by the Spirit* to His holy apostles and prophets." [34]

Thus, the prophets of God in both the old and new covenants spoke under divine inspiration. They could give fully authoritative pronouncements, such as when the Holy Spirit *ordered* the church to send out Paul and Barnabas as missionaries. They could by inspiration tell the future (e.g., Agabus). They could speak mysteries. The prophets could literally give the church new authoritative doctrine. The apostles and prophets, by divine inspiration, explained to the church the meaning of Christ's death. The Holy Spirit revealed to the church that the ceremonial laws of the old covenant were put away, and the middle wall of partition has been broken down; thus, God only has one people: those who are in Christ. All the various implications of the cross needed revelational (spirit-inspired) explanation. The reason it is important to define the nature of New Testament prophecy is because most Charismatics, either explicitly or implicitly, regard prophecy as less revelational and authoritative than Scripture. The fact that not all inspired prophetic statements were inscripturated or placed in the canon (the 66 books) is not important to this discussion, because not all the apostles' inspired statements or writings made it into the canon either (e.g., the lost letter of Paul to the Corinthians). When a Charismatic says that much of what a New Testament prophet does is not predicting the future but giving exhortation, he may be correct. But prophetic exhortation is not just sanctified advice; it is not just the exposition of Scripture. It is Spirit-inspired, revelational exhortation. It has the same authority as Scripture; it is a "Thus-saith-the-Lord" exhortation.

The author attended Charismatic churches for over three years and heard hundreds of "prophecies." Yet never once did he hear *new* doctrine. In fact, when a "prophet" did speak forth new doctrine, the pastor and elders would tell that "prophet" to shut up. In the many instances where "prophets" ordered people to do things (e.g., "Mary, God told me that you should marry John") people

learned real fast that such exhortations should be taken with a large grain of salt! Why? Because modern Charismatic prophets simply cannot be trusted. They are about as dependable as throwing a pair of dice. Thus, even most Charismatics don't take their exhortations and prophecies seriously.

Why do Charismatics go out of their way to redefine prophecy as something less than it actually was in the New Testament? [35] The primary reason is that most Charismatics realize that modern Pentecostal prophecy is really not the same as Old Testament and New Testament prophecy. If Charismatics did not redefine prophecy as basically nothing more than "vague" spiritual exhortations, then their prophets would be subject to objective verification. Compare a typical biblical prophecy with a typical modern Charismatic prophecy. Elijah the Tishbite came and prophesied to evil King Ahab and his wicked wife, Jezebel. Note the *specificity*: Ahab's family will be cut off (i.e., murdered; 1 Kgs. 21:21). Ahab's posterity will be cut off after Ahab is dead (v. 29). Ahab's wife will be eaten by dogs by the wall of Jezreel (v. 23). In the exact spot where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth (whom Ahab murdered) the dogs will lick up Ahab's blood. These prophecies were fulfilled perfectly (cf. 1 Kgs. 22:34-39; 2 Kgs. 9:32-37, 10:7-11). After the last of these prophecies was fulfilled, God says: "Know now that nothing shall fall to the earth of the word of the Lord which the Lord spoke concerning the house of Ahab; for the Lord has done what He spoke by His servant Elijah" (2 Kgs. 10:10).

Now compare Elijah's prophecy to the typical Charismatic "prophecy": "Oh, come unto Me, my people. If you return to Me, I will bless you. If you come close to Me, I will love you and bless you," etc. This kind of vague, nonspecific sort of "prophecy" can never be confirmed as real, because it contains nothing specific regarding the future. Moreover, when Charismatics do go out on a limb and get specific, what happens? They are consistently proven wrong, time after time.

With the literally thousands of Charismatic prophets throughout the United States, we should expect to find at least a few that can meet the test of true prophet given in Deuteronomy 18. *The truth is that there are no real prophets today*, because prophecy, like tongues, ceased when the New Testament Scriptures were completed. Remember that God set up the sign gifts such as tongues, prophecy, dramatic healings, etc., in such a way that they prove publicly the truth of God's Word. That is why the New Testament prophecies, tongues and healings were seen and known to be real by both Christians and unbelievers. Christ's enemies could not deny that Jesus was working amazing public miracles; they were forced to attribute them to Satan (Mt. 12:24). Paul healed a crippled boy *publicly*; the pagans who observed the miracle could not deny it; they attributed the miracle to their false gods (Ac. 14:11).

