17 REASONS why I left the TONGUES MOVEMENT

eBook

Alfred H. Pohl

17 Reasons Why I Left The Tongues Movement
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Dedication

To my wife, Minnie,
loving and loyal companion
on life's journey.

Acknowledgments

The author gratefully acknowledges the help of those dear fellow Christians who have supported us in this ministry, both in prayer and financially, and made the publishing of this fourth printing possible.
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Also by the author:

Receptions of the Holy Spirit in ACTS

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Foreword

Many have asked, “Why did you leave the Tongues Movement?” In this book I have attempted to give my major reasons for doing so. These I present. not in a spirit of controversy, but With a sincere desire to help those who are seriously seeking a scriptural answer in these days of bewildering teaching and confusion.

Should, through the reading of this testimony, someone be helped, I will be most grateful. All glory to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ!

A.H. Pohl
Three Hills, Alberta
July 3, 1982

Foreword to Fourth Printing

About 18 years have passed since the first printing of this book. Obviously it has been helpful to many of God’s children for which I sincerely thank the Lord. Continued demands have resulted in this 4th English edition.

Requests for the book in other languages have brought about four major language editions: Spanish (2 printings; Czech; Burmese; Portuguese, and several tribal language printings. The many letters and phone calls expressing appreciation for help received have been most encouraging. May the Lord bless this edition .. also! Amen.

A.H. Pohl
Westbank, BC
March 2001

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17 Reasons Why I Left the Tongues Movement

After a service one evening a Christian brother, who is a minister in the Pentecostal Movement, approached me and asked, “Can you tell me in a sentence or two why you left the Pentecostal Movement?” He was asking for an impossibility! How could I condense all that was involved in a major, life-altering decision into one or two sentences? I left for a number of reasons, and just simply to itemize them without a good explanation backed up by Scripture would accomplish very little and could actually result in misunderstanding.

In this testimony I purpose not only to list some of the main reasons why I left or why I am not in the Tongues Movement today, but also expand on each one, at least to some extent, as space will allow. References made to tongues-speaking, Pentecostal, Full Gospel teachings will of necessity be more to those of the mainstream of that Movement, although there are many differing views and doctrines in Pentecostalism. This has resulted in the formation of many different Pentecostal-Tongues denominations. All Tongues people are not in full agreement on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Some ask why I left pastoral work to engage in a traveling ministry majoring largely in teaching the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Much of my ministry now involves messages of warning to God’s people. Is this justified? Is it loving to speak on this subject when feelings are very tender in this area? In answer, I suggest for your consideration the following three reasons:

1. God’s minister must preach the whole counsel of God.

Paul; in Acts 20:20 and 27 said: "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you," and "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." I personally believe, that, to a large extent, failure on the part of fundamental and non-Tongues ministers to teach and preach boldly and plainly the true doctrine of the Holy Spirit to our people has:

a) been unfair and unloving to our congregations, and

b) in many cases has resulted in these untaught ones being ensnared in wrong teaching, and

c) has contributed to split or divided churches, etc.

Let me ask you, why should we not teach the doctrines that we believe in our own churches? We owe that to our people as well as to those who might consider joining. Do they know what they are joining? That could save a great deal of heartache for all concerned later on. Certainly, we must not teach with malice but in love (Eph. 4: 15). But failure to give sound teaching on the Holy Spirit to avoid hard feelings now or fearing fanaticism isn't going to cause our people to *"grow up into Him (Christ) in all things"* (Eph, 4:15). They will be unprepared for the winds of false doctrine that are bound to sweep over the land.

2. The most loving thing God's minister can do is to both proclaim and defend the Truth of God's Word.

This is not only my **right** but also my **obligation! I,** as God's ambassador, am responsible to teach God's people. Failure to do so may result in some of them being led astray. Who will receive the blame?

3. A true minister of the Word must have, along with the theme of exalting Christ, a note of warning.

Paul did. In Acts 20:31, speaking to the Ephesian elders, he said: "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to *warn every one* night and day with tears." Again, in Colossians 1:28 he said: "Whom we preach,

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(that is, Christ) *warning every man*, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

A note of warning is an important part of the message of God's minister. It is not easy or pleasant, but essential. If I knew that the bridge down the road was washed out, and I saw you coming down the road in your car heading for danger, what kind of friend would I be if I simply smiled, waved a greeting, and shouted, "Have a good day"? We need to warn because we love God, His people and the Word of God!

I want to make it clear that I am not a *crusader against* the Tongues-Charismatic Movement. Rather, I am, if you will, a *crusader* for the Truth. I believe that, wherever. the Scriptures cut across error and false doctrine, we need to take our stand for the final authority of God's Word. This I had to do, at great cost, in my own life. I am not against Tongues people, though I can't agree with their teachings. But I am making myself available to help them and those who are confused and unsure as to what God actually has for them according to His will expressed in the Scriptures. I believe that the Lord brought me up this road that, knowing by personal experience the pitfalls and problems involved, I might be able to help and minister to others in similar circumstances.

It is my desire also to help many to a realization of what the true Spirit-filled life really is. I believe that we, in the Tongues Movement, made a serious error by putting so much emphasis upon tongues speaking, so much so, that we missed something very important. Being so occupied with what we considered to be the evidence of being Spirit-filled, namely, tongues speaking, we, to a great extent, missed the real meaning and significance of the biblical Spirit-filled life. It is this genuine Spirit filled life that I am concerned about and

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want so much to see lived by God's people today, and I'm sure that many of you share this concern with me.

Two Extremes

There are two extremes, I believe, that we have to avoid: first, when there is no fire in the church—cold, formal, dead; and, secondly, when there is *wildfire* in the church. Which of these present the greater danger? Certainly cold, dead formalism does not produce fruit and life. But, on the other hand, think of the harm and reproach that is produced by an unbalanced, extreme, fanatical type of church activity. A good rule to follow is "AVOID EXTREMES!"

In 1 Corinthians 14:26 we are told: "Let all things be done unto edifying," and in verse 40 we read: "Let all things be done decently and in order." I know a little about the "wildfire" extreme, and know what harm it can do. But it is also dangerous to slip into the other extreme of being too cold and formal. Let us remember that we are the possessors of eternal life. We believers in Christ have that "abundant life" Christ spoke often John 10:10. Let us be reminded that there is a real, genuine, scriptural, Spirit-filled, Spirit-led, Spirit-controlled life that each of us who are believers should know in our everyday activity and experience (Eph. 5:18).

Many today are questioning and desiring greater depth and reality in their Christian lives. This is very commendable! As they see coldness and perhaps very little emphasis on the Spirit-filled life in their churches, they begin to ask whether their answer might not be in the Charismatic Movement. It is to meet some of these needs that I am directing my ministry now as the Lord enables.

May I here just briefly suggest the solution to this problem? (I will expand on this further toward the end of this book.) The answer for these Christians will not be found in fanaticism but in a right understanding of Bible teaching on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and His work in the believer

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and in the church. All that we need *we already have potentially in the INDWELLING Holy Spirit*. Now, it is up to us to appropriate it or yield to the Holy Spirit's ministry in and through us. The answer, I repeat, is not in the extreme of fanaticism or "wildfire."

Personal History

Now for a brief view of my personal history in the Tongues Movement:

I belonged to the Apostolic Church of Pentecost of Canada, Incorporated. I was raised in it from childhood, was saved and baptized in it, ordained in it, preached in it, taught in our Bible school for five years, and was our denomination's missionary-secretary for five years—during which time I visited and spoke in most· of our churches across Canada.

I thoroughly enjoyed my work and responsibilities in the Bible school, teaching the Word of God to eager young students. Along with other Bible subjects I taught Missions. I would teach in the school during the winter months and in summer I traveled and ministered in the various churches and camps in the interest of missions. My heart was in missions and I loved the work. I had the joy of seeing a goodly number of our students and others respond to the missionary call, and then to send them out to the mission fields. I was completely satisfied, and seemingly I had found my "niche" in life and in the Lord's work.

But why then did I leave?

I will endeavour first of all to list the major reasons and then elaborate on each one. However, it will impossible to look at each reason thoroughly in the scope of this testimony.

I Left the Tongues Movement because of:

1. Sincere convictions regarding their doctrines, emphases, and practices.

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2. An unsound biblical basis for their doctrine of the Holy Spirit.
3. An overemphasis of one gift of the Holy Spirit.
4. An underemphasis of other doctrines.
5. Their “experience” orientation.
6. The undermining of the personality of the Holy Spirit.
7. Spiritual pride and disunity produced by their doctrine.
8. The teaching that tongues-speaking is a sign of spirituality and even of salvation.
9. Sign-seeking instead of faith.
10. Questionable activities practised and condoned.
11. The fear of questioning the so-called activities of the Holy Spirit.
12. The view that the Corinthian church was a model church.
13. The danger of claiming extra-biblical revelation.
14. The excesses and deceptive practices condoned in divine healing campaigns.
15. The tendency to blind, unquestioning devotion to popular leaders.
16. The possibility that the Charismatic Movement will be instrumental in producing the prophesied world ecumenical church of the last days.
17. Their distortion of the true Spirit-filled life.

Now let's look at each of these reasons in some detail.

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Reason 1
Sincere Convictions Regarding Their Doctrines, Emphases and Practices

As I said before, I was content and happy in my work and position in the Movement. I felt at home in a fellowship that I grew up in, was accepted and appreciated, with no thought at all of ever leaving it. But as, day after day, I taught my classes in Bible school, and was confronted with serious and difficult questions from keen students, I was driven to a deeper study of the Scriptures. Gradually I became aware of serious shortcomings and discrepancies in our *doctrines, emphases* and *practices*.

I discussed some of these disturbing questions with some of our brethren who also questioned some things. Some also finally left the Movement, but others no doubt felt the price of leaving too great. And it was a big price, as I discovered later on. I did not have any ulterior motives for leaving, I can assure you! The Fundamentalists and non-Tongues people were not about to receive us with open arms! I had no offer of churches to pastor or lucrative church positions. On the contrary, we were in a sort of "no-man's land" for about seven years. We had left the Tongues people, being looked upon by some of them as "traitors," and the non-Tongues people weren't sure that they wanted us or could trust us. It was quite a lonely time, for in those days (1950) the gulf between the Fundamentalists and the Pentecostals was very wide.

Today, in many churches and denominations there is practically no gulf at all, with resulting doctrinal confusion and no clear teaching on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

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The dilemma

Eventually I was confronted with a problem: Could I teach something that my denomination stood for, but which I had come to see was not according to the Scriptures? Could I teach something as truth and mislead these trusting students when I myself did not believe it? Ultimately I had to make a decision. What direction was I to take? I couldn't teach something that I didn't believe. I could not mislead others. To teach what I now saw in the Scriptures contrary to the denomination's doctrines would be very unethical. And beyond that, the thought of the final accounting at the Judgment Seat of Christ had to be dealt with. I could not go on.

At the close of the school year my wife and I left the school, my position of Missionary-Secretary, and the denomination as quietly as we could. Our objective was not to disrupt, not to damage or harm, but to leave and find a fellowship where we could serve, teach and preach what we were beginning to see in the Scriptures and to disassociate ourselves from methods and practices that we now felt were unscriptural. God gave us the grace to do it this way, and we thank Him for it! Much that is highly unethical was done and is being done in the name of Christ today. This ought not to be! Many non-Christians exhibit more ethics than some Christians do! Shame on us! If a Christian does not agree with the doctrines of his church, he should not take it upon himself to undermine that church by teaching otherwise in an underhanded manner. If he cannot do this, then, I believe, he (or she) should be ethical enough to quietly leave and find a fellowship that he can fit into. But let’s not break up churches!

Right here I would like to say something about “divisiveness” that is characteristic of some of the Charismatic’s. Why should attempts be made to take over or split churches, all in the Lord’s name but not to the Lord’s

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glory? How much heartache, strife and hatred is generated in these attempts which purportedly should bring about a more spiritual result, when actually the real result often is Corinthian carnality and tragedy. The admonition of Ephesians 4:3 still stands today: "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Almost anyone can disrupt, break up or split a church: that usually isn't very hard to do, but it is the true work of the Holy Spirit that keeps it together. And you, Christian, have the biblical responsibility to work toward unity and harmony in your church! Are you working at it?

I have recently been in a church which was almost split right down the middle by the introduction of Charismatic teaching, with the resulting factions and strife. It was heartrending to see the division and devastation caused, not by the Holy Spirit, for He does not work toward division and strife, but the disruption was the result of the work of our enemy, Satan!

On the other hand, a non-tongues Christian fellowshipping in a tongues-speaking church needs to be ethical, too! If he cannot agree, let him go elsewhere instead of stirring up strife within that church. I say, then, brethren, let us be careful and ethical! God will hold each one of us responsible if we break up, divide, or cause disunity in a church. It is a dangerous matter to "mutilate the Bride of Christ!" Beware! Who dares to lay his hand upon Christ's Body—the Church? (Of course, I am here referring to a true Bible-believing church.) I believe there will be some serious accounting called for at the Judgment Seat of Christ in this regard. Again, let's be careful and ethical!

When we left the Tongues Movement, I had prayed this prayer, "Lord, don't let me become bitter against my brethren!" I knew that the natural tendency would be to fight back when I was accused of ulterior motives or of "denying the Holy Spirit" or of other unpleasant accusations. But I

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thank the Lord that He has most wonderfully answered that prayer! In the light of the Judgment Seat of Christ I am thankful that the Holy Spirit put that prayer in my heart.

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Reason 2
An Unsound Biblical Basis for Their Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

Tongues people build their doctrine of the Holy Spirit largely on the Book of Acts and 1 Corinthians, chapters 12-14. The emphasis falls upon Acts and I recall my own ministry from this book, in which I would formulate doctrine without recognizing that it was a historical book, a record of the Church's beginning and not primarily a book of doctrine as the Epistles are.

My first point, then under this heading is:

Formulating doctrine in the Book of Acts

In studying the Book of Acts, the careful student must recognize several important characteristics of the book. Unless he does, he can come up with strange, peculiar and erroneous doctrines, which in fact, many have done.

Consider with me the following four characteristics of Acts which I have called, **"Keys to a Proper Understanding of the Book of Acts":**

1. That it is, primarily, a historical book, not a doctrinal book as the epistles are.
2. That it is a book recording the transition from the Old Testament to the New Testament, from the Age of Law to the Age of Grace-the Church Age.
3. That it is a book recording the beginnings of the Church.
4. That it is a book that primarily centres around Christ's apostles—it is indeed "The Acts of the Apostles."

My comments on each of these four keys must of necessity be brief here. However, those desiring an expanded study may write for a set of tapes entitled, "The Four Group

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Receptions of the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts," or the book "Receptions of the Holy Spirit in Acts," now available.

Key 1: Acts is primarily, a HISTORICAL BOOK, not a doctrinal book.

On the other hand, the Epistles were written primarily to reveal and teach church doctrine. It is dangerous, then, to begin to formulate our doctrines on the historical happenings in Acts

a) because there is a very real possibility that we will misinterpret the recorded happenings. Obviously, just that is being done, for we do have so many different interpretations, all from the same Book of Acts;

b) because Acts is a book of transition and church beginnings, the full revelation of church truth is not yet there recorded or revealed. That is given to us in the Epistles.

In the Epistles we have the "full bloom" of New Testament revelation or church truth. That that is so, may I remind you of Paul's oft-repeated statement, "Behold, I show you a mystery." What did he mean by "mystery?" Obviously, it was a New Testament truth not formerly revealed, even in Acts, but was being revealed in the Epistles. See 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Ephesians 3:1-6, etc. We must be very careful, then, to look at events in the book of Acts in and with the full light of the Epistles to guide us in formulating our doctrines.

Key 2: Acts is a record of the TRANSITION from the Old Testament to the New Testament, from the Age of Law to the Age of Grace, the Church age.

Unless this fact is recognized we invite the possibility of wrong interpretation. When I teach the book of Acts, I usually suggest seven reasons why it must be considered a book of transition. May I just point out two of these reasons here briefly by asking these questions:

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First, should a believer in the Church age be baptized before or after receiving the Holy Spirit? In Acts 8:12-17 and in Acts 19:5-6 we read that they were baptized before they received the Holy Spirit. But in Acts 10:44-48 they were baptized after. Both practices are recorded in Acts. Which is right?