The fact that an objective, empirical analysis of modern Charismatic prophecy proves that what is called prophecy today is *not* the same as New Testament prophecy does not necessarily mean that prophecy has ceased; it just means that the Charismatic claims regarding it being a continuation of what occurred in the days of the apostles are false. To prove that prophecy ceased after the death of the apostles and the close of the canon (the New Testament), one must go to Scripture. One passage which teaches that tongues and prophecy have ceased is 1 Corinthians 13:8-13. That passage was discussed in our consideration of tongues (p. 18). There is another passage which proves that the office of prophet was foundational and temporary; that passage is Ephesians 2:19-22.

> Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling

place of God in the Spirit.

Before discussing the foundational nature of the New Testament offices of apostle and prophet, we must dispense with the notion that Paul is speaking of Old Testament prophets in verse 20. There are several reasons why "prophets" definitely refers to New Testament prophets. First, note that Paul mentions apostles first and prophets second. When discussing the gifts of the Spirit in the New Testament church, Paul follows a consistent pattern. New Testament apostles are always listed first *before* New Testament prophets. "And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets.... Are all apostles? Are all prophets?" (1 Cor. 12:28-29). If Paul had been discussing Old Testament prophets, he would logically have placed them before the apostles and not after. Second, the context within the book of Ephesians shows that Paul is speaking of New Testament prophets. "The mystery of Christ...has *now* been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets" (Eph. 3:4-5). Although Ephesians 3:5 is seven verses after Ephesians 2:20, it is the very next sentence in the Greek. Also, the Greek word *nun* ("now") cannot refer to Old Testament prophets, because the word refers to a present reality (i.e., when Paul wrote the epistle). Third, in Ephesians 4 Paul says very specifically what he means when he says apostles and prophets. He says that after Christ ascended to the Father, He gave gifts to His church (vv. 7-8). In verse 12 he says that these gifts are "for the edifying of the body of Christ" (i.e., the New Testament church). In verse 11 Paul identifies what these New Testament gifts are: "He gave some to be apostles, some prophets." "Since the prophets are gifts given, along with the apostles, as a *consequence* of Christ's victorious ascension, they must be New Testament prophets." [36] Paul mentions apostles and prophets three times in this short epistle, and each time he obviously means the same thing: *New Testament* apostles and prophets.

Paul says that the New Testament offices of apostle and prophet are

foundational to the Christian church.

> A foundation, by the very nature of the case, is laid but once, while the superstructure may be erected over a long period of time. In fact, Paul here clearly implies that the foundation is already laid. He says: "having been built upon the foundation" (*epoikodomethentes*). But he goes on to speak of the building presently "growing" (*auxei*) and "being built together" (*sunoikodomeisthe*) on that foundation. [37]

The picture that Paul sets before us is that of a completed foundation upon which the church of Jesus Christ rests. But the church, unlike the foundation, continues to grow. The verb "to grow" in verse 21 is in the present tense and shows that Christ's church continues to grow even now.

The offices of apostle and prophet were unique to the situation of the church before the completion of the canon. Revelation was needed to produce the New Testament. And before the New Testament was completed, direct revelation was necessary to explain the work of Christ and to meet contemporary needs. Just imagine what it would be like trying to explain the significance of what Christ did without the New Testament! After the New Testament canon was completed and the last prophet and apostle died, the revelatory gifts ceased. This is not only the teaching of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 and Ephesians 2:20; it is also a historical fact.

> From the time of the apostles until the present, the true church has believed the Bible is complete, efficient, sufficient, inerrant, infallible, and authoritative. Any attempts to add to the Bible, to claim further revelation from God, have always resulted in cults, heresy, or the weakening of the body of Christ. Although Charismatics will deny that they are trying to add to Scripture, their views on prophetic utterance, gifts of prophecy, and

> revelation really do just that. As they add—however unwittingly—to God's final revelation, they undermine the uniqueness and authority of the Bible. New revelation, dreams, and visions come to be as binding on the believer's conscience as the Book of Romans or the Gospel of John. [38]

Thus far we have seen that most Charismatics have redefined prophecy as something less revelational and authoritative than what occurred in the days of the apostles. This unbiblical redefining of prophecy allows Charismatics to do two things. First, they avoid the objective verification that the biblical prophets were subject to by giving vague exhortations or nonspecific prophecies (which could easily be made up on the spot by any Christian; their nonspecific prophecies cannot be proven either true or false). Second, by claiming that prophecy is less revelational and authoritative than Scripture, they can claim that they are not adding to Scripture. We have noted that the office of New Testament prophet is a continuation of the Old Testament office. The exhortations and prophecies of the New Testament prophet are Spirit-inspired and equal in authority to Scripture. Furthermore, the Bible teaches that prophecy serves a distinct foundational function in the church because of unique historical circumstances (i.e., an open canon). When the New Testament canon was completed, prophecy ceased, because it was no longer needed.

The description given thus far of the beliefs of Charismatics regarding prophecy does not convey the full truth regarding how bad things are within the Charismatic movement. It would be one thing if Charismatics had a few "prophets" in each church blurting out vague exhortations and nonspecific prophecies. But in actuality, *most Charismatics believe that God speaks to each Spirit-filled Christian directly*; that He leads people to do things apart from the Holy Scriptures. Phrases common in Charismatic circles are "God told me to do this," "The Spirit led me to do that," "Jesus spoke to me and told me such and such." Such thinking leads to

subjectivism and mysticism; it clearly contradicts God's Word. In the days of the apostles, when all the supernatural gifts were being practiced, direct revelation came only by the apostles and prophets (tongues and their interpretation are a form of revelation also). The Apostle Paul specifically says that *not* all had the gift of tongues and that only *some* were prophets (cf. 1 Cor. 12:30; Eph. 4:11). The idea, common in our day, that God leads people directly or communicates with people directly is unbiblical and dangerous. While the majority of Charismatics believe in biblical inerrancy and claim to love the Bible, many are being led about by subjective feelings, impressions and experiences rather than the clear teaching of God's Word.

Our responsibility as believers is not to follow our feelings or impressions but to study the Word of God and apply it to our lives. Everything we need in life for all our decisions can be learned from scriptural principles. Christians must stop believing in mystical impressions and start learning how to deduce truths from Scripture and apply them to ourselves, our families, jobs, schools, civil government, and so on. The Charismatic movement and its implicit subjectivism have caused untold harm to thousands of Christians. The author personally knows of horror stories where immature believers were "led" to do unbiblical and stupid things (e.g., "God led me to quit my job and live in a tent," "God led me to leave my wife," "God told me to marry Mary," "God told me to invest in such and such," etc.). If someone says to you that God spoke to them, say, "Show me in the Bible." When a Christian tells you that God led him to do something, tell him to prove it from the Word of God. *Our freedom from dictatorial pastors, oppressive governments and subjective nonsense is the objective, infallible, sufficient Word of God, the Bible.*

**Signs and miracles**

Charismatics believe that the miraculous sign gifts, including "faith healing," are normative for today. Therefore, they believe that

dramatic miracles are still occurring in the church. Historic Protestantism teaches that the sign gifts served a distinct purpose in the apostolic church—that of authenticating the apostles' teachings. Once the Spirit-inspired teachings concerning the person and work of Christ were inscripturated, the sign gifts ceased, because they were no longer needed. To determine if the sign gifts are still normative, we must answer three questions: What is the purpose of the sign gifts? Did these gifts cease after the completion of the New Testament canon? Are the miracles that are supposedly occurring today the same as those that occurred in the days of Christ and the apostles?