Secondly, should a believer be baptized in water more than once? In Acts 19:3-5 we read that the twelve men at Ephesus who had already been baptized were re-baptized under Paul's ministry. Why? Is this to be the normal practice throughout the Church age? Or must we here recognize a transition—of Old Testament believers coming into the Church age, into the Church? As we read Acts 19:1-7 carefully, we discover that these twelve men were disciples of John the Baptist coming in transition into the church. Paul recognized the transition, or else, why did he baptize them again? Was it not because he recognized that their first baptism in water was not a valid baptism for believers in the Church age, for "Christians?"

Key 3: Acts is a record of the Church's BEGINNINGS.

Consider this: first, God was introducing a new plan and program, and forming a new body, the Church, which did not exist in the Old Testament but had its beginnings in Acts.

What happened at Pentecost (Acts 2), Samaria (Acts 8), Caesarea (Acts 10) and Ephesus (Acts 19), is not an advance in the old body, that is, the body of Old Testament believers, but, rather, is the beginning of the new Body, the Church.

Secondly, inaugural events usually are unique, onetime events not necessarily repeated thereafter. Just as at the beginning of the Age of Law at Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:16-18), there were certain unusual events which were not repeated, so we can expect that certain unique and unusual events which occurred at the beginning of the Church age, were not meant for duplication throughout the entire Church age.

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Thirdly, events that occurred at the inauguration of the Church do not necessarily have to be adopted as the permanent pattern for the Holy Spirit's ministry throughout the entire Church age.

Key 4: Acts is a book that primarily centres around Christ's APOSTLES.

Note the title, "The Acts of the Apostles." In it the Holy Spirit describes the prominence, the importance, and the authority of these men who were specially chosen by the Lord to personally represent Him in the completion of the laying of the foundation of the church. This is clearly expressed in Ephesians 2:20: "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone."

The Lord Jesus had begun the foundation of the Church, but left the completion of that task to these chosen men to whom He gave, not only great responsibility, but also great authority and power.

To the apostles, and to those whom they authorized, were given credentials, attesting signs, the very attesting signs that Christ Himself had, to enable them to complete the Church's foundation, which, of course, relates to its beginning. That is what Paul is speaking about in 2 Corinthians 12:12: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds." See also Hebrews 2:3-4.

> How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

QUESTION: If every Christian could perform "signs, wonders, mighty deeds," then where or what are the "signs

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of an apostle" that Paul is speaking about? Therefore consider: special sign credentials were given to the apostles for the laying of the church's foundation. These "signs, wonders, mighty deeds" were meant for the church's beginnings or inauguration and not meant to be the normal pattern throughout the entire church age. Yet many are endeavouring to duplicate these things today, the things that belonged to the apostles and the church's beginnings.

In concluding this section, may I repeat that we must be careful about formulating our doctrines in Acts because it is a historical book and not primarily a book of doctrine. We must recognize it's transitional character and also that it is the record of the church's beginnings as God used His specially chosen and empowered apostles to finish the foundation of the church. We should, therefore, understand the events recorded in Acts in the light of the "full-bloom" of divine revelation as given to us in the doctrinal epistles.

For a consideration of 1 Corinthians 12-14, I will make comment under REASON # 12 later in these studies.

Two-stage experience teaching

Another doctrinal error, as I now see it, that is generally believed by Tongues people, and this is also largely based on the book of Acts, is that of a two-stage experience. That is, that at point "A" in time your were saved, and then at point "B," sooner or later, if at all, you experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit with tongues-speaking as the evidence. This view disregards the following:

1. *In the Old Testament, believers did not receive the Holy Spirit and were not indwelt by Him as we Christians now are in the church age* (1 Cor. 6:19-20). Old Testament believers coming into the church in Acts were not experiencing a "second blessing" but actually a "first" as far as the Church or the Body of Christ was concerned. They were not making an advance in the old

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Body but were entering the new Body, the Church.

2. *The normal Church age experience of salvation involves receiving the Holy Spirit at the moment of believing on Christ, and that until a person has received the Holy Spirit he or she does not belong to Christ and to His Body* (Rom. 8:9).

3. *The four group receptions of the Holy Spirit recorded in Acts (chapters 2, 8, 10 and 19) involve the first Church age experience of receiving the Holy Spirit to indwell the Church and the individual believer and not a second, for before Pentecost the Holy Spirit was not yet given* (See In. 7:37-39).

We [in the Pentecostal church] endeavoured to support this two-stage experience teaching from the Book of Acts. However, a thorough study of Acts will show that this view is in error. Again, time does not allow me here to go into detail, but I will refer to one key Scripture that they use very often, and that I myself used to prove this two-staged-experience teaching. It is Acts 19: 1-7. Please take time here to read this portion before you go on.

> And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about

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twelve.

QUESTION: Had these men been "saved" in the normal New Testament sense of the word before Paul met them, and were they now, under Paul's ministry, experiencing a "second blessing," a baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit? Or was this a first encounter with the promised Comforter, the Holy Spirit?

Please Consider:

These men were disciples of John the Baptist (verses 3-4) *and were coming out of the Old Testament into the Church age*.

Remember that Old Testament believers did not receive the indwelling Holy Spirit. So these men, though believers as far as John the Baptist's ministry was concerned, had not yet received the promised Comforter (In. 14:16-18), and they indicated this in verse two when they said, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." That certainly is not the language of any New Testament Christian! They obviously were uninformed of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, etc.

Notice Paul's assessment of their spiritual status. He apparently sensed some lack in these "disciples"; hence his question, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since you believed [or, having believed]?" The Greek here does not indicate a time-lapse between believing and receiving. But with this question, Paul was probing whether they were New Testament believers already who had received the Holy Spirit or if they still were uninformed Old Testament saints. That is why Paul answered them as he did in verse 4:

> John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

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You see, they were still on the other side of the cross and of Pentecost in their experience. And further, Paul recognized this fact by allowing them to now be baptized as Christians in the Church age.

To say then, that these men were "saved" before this meeting with Paul and then received the Holy Spirit here as a "second blessing" is far from the truth. I have a tract published by the Gospel Publishing House, Springfield, Missouri, USA which makes this statement: "The twelve men at Ephesus were saved men—'disciples'—but had not received the Holy Ghost." What an erroneous conclusion! And yet I have to admit that I myself at one time preached that way.

A final QUESTION: If these men were saved Christians before they met Paul, and had not yet received the Holy Spirit, in the light of Epistle teaching as we find it in Romans 8:9 "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His," where then were these men spiritually?

Obviously then, this nineteenth chapter of Acts cannot be used honestly as proof for the teaching of a "second-blessing" experience to be normal for the church age.

The teaching that the Baptism and the Filling of the Holy Spirit are synonymous

Another teaching in which most Tongues people err is that the *baptism* and the *filling* or *fullness* of the Holy Spirit are one and the same. But these are two different and separate ministries of the Holy Spirit. The following is from a Pentecostal church promotional brochure I saw in British Columbia (Canada) in 1978: "The baptism in the Holy Spirit is also called by other suggestive phrases—'Filled with the Holy Spirit,' 'The Gift of the Spirit was poured out,' 'The Promise of the Father,' 'The Holy Spirit came on them,' 'Enduement from on high.'" This failure to distinguish

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between *baptism* and *fullness*, as well as between other ministries and activities of the Holy Spirit has resulted in much confusion.

Spirit baptism is referred to in 1 Corinthians 12:13 as placing us into the Body of Christ—the Church. There we read: "For by one Spirit are [or were] we all baptized into one body." This was a once-and-for-all event not to be repeated and takes place at conversion. But the filling with the Holy Spirit is not a once-for-all event but can be repeated over and over. See Acts 4:8 where Peter is said to be filled with the Holy Spirit though he was filled at Pentecost in Acts 2. In Acts 4:31 we see the whole church group filled again.

This fullness of the Holy Spirit is spoken of in Ephesians 5:18, where we are told: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." Greek scholars inform us that the phrase "be filled with the Spirit" actually means "be constantly under the control of the Spirit." The filling or fullness, then, is not just a once-for-all experience, but a constant, daily life yielded to the control of the Holy Spirit, so that the words, filled or fullness take on the meaning of "full control by the Holy Spirit."

On the other hand, the baptism is a once-for-all placing into the Body of Christ, not to be repeated. We cannot say that these two ministries of the Holy Spirit are identical. A person may be baptized with the Spirit but not filled; but he cannot be filled without being baptized with the Spirit.

Some Tongues-people also teach that there are two Spirit baptisms, one into Christ at conversion, and a second into the Holy Spirit as a subsequent experience. But this teaching is in direct contradiction of Paul's clear declaration that there is only one Spirit baptism—Ephesians 4:5.

Also consider the following:

1. *Nowhere in the New Testament do we read of any Christian experiencing Spirit baptism more than once,*

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but regarding the fullness—yes! In other words, the baptism is not repeatable but the fullness is.

2. *There is no command anywhere in the Epistles that Christians should seek the baptism, but there is for the fullness* (Eph. 5:18).

3. *If baptism is an experience subsequent to conversion and is as important as Tongues-people insist that it is, then is it not strange that there is no reference anywhere in the Epistles to seek the baptism?*

Another unsound teaching of Tongues-people should be mentioned here before we leave this section, and that is that Tongues-speaking is the INITIAL EVIDENCE of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Note the phrase, the "initial evidence." They teach that all Christians should experience the second blessing of the baptism or filling with the accompanying evidence of speaking with tongues. But this does not square with Paul's question, "Do all speak with tongues?" in 1 Corinthians 12:30, where obviously the answer is "No." To get around this they have had to invent the "initial evidence" teaching, which again is based on a questionable interpretation of events in the Book of Acts and is entirely without support from the Epistles. There is not one clear reference in Scripture upon which they can build this particular teaching. And yet it is so basic to their whole system of belief and practice.

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Reason 3
An Overemphasis of One Gift of the Holy Spirit

Have you ever noticed how prone we humans are to go to extremes? This is especially true in religious matters. Observe how some particular doctrine or teaching is emphasized or exalted above other important doctrines. And often the very denominational name indicates this. Take for example the name, "Seventh-Day Adventist." Their name tells what they are emphasizing and consider most important, "Seventh Day" (Sabbath) and "Adventist" (Return of Christ). These are their distinctives and became the reason for their existence as a denomination in the first place. Take other names too—Holiness, Jesus Only Church, Latter Rain Triumphant Church, Foursquare Gospel, Full Gospel, Pentecostal, Charismatic, Pentecostal Fire Baptized Holiness Church, etc. Some of these advertise by their titles what their distinctive doctrines are, and which, in their estimation, are most important doctrines and practices. At least, that's how their denominations began.

It is this overemphasis that explains in part, at least, the existence of so many denominations today. The Pentecostal-Tongues people have exalted the one gift of the Spirit, namely, the gift of tongues, above all the other gifts and out of all proportion. They have exalted it to an unscriptural extreme. In my opinion, they are making the same error that Ellen G. White of Seventh Day Adventism made. She claimed to have seen a vision in which the Fourth Commandment (that of the Sabbath) rose up above the other nine, and was surrounded by a halo of light. From this she concluded that she and her denomination should recognize Sabbath-keeping as the all-important message and doctrine of their church. And so this is where they put their emphasis. To many Pentecostal-Charismatic's, tongues speaking has

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become what "Sabbath-keeping" is to the Seventh-Day Adventist!

Notice this expression of extremism in the following:

Tongues-speaking, according to them, is the evidence of the Baptism or Fullness of the Holy Spirit.

This is the view held by many in the Tongues Movement, but not all subscribe equally to it. I was brought up to believe this and preached it. But this position, I found by study and observation, is untenable [not defendable]. Why?

1. *If tongues speaking is THE evidence, then all other evidences-such as witnessing for God (Acts 4:31), and the Christ-likeness of life, and the fruit of the Spirit* (Gal. 5:22-23)—are ruled out.
2. *Since obviously tongues speaking can be imitated, and is, by heathen, spiritists, etc. it is a questionable evidence*. Deception and counterfeit can enter in. This thought alone should make us to seriously question such teaching.

This is precisely what happened to me while I was still in the Tongues Movement. As denominational Missionary-Secretary I was visiting and ministering in our churches in Ontario one summer. While I was in one of these churches, the pastor approached me about the possibility that he and his family could go to Jamaica as missionaries. I took his application forms back with me to our headquarters in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan [in west central Canada] where I presented them to our Missionary Council. Eventually this family was sent out to Jamaica. Not too long after their arrival there, I received a letter from this brother. Part of this letter reads as follows:

> Throughout Jamaica there is a class of people known as 'Pocomania.' This word means 'half-mad or a little mad.' They believe in all kinds of superstitions

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> and practice all manner of evil. Since they are generally very poor, they usually worship in the open air. A very common sight here is to see groups of these people beating their drums and singing on the streets and along the roads. Last Sunday evening I saw five large groups in about as many city blocks. Often you can hear their drums beating until late at night. They speak in tongues and sing our choruses, and because of this it brings a great reproach upon the true gospel and makes the preaching of the gospel difficult.

I was shocked, particularly by the words, "They speak in tongues." All my life I was taught and myself preached that tongues speaking was THE evidence of Holy Spirit baptism, that all tongues speaking was of God, and now I was informed that heathen also speak with tongues! What was this? Had it not been that I knew the missionary personally I likely would not have believed him. But here was one of our own men telling me this! That really got me thinking and investigating, only to discover that many non-Christians also speak in tongues—heathen witch doctors, spiritists, Mormons, one branch of the Mohammedans, etc.

Once I spoke in a mission church at Alix, Alberta. During my message I mentioned the above incident about Jamaica. When I had concluded my message, a young man from the Cook Islands [near New Zealand], who was in the meeting that night, got up and publicly confirmed what I had said, that heathen also speak in tongues on his island.

So by the teaching that tongues speaking is THE evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the door is opened to the possibility of false or counterfeit tongues being accepted as genuine evidence of the Holy Spirit fullness. On the other hand, what better evidence is there than a transformed life, a Christ-like life with the fruit of the Spirit in manifestation: "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

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meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22-23)? This is difficult to imitate or counterfeit!

I also remember the excitement expressed by some Tongues people who had visited the Mormon Temple at Salt Lake City, Utah [USA]. They told me that they had discovered that Mormons, too, speak with tongues, and they had come away with the impression that there must be a close relationship between them, some kind of spiritual kinship! Apparently, if only they speak with tongues, then some false doctrine can be overlooked! And therein lies a big danger today. The modern (new) Charismatic Movement admits that there are tongues speakers who know no repentance or new birth as we know it and as the Bible teaches it.

Also, as I searched the scriptures, I saw that the prominence that we gave to the gift of tongues was unscriptural

We had fallen into the same error that the Corinthians had. It was to correct them that Paul wrote his first epistle to them. He did not write to encourage them to a greater use of the gift of tongues, but, rather, to correct them in their overemphasis and abuse of that gift. The gift of tongues is clearly one of the lesser gifts. In the list of gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 it, with the sister gift of interpretation of tongues, is last in order. This is also true in the second listing in this same chapter, 1 Corinthians 12:28, where it again is last on the list. Besides, in the other two major lists of the gifts in the Epistles—Ephesians 4:11 and Romans 12:6-8,—the gift of tongues is not mentioned. This should tell us something about the relative importance of this gift.

Then notice Paul's evaluation of the importance of the gift of tongues in 1 Corinthians 14:5-6:

> I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that

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> ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying. Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?

And in 1 Corinthians 14: 19-20:

> 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. Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

We could add one more reference here—1 Corinthians 13:1

> Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

Obviously, these Scriptures teach that the gift of tongues is not the most prominent of the gifts, as the Corinthians mistakenly thought (and as many also do today). It was because of their immaturity in understanding this that Paul added verse 20 of 1 Corinthians 14 to verse 19: "Brethren, be not children in understanding. . ." In other words, he is telling them to "grow up," to "mature." In effect he is saying, "Don't continue in your childish thinking." See 1 Corinthians 3:1-2. where he calls them spiritual "babes." He is saying, "Don't remain in a state of misunderstanding of God's purpose for giving the gift of tongues, but rather, grow up, mature!" He calls for sound and mature thinking, not for a childish preoccupation with one of the lesser gifts.