The Bible teaches that signs are public, visible, miraculous events. Their purpose was *not* to give believers exciting worship services [39] or a wonderful experience but to authenticate a divine message or messenger, to prove publicly that the person performing miracles was sent from God. "In Exodus 4:5 God told Moses to perform miracles in order 'That they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers...has appeared to you.' Thus the miracles attested Moses' divine mission." [40]

Elijah was sent to reside with a widow in Zarephath (1 Kgs. 17). After the widow's son died, Elijah prayed to God, and God revived her son. What was the widow's response? "Now by this [miracle] I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is the truth" (v. 24). When Jesus was asked at the Feast of Dedication if He was the Christ, He said, "I told you, and you did not believe. The *works* that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me" (Jn. 10:25). Nicodemus told Christ, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him" (Jn. 3:2). The man born blind chided the Pharisees for not knowing that Jesus was sent from God: "You do not know where he is from, and yet he has opened my eyes!... If this man were not from God, he could do nothing" (Jn. 9:30, 33; cf. Mt 9:6; 14:33; Ac. 2:22). The signs that Jesus did authenticated both Him and His message. His greatest

sign, of course, was His resurrection from the dead (Mt. 12:38-40).

The Apostle Paul tells the Corinthians that the miracles he performed proved his apostolic authority. “Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds” (2 Cor. 12:12). If miraculous signs were common in Paul’s day, such a statement would have proved nothing. Miracles were never an end in themselves but authenticated the apostolic message in the first century church. When Paul and Barnabas preached, the Lord, “was *bearing witness* to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands” (Ac. 14:3; Barnabas is called an apostle in v. 14).

The author of Hebrews asks, “How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, *God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit*, according to His own will?” (Heb. 2:3-4). The passage refers to those who heard Christ—the apostles. A prerequisite of being an apostle was to have seen the resurrected Christ (Ac. 1:21-22; cf. 1 Cor. 9:1). Paul says that he was *the last* living person to see the risen Lord (1 Cor. 15:7-8). If the purpose of the sign gifts was to authenticate the apostles as true messengers God, and the apostles are all dead, then the sign gifts are no longer needed; they have served their purpose. If a modern faith healer claims to have seen the resurrected Christ, he is a liar. [41]

B. B. Warfield did an intensive historical study of miracles and concluded that miracles did, in fact, cease after the death of the apostles. [42] He noted that as heresy and superstition increased in the papal church, so did the accounts of “miracles.” These “miracles” were obviously fraudulent, because they were associated with gross heresy, idolatry and superstition (e.g., being sprinkled with Mary’s breast milk, or touching a piece of the cross, or placing

the eucharist on a person's forehead). The Reformation, with its solid biblical theology, discarded all such nonsense and pointed people back to the pure, infallible, sufficient Word of God. Sadly, the Charismatic movement is turning from the purity of Reformation doctrine back toward the subjectivism, mysticism and superstition of Rome.

> The fact that...glossolalia were virtually absent during eighteen hundred years and the fact that the gifts of healing which the apostles possessed were no longer in evidence after the apostles had died should certainly give us pause. The testimony of church history would seem to be that the Spirit has not continued to bestow these gifts on God's people, even though he has continued to guide the [true] church into all the truth. If these miraculous gifts were intended to remain in the church, why did they disappear? If these gifts are essential to the life of the church, why did God withhold them from His people? The conclusion seems inescapable: these gifts were never intended to remain in the church. [43]

If real, dramatic sign miracles are still occurring today, they should be easy to verify objectively. A brief comparison between the New Testament gift of healing and that practiced by Charismatics will prove that Charismatic faith healers are fraudulent. Jesus and the apostles healed many people with a word or touch (e.g., Mt. 8:6-7; Ac. 9:32-35). They healed instantaneously (Mt. 8:13; Mk. 5:29; Ac. 3:2-8). They healed totally not partially (Jn. 9:7; Ac. 9:34). They were able to heal everyone who believed (Lk. 4:40; Ac. 5:12-16; 28:9). They were able to heal serious organic disease, crippled bodies and birth defects (Lk. 6:6, 17; Jn. 9:7; Ac. 3:6-8; 5:16; 8:7). They cast out demons (Lk. 13:32; 10:17; Ac. 10:38) and raised the dead (Lk. 7:11-16; Mk. 5:22-24, 35-43; Jn. 11:43-44; Ac. 9:26-42; 20:9-12).

There are a number of serious discrepancies between the healing

miracles in the Bible and what is supposedly occurring today. Most healings performed by Christ and the apostles occurred in public places, in front of unbelievers. They did not hold healing services; they healed people right out in the open, even in front of their enemies (e.g., Lk. 5:22-26; Ac. 3:4-10). Have you ever seen a modern faith healer go into a major hospital and heal the sick? Have you ever seen one heal someone on the steps of city hall, in a shopping mall, or at a public park? If these faith healers have the same ability as the apostles, why do they do their "healings" in church buildings, in front of people who already believe? Signs are given for unbelievers; Christians do not need to be convinced that Jesus is the Christ—they already believe.

Christ and the apostles healed people who were generally known to be suffering from illness. Peter healed a man "lame from his mother's womb" who begged daily at the temple. Afterward, the people "*knew* that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what happened to him" (Ac. 3:10). Christ healed a man who couldn't walk for thirty eight years, who lay daily by the pool of Bethesda (Jn. 5:2-15). If you go to the typical faith healing crusade what do you see? A room full of total strangers. Virtually anyone could throw away a pair of crutches, and no one would really know if a healing had taken place or not. Why don't modern faith healers do what Christ and the apostles did and perform a public healing on someone that everyone knows is crippled? The answer is simple: they can't.

> 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? It isn't happening. Why? Because those who claim the gift of healing don't really have it. [44]

If miraculous healings were still occurring today, it would be very easy to prove. Anyone could take a camcorder to the healing crusade and film the miracle for all to see. But why is this not happening? Because the supposed healings taking place today prove nothing. The typical Charismatic healing deals with back pain, hemorrhoids, leg lengthening (not by two feet but half an inch), headaches etc. Christ restored a man's hand that was lifeless and withered; the "hand was restored as whole as the other" right in front of Christ's enemies (Lk. 6:10). They could not deny the miracle. On another occasion, Jesus restored a man's ear that had been cut off, right in front of His enemies (Lk. 22:51-52). Are modern faith healers restoring amputated limbs? Of course not. Can you go to a healing crusade and observe a withered hand restored right in front of your eyes? No, it's not happening. If Charismatics were healing crippled legs, withered hands, cut-off ears, blind eyes, deaf ears, palsy, hemorrhages, etc., like Christ and the apostles, they would be on the nightly news, *60 Minutes* and *20/20*. Sadly, the only Charismatic faith healers who make the news are there because of fraud, adultery, theft, prostitution, and the like.

Christ and the apostles raised the dead. Jesus raised the widow's son who was dead and already in a casket; afterward, the account of what Christ did "went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region" (Lk. 7:11-17). He brought to life a synagogue ruler's daughter (Mk. 5:35-43). Lazarus had been dead for four days and was starting to rot. When Jesus "cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus come forth!'" Lazarus rose from the dead in front of many Jews (Jn. 11:43-45). Paul raised the young man Eutychus who had fallen out of a window and died (Ac. 20:9-12). He probably had a cracked skull, broken bones and serious internal injuries, yet he was completely healed in an instant! The Apostle Peter raised the godly

widow Dorcas from the dead (Ac. 9:36-42).

Are modern faith healers raising the dead to life? Have they ever stopped at the scene of a fatal car accident and restored shattered bodies to life, as Paul did with Eutychus? Have they ever walked up to a coffin at a funeral and simply spoken the word of life to the dead? “It is interesting to note that those claiming the gift of healing today do not spend much time in funeral parlors, with funeral processions, or in cemeteries. The reason is obvious” (MacArthur, p. 145). While there are stories on Christian television shows of those who supposedly died and then came back to life, these stories cannot be verified. If Charismatic healers could raise the dead, like Christ and the apostles, then they could prove it by doing it in front of a large group of witnesses.