A Charismatic who encouraged everyone to seek a tongues experience was confronted with the fact that some who had experienced tongues were demonstrating no basic changes in

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their lifestyle, but were still involved in sinful practices. He replied, “Well. if tongues won’t straighten out their lives, I don’t know what will do it.” This is an example of exalting a lesser gift to a place of supreme importance, which is entirely unscriptural. Let us, by careful and prayerful study of the Scriptures, avoid such errors and extremes that do not glorify Christ!

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Reason 4
An Under-emphasis of Other Doctrines, Particularly the Cross-work of Christ

The overemphasis we placed on tongues resulted in an under-emphasis of other important doctrines. Especially was this true regarding the principal and main message of the Church-the preaching of the basic and simple Gospel of Jesus Christ in His death, burial and resurrection (1 Cor. 15:1-4).

QUESTION # 1: Is there anyone doctrine or message that the Church should emphasize above all others?

QUESTION #2: Is there a danger of becoming unbalanced, lopsided?

I believe that the answer to both questions is a definite "Yes!" This becomes clear when we study the Corinthian Epistles. In their overemphasis of tongues they had failed to give the simple Gospel of Christ the place of supreme importance that it should have in the Church. They were majoring in the minors. They had become lopsided in doctrine and consequently in practice. This is a constant danger to the churches, even in our day. We have to be on guard constantly that we do not go to unscriptural extremes. For an example, let me tell you what a Christian brother told me recently about an encounter that he had with a Tongues believer. This man said to my friend, "Brother, have you ever talked in tongues?" My friend's reply was "No." To this he [the charismatic] said, "Well, then, you've got nothing!"

While I, as a young preacher, was ministering in the Tongues Movement, I was informed one day that leaders of our denomination were critical of my preaching. They said that I was preaching the cross too much and not mentioning tongues enough! That greatly disturbed me! I did want the approbation of our Elders, and I did want to do what was

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right. You see, I grew up under the ministry of a godly pastor who knew the gospel and emphasized it. He loved and taught the Book of Romans and emphasized the importance of the cross of Jesus Christ and justification by faith. Now, I was being told to change my emphasis in the ministry. What was I to do?

Once again, I was driven to the Scriptures. The Corinthian church was the great tongues-speaking church, so I began to read and study about the tongues' emphasis. But as I read I discovered that, though I was out of step with the Corinthian church, I really wasn't out of step with Paul. I read in chapter one of 1 Corinthians such verses as 18 and 23:

> For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.
>
> But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.

And verse 24 continues:

> But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

And then when I got to chapter two, verse two, I read these words of Paul to the Corinthian church:

> For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

I was greatly relieved and encouraged. I might have been "out of step" with my denominational leaders but I was "in step" with Paul! I was in good company! For obviously Paul was dealing with the very problem that I was facing.

Did you notice where Paul put his emphasis? Yes, he was determined that nothing, not even tongues speaking, would take the place of the all-important message of the cross—the simple but powerful Gospel of Christ!

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Now please note the words "among you" (1 Cor. 2:2). Paul was writing this to the great tongues-speaking church of his day. (Incidentally, tongues speaking is not mentioned as occurring in any other of the churches to which epistles were written.) Paul, if he had sought popularity and an "in" with the Corinthians should have mentioned the cross plus tongues (perhaps he should have called it the "Full Gospel"), but he didn't! He was "hewing to the line." To Paul the "preaching of the cross" was all-important, and nothing was to detract from it. But in doing so, he made himself one of the most unpopular preachers to the Corinthian church. I think I know a little about that too—"He preaches the cross too much, and doesn't mention tongues enough!"

In his second letter to the Corinthians, chapter 11, verses 3-7, Paul again reminds the Corinthians of the importance of the simple, basic "Gospel of God" in a church's faith and proclamation. We read verse 3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Notice his words, "the simplicity that is in Christ." It is, I repeat, the perennial temptation for a church to drift away from this simplicity of the gospel and add to or subtract from it. Let us beware! Paul then goes on to warn them about ending up with "another Jesus," "another spirit," "another gospel." Sobering words!

One more thought: Have you ever noticed where Paul places his definition of the gospel? Yes, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, the tongues-emphasizing church! But not only that. It follows right after his thorough teaching on the gifts, and particularly his dealing with the gift of tongues in chapters 12-14. We find his gospel definition right in the beginning of chapter 15, verses 1-4. After showing the Corinthians their error of tongues emphasis, Paul now tells them where their emphasis should be. Notice his words:

> Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel

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> which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

Notice how he begins: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel." The word "moreover" is also translated "now." Paul is saying, "Now brethren." Having just concluded his teaching about the tongues-abuse issue in their church, he is saying, in effect, "I have something more important to 'declare unto you'." Imagine Paul having to, at this point in time, declare the gospel to the Corinthian church! You see how far they had drifted from it by wrong emphasis. They had become lopsided, unbalanced. So Paul is forced once again to declare that simple gospel to them that he had preached to them when he started their church.

And the simplicity of that gospel is embodied in the three cardinal points of Paul's definition in verses 3-4: "Christ died for our sins. . .He was buried, and. . .He rose again!" That is the gospel that Paul preached, by which alone sinners are saved, and which was, is, and always will be the paramount message of the Church. Satan will try his utmost to stop that message. Sometimes he uses fanaticism and wrong emphasis on the part of Christians to accomplish his ends.

Let us not disappoint our Lord by not emphasizing the gospel or adding to or subtracting from it. For it alone remains the message of God to a lost world. With Paul (Rom. 1:16), let us always say: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

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Reason 5
Their "Experience" Orientation

To many in the Tongues Movement, experience has become all-important, crowding scriptural teaching into second place. Experience has become the criterion of truth. It is dangerous to build doctrine on experience. The Bible, not our experiences, is the final ground of authority.

I well remember an illustration that was used in my day in the Tongues Movement. A fundamentalist pastor had heard that a coloured boy in his congregation was attending Pentecostal meetings. He took the boy aside to warn him about getting some counterfeit experience. But before he could finish his warning the young lad cleverly replied, "Too late, pastor, me got it!" Now this answer, supposedly making and proving a point and also good for some laughter and Amen's, really can be very misleading. It does not prove that the "experience" is genuine. Secondly, the experience can very easily be misinterpreted and wrongly labelled with a Bible name.

We could ask, "Is this experience really the 'filling' that the Bible speaks about?" Commenting on this, Dr. John F. Walvoord said: "The final test (of any experience) must always be what the Scriptures actually teach."[1]

There are experiences, experiences and experiences. People hear voices, see visions, have dreams, have contacts with non-human beings, fall prostrate on the floor, see lights, and on and on. If we are to believe and accept every one of these as genuine and from God, and build doctrine on them, where would we be? But how then can we know the truth? There is only one way, and that is by testing everything with the straight edge of the ruler of Scripture, not with experience. The error that is often made is to have the "experience" and then try to fit it into the Scriptures and find a "label" for it.

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We must also be very sure that we know what the Scriptures actually teach; otherwise, we can still fit our experiences into the Scriptures, put a Bible label on them, and go on unwittingly attributing our experiences to the work of the Holy Spirit. That this has and is being done, no one can honestly deny.

Some time ago I read of some Brazilian Christians who claimed to have received messages from God that they were to drown their children because of the terrible future they would face if they grew up in this troubled world. The deceived parents murdered their own offspring! Now I'm sure that they were sincere and convinced that the voices they had heard were from. God. But they were sincerely wrong because their action was contrary to the teaching of God's Word, the Scriptures. Remember, an experience does not prove its own genuineness! Also, never bend the Scriptures to accommodate your experiences!

An evangelist spent several hours discussing and examining the basic teaching of the Charismatic Movement in the light of the Scriptures with a Charismatic lady, only to hear her say, "Oh, but my experience!" He then asked her, "Will you take the Scriptures or your experience?" But there was no clear response from her.

When one places experience on an equal footing with Scripture, a grave error is committed. Experience alone can be very deceiving. Notice Christ's warning in Matthew 7:22-23:

> Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

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Here the Lord speaks of miraculous experiences being produced by non-Christians. They had been deceived into believing, by their experiences, that they were instruments of the Lord's power when they actually were workers of iniquity. And notice also, these were using the Lord's name in all of this. Beware of deception, particularly that which is done even using the name of Jesus!

Dr. John F. Walvoord in his book entitled *The Holy Spirit* writes as follows: "The final test must always be what the Scriptures actually teach. Experience may serve as a partial test of the conclusions, but in itself the Bible must be taken as the final authority. Experience ever possesses two fatal grounds for error:

1) a misapprehension of the experience itself in its content and divine origin;

2) a faulty conclusion as to the doctrinal meaning of the experience.

Hence, on the one hand, an experience supposedly of divine origin may be purely psychological, or worse, a deceiving device of Satan himself. On the other hand, a genuine experience may be misunderstood and mislabeled."

Too often the tongues-experience seeker is almost forced to speak in strange sounds, and when he does, that experience is then interpreted for him by some Charismatic and labelled as the "baptism." But is it? Do we take the scriptural teaching for our guide or the words of a man or woman? Dr. Walvoord states:

We are ever prone to interpret Scripture through experience, instead of interpreting experience through Scripture. The factor of human experience is very close to some aspects of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, but experience may not be normal, and if normal may not be properly interpreted. Much harm has come through arbitrary

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doctrines established in the last analysis on experience rather than revelation.[2]

Because "experience" is so much emphasized, there is great danger that some seek for the "experience" instead of the Holy Spirit Himself. In other words, the "gift" becomes more important than the Giver. I am greatly concerned about an expression that I heard very often: "Have you got it, brother?" What is meant by that word "it"? Could "it" refer merely to the experience? I'm afraid that is the meaning to many Tongues people today. It seems to me that the tongues-speaking experience has become a status symbol. It gives them spiritual prestige and makes them "acceptable" to their Charismatic fellows.

Another error, I believe, is the teaching that all the experiences recorded in Scripture should be the normal experience of Christians today. One man, referring to tongues speaking, endeavoured to prove that this experience was for every Christian today because "it's in the Bible." Need we remind ourselves that circumcision is also in the Bible, in the New Testament, even in the book of Acts. Does that mean that all Christians should be circumcised today? What about the "cloven tongues like as of fire" that "sat upon each of them" at Pentecost and the "sound . . . as of a rushing mighty wind?" Are we to seek these experiences today because "they are in the Bible?" We would do well to take heed to the words of one Bible teacher, F.D. Taylor, Sr., who has summarized this question in these words: "All experiences in the Bible were given for instruction, but they were not all given for duplication."[3]

Let us never forget the importance of the teachings of Scripture. In 2 Timothy 3: 16-17 we read: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable (for what?) for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That [that what?] the man of God may be perfect [complete, mature, accomplishing God's purpose],

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throughly furnished unto all good works." It is the Scripture, primarily, and not experiences that can "thoroughly furnish" or equip us for effective living and service for Christ.

It was Peter who, with James and John, witnessed Christ's transfiguration on the mount (Matt. 17:1-9). What an outstanding experience this must have been for him. In his second epistle, chapter one, and verses 15-18 Peter refers to this experience. But now notice what he says in the verses immediately following (19-21). We read in part: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place . . . ." Was Peter building his theology or doctrine on that wonderful experience, or did he have something "more sure?" Yes, he did have something more sure. It was the Word of God that was given through "holy men of God" who "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (verse 21).

In effect, Peter is saying here, "I have something more trustworthy, 'more sure' than that mountain top experience; it is the revealed Word of God spoken by the prophets in the Scriptures." The "more sure" Word of Scripture is the best and final authority, not experience.

A lady who was very much taken up with Charismatic experiences was trying to convince me recently that these were all so wonderful and genuine. I kept referring to the Scriptures and tried to show her that we must be guided by the doctrine of the Scriptures, not by our interpretation of our experiences, and that the Bible is the final authority of truth. After a while she became very much annoyed and said, "Doctrine! Doctrine! I am sick and tired of that word!" Unfortunately, she was putting experience above the Word of God. It is just this attitude and failure to recognize the Scriptures as the supreme and final authority that leads to confusion and often, spiritual shipwreck. Let's build on the solid rock of the Word of God, not on the sinking sand of human experiences and man's interpretation of them!

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In closing this section, let me quote a paragraph from a Christian paper called *Listening:*

Let it be remembered that you cannot trust religious experiences. The first awareness of the Lord, the ecstasy of worship, the physical act of water baptism, the second, third, and hundredth blessing, are all what has happened IN you. Get your confidence on what has happened FOR you. The luster of your experience fades and shines according to your health, your circumstances, your frame of mind. But what the Saviour did for you when He died on the cross, what He is doing now for you living on the throne, and all that is yours in Him never changes because it depends on Him, not on you.[4]

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Reason 6
The Undermining of the Personality of the Holy Spirit

To me it is quite clear that the Bible teaches the personality of the Holy Spirit. The personal pronoun "He" is repeatedly used when referring to the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, many cults deny His personality and think of the Holy Spirit merely as an impersonal force, a power or an influence, but not as a Person.

Shortly before I left the Tongues Movement a very dear Christian brother and Bible teacher pointed out to me that our denomination and Tongues people in general, were, because of our doctrine of the Holy Spirit, gradually slipping into the error of the cults. Though in theory and in our Articles of Faith we subscribed to the personality of the Holy Spirit, yet in practice we looked upon Him largely as a "Power" or an "impersonal force." Actually, to that time I had not noticed this gradual erosion in my own mind. I began to examine his warning and found that it was indeed so. I asked myself, "Why was this trend in our thinking developing?"

I believe that one of the main reasons for this was our emphasis on experience. The Holy Spirit "fullness" became a desirable experience. We became more occupied with the gift than with the Giver. This appears in the oft repeated question, "Have you got it?" or "You've got it!" Let's just analyse that statement: what did we mean by "it"?

1) If all we are concerned about is an experience, then the word "it" would be quite appropriate. And I am afraid that to many that is all that it is.

2) But if we recognize that this is a meeting with or ministry of God the Holy Spirit in us, then we can hardly use the word "it," but rather it should be "Him."

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There is real danger here of being more occupied with the gift than with the Giver.

3) Even if we should say, "I've got Him" do we give the right impression of what the Bible actually teaches? Really, is it a case of us having more of Him or is it not a case of Him having more of us? Does not the Scripture emphasize this, that we should yield our members, ourselves, to the control of the Holy Spirit that Jesus might be the Lord of our lives? Romans 6:13 tells us to "Yield yourselves unto God"; so also verse 19 and Rom. 12:1-2. And add to that the meaning of the words "be filled" in Ephesians 5:18: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." The words "be filled" in Greek mean "be constantly under the control of." Christians are thus commanded and expected to be constantly under the control of the Holy Spirit, or to be "led by the Spirit," or to "walk in the Spirit." The case, then, is that the Holy Spirit, who indwells every believer, should be in control of the yielded bodies of all Christians so that the Lord Jesus might be glorified through them. No, we really are not to seek a greater "portion" of the Holy Spirit, but we ought to make sure that we ourselves are completely yielded to Him, that He has all of us!

This emphasis and use of the word "it" is reflected in a Pentecostal tract that I for some reason, still have in my possession. It is Tract No. 4285, published by the Gospel Publishing House, Springfield, Missouri, entitled, "The Baptism of the Spirit." Let me give you just a few excerpts here to illustrate what I am trying to say: "Down at the house of Cornelius (Romans) they received it eight years after the day of Pentecost . . . . The disciples at Ephesus (Greeks) received it twenty years after the first outpouring . . . Multitudes are receiving it today . . . It is for you . . . We are commanded to seek it . . . Pray for it . . . Praise God for it in

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faith. . . .” I believe that it is this kind of teaching that undermines and erodes our concept of and faith in the personality of the Holy Spirit. I know how it had, unconsciously, affected me.