**Conclusion**

The Bible teaches that miraculous sign gifts served a distinct purpose; once that purpose was accomplished, they ceased. Modern tongues, prophecy and faith healing do not even remotely resemble what took place during the days of Christ and the apostles. The objective testimony of history is that these miraculous gifts ceased after the completion of the New Testament canon. Christ and the apostles did their miracles openly, even in front of their enemies. We challenge our Charismatic brothers to do likewise and prove to the world and non-Charismatic Christians that these gifts are real. Until there is biblical and empirical evidence to support Charismatic claims, we must regard the distinctives of the Charismatic movement to be bogus and fraudulent (2 Cor. 13:1). While we believe that modern faith healers are living in self-deception and (knowingly or unknowingly) committing fraud, we also believe that God heals His people with prayer. If you are presently attending a Charismatic church, you are exhorted to leave and attend a church that focuses on the truth as revealed in Scripture. God is not impressed by large numbers, silly entertainment and the phony miracles of modern Charismatic

preachers. He wants you to attend a church that teaches the truth and worships Him as He has appointed in His Word.

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## Notes

[1] Scripture references are from the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.

[2] Anthony A. Hoekema, *Tongues and Spirit Baptism: A Biblical and Theological Evaluation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), p. 19.

[3] "The fundamental significance of the aorist is to denote action simply as occurring, without reference to its progress.... It presents the action or event as a 'point,' and hence is called 'punctilliar'" (H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (Macmillan, 1969 [1927]), p. 193.

[4] John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The Charismatics: A Doctrinal Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), p. 99.

[5] MacArthur, p. 101.

[6] Hoekema, p. 21.

[7] Every occurrence uses the same Greek word, *en*.

[8] Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., *Perspectives on Pentecost: New Testament Teaching on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (Philipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1979), p. 31.

[9] Hoekema, p. 26 (cf. Ephesians 1:13).

[10] Gaffin, p. 33-34. Cf. "...Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water *by the word*" (Eph. 5:26).

[11] Gaffin, pp. 19-20.

[12] George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925* (New York: Oxford, 1980), p. 93.

[13] The phrase "baptism of the Holy Spirit," commonly used by Charismatics, is unbiblical. The Bible always uses the phrase baptism *in* or *with* (Greek: *en*) the Holy Spirit. This is because the Holy Spirit is not the one baptizing. It is Christ who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. He receives this privilege as the divine-human mediator, as part of His glorification by the Father.

[14] Robert D. Brinsmead, "Justification by Faith and the Charismatic

Movement," *Present Truth* (special issue, 1972), p. 7.

[15] This is the official position of the Assemblies of God, for example: "The baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance" (Constitution of the General Council of the Assemblies of God [Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Publishing House, 1983], V:8). The notion that everyone who receives the baptism in the Spirit should evidence this by speaking in tongues clearly contradicts the Bible. Paul asks, "Do all speak with tongues?" (1 Cor. 12:30); the construction of this rhetorical question demands a *no* answer. Further, he says, "I wish you all spoke with tongues" (1 Cor. 14:5). Clearly, everyone in the Corinthian church did *not* speak with tongues. According to common Charismatic presuppositions, one would have expected that Paul would have lectured the Corinthians on how to receive the Spirit-baptism, so that everyone could speak in tongues. The truth is that tongues, like prophecy, was a gift that only *some* were given.

[16] MacArthur, p. 159.

[17] Gromacki, p. 61.

[18] Ibid., p. 62.

[19] This is evident from the context of the Old Testament quotation (Isa. 28:11). "It is probably correct to see here a reference to the coming of the Assyrians, whose language, naturally, the Judahites would not understand" (Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969], 2:277).

[20] Ibid., p. 64.

[21] J. H. Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 250.

[22] Gaffin, pp. 78-79.

[23] Fredric Louis Godet, *Commentary on First Corinthians* (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1889), p. 663.

[24] What, then, does Paul mean when he says, "I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all" (1 Cor. 14:18)? Does it mean that Paul prayed in tongues in private more than anyone else? No. Paul spoke in tongues more than anyone else because he was constantly preaching the gospel in new areas with different languages and dialects. Thus, Paul, like the apostles in Acts 2, needed the gift of tongues as a *sign to unbelievers* (cf. 1 Cor. 14:22). If Paul had to learn a new language and/or dialect every time he went to a different province or country, the progress of the gospel would have been greatly delayed.