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Reason 7
Spiritual Pride and Disunity Produced by Their Doctrine

By the very nature of their doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the door is opened to the possibility of spiritual pride entering in, and for the tongues speaker to think of himself as being spiritually superior to the brother who has not had a similar experience. Though this feeling is generally not openly expressed, it is there, nevertheless. I have observed this many times, both in my years in the Movement and also since I left. In case someone might think this to be an unfair appraisal, let me quote from a tract that I have before me right now, written by a well known Pentecostal minister, R.E. McAlister, and published by the Gospel Publishing House, Springfield, MO. It is Evangel Tract No. 251.

It is admitted by Bible students the world over that speaking with tongues as the Spirit gives utterance is a sign. Suppose we ask the question, 'Of what is it a sign?' The answer is found in God's own Word, for we find the sign accompanied the reception of the Holy Spirit when God standardized New Testament Christian experience. It follows logically, then, that only those who have spoken in tongues can lay claim to a normal New Testament experience. All others, regardless of what they profess or claim, ARE BELOW PAR. (Capitalization mine.)

So with the teaching of a second blessing with tongues-speaking evidence comes this inevitable thought: "All others are below par." "I have arrived." "I am on a higher plane." "I am more spiritual."

This reminds me of the same attitude that was so prevalent in the Corinthian church and which Paul deplored. Just recently my attention was drawn to a phrase that Paul used several times in his first letter to the Corinthians. You can

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find it in chapter five, verse two. The phrase is "ye are puffed up." Six times these words appear in this epistle. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* of the Bible informs us that the words "puffed up" mean "inflated." Inflated!

What a description of the spiritual condition of the Corinthian Church! Yes, they had the gifts of the Spirit, and especially the gift of tongues, in operation in their church. They thought themselves to be "spiritual," but were blind to the fact that "spiritual" people are not "proud," They were "puffed up," "inflated," spiritually proud, but from God's viewpoint, they are called "carnal" four times in 1 Corinthians 3:1-4. Why? Because of their spiritual ignorance (1 Cor. 12:1)—their misunderstanding and abuse of the gift of tongues particularly.

That this feeling of superiority and spiritual pride still exists I discovered not long ago. After a Sunday evening service in which I was speaking in a series of messages on the Holy Spirit, a man approached me. He shoved the button in his coat lapel up to my face and asked if I knew what it was. I didn't answer immediately because I had taken my glasses off and couldn't focus my eyes on that button so close to my face. I tried backing up to get it into focus but he kept following me. Before I could read it he said something like this, "You don't know anything about it! If you did you would have recognized it right away." Then he tapped me on the shoulder, as he stood his full height, and looked down at me and said, "Well, I've got more than you have!" With that he turned and strode out of the church. Incidentally, the button he was wearing was that of the Full Gospel Businessmen's Association.

Not only does their doctrine and emphasis produce spiritual pride in some, but it also opens the door to disunity and division. A natural result of this tongues experience, teaching, and emphasis is to produce two groups in the

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church—the "haves" and the "have-nots." Perhaps we can call it "Christian class consciousness?"

No, it might not be obvious on the surface, but the problem is there. One Christian separates himself from another because he thinks that his "experience" has put him on a higher plane than the "have-not" brother. Or it may be a whole group that will separate themselves from fellow believers or one church from another church. The attitude that "we have more than you have" seems to be the underlying and basic reason for these unhappy separations and divisions. This is not simply a fundamentalist-Charismatic division, but occurs, surprisingly, too often among the Tongues people themselves. Was this not a problem in Corinth, as well? There were divisions and cliques in their church, too (See 1 Corinthians 3:1-4). All this, Paul informs us, is not a sign of spirituality but of carnality, as we read in 1 Corinthians 3:3:

For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

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Reason 8
The teaching that Tongues-speaking is a Sign of Spirituality or Even of Salvation

A man who had just experienced tongues speaking said that he was sure now that he was saved. We could ask the question then, "How can we really know that we are saved?" What is reliable assurance that we have passed from death unto life? Is it a certain kind of experience? If so, can we completely trust experiences? In this case, we know that tongues speaking can and is being counterfeited. Heathen, spiritists, Mormons, etc. also experience tongues speaking. Apparently there are Charismatic's today who obviously have never repented, have exhibited no change or transformation of life, and yet are tongues speakers. Many Roman Catholic Charismatic's continue to worship and pray to Mary, attend Mass, pray to "saints" etc., etc. Are we to accept them as our brethren in Christ simply on the basis of tongues speaking? Can they, or can we, safely build on the foundation of an "experience?"

Basically, the assurance of our salvation must rest upon the unchanging and ever-dependable Word of God—His promises to the believer. One such promise and word from God to us is 1 John 5:13 "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." How can we know that we have eternal life? This verse tells us plainly that our assurance rests upon the written Word of God.

Experience, emotions, feelings all may change or pass away, but the solid rock of God's Word remains. By faith we rest on His promise. Did He not say: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into

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condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24)?

I have heard His Word; I have believed on Him, therefore I have everlasting life! How do I know? Not because I feel something, not because I saw a vision or heard a voice, or spoke in tongues, but simply and basically because HE SAID SO! I simply take Him at His Word. I do have His Word for it! And it is impossible for God to lie (Heb. 6:18). That is assurance! Do I need more? By simple faith in His Word I received salvation. By simple faith in His Word I have the assurance of my salvation!

Certainly there will be other corroborating evidences, and these are also mentioned in God's Word, that reveal the reality of the new nature within us. There should and will be a change in our lifestyle, just as we read in 2 Cor. 5:17 "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

This is more fully developed in the epistle of 1 John where we read such words as these: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (1 Jn. 3:14); and, "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments," that is, His Word (1 Jn. 2:3). If we really know the Lord; there will be a change of attitude toward God's Word, and a developing love for it and obedience to it. We will desire to do God's will. But time does not permit us to pursue this topic further here.

Is tongues speaking evidence of spirituality?

Secondly, is tongues speaking an evidence of greater spirituality? Really, now, how can we know that we are spiritual? Can everything be based on a once-for-all, a once-in-a-lifetime experience? Is that the whole proof? Or is it possible that there will be evidences of an inward spiritually manifested in our daily walk and living?

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To take tongues speaking as the evidence of a Spirit-filled, Spirit-controlled spiritual life is to disregard the teaching of 1 Corinthians. Please notice that the Corinthian believers came "behind in no gift" (1:7). They had the gifts of the Spirit in their church and laid particular emphasis upon the gift of tongues as we see it in chapters 12-14. Yet, in spite of all this, Paul calls them "carnal" four times in chapter three. And "carnal" is the opposite of "spiritual." Besides this, Paul reminds them that they had contentions, divisions, fornication, quarrels, disorders at the Lord's Table, etc., in their church that all their tongues speaking could not cover. They were carnal in spite of it. Then, we might ask, what were they missing?

They did not realize, as many also don't today, that spirituality is not determined by the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit, but by the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit! That is why, I believe, Paul "sandwiched" the "Love chapter" (ch. 13), between the two chapters dealing with the gifts, chapters 12, 14. It wasn't that he changed the subject and suddenly decided to write about love, but, rather, he is trying to show the Corinthians, so taken up with their emphasis on tongues, that they were missing the "more excellent way" (12:31), that they did not have the fruit of the Spirit in their church and in their lives. They were missing the fruit of the Spirit which is the evidence of the indwelling Holy Spirit actively producing Christlikeness in the life of the believer, in other words, the Spirit-filled, controlled, fruitful, spiritual life.

Paul begins chapter 13 with these words: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophesy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing."

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What is love? It is the basic fruit of the Spirit—Gal. 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Though I once believed and taught that tongues speaking was the evidence of being Spirit-filled and of spirituality, in the light of the teaching of God's Word, I had to completely change my viewpoint.

In closing this section I want to point out briefly what I now believe the characteristics (or evidences) of a Spirit-filled, spiritual Christian really are:

1. A crucified, self-denying life (not just a one-time experience, but a LIFE), Gal. 2:20; 6:14.
2. A surrendered life—submissive, yielded to the Lord. The will subjected to His will, Romans 6:13, 19; 12:1-2.
3. A Christlike life, Gal. 2:20b; Rom. 8:29.
4. A fruitful life—the fruit of the Spirit in manifestation, John 15:5, 8; Gal. 5:22-23.
5. A life effective in Christ's service and witnessing, Acts 1:8; 4:31.
6. A life that glorifies God, John 15:8; 1 Cor. 6:20.

Here are two more Scriptures that should be considered in this connection: Matt 7:20 "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them," and John 13:35 "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if you have love one to another." Please note that it does not say, if you speak in tongues or have some gift or manifestation in your life, but "love," the basic fruit. This is also the clear teaching of 1 Corinthians chapter 13.

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Reason 9
Sign-seeking Instead of Faith

At this moment of writing I have before me a clipping from the church page of the Calgary Herald (Calgary, Alberta, Canada). It is a Charismatic church advertisement for services—with great emphasis on miracles. One meeting is called "Nite of Miracles." The word miracles appears four times in this one ad. And there are others like it. Why this emphasis on miracles, on the spectacular and on the sensational?

I am reminded of the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 12:38-40 "Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But He answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah: For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Jesus said, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign!" This sign seeking certainly does not have God's approval! Why? Notice how the Lord continues here in verses 39 and 40. Yes, there was one sign. that they should be occupied with—that was the sign of Jonah which pointed directly to the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. That is the great sign that God gave to the world that many generations have and are overlooking.

In 1 Cor. 1:21-24 Paul deals with the very same issue, and is in total agreement with Christ. Notice how he expresses it: "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the

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Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

In verse 22 he says: "The Jews require a sign." So what does Paul do about it? Does he produce signs and wonders to meet their craving for them? No! Though Paul could and did do so as an apostle in God's timing, not simply to satisfy curiosity and cater to the demand for the spectacular (see 2 Cor. 12:12) but to authenticate his Apostleship and his message when required. But here to these sign-seekers he has but one sign, verse 23: "But we preach Christ crucified!" And in chapter two verse two he says "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

The Christian is not to be preoccupied with signs, wonders, and miracles, but with Christ's work for him on the cross and with His Gospel. That alone is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (1 Cor. 1:24; Rom. 1:16). The Corinthian error, which is being perpetuated today, was that they majored in the spectacular to the exclusion of the simple, yet wonderful and powerful Gospel of Christ that centres in the cross work. Charismatics talk about "power" in their meetings—manifested in the miraculous and unusual. But is that the "power" that saves men's souls? Only the Gospel of Christ can do that!

Furthermore, the Christian is to "walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). But the miracle-seeker wants always to see! Remember the lesson that the Lord taught Thomas, who, too, had said "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails . . . I will not believe." Jesus replied "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (Jn. 20:24-29). Genuine faith rests in God's Word, not on sight.

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The ultimate danger of sign and miracle-seeking lies in the fact that in the last days Satan will employ the miraculous to deceive the multitudes, culminating in the deceptions of the Antichrist and the False Prophet.

Take note of these warnings:

1) Christ's warning in Matt. 24:24

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great Signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Evidently, "signs and wonders" can and will be performed by false Christs and prophets. How many are and will be deceived by them?

2) The warning of 2 Thess. 2:8-12

And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

It appears that the basic tool of deception employed by the Antichrist will be his miracle-performing powers. How effective this will be is seen today by the unscriptural appetite of so many for signs, wonders, and miracles. Could it be that they are being prepared for the great deception that we read of here and also in Revelation chapter 13?

We might well ask ourselves why the Lord will permit this powerful deception. The answer, I believe, is right in this passage in 2 Thess. 2. In verses 10 and 12 we find these phrases "Because they received not the love of the truth" and "who believed not the truth." Twice the word truth appears

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here. God permits this powerful deception, this "strong delusion," to sweep over a people who have neglected and rejected TRUTH—God's Word, the Scriptures, and Christ Himself, Who is the TRUTH (Jn. 14:6). Because they have not put the Scriptures where they belong—in FIRST PLACE, but have run after the spectacular, the miraculous, the sensational, to satisfy their unscriptural craving for these things, God sends them "strong delusion, that they should believe a (the) lie."

Dear reader, our recognition of the supreme authority of God's Word (Truth) is all-important! Doctrine is important! Stay close to the Book, the Bible! All experiences, signs, wonders, miracles must be subject to the Scriptures. Our faith must be based on the unchanging eternal Word of God. In connection With this thought I suggest that you also read Revelation 13:11-18.

In conclusion, turn to John 4:46-54 where we find the beautiful record of the healing of the nobleman's son. When the father approached the Lord for his son's healing, the Lord said to him (verse 48) "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." Why did he reply like this? I believe it was to test the father—was he like most of the Jews , were, sign-seekers, or did he have real faith that could stand on the bare Word of the Lord?

Then, when the Lord simply said (verse 50) "Go thy way; thy son liveth," he just took the Lord at His word. The verse goes on to say "And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way." How beautiful this simplicity of faith! He did not ask for a sign that his son was healed. He simply believed the statement of the Lord Jesus, without any signs. How this must have pleased the Lord Who was constantly harassed by sign-seekers! May we, too, be found in the ranks of this nobleman! Remember Heb. 11:6.

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But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

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Reason 10
Questionable Activities Practised and Condoned

Writing to the Corinthian church, Paul the apostle said "For God is not the author of confusion," and "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:33, 40). Having grown up in the Tongues Movement, I didn't see the import of these words as I do now. For at that time the activities in our churches were quite normal to me; they were part of that which I had been taught from childhood and up to be right and proper. But as I look back now, and in the light of these and other Scriptures, I feel ashamed of some of the proceedings, methods, and happenings that I witnessed. Even at that time I was shaken at times by what I saw.

One of the very common happenings was what we used to call "falling under the power," or to use the more refined phrase used today, "slain in the Spirit." When it involved ladies who lay prostrate and sometimes struggling on the floor, they were quickly covered with coats or blankets to prevent them from uncovering themselves. This practice is still followed today.

It is very difficult to reconcile this type of thing with the Scripture, "Let all things be done decently and in order." If these people are really "slain by the Holy Spirit," it is indeed strange that the same Holy Spirit that gave us the Scripture should go contrary to the Scriptures that He gave! This cannot be.

Three questions about "Spirit slaying"

But we must ask ourselves, is this practice and experience scriptural? Here are three questions to consider:

1) Is there any clear statement in the Epistles to support it? To my knowledge there is no doctrinal teaching there

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that does.

2) Is there. any clear record of this happening in the biblical history of the early Church-in the Book of Acts?

Where do we see this "laying on of hands" upon believers resulting in large numbers falling to the ground or the floor? Some refer to Saul's experience on the Damascus Road (Acts 9). But Saul, or Paul, was not a believer at that time, but, rather, a persecutor of Christians. He was being "arrested" by the Lord! Besides, no one had laid hands on him before he fell to the earth. Some others refer to John 18:6 where those who came to take the Lord Jesus captive "went backward, and fell to the ground." But these were definitely not coming to the Lord to be blessed or healed, they were, in fact, "enemies" coming to arrest Him. They were not believers, nor did they have hands laid on them. Compare this event with Psalm 27:2 "When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell."

3) Is there any scriptural evidence that an evil spirit can do such a thing?

Yes. In Luke 4:35 we read "And when the devil (or demon) had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not." So also in Luke 9:42 "And as he was yet a coming, the devil (or demon) threw him down, and tore him." There is ample evidence that devotees of evil spirits, such as witchdoctors, undergo similar experiences and certainly not by the Holy Spirit.

Also consider this: Often in healing prayer lines, people who come for healing just "fall under the power" or are "slain in the Spirit." Instead of being healed (that's what they came for), it appears that they are simply "side-tracked." Where is the scriptural basis for this practice? This is not what happened when the sick came to the Lord or to His apostles!

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Remember this, experiences should not automatically be accepted as from God the Holy Spirit simply because they take place in a church or a religious environment! Any spirit manifestations that are not related to a deep conviction of sin and genuine repentance should be questioned in the clear light of Scripture.

It is true, however, that in the history of church revivals, there were those who were under such deep conviction for their Sins, and in a genuine state of repentance, that they fell to the ground before the Lord. I personally heard Brother Duncan Campbell, the Scottish revivalist of our century, tell of a young woman who was instrumental in organizing a dance for the youth of her community on the first night of Mr. Campbell's revival meetings in her town. This, of course, she did in opposition to the meetings. But the Holy Spirit brought her under such conviction of sin that she came rushing into the church after the service was over and collapsed before the Lord at the altar. No hands were laid on her. It was a genuine ministry of the Holy Spirit.

There are examples of prostration in fear, humiliation and repentance in the Scriptures as well, but what is happening in some areas today seems to be of a different character, largely man-made and manipulated. All such manifestations that are not related to a deep conviction of sin and true repentance, and do not stand the test of Scripture, particularly the Epistles, should be avoided. "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good," is God's Word, and is so very helpful to us here (Rom. 12:9).

Further, in the area of seeking the tongues experience, it is deplorable to what extremes some will go. Overemphasis of the value of the tongues experience has brought with it a variety of questionable methods to produce it. It appears that some are so anxious to speak in tongues that they will try almost anything to cause it to happen. Either the seeker or the person praying with him, or both, are often responsible

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for the methods employed. Here are a few of the questionable methods that I observed:

The seeker, praying or praising the Lord in an audible voice, is shaken by the hands of those praying for him. The result is a vibration or quiver in the seeker's voice. "That's it, Brother" or something similar is the encouragement the seeker hears as he seemingly gets nearer to the "experience." But worse yet, the sight of a seeker having his jaw manipulated by some overzealous helper to distort the words of the seeker and produce unusual sounds, is sickening, yet often practised. Then there are those who "teach people to speak in tongues." Repetition of certain phrases must be practised, sometimes at accelerated speeds till proper language is lost, and unintelligible sounds result. Cassette tapes to teach experience-seekers how to "speak in tongues" are available. What biblical basis is there for "teaching" believers to speak in tongues? It is completely foreign to the New Testament concept of the gift of tongues. In the three instances of tongues-speaking recorded in the Book of Acts (chapters 2,10,19), there is no hint of the recipients having first to be "taught how to speak in tongues."

New way to speak in Tongues

One other method that I witnessed and which disturbed me very much, though I was still wholeheartedly in the Tongues Movement, comes to mind.

In a series of special meetings held in a certain church in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, the evangelist had a "new" way to get people to speak in tongues. After the message of the evening he called for all seekers to come forward and be seated in the front pews. Then he briefly explained what procedures they would follow. It would be different than the conventional methods we usually used. This was his theory: "The seeker needs to initiate the sound, that's his

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responsibility, and the Holy Spirit's responsibility is to take that sound and produce the tongues sound from it."

He quoted the Scripture: ". . . open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it" (Psalm 81:10). Then he urged all the seekers who were seated, and not kneeling, to put their heads back and open their mouths, and then make a sound. He suggested that they simply say "Ah-h-h-h"—to draw out the sound and keep on repeating it. It was a strange sight! For someone raised in the Tongues Movement even this was too much. Here were several rows of adult people sitting, heads back, mouths open, all saying "Ah-h-h-h . . ." And the evangelist and the pastor were walking back and forth down the rows, laying hands on them and to some extent shaking them to get a quiver into their sounds, then encouraging them to get louder and to "let go!"

And, by his standards, he was successful in getting some strange and peculiar sounds out of some of the seekers, which he labelled as "tongues speaking." But I had to ask myself, "Was this 'as the Spirit gave them utterance' (Acts 2:4), or were these 'man-made tongues?'"

But this wasn't all. What really startled me, and caused me to begin to think very seriously about this type of procedure, was what I witnessed a few minutes later. One dear old lady, a seeker, seated on the front pew against the wall, was praising the Lord and praying in her accustomed way, when the evangelist came back down the row of seekers to where she was. He discovered that she was not saying "Ah-h-h." So he made it very plain that he wanted her to say nothing but "Ah-h-h." She began, but by the time the evangelist had gone back down the row and returned to her she was once again back to praising the Lord and saying, "Jesus, Jesus, etc." Then to my utter amazement, I heard him say to her, words to this effect, "Lady, I told you to say 'Ah-h-h'! If you don't stop praising the Lord and saying, 'Jesus, Jesus,' I won't pray with you anymore!"

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Was I hearing things? I could hardly believe my ears! And lest I should make a mistake in later quoting him I took out a notebook and wrote it down.

I had to seriously ask, What is this? Is this biblical? When is it wrong to praise the Lord? Is it safe to omit the name of the Lord Jesus from my praying, especially when seeking the fullness of the Holy Spirit? Could not this kind of procedure leave the seeker open to the entrance of another spirit? Does not Prov. 18:10 tell us that "the name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe?" What could the seeker be letting himself open to with this procedure?

And, simply because someone produces some unintelligible sounds does not prove that it is the Holy Spirit speaking. Evil spirits can "peep and mutter" as well Isa. 8:19 reads "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God?" This incident opened my eyes to the dangers of using man-made methods, for the results are at best questionable, and not the product of the Holy Spirit Himself.

In searching the Scriptures we discover that tongues speaking was produced by the Holy Spirit, not man made. Acts 2:4 states "As the spirit gave them utterance." And the gift of tongues, spoken of in 1 Cor. 12:11, as well as the other gifts, are given "to every man severally as he will," not worked-up or man-produced. It is a dangerous practice to play around with tongues or to try to manufacture them. The Holy Spirit is perfectly capable of giving the gift of tongues, if He so wills, without man's questionable methods!

Paul also refers to another disorder in the Corinthian church in 1 Cor. 14:27-28 "If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself,

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and to God." There is an orderly limitation stated here. Often this is not obeyed in modern tongues meetings, and these excesses are often overlooked by the leaders for fear of hindering "the work of the Holy Spirit" or of grieving Him, or of offending someone. So confusion results. But in verse 33 we read "God is not the author of confusion."

In concluding this section, many other questionable methods and practices could be referred to, such as catering to the sensational: sensational meetings, sensational speakers, sensational methods, advertising sensational healing and miracle meetings. Some even try to bring in the crowds by featuring child or boy preachers, without considering the eternal harm that this might do the child involved. Not long ago a Charismatic evangelist in western Canada was conducting tent meetings about ten miles from our home, in which he featured a boy-preacher whose pictures adorned the colourful advertisements. I was personally invited to hear this boy-wonder. Some people got quite excited about him. There always are people who are attracted by this kind of sensationalism. But, we could ask, what are they doing to this child? How will all this popularity and acclaim affect him for time and for eternity?

In his book, Truth About Tongues, Dr. Hugh F. Pyle gives this information about Marjoe Gortner, a "child-preacher," who was "used" for years in this manner:

Television and movie actor Marjoe Gortner was ordained to preach at the age of four and was billed as a boy-wonder on the miracle-preaching circuit. He preached for years. Women would swoon and fall to the floor at his touch and his command. He says now that he was just 'acting,' and that while he could have made a lot of money in the healing-revival business, he became bitter about it all by the time he had reached seventeen, and realized what his mother had done to him. Yet great crowds had faith in his power to heal

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by the 'laying on of hands.' Marjoe laughs about it all and says it was all psychosomatic.[1]

Questions we must ask

Seriously, brethren, before we embark in new and sensational methods of doing the Lord's work, let us ask ourselves these questions first:

1) Is it really scriptural?

2) Is it edifying? 1 Cor. 14:26 "Let all things be done unto edifying."

3) Is it decent and orderly? 1 Cor. 14:40 "Let all things be done decently and in order."

4) Is it glorifying to the Lord and to the Gospel of Jesus Christ? 1 Cor. 10:31 "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Please note that these questions are the very ones that the carnal Corinthian Christians undoubtedly failed to ask themselves in their church conduct, for the references that I have quoted above are all from the First Epistle to the Corinthians directed to them in the very areas of their weakness and failure. May we today be careful not to make the same mistakes that they made!

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Reason 11
The Fear of Questioning the So-called Activities of the Holy Spirit

This fear would manifest itself by failure to question or judge, even though some of those activities seemed strange, out-of-place, or even wrong. I recall that on many occasions in our church services when someone would "prophesy" or "speak in tongues" that the congregation would bow their heads and listen quietly and almost fearfully. The message that was coming through was, it appeared to me, more respected than when the Scripture itself was being read. Wasn't this God speaking directly to us? And who would dare to question these messages? But should they not be questioned or challenged? This fearful bowing to every so-called prophetic utterance should be questioned, according to 1 Cor. 14:29 "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the others judge." Not only was there to be order in the manner of giving the messages, but there was to be a judging of the validity of the prophecy. This, to my knowledge, was rarely done. Almost slavishly the messages were received as genuine.

May I give you an example? An-evangelist was invited to speak in a series of meetings in the large city church where we attended at that time. He laid claim to being a prophet, and every once in a while he would give a "prophetic" message, usually apart from his sermons. He would begin these "prophecies" in a loud, booming voice, usually with the words "Thus saith the Lord," or, "The Spirit speaketh expressly" or other familiar introductory words used by Bible prophets. When he began, a real quiet ensued as people bowed their heads and almost fearfully awaited this "message from God." Not once did I hear any judging or questioning by any of the leaders or elders of the church. Everything seemed to be accepted as God's truth. When I

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voiced some misgivings, I was, looked upon as someone who was in danger of God's wrath for not receiving "the message."

On one occasion, this was in the late 1940s, this man gave a message in "prophecy" informing us that all born-again Christians, of whatever denominations, would all be united together in one church in the 1960s. And he added, "If what I am saying today does not come to pass, phone me collect, and tell me that I am a liar!" I wish I had his phone number! Obviously, he was a false prophet. But I venture to say that over 90 per cent of the people there believed him, but have long since forgotten about his prophecy. The biblical test of prophets is found in Deut. 18:22 "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him." Notice that the Old Testament ordered severe judgment on false prophets—it was death! Why? Deut. 13:5 reads: "Because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God."

Many times I have asked myself this question "Why are so many Christians so gullible? Why are they so easily deceived by the clever acts of the deceiver?" And this, in spite of all the warnings in Scripture. There are at least a dozen direct warnings. in the new Testament about deception. Let's look at just three: Matt. 24:4 "Take heed that no man deceive you." This warning by the Lord Jesus is given three times in this chapter. Eph. 4:14 "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Notice the phrase, "no more children." The Lord expects us to grow up and mature so that we are not tossed and "carried about with every wind of doctrine."

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And Rom. 16:17-18 issues this warning "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Notice these words here "contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned." Doctrine is very important! These deceivers must be judged by the doctrine of the Scriptures, not slavishly believed, feared, and followed.

The fear of ascribing the work of the Holy Spirit to the Devil or demons was and is very real in the Tongues Movement. There is, of course, a biblical basis for this, Matt. 12:31-32. But to go to an extreme and let deception go unchallenged, even though we are scripturally warned again and again, is also to be disobedient and sinful!

It is true that ascribing the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan is a very serious sin, but it is also a serious sin when we ascribe the works of the flesh and of Satan to the Holy Spirit! I am afraid that too much of this is done today. The Holy Spirit gets credit for many, many things that he didn't do! Brethren, let us avoid this sin too!

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Reason 12
The View that the Corinthian Church Was a Model Church

Because tongues speaking is so much in prominence in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, and, incidentally, is not even mentioned in any of the other twenty church epistles, it became a very important epistle to us. I personally, as I'm sure many others did too, looked upon the Corinthian church as a model in the area of gifts of the Holy Spirit, particularly the gift of tongues.

Here, though, let us ask ourselves some questions:

1) Was this epistle written to encourage the all-out use of tongues, or was it written. to correct its overemphasis and abuse in the Corinthian church?

2) Is everything that transpired in the Corinthian church doctrinally correct and can thus be used as a basis for doctrine by all churches throughout the age?

Can we build upon their church conduct as being exemplary and such as will please the Lord? In short, should our churches today strive to be like the Corinthian church? Is it a "model" church?

I, for one, did not approach the Book of first Corinthians with these questions in mind. Because of the tongues-emphasis teaching that I was raised in, I felt and believed that we should be more like the Corinthians, for did they not have the gifts of the Spirit in operation in their church? Chapter 1:7 tells us that they came "behind in no gift." And they, of all churches, must have been most spiritual because of the great prominence of tongues in their services, for only in this church are tongues mentioned in the epistles. They excelled in tongues speaking!

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How wrong I was! Isn't it strange how doctrinal extremes can blind a person to truth! I have since learned, and not overnight, either, that I was wrong in my approach to the Book of 1 Corinthians.

Answering our questions now,

1) Paul did not write this epistle to commend the Corinthians for their emphasis on tongues speaking, or to urge them to do more of the same, but rather to bring them back to a more restrained and orderly use of this gift. In fact, he urged them to major more on the "best gifts" (12:31). He said "Covet earnestly the best gifts," one of them being the gift prophecy (14:5) "I would that ye all spoke with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied." In 14:19 he adds these words "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." In other words, he is plainly telling them that they were putting their emphasis in the wrong place.

2) Paul makes it very plain in his letter that the Corinthian Christians, though they had the gifts of the Spirit in operation in their church, were nevertheless "carnal" (3:1-4). Notice a few of the "carnal" or unspiritual fleshly manifestations present in their church: contention—1:11; division—1:10,12,13; carnality—3:1-4; fornication—5:1; taking one another to court—6:6-7; disorders at the Lord's table—11:17,20-22; immaturity in spiritual matters—3:1, 12:1, 14:20; disorders in church meetings—14:40.

What does all this tell us? The lesson is plain. It is possible to have gifts and yet be unspiritual. Read 1 Cor. 13:1-3 again! Remember, spirituality is not gauged by your gifts but by the fruit you bear! In this area, then, the Corinthian church was certainly not to be followed as a model church!

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3) The Corinthian church falls short of being a model church because of their lack of the fruit of the Spirit!

This is what Paul is trying to get across to them in chapter 13 particularly. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance . . ." (Gal. 5:22-23). But these were in short supply in the Corinthian church. That is why they took each other to court, were contentious, divided, and exhibited selfishness and pride, etc. No, the Corinthian church was far from being a model church. It would have been preferable to take the Philippian church or the Thessalonian church as our model, but then, there was no indication in their epistles that they were tongues speakers!

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Reason 13
The Danger of Claiming Extra-Biblical Revelation

While still in the Tongues Movement, I had to come to grips with the problem of divine revelation—was the Bible a completed, finished Book; or was God continuing to reveal new truths, even in our day? Does the Bible contain all that the man of God in the Church age needs for faith and godly living, or do we need further revelations?

When a message was given in tongues and interpreted, or when a "prophet" would prophesy in the assembly, prefacing his remarks with "Thus saith the Lord" or "the Spirit speaketh expressly," was this indeed God speaking by inspiration? If so, then was this new revelation on a par with the written Scriptures? And if so, could we add it to our Bibles? Was this "gift of prophecy" the same as that which Peter, Paul, James or John had?

When I began asking questions, the usual answer I received was, "No, we should not add these prophecies to our Bibles. They are simply reminders of truths already in the Bible, and must be in agreement with the Scriptures." All of which made me ask, "If there is no new truth revealed, why don't we go to the Scriptures themselves in the first place instead of this round-about method? Are we too lazy to read, study, and meditate? Must we get our Bible truths in this fashion? Is the Bible not good enough? Do we need this added procedure?

Secondly, I'm afraid that many Christians, particularly the younger ones, got the wrong impression of this procedure and concluded that this was indeed new revelation—God speaking directly by inspiration. They would rely upon such messages for their guidance, which in some cases, led to spiritual shipwreck. If we use these means to guide us, we

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leave ourselves open to deception. The message can be coloured or even fabricated by the messenger. Remember the repeated warnings in scripture about false prophets (Matt. 24:11, 24, etc.). Many have found this to be so to their sorrow. But this I know, that the written Scriptures are sure, trustworthy, reliable. Remember Peter's statement in 2 Peter 1:19 "We have also a more sure word of prophecy (that is, the Scriptures); whereunto ye do well that ye take heed." To the Scriptures! They are the means that God has ordained for Christian faith, guidance, growth and maturity.

Notice also Paul's statement on this point in 2 Tim. 3:16-17 "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 perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." What is Paul saying here? What does the man of God need for guidance, for growth into maturity, for producing all good works? Not new revelations or these roundabout procedures that can be deceiving counterfeits, but the written Scriptures that God gave to the Church through those whom He had ordained to lay the foundation of the Church (Eph. 2:20, 3:3-5). Let's read these verses "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone"; "How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote before in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit."