[25] "It is equally clear that *oudeis akouse*, does not mean that tongues were inaudible, or that no one listened to them, but that no one found them intelligible. One might as well have heard nothing" (Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical*

*Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, p. 306).

[26] Gromacki, p. 65.

[27] Ibid., p. 67.

[28] Charismatics are notorious for sloppy, shallow, and even unbiblical theology. Is it not telling that all the great theological works written since the beginning of the Reformation (including works on the Holy Spirit) were written by non-Charismatics: Martin Luther, John Calvin, Zwingli, John Knox, Bucer, George Gillespie, Samuel Rutherford, Jonathan Edwards, John Owen, Charles Hodge, John Murray, etc.? The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. If Charismatic theologians have a greater Spirit-blessing than other theologians, then why are their works sloppy, inferior and even unbiblical (e.g., "name it and claim it")?

[29] Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., *The Charismatic Gift of Prophecy: A Reformed Response to Wayne Gruden* (Memphis: Footstool, 1989), p. 54.

[30] See Gentry, pp. 56-58. Gentry says, "Furthermore, just as 1 Corinthians 13:9 and 10 compose a mutually complementary unit of thought, so do both halves of verse 12. Part a and b of verse 12 clearly form a parallelism:

Now - we see - in a mirror; - then - face to face
Now - we know - in part; - then - I fully know.

The context of 1 Corinthians 12-14 explains *modes of revelation*, some of which are piecemeal, as we have observed. The verse before us seems also to be dealing with revelational modes. It would seem to be putting too literal a construction on the adverbial phrase 'face to face' for it to be equated with Old Testament theophanies" (p. 57).

[31] Gentry, p. 8.

[32] D. Miall Edwards, "Mystery," in James Orr, ed., *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), 3:2104-2105, quoted by Gentry, p. 24.

[33] John McClintock and James Strong, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Exegetical Literature* (New York: Harper, 1879), 8:1061.

[34] "Now in the church in Antioch there were certain prophets.... As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, *the Holy Spirit said*, 'Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them'" (Acts 13:1-2). Not only do prophets speak the very Word of God, their inspired utterances carry the full authority of Holy Scripture. The Holy Spirit, speaking through prophets, gives a divine imperative (a command). The disciples have no choice but to obey.

[35] The passage in Acts 21:10-11 regarding the binding of Paul is used as a major proof text by those who argue that N.T. prophecy is different than O.T. prophecy; that it is a lesser form of revelation in which inaccuracies (i.e., mistakes) are permissible and even

the norm. They argue that both of Agabus' predictions were not accurate: Paul was *not* "bound" by the Jews and that the Jews did not "deliver" Paul into the hands of the Gentiles. Such a view, however, is overly simplistic and obviously unscriptural for a number of reasons. First, a careful examination of O.T. prophecy reveals that many O.T. prophecies could be disregarded if treated in the same manner as Agabus' prophecy is treated. John the Baptist is not literally Elijah (cf. Mal. 4:5, Mt. 17:11-12). Second, biblical inerrancy is destroyed if the method of treating Agabus' prophecy by certain Charismatic scholars is applied to Scripture. Peter said that Judas purchased a field with the silver he received for betraying Christ (Ac. 1:18), yet Mt. 27:3-10 notes that the field was bought after his death by the chief priests with his money. In Acts it repeatedly says that the Jews crucified Christ, yet the gospels make it clear that it was the Romans who actually did the crucifying. Third, the passage specifically says, "Thus says the Holy Spirit" (21:11); this is equivalent to the O.T. "Thus says the LORD." The idea that the Holy Spirit can lie or make mistakes is blasphemous, for "it is impossible for God to lie" (Heb. 6:18). One could argue that Agabus lied when he said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit." But if Agabus was a liar, then Paul would have rebuked him. It is obvious that Paul and the Jewish church did not regard Agabus' prophecies as inaccurate, or Agabus as a liar. Fourth, there is no question that the point of the prophecy (that Paul would be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles) took place perfectly. "The prophecy of Agabus in Acts 21 *was* indeed fulfilled in regard to its *fundamental point*. Paul was bound *because of* the Jews' resistance to him (cf. Ac. 21:27-31, 35). The Romans would not have physically bound him if the *Jews* had not instigated the uproar that led to his binding" (Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., *The Charismatic Gift of Prophecy*, p. 43). The common Charismatic treatment of this passage is a grasping after straw.