Paul here lays claim to the gift of prophecy—by which God revealed "mysteries" (truths not revealed before) through him. But notice carefully verse 5 "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men [that is, church truth and doctrine], as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." "Now revealed."

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When? Not a continuing revelation throughout the entire Church age, as some try to teach, but the word "now" points specifically to Paul's day—the day of the apostles. God was pleased to give us Church truth, the New Testament, through the apostles and those closely associated with them. These writing apostles were New Testament prophets through whom the Holy Spirit spoke (2 Pet. 1:19-21). When the last apostle laid down his pen, the New Testament was complete and revelation ceased. All we needed for the entire Church age, "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16), was written and preserved for us in the blessed New Testament as it complements the Old Testament. The Scriptures are complete! The written Word is sufficient; there really is no further need for oral revelations!

Incidentally, that means that there is no longer any need for the real gift of prophecy in the church today. The canon of Scripture has been completed. Why prophecies then? That is why, in 1 Cor. 13:8-10 Paul says "Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail [or, be done away]; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect [or complete] is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." Prophecy, a gift of revelation, was given by the Holy Spirit to give us the New Testament Scriptures, piece by piece, part by part, 27 books in all. But now that the canon of Scriptures is "perfect," that is, "complete," this gift, as well as the other revelatory gifts here mentioned—tongues and the gift of knowledge, would "cease" or "vanish away." Why? Because their purpose in the Church was fulfilled and there was no further need or use for them. Why then, should we insist that we must have these gifts in operation in the Church today?

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A brief further look at other Scriptures that indicate that New Testament church truth revelation is complete should be included here, though time and space does not allow the inclusion of all on this subject. But notice particularly Jude, verse 3 "Beloved; when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once (or, once for all) delivered unto the saints."

Please notice the words "the faith." He is speaking here of the body of truth that was then being given to the Church, that is, the New Testament. The phrase, "the faith" is also found in Gal. 1:23 "He which persecuted us in times past now preacheth THE FAITH" [capitalization mine]. And so also in 1 Tim. 4:1. I am told that the definite article "the" here in the Greek indicates the one and only faith. There is no other!

No more prophecies needed!

Notice too, the word "once" or "once for all" as the marginal reading in my Bible has it. According to W.E. Vine, the Greek word here means, "once for all, of what is of perpetual validity, not requiring repetition." The same Greek word is also used in Heb. 9:28 "So Christ was ONCE offered to bear the sins of many;" and also in 1 Peter 3:18 "For Christ also hath ONCE suffered for sins." Obviously, the word "once" used in these three verses means that it won't be repeated. It was a once-for-all act. Since that is so, the Scriptures as given to us through the instrumentality of the apostles are complete and final. There is no further revelation needed or forthcoming in God's plan for the Church.

One more word here in Jude 3 needs our attention. It is the word "delivered." "That ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once [for all] DELIVERED unto the saints. John F. MacArthur, Jr. in his book *The Charismatics*, points

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out that in the Greek this word “delivered” is an aorist passive participle, which indicates an act completed in the past with no continuing element.[1] So we must conclude that the Scriptures are God's final revelation to the Church, and they are complete. Some other Scriptures that indicate this also are Gal. 1:6-9; Heb. 1:2; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; and Rev. 22:18-19.

There is a dangerous trend in the Charismatic Movement in seeking after revelations and prophetic utterances and tongues and interpretations, apart from the written Scriptures. And extremes usually start with slight deviations. We must ask ourselves. “Where will this end?” Many cults have gone this route, such as the Mormons, Christian Science, the Children of God, the Moonies (followers of Sun Myung Moon), and also the Roman Catholic Church. Remember this: the great Protestant thesis is and always has been, that the Holy Spirit speaks through the Scriptures! Regarding new revelations someone has said “If it’s true it isn’t new, and if it’s new it isn’t true!” Back to the Scriptures should be our watchword in these days of dangerous and growing deception! I close with this Scripture of warning. 1 Tim. 4:1. Please consider it carefully “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils”

1. John F. MacArthur, The Charismatics (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), used by permission.

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Reason 14
The Excesses and Deceptive Practices Condoned in Divine Healing Campaigns

Needless to say, I grew up in a spiritual environment where divine healing was a prominent teaching and practice. Divine healing campaigns were very popular, attracting large crowds from far and near, often at great expense to the sick who needed special care and transportation. But also, for most of the sick they proved disappointing. Their expectations had been raised so high, only to be dashed after all the excitement was over. Some seemed to experience a momentary relief from pain, but all too many would discover no lasting benefit. And by that time the healer would be too far away to be questioned or to explain. The sick person would then simply be forced to accuse himself of lack of faith, or in some cases, throw his faith overboard. This type of procedure regarding the treatment of the sick is a very serious matter and ought to be questioned in the light of Scripture. Much reproach has come upon the cause of Christ by the actions of some unscrupulous people who claim to be prophets, miracle-workers, or to have the gifts of healing. These, Peter warns us, "through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you" (2 Peter 2:1-3). How despicable! To masquerade as those who can help, but in reality, because of greed, they are out to exploit those who are least able to give them money.

Right here I want to make it very clear that I do believe in divine healing. I have seen the Lord heal the sick in answer to prayer, not in the spectacular environment of special healing campaigns, but in the simple biblical procedure, of James 5:14-16. Also, I don't want to be misunderstood as being opposed to praying for the sick, far from it; but I do believe that we need to take heed to the clear warnings of Scripture in regard to the false, the deceptive, that comes in

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the name of Christ but is not of Him—Matt. 7:21-23. Before we examine Scripture on this topic, I want to tell you of a healing campaign that I participated in vitally, in which the Lord opened my eyes to the deceptive practices that were employed. I went into that campaign a firm believer in the genuineness of the healer and his gift to heal. I did everything I could to help him. I was one hundred percent for and behind him and encouraged sick friends to come long distances to be healed.

At that time, I believe it was in 1947, I was on the teaching staff of our denominational Bible school in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The healing meetings were held in the church auditorium which was adjacent to the Bible School dormitory and offices. It became my responsibility to place the very sick, such as stretcher-cases, in the various dormitory rooms. The "healer" in this particular campaign, was William Branham from the USA who had been invited by our church leaders to minister in some of our larger city churches. The services were very well attended by people coming long distances, many from other provinces.

When Mr. Branham had concluded his meeting in the church auditorium, I would take his arm and lead him from room to room in the dormitory, so that he could pray for those who were unable to attend the public meetings or stand in the healing-lines. This gave me an excellent opportunity to work in very close contact with him and observe what was happening. Let me repeat here, I was fully behind Mr. Branham at this time, and prayed earnestly with him for the healing of these dear suffering people. At that time, as he gave assurance to one after the other that they were healed, I rejoiced and praised the Lord with them.

A common practice of Mr. Branham was to take the hand of the sick person, and then say something like this, "The vibrations in your hand tell me that you have cancer. But I will pray for you that the Lord will heal you." When he had

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prayed, he would say something like this, "The vibrations are gone, the cancer is dead. You are healed! But you will be very sick for about three days till your body throws off the dead cancerous tissue. But don't worry, you are healed. Just trust the Lord." With similar words he would give assurances to these suffering ones that they would recover. This, of course, would bring hope and joy to these dear souls, many of whom responded with a large financial gift, sometimes far beyond their means. At times I was given large sums of money to pass on to Mr. Branham, which I always did gladly, for I, too, believed him.

This will have to be just a very brief picture of what went on day after day throughout the whole campaign, but you can visualize the rejoicing that was created by this man's declaration of healings, and the hope that was given to scores of people who were desperate in their pain and suffering. I wish that I could go on to say that all these, or at least a good number of them, did go on to recover. But I can't. Time went on, the campaign ended, and Mr. Branham and his party were gone. Then we began to see the results being tested by time. It was a difficult time for us, and particularly for me. For one by one these that I had personally seen "healed" and declared so by the "healer," died. Our faith was severely tested. Relatives of the deceased ones would ask, "Why?" What could we tell them?

I had to ask myself several questions: If these people were really healed, why did they die? Did their faith fail? Why then did so many fail in their faith and lose their healing? How did this line up with healings recorded in Scripture? Did people healed by Christ and the apostles lose their healing? Were they subject to relapse too if their faith failed? Or, could it be that these Branham healings were counterfeit and not genuine after all, much as we had believed him to be genuine? And, worst of all, was it possible that we had been victims of deception?

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All these questions were answered gradually in the days and weeks that followed the campaign. Time and space does not permit me here to elaborate or go into the various incidents involved, but I simply refer to a few of the key ones.

In the first weeks following the campaign we received one report after another of people whose healing had not lasted. Either they were back to their original condition or had died. It was disturbing! Some meddlesome newspapermen had investigated. Their reports hurt the reputation of our churches and witness as more and more people who were supposed to be healed were found not to be, after all.

One day while I was occupied in the office at the Bible School, I received a visitor. As he came in, I immediately recognized him as the father of four of our Bible School students. His was a highly respected family in our Fellowship. But not many days before this, during the campaign, he had flown his wife, sick with cancer, to Saskatoon. He had phoned me from the airport asking where the ambulance should bring his wife to be prayed for. I made arrangements and placed her in one of the dormitory rooms. That evening when Mr. Branham had concluded his ministry in the church auditorium, I led him into her room where he prayed for her and pronounced her healed. Needless to say, we all rejoiced together! Joyfully they returned by ambulance and plane to their home near Regina.

Now, several days later, this dear brother sat before me in our office, his heart heavy and his mind in turmoil. He had come nearly 200 miles to speak to me. Before he did, however, I already sensed what had probably happened. But in spite of this, his question still hit me very hard. “Brother Pohl,” he said, “you were there beside my wife’s bed the night Mr. Branham prayed for her and pronounced her healed?” “Yes,” I replied, “I was right there.” He went on, “Can you tell me why it is that my wife who was healed just

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a few days ago is now in the grave?" My friends, I believe that was one of the hardest questions that I was ever called upon to answer! My heart went out to this dear brother. I felt with him. But how could I answer him? Should I tell him that his and his family's faith had failed? Yet his was a family that was highly regarded in our denomination for spirituality. Or, on the other hand, should I tell him that perhaps Mr. Branham did not have the gifts of healing after all and that we were all deceived? To admit this would reflect seriously upon the wisdom and integrity of our denominational leaders who had brought Mr. Branham to Canada to minister in our churches. Actually I can't remember just what I told our dear brother. But I do know that I did some very serious thinking about all this. I began to seriously question this whole area of our teaching and practice relative to this approach to divine healing. I am not so sure, however, that too many others did the same.

But someone might say that his case was an exception? But was it? There were, then, far too many "exceptions!" Let me cite another case:

One afternoon during the healing campaign I answered a telephone call. The call was from a Pentecostal pastor from Ontario. He had just flown in with his wife, sick with cancer, and her nurse. As on other occasions, I admitted them to a dormitory room, and in due course she was prayed for and Mr. Branham pronounced her healed. Again there was much rejoicing. I remember that the pastor handed me a cheque of a sizable sum of money to pass on to Mr. Branham. As he did so, he remarked that he couldn't afford to give that much, but that Mr. Branham deserved it because his wife was now healed, and he had spent thousands of dollars on doctors that didn't help her.

It was several weeks later that I, as the Missionary-Secretary of our denomination, visited and ministered in our churches in Ontario. When in the vicinity of this pastor's

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home city, I made inquiry as to his Wife's state of health, only to be told that she too had passed away. What a blow that must have been to that dear brother! But that was not all. I was told that he had a good radio ministry in his city. When he had returned from the healing meetings in Saskatoon, he announced over his radio broadcast that his wife had been wonderfully healed. However, just a short while after that he had to inform his radio audience that his wife had died. I was told that it dealt a severe blow to his radio ministry.

My friends, what kind of a testimony is this to the world? To them it "does not add up." And there is something wrong! Did this pastor's faith fail? Let me ask, did this sort of thing happen to those who were healed by the Lord Jesus or by His apostles? Where, then, is it recorded? As Christians we sometimes think that we're "charitable" if we overlook these things, but is this real "charity" or love? Is it loving to permit this type of thing to be carried on in our churches, to the needless suffering, agony, disappointment, and expense of the sick? And more importantly, is it scriptural not to deal with the false, the counterfeit? (See Titus 1:7-14.) Are we church leaders called upon to "protect" the sheep . . . or the wolves?

It was this failing in our denomination, and in the Tongues Movement in general, to deal with ministers of high standing or popularity who needed to be corrected or stopped, that became one of the greater reasons for my leaving the Movement. I came to the conclusion that excitement, the spectacular, was not the most important, if the genuine God-glorifying working of the Holy Spirit was not present in healing meetings.

Now, though much more could be said, I must conclude this section with this summary: I believe that the Lord does heal today. His method for us is stated in James 5:14-15, where the sick person is to call for the elders of the church. Today this is reversed, the "healers" call for the sick! Large

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offerings are usually taken, much of which, if not all, goes to the healer. Again I am reminded of Peter's warning in 2 Peter 2:3, where we read "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you . . ." And tragically, because of this, the "way of truth is evil spoken of." It brings reproach upon the Gospel of Christ.

Secondly, we should examine the results of modern healing campaigns and compare them with those of Christ and His apostles. What percentage of sick prayed for are really healed? Generally, according to what I have observed, the average is very low. Yes, there are some. There undoubtedly are some psychological healings, and then there are a few whose faith reaches out to Christ Himself. They, I believe, are healed in spite of the healer. But these are few in number. Don't be deceived by the number that you think you saw healed in the campaign. All that can be very deceiving. Caught up in the excitement and spirit of the meeting, you can easily be misled. I was privileged to be on the "inside" of this particular campaign, and had my eyes opened to some of the inner workings. I could, if time permitted, relate several instances where people in the audience thought that they saw a miracle when it was not so at all.

But more importantly, the low percentage of those healed today compares very unfavourably with the biblical record. Of Christ Himself we read in Matt. 8:16 "When the even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils: and He cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick." Of the apostles we read, Acts 5:16 "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." No need to ask in those days, "Were there any who were healed?" No! For they were all healed! That was the real gift of healing. It was genuine. Let those who profess to have the

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gifts of healing today produce this kind of evidence! But, sad to say, they fall very far short.

Besides, some of the modern healers seem to "specialize" in healing certain kinds of sicknesses. They shy away from the more difficult cases such as severely crippled people. But the healings performed by Christ and His apostles were not limited to certain diseases. Of the Lord Jesus we read that He healed "every sickness and every disease among the people" (Matt. 9:35). And as we read in Acts 5:16, the apostles "healed every one," obviously every sickness and disease was dealt with by them.

Finally, we must also remember that the miraculous sign-gifts were given to the apostles, and to those whom they authorized, to be their apostolic credentials as they were called upon to complete the laying of the foundation of the Church that Christ had begun (Eph. 2:20). This is what Paul is referring to in 2 Cor. 12:12 as he defends his apostleship before the Corinthian church. We read "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds." My question here is this: If anyone apart from the apostles or those authorized by them could perform these amazing genuine healings and miracles, then where or what were the signs of an apostle? We must conclude, then, that these special gifts of healing and miracles were given to the apostles as their credentials while they finished laying the foundation of the Church, and when their work was done, and they passed off the earthly scene, these sign-gifts would no longer be operative.

The great display of the miraculous that accompanied Christ and the apostles in the Church's beginnings ended with the passing of the apostles. For us to try to duplicate these today can only lead to confusion and the opening of a door that makes room for deception and disappointment. I believe recent history simply proves that point.

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Church history also shows us that with the passing of the apostles the great display of miraculous gifts ceased. Even near the end of Paul's ministry apparently he did not use his gifts of healing for he wrote to Timothy, 2 Tim. 4:20 "But Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick." Now if the modern teaching that God wants all His people to be well and healthy all the time were true, why did not Paul exercise his gifts of healing and heal Trophimus? Surely, he could have used Trophimus' help in the ministry? But it appears that even then already the gift of healing was passing away.

That does not mean that God cannot or does not heal today, even though He has withdrawn the gift. He is still sovereign, and does answer prayer, if we come to Him according to James 5:14-15. Thank God many are healed, not through the gift but by "the prayer of faith." But we should not expect the same spectacular display of healings and miracles that accompanied the ministries of Christ and the apostles, for these belonged to them as their credentials and to the church's beginnings. Now we "walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7).

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Reason 15
The Tendency to Blind, Unquestioning Devotion to Popular Leaders

There is a dangerous tendency in the Movement to idolize and give undue reverence to leaders with abilities and strong personalities, or we might say, "charisma." Even when there are glaring errors, inconsistencies, and unscriptural practices, many will support, defend, and blindly follow these leaders. In a previous section I referred to a "prophet-evangelist" who visited one of our churches. I remember the unquestioned respect, reverence, and awe that people showed, especially when he "prophesied" (so-called). It reminds me of the Samaritans in Acts 8:9-11, who also gave undue reverence to Simon the sorcerer. We read these words in verse 10 "To whom (that is, Simon) they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God." I believe many today are similarly deceived by false prophets and miracle-workers (so called), in spite of the oft-repeated scriptural warnings against deception. The prophet evangelist I mentioned above turned out to be a false prophet, yet he was given great honour and respect by practically the whole church.

It is amazing how these clever personalities can capture the minds and hearts of unsuspecting sincere Christians and blind them to their own errors and faults! I remember hearing, when still a young boy, the glowing reports about Aimee Semple McPherson. She was the originator of one of the tongues denominations and was acclaimed as a great leader. Many of us would have considered it a great privilege to see her and hear her speak. But though great crowds followed her and idolized her, the "behind-the-scenes" picture is not pleasant. An examination of her record is as disappointing as it is revealing. But I am sure that many of her devoted followers will not believe anything that might be

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proven against her. They can't, and won't, believe that their revered leader could be guilty of doing any wrong.

Another popular faith-healer, Mr. A.A. Allen, whom I heard on the radio years ago, and who must have had a considerable following of supporters, was found dead in his hotel room in San Francisco in 1970. He apparently had come to the city for an operation on his arthritic knee, but died in his hotel room. The coroner reported that he had died of acute alcoholism and fatty infiltration of the liver. But I dare say that many of his loyal followers will not believe the coroner's report. They just can't believe that their leader could do such a thing.

It is this "blind loyalty" that is all too prevalent in many areas of the Movement that is alarming. In the area of financial support, many sincere people of God, overcome by the "charisma" or personality of some leader, give very generously to line the coffers of these people, without investigating or questioning what use is made of their offerings and gifts.

Just to illustrate, I refer to a news item that appeared in the *Calgary Herald*, June 7, 1980. The article made reference to evangelist Rex Humbard's pleas for financial support for his television programs, and then told of how he spends some of that money. Here is a quote in part:

> Evangelist Rex Humbard, who last year said his television ministry was strapped for funds and appealed to viewers for more cash, admits he and his sons recently purchased a home and condominiums in Florida for $650,000.
>
> "My people don't give a hoot what I spend that money for," Humbard said.
>
> Humbard said last September 24, his ministry was $3.2 million in debt but purchased a home and condominiums near Palm Beach, FL with his sons for

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the $650,000 sum, the Cleveland Press reported this week.[1]

When Mr. Humbard said "My people don't give a hoot what I spend that money for," he certainly uncovered an obvious trend and reality among many Charismatic people today, and he underscores what I am trying to point out. Far too many Christians today are "too-trusting." Dare we handle the Lord's money in this careless manner, either in the giving or the receiving of it? No wonder, then that many God-fearing pastors and missionaries serving the Lord in small churches or in difficult areas, are suffering for lack of sufficient support—because God's money is being "drained off" by appealing personalities. Also think of what the nonChristian thinks of all this. Is it a good testimony? By no means! The very fact that this newspaper reporter investigated and the Calgary Herald published this article tells us something.

This tendency, then, to blind devotion and faithfulness to leaders with strong personalities, I believe, is very dangerous. We see much of the same in some of the better known cults today. All we need to do to emphasize this point is to mention the name of Jim Jones. In 1978 the world was shocked by the mass suicide of hundreds of Jones' loyal followers. Why did they do it? Because long before that fatal day they began to give blind, unswerving loyalty to Jones. They began to trust him, for everything and with everything, even when he did wrong. They ceased to think for themselves. They were deceived. They certainly did not follow God's Word closely in its teachings or they could not have followed Jones too long. It is so important, Christian, that we stay very close to the Bible. Study it! Believe it! Trust it! Follow it!

Someone might object here and say that I am too hard on the Tongues-Charismatic people in this area. May I then add this thought: it is also true that among non-Tongues

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Christians we can find leaders with strong personalities who take advantage of trusting Christians. But there is this difference—if the Tongues people are correct in their claim that they "have more" and are "filled with the Spirit" because they speak with tongues and are therefore "more spiritual" than the non-Tongues people, then they should have a better record in this area! If they indeed have more than we have, then it should be evident! It is one thing to make a claim, it is quite another to produce the evidence.

May we all, by the grace of God, strive to be more Bible-oriented, and to be more loyal to our Lord Jesus Christ and the Scriptures than to personalities!

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Reason 16
The Possibility that the Charismatic Movement will be Instrumental in Producing the Prophesied World Ecumenical Church of the Last Days

Strictly speaking, this was not a reason why I left the Tongues Movement, but it is a reason why I am not, and would not, be in the Movement today. I see signs of great danger ahead. Some other Christians share the same concern with me. I wish that I were wrong, but all signs at the present indicate that the Charismatic Movement could be the common denominator for a worldwide ecumenical organization or church. In the past, all attempts to bring about ecumenicity on the basis of faith, belief, or doctrine, have failed. But in the Charismatic Movement, unity is attained, not by unanimity of doctrine but on the basis of a common religious experience. To them largely, doctrine is not the important thing. But the experience is. So it is not surprising that in Charismatic circles people of many denominational backgrounds and doctrines can all worship and fellowship together, not because they agree on doctrine but because they agree on a common religious experience.

This is a very dangerous trend! Why? Because setting truth aside in order to have unity will ultimately put the One Who is "the Truth," the Lord Jesus, outside the Movement. That's just what we see predicted in Rev. 3:20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Here is a picture of the condition of the Church in the last days. We see the Lord Jesus standing "outside" the Church, knocking, trying to get in. But there is no room for Him. Doctrine and truth have been neglected. Experience has become the important thing, and the criteria for church

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membership or fellowship. No longer is it faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ that makes one an accepted Christian. He who is "the truth" is no longer wanted or welcome in church but is left standing outside . . . what a sad, tragic picture!

Can it be, then, that the Charismatic Movement will be the instrument that will help to bring about the great world church of Revelation, chapter 17? It is possible if they continue, in the interests of unity, to put experience ahead of doctrine. Anything can happen to the church that moves away from the solid foundations of the truths of God's Word.

Dr. Vernon McGee, in a radio broadcast not long ago, referred to a statement by a Charismatic who said that in these last days God was laying His Word aside in order to bring the churches together! It is a sad, sad day, when Truth must be sacrificed to obtain unity! But that is what we see developing today.

Perhaps the warning voiced by a dear uncle Of mine shortly before he went to be with the Lord, is right. He was an ardent Pentecostal Christian, and in my last visit with him he greatly surprised me with this question. Calling me by my first name, he said, "Do you know that the new Charismatic Movement is leading our Pentecostal people right into the church of the Antichrist?" Nothing that he could have said could have surprised me more. But, from that point on we found ourselves in agreement as we had a lovely and profitable discussion together. It happened to be the last visit I had with him, for shortly after that he went to be with the Lord.

He was an old-time Pentecostal, or one of those who are sometimes referred to as "classical Pentecostals." I'm discovering that some of these classical Pentecostals are also becoming concerned or alarmed by what is happening in this "new" Charismatic Movement. This is evidenced by a statement made by a Pentecostal writer, Mr. Harry Lunn, in

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an article entitled, "Beware the Christless Pentecost." He said: "A Pentecost without repentance, a Pentecost without Christ, that is what some are experiencing today."[1] I was glad to see this thoughtful and challenging article. It tells me that some of the classical Pentecostals are also beginning to see the warning signals in the "new" Charismatic Movement.

Another classical Pentecostal, an elderly aunt of mine, also expressed her misgivings by asking me this question: "How is it that Charismatic Catholic people can speak in tongues, and then go back to the Catholic church and worship Mary, pray to the saints, go to mass, etc? How can they do this? There is something wrong, isn't there?" I had to agree with her. Something is wrong! It doesn't stand up in the light of the Scriptures. And to Auntie it was a special problem because she herself is a converted Catholic. Years ago when she was saved, she knew that she could not go back to the Catholic church to fellowship and worship there. It would be to compromise truth. So now she can't understand these "new" Charismatics.

These are days, then, that we need to live very close to the Scriptures. There is a dearth of good, sound Bible study amongst God's people. Only with the Truth will we be able to combat the Lie.

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Reason 17
Their Distortion of the True Spirit-filled Life

The Scriptures definitely teach that there is a spirit-filling for every believer. God has a plan whereby every child of His can live a new life, a life of victory, fruitfulness, and effective service for him—a life that will be Christ-like and glorify God. God's basic provision to make this possible is the filling of the Holy Spirit, for we cannot live holy and God-pleasing lives in our own strength.

Have you ever asked yourself, Why did the Lord send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, to indwell me? What was His purpose in doing this? As we study chapters 14 through 16 of John's Gospel we will see a number of reasons, but they all add up to one basic purpose—that we, sinners, saved by grace, may now live lives to God's glory, trophies of His grace, and that we too might be like our Saviour and Lord, living Christ-like lives.

The Lord knew that in our own strength this would be impossible, so He arranged that the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, should indwell every believer—not only to be "with" him, but "in" him, John 14:17. (He couldn't be nearer to us, could He?) And further, He "abides with us forever!" (Jn. 14:16). Why this arrangement? That He, the Holy Spirit indwelling might, as we daily yield ourselves, our bodies, to Him, live the life of Christ through us—that we might "live" in the Spirit and "walk" in the Spirit. All that we need to live victorious, God-pleasing lives is ours already potentially in the indwelling Holy Spirit!

But now someone will ask, "Where does the filling of the Holy Spirit come in, and what is meant by 'being filled with the Holy Spirit'?" Our answer to these questions, I believe, will determine whether we hold to the Tongues-Charismatic

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viewpoint or to that of the non-Tongues Christians. The Tongues-Charismatic people generally have the concept that the filling of the Holy Spirit is a crisis experience, a once-in-a-lifetime experience evidenced by the speaking in tongues. When tongues speaking occurs, it signals that the seeker "has got it." Now some do believe that there can be renewed fillings thereafter, but their whole approach to the filling leaves the impression that "now I have it," and that's it!

As a young Christian in the movement, I got that impression when I repeatedly heard testimonies like this: "I thank the Lord that I was filled with the Holy Spirit 40, 30, 10 or whatever years ago, with the evidence of speaking with other tongues." It left me with the thought that this filling of the Holy Spirit was something like a once-in-a lifetime inoculation. From this experience on they are perpetually "filled." And yet, in some cases, I wondered about the effectiveness of this experience when I observed some of the conduct of those who had testified. I had to ask, "If they still are filled with the Spirit, how can they do those things that are wrong?" Something didn't quite add up.

On the other hand, the non-Tongues, non-Charismatic belief generally held is that the filling of the Holy Spirit is not a once-for-all experience but involves a continual yieldedness to the indwelling Holy Spirit, so that He can bring our lives daily into submission to the lordship of Christ, thus producing the fruit of righteousness in us. In short, it is a life, rather than a crisis-experience.

One other teaching of Tongues-Charismatic people that contributes to confusion at this point is that the filling and the baptism are one and the same experience. If they were the same, then the teaching that the filling is a once-in-a-lifetime experience should be correct, for the baptism is a once-for-all event. But we never read in Scripture of anyone experiencing a second Spirit baptism. But, we do read several times, of Christians experiencing a fresh filling. Nowhere in Scripture

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do we have a command to believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, but we do have such a command regarding the filling, in Eph. 5:18.

The baptism and the filling are two different ministries of the Holy Spirit. By the baptism all believers are placed into the Body of Christ, the Church, 1 Cor. 12:13. There we read "For by one Spirit are (or were) we all baptized into one body . . ." It is a once-for-all act of Christ by the Spirit that unites the believer to His Body, the Church. The word "are" here could be translated "were," which informs us that all Christians have experienced the baptism when they believed on Christ. It is not an experience to be sought again. That is why there is no command anywhere in Scripture for Christian believers to seek the baptism.

By Spirit baptism we are placed into Christ. Did you ever notice how often the phrase, "in Christ" appears in the New Testament? What does it mean? How did we get into that position? By the baptism of the Holy Spirit. At the moment of believing on Jesus Christ we are placed into Christ by Spirit baptism.

But now let us look at the filling. Turn to Ephesians 5:18, where we read "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." Briefly notice several things that this scripture tells us:

1) This is a command. God expects every Christian to be filled With the Holy Spirit. Are you? It is just as sinful for you not to be filled as it is for you to be "drunk."

2) The filling is not optional. It is not a case of, "If I want to I will!" No! God expects all Christians to be filled; that is His plan for all of us.

3) This command is addressed to those who already are Christians, Eph. 1:1, and who have already been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ, who are "in Christ."

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4) Be filled. A close look at these two words can be very helpful. The Greek here gives the thought of "being constantly under the control of' the Holy Spirit.

Years ago I looked at the filling as a once-for-all experience. One day I heard brother Theodore Epp of *Back to the Bible Broadcast* speak on Eph. 5:18. He pointed out the above meaning of "be filled" in the Greek. That really caught my attention and helped me immensely. It tied many Scriptures and truths together for me. For if a Christian is Spirit-filled, he is indeed Spirit-controlled. It cannot be otherwise. And if he is Spirit-controlled he is, then, under the lordship of Christ, which is where he should be. And being under the control of the Spirit he will also "walk in the Spirit" and "live in the Spirit." The Spirit-filled person, then, is the Spirit-controlled person. The Holy Spirit is not a power that you can have and use, but He is a Person, Who desires to have and use you!

This brings us to another thought—

5) If He is in control, then it isn't a case of me having "more of Him" (the concept so many have today as they seek the filling), **but it is a case of Him having "more of me,"** yes ALL of me! (Rom. 6:13,19; 12:1-2). You cannot have more of Him, but He can, and should, have more of you.

6) Every Christian has the Holy Spirit in his life as Resident, but the Spirit-filled (controlled) Christian has Him in his life as PRESIDENT!

In summary I would like to repeat that I believe that our doctrinal views of the Holy Spirit can either thwart or fulfill God's wonderful plan and purpose that every Christian live a victorious. fruitful. and Christ-honouring life. There is no better testimony to a lost world than a Spirit-controlled LIFE with the fruit of the Spirit in manifestation (Gal. 5:22-23). The world does not care how often or how loudly we shout

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“Look at me, I’m filled with the Spirit because I spoke with tongues, etc.,” but they do notice and care if they see a transformed LIFE, a life daily under the control of the Holy Spirit, a life that exhibits “Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” They are witnessed to when they see Christ living in us! That is God’s design for our lives; let us not disappoint Him!

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Charismatics—Whither Bound? Postscript to Second Printing (1984)

In chapter 16 of this book, I refer to the possibility that the modern Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement could be leading its followers into a world ecumenical church. Since that manuscript was written for the first printing much has happened. There is increasing evidence that there is a strong movement toward unity and ecumenicity among both Protestant and Catholic Charismatics. We must ask the question, In the light of current trends, is the Charismatic-Pentecostal Movement leading its people back to Roman Catholicism?

Let's take a quick look at this Movement now under these three headings: ITS GROWTH, ITS DANGERS, ITS DIRECTION.

The growth of the Charismatic Movement

Some Christians recently said to me, "But the Charismatic Movement is dying out!" How misinformed they were! Make no mistake, the Charismatic Movement is not dying out; it is growing! It is not a movement that we can ignore, hoping that it will go away (the attitude that many have today). It is a religious force that we will have to reckon with. We will have to take a stand either for or against it because great spiritual issues and principles are involved. We must ask ourselves: is it firmly based and rooted in Scripture? Is it built upon Truth or upon religious experiences?