[36] Gentry, p. 28.

[37] Ibid.

[38] MacArthur, p. 25.

[39] The miracles performed by Christ and the apostles were not done in revival meetings or in worship services. The majority of miracles recorded in the New Testament were done in the open—in public. The few miracles which occurred in a somewhat private setting were not in church but in people's homes. The only recorded instance of a miraculous healing taking place during a church service is in Ac. 20:7-12. Eutychus dozed off during Paul's message and fell three stories to his death. Paul healed him *in the street* where he lay dead, then brought him back to the service. There is no biblical precedent whatsoever for the modern Charismatic healing services conducted today. The biblical pattern is set forth in Jas. 5:14: "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." The elders are to go to the sick person's *home* and pray for him.

[40] Gordon Clark, "Miracles," in Merrill C. Tenney, ed., *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 4:244.

[41] Miracles do not appear in Scripture arbitrarily. They are clustered around major

events in Israel's salvation-history. There are three major periods of signs within the Bible. The first occurs during the exodus from Egypt and the conquest of Canaan. The signs authenticated Moses and Joshua before the pagan world and God's people. This was a period of great revelatory activity (e.g., the five books of Moses). The second period encompassed the ministries of Elijah and Elisha. Elijah's ministry is at the beginning of the great prophetic period. The prophets explained the law and revealed the coming Messiah. The third great period of miracles and revelatory activity is the ministry of Christ and the apostles. The apostles explained the person and work of Christ by the Holy Spirit. Christ is the finality and focus of all revelation. "God, who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things..." (Heb. 1:1-2).

[42] Benjamin B. Warfield, *Counterfeit Miracles* (New York: Scribners, 1918).

[43] Hoekema, p. 65. Another question needs to be asked: why did none of the great Protestant Reformers such as Luther, Calvin or Knox exhibit such gifts? These men were used by God to restore the true gospel to a world darkened by Papal heresy. They risked their lives, and through their efforts half of Europe was converted to Christ. Does it make sense that God would ignore the Protestant Reformers yet give miraculous gifts to people of heretical doctrine such as Charles F. Parham, Agnes Ozman and W. J. Seymour? Does the Spirit of truth authenticate heretics?

[44] MacArthur, p. 134. The author personally attended over a hundred "healing services" and crusades. It is significant that almost all modern faith healers operate on the basis of what is called the "word of knowledge." The "faith healer" will stand on stage and say, "There is someone in the balcony who suffers from low back pain. Whoever you are, God is healing you right now." Or "Come on down; God is going to heal you right now." If the faith healer uses the second option, he will lay hands on the "sick" person, tell him that he is healed and send him back to his seat. "Faith healers" on TV use the "word of knowledge" to heal people thousands of miles away. They can even heal people who watch on time-delay or see a rerun. How amazing! There is one problem with the use of the "word of knowledge" technique by modern faith healers: there *is not* a shred of biblical evidence that Christ and the apostles ever used such a method for healing. The "word of knowledge" technique is a twentieth-century phenomenon. In a large church or auditorium anyone can say, "Someone in the balcony has back pain," and be correct. Why? Because back pain, hemorrhoids, intestinal problems, etc. are common. The "word of knowledge" technique is unbiblical and a complete fraud. If God is giving these men information regarding someone in the audience with a disease, why is this information so vague? God knows everything. Why doesn't the faith healer say, "John Robbins, you have lower back pain; come on down and be healed"? The information is vague because it does not come from God. Two popular faith healers that *did* give specific names, addresses, and exact medical problems were both exposed as frauds (their wives were backstage giving them information over a radio receiver). If God can give a prophet exact information 500 years before it happens, could He not tell Pat Robertson the name of the person whose hemorrhoids are being healed in Dallas, Texas?

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