Many Charismatic conferences have and are being held. Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Baptists, Episcopalians, Mennonites, Presbyterians, United Church members, etc., as well as nondenominational Christians, come together on the basis of the charismatic experience. Not only are there local and national conferences, but also international. The first

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international conference of the Charismatic Renewal took place in Kansas City in 1977. It was reported that some 50,000 Charismatics attended. At the "Washington for Jesus Rally" (1980) it is said that 300,000 Pentecostal, Catholic and non-Catholic Charismatics gathered. Included were leaders from Roman Catholic and a number of Protestant denominations and churches and some well-known Charismatic radio and television personalities. In 1981, "Jesus 81 Rallies" were programmed throughout the world, including Berlin, Germany and New Jersey, New York.

No, the Charismatic Movement is not dying out. It is growing tremendously! We cannot, must not, ignore it. Many Christians are being caught up in it. They need teaching and direction. Are we providing it?

The Dangers of the Charismatic Movement

False Unity

A paramount objective of Charismatics appears to be the unity of churches and denominations. Statements made by both Catholic and non-Catholic Charismatics lead to this conclusion. And Pope John Paul II is certainly in agreement. Unity of all churches (under Rome, of course) is one of his main objectives, it appears. Addressing a conference of Charismatic leaders in Rome, he reportedly said, "By your experience of many gifts of the Holy Spirit which are shared also with *our separated brothers and sisters,* yours is the special joy of growing in a desire for the unity to which the Spirit guides us and in a commitment to the *serious task of ecumenism."*

But to attain that unity, Bible doctrine will obviously have to be set aside or else compromised. What kind of unity will result? Not a unity of faith, a unity based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but one that is based on experience—mainly the "tongues speaking" experience.

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Charismatics of various beliefs meet and fellowship together, accepting each other as Christians and "loving" each other without giving serious consideration to the unscriptural and soul-destroying doctrines that some adhere to. Are Roman Catholic Charismatics questioned as to whether they have put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (not Mary or the church) as their Saviour from sin? Is anything said about the worship of Mary instead of the Creator or the Saviour (Rom. 1:25)? Why is it that some Roman Catholic Charismatics say that they are more devoted to Mary because of their Charismatic experience? The Scriptures plainly teach that Christian fellowship and love must be based on Truth, not on false doctrines. We should *love in the truth* (2 John 1; 3 John 1,3-4).

It appears that this "unity" that is being promoted today is a false unity. It is an endeavour to bring together the saved and the unsaved, the truly born-again believers in Christ and those who merely have a religious profession. According to the Scriptures, this is a false unity. Man says, "Join them." God says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate" (2 Cor. 6:17). When will we believe and obey?

False revival

Charismatic activities and growth are considered to be the beginnings of a great worldwide revival. It would indeed be wonderful to see a genuine revival stir God's people everywhere, but is what we see in the modern Charismatic movement a genuine revival from God? The emphasis does not appear to be on the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection as being necessary to save man from his sin, resulting in a "new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17). Following that, there is a transformed lifestyle, such as was exhibited by the Christians at Thessalonica of whom Paul could write, *"Ye turned to God from idols* to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven" (1 Thess. 1:9-10). Rather they

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appear to put their emphasis upon a "second blessing" teaching, sometimes without a "first blessing" (salvation) experience.

It is primarily a Holy Spirit-centred movement. But the Lord Jesus told us that "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"* (Jn. 15:26) and *"He shall glorify me"* (Jn. 16:14). The Holy Spirit never exalts Himself, but Christ! Genuine revival is always Christ-centred.

Consider this, too, that the Scriptures warn us that there will be a great "falling away," and apostasy, as we draw near to the Lord's coming (2 Thess. 2:3), and not a worldwide revival. And the Lord Himself said, "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" (Lk. 18:8).

That does not rule out a genuine revival amongst those of God's people who will stand true to the Scriptures, though greatly outnumbered and persecuted. Church history records that persecution and trials have been spiritually beneficial to those who have remained loyal to Christ and His Gospel and the Holy Scriptures. But that is not to be confused with a great worldwide religious movement toward the unity of many denominations and organizations of varied beliefs and doctrines. That is neither biblical unity or biblical revival.

A false church

False unity and false revival will lead to a false church. This we are warned about in Scripture. The final state of Christendom will be the Laodicean condition—an organization bearing Christ's name but With Christ Himself on the outside—an apostate church (Rev. 3:14-22), not a "revived" or spiritual church. In chapters 17 and 18 of Revelation, the Lord refers to this false church, this spiritual "harlot," and pronounces her doom.

A false appraisal of church history

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This evident desire for union with the Roman Catholic Church, in spite of her unchanged basic doctrines, indicates a woeful lack of understanding of the Protestant Reformation. David Samuel, in his book *Pope or Gospel,* wrote,

"Those who forget their history end up as slaves in the gutter." Those words, spoken recently by a politician, remained in my mind because they pin-pointed a real weakness of Protestantism today. One of the principal reasons for the drift in the Protestant churches towards Rome is the neglect of history. We shall not understand ourselves, and we shall certainly not understand the Church of Rome, unless we take the trouble to acquaint ourselves with what has happened in the past.

Were Martin Luther and the Reformers wrong? Was the Reformation all a great mistake? Was the blood of the martyrs spilled in vain? Do we now tell evangelical, born-again Christians who came out of the Roman system that they should go back, that all that they experienced was really not necessary—it was all a big mistake? They know better, but do we who still call ourselves Protestants? Make no mistake, the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement is not Protestant now.

The Direction of the Charismatic Movement

Just a few days ago an elderly Christian lady who spends much of her time watching and listening to Charismatic programs on radio and TV said excitedly, "The Catholics are coming!" She meant that Catholics are being converted and saved. But perhaps it is not so much a case of the Catholics coming to our Saviour by faith in His finished sacrificial work, but more a case of Protestants *going*—going back to Rome!

It is now claimed (1983) that there are some 35 million Roman Catholic Charismatics. They have become the predominant force in the Charismatic Movement. The pope

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has cleverly kept the Catholic Charismatics within his church. He has appointed certain bishops to shepherd them within the church. Continually the Catholic Charismatics are urged to stay in their church. The pope is using this movement to bring the non-Catholic Charismatics into his "fold." And he is apparently succeeding!

Addressing some 10,000 delegates to the third International Conference on the Charismatic Renewal in Rome, the Pope said, "The church and the world need what you have—your new joy and enthusiasm. Now go and give it to them."

Dr. Ronald E. Baxter, in his book *Charismatic Gift of Tongues,* asks the following question,

Who is receiving whom in this enlarged Charismatic ecumenism? Most astute observers would agree that the present situation is a little like the old adage, 'Come into my parlour, said the spider to the fly.' To the Roman Catholic hierarchy, the Protestant Charismatics are but separated brethren who need to return to Mother Church. To many leaders in the Charismatic Movement, this might not be a bad idea!

For some time now Pentecostal-Charismatic leaders have been trying to bring about such a union. A news item from Vienna, Austria, November 9, 1981, as reported in the *Western Catholic Reporter*, Edmonton, Alberta, stated that,

A high-level ecumenical dialogue with representatives of Pentecostal churches had produced surprisingly large areas of agreement, according to one participant. Father Robert Wister, professor of church history at Immaculate Conception Seminary in Darlington, New Jersey, one of the Catholic participants at the meeting, said the discussion ended, "with deeper consensus than had been anticipated." An agreed statement issued at the conclusion of the week-long meeting said, "Roman Catholics discovered that Mary

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enters into Pentecostal preaching and devotion. The Pentecostals see that the presentation of Mary's intercession in official Roman Catholic teaching does not undermine the one mediator-ship of Jesus taught by the Bible."

There appears to be a compromising of doctrine here to obtain unity. 1 Timothy 2:5 reads, "For there is one God, and *one mediator* between God and men, *the man Christ Jesus*."

A leading instrument in the Pentecostal-Charismatic-Roman Catholic unity movement is the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship. This is not, strictly speaking, an interdenominational fellowship of Christians but is very much a Charismatic organization that requires its officers to be tongues speakers or seekers. This Fellowship is working for unity with Roman Catholics.

The Scriptures plainly warn us of great deception in the last days of the Church: "But evil men and seducers shall become worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But continue thou . . . in the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:14-15).

We are facing difficult days! Intense spiritual battles are before us. Grave decisions will have to be made. God's people will be called upon to take a definite stand for Truth and the Scriptures, no doubt at great cost. We must, though, remember that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore, take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand *in the evil day*, and having done all, to stand!" (Eph. 6:12,13). Will you and I be found faithful to our Lord Jesus and His Gospel?

I close with the following timely warning written by Mr. Wilson Ewin in his booklet entitled *The Spirit of Pentecostal-Charismatic Unity:*

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A powerful spirit is moving throughout the labyrinth of Pentecostal-Charismatic renewal. The spirit is the same deceptive voice that spoke in the garden and said, "in the day that ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods . . ." (Gen. 3:5). It is the enemy of our Holy God, a rebellious spirit from darkness. The apostle warned of this coming of "ANOTHER SPIRIT" (2 Cor. 11:3-4). And now the voice of that spirit is heard calling for unity and the formation of the end time universal religious complex of John's Revelation.

But wait! Another voice is calling. However, the appeal is different. In fact, it is strongly opposed to the spirit of unity. The Spirit of God says, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). The reader is left to decide which of the two voices he will obey.

Upon that decision rests the future of America. Our wicked society is facing the imminent judgment of a Holy God and separation from evil is God's ultimatum for deliverance. It always was. (See 2 Chron. 7:14). It was so with Israel of old when the nation united with evil. And so it is today in a modern parallel. The spirit of Pentecostal-Charismatic unity is leading untold millions back into the ruin of Romanist falsehood, error and idolatrous worship. It is the system that God hates and has promised to destroy (Rev. 18:6-24). "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Cor. 6:17).

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Charismatics Moving Ever Further from the Truth
Postscript to Third Printing (1991)

Over Six years have elapsed since the second printing of this book. Has the Charismatic Movement weakened during that time? Has it renounced its errors and false practices and conformed more closely to the Scriptures?

I wish that I could answer in the affirmative, but I can't. Contrary to what many non-charismatic Christians might think today, the Charismatic Movement is continuing to grow tremendously! And, there is an escalating trend toward false and heretical teaching and unscriptural practices. And beyond this is its bent for ecumenicity—fellowship and unity with other denominations and groups which deny the true Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and which are not "sound in the faith."

Charismatic growth

David W. Cloud, editor of O TIMOTHY magazine, in Vol. 7, Issues 8-9, 1990, wrote informatively as follows:

At the turn of this century there were no Pentecostals in the world. Zero. Even 50 years ago Pentecostalism was a very minor part of Christendom. But things are different now! The ten largest churches in the world are charismatic. The only church in the world which claims over 500,000 members is charismatic. The charismatic movement is probably the fastest growing movement which names the name of Christ. The charismatic movement dominates the Christian media in the West, permeates such influential organizations as the Christian Booksellers of America and the Christian Broadcasting Association, and controls much of the Christian television and radio transmission. Some of the largest mission groups are charismatic. Youth With a Mission, with

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its 21,000 workers (counting short-termers), is an example. The charismatic movement influences society at every strata, from the businessmen to the poorest of the poor in third world nations.

Statistician David Howard claims that 372 million Christians—one in every five—identifies with the Pentecostal-charismatic movement (Press Release, Indianapolis '90, August 16, 1990). He claims that charismatics are growing by 54,000 per day, and that 80% of all conversions are charismatic. These statistics are highly debatable, but there can be no doubt that it is a massive movement.[1]

Consider also the popularity of large Charismatic conferences. Two of these, sponsored by the North American Renewal Service Committee were: New Orleans, 1987, and Indianapolis, 1990. The New Orleans Conference attracted about 40,000 and at Indianapolis there were about 25,000 registrants. David W. Cloud gives the following statistics on Indianapolis: "Forty-eight percent of those in attendance were Roman Catholic. Ten percent were nondenominational, nine percent Episcopal, and eight percent Pentecostal; Forty denominations and organizations were involved in the congress, and fifty nations were represented among the speakers and those in attendance. Roughly 200 speakers participated in the congress, and there were more than 150 exhibitors."

In the light of this spectacular growth of the Charismatic Movement and its influence on Christendom today, we cannot and dare not ignore it. It needs to be carefully examined and evaluated by Scripture—which is our final standard for faith and practice. Numbers or popularity are no proof of God's favour or of the correctness of doctrine (2 Tim. 4:1-4). Consider Jeremiah. In his day when apostasy was rampant in Judah, he stood alone for the truth (Jer. 9:1-9; 26:8-9). He was despised, ridiculed, and persecuted. But the

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great majority was WRONG! We are living in a similar time of great apostasy (so prophesied—2 Thess. 2:1-12). Great deception is invading the churches. Let's heed the warning of God's Word: "Let no man deceive you!" (2 Thess. 2:3).

Charismatics and revival

Charismatic's generally believe that their rapid growth will result in a revival that will prepare the world for Christ's coming. Chairman of the 1990 Indianapolis Congress, Vinson Synan, in his welcoming address said, "We believe that a mighty worldwide renewal and revival in the churches will make the 1990s the greatest decade of evangelization in the history of the church."[2]

But we must ask, "Is what we see genuine or counterfeit revival?" Speaking of "the last days" of the church age, the Apostle Paul, in 2 Timothy chapter 3, warns us of "perilous times". . . that men shall have "a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away". . . that they would never "come to the knowledge of the truth". . . would "resist the truth". . . would be "reprobate concerning the faith". . . and that "evil men and seducers shall become worse and worse [not better and better], deceiving and being deceived."

Again, in 2 Thessalonians 2, the Apostle warns the church of a "falling away" (v.3)—a great apostasy that will usher in "that man of sin, the son of perdition . . . even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders . . . with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."

Please note that there will be Satanic "power, signs and lying wonders" in the last days. Compare that with the "miracles, signs, and wonders" emphasis so prominent in Charismatic circles today.

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This scenario that Paul describes is far from that of a worldwide revival!

But Charismatic's will dispute this, referring to Acts 2:16-21 where the Apostle Peter speaks of a Spirit outpouring in "the last days." What does Peter mean? Is he contradicting Paul? How can these two prophecies be reconciled?

Briefly, we must remember that Peter is speaking to Israel, and that he is quoting from the Book of Joel, where that prophet describes God's judgment upon unrepentant Israel, but also God's future restoration of that nation to His favor, an outpouring of His Spirit upon them, and great future blessing. To this agree the words of the Old Testament prophets. Please read Ezekiel 39:25-29; Isaiah 32:14-18; Zechariah 2:11-13; Zechariah 12:10.

Paul is in complete agreement with the Old Testament prophets, as he so plainly tells us in Romans chapter 11. Notice particularly verses 25 and 26:

For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits: that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved . . . .

No, there is no contradiction here when we differentiate between Israel and the Church! Let's not confuse God's wonderful promises to Israel in her "last days" with His prophecies to the Church. For Israel, after much suffering, there awaits a glorious future accompanied; of course, by a great work (outpouring) of the Holy Spirit. For the Church the "last days" will be times of a great "falling away," so much so that the Lord Jesus Himself warned us in Luke 18:8- "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?"

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Charismatics and truth

To every serious Bible-believing Christian student truth is of paramount importance. When truth is suppressed, displaced, or denied, it becomes a very serious matter. For years the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement has been rather indifferent to this fact. Confused teaching regarding the work and gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as claiming that the baptism and the filling of the Holy Spirit are synonymous. They have also put "experience" above the written Word, and they value "tongues speaking" (is it ever questioned or tested to see if it is genuine?) above and beyond what the Bible allows. And they continue to practice being "slain-in-the-spirit" in spite of the fact that there is no New Testament scripture which shows that Christians in the early church had such experiences. In fact, this practice seems to be more closely related to the occult and the working of evil spirits.

Is there any improvement in the Movement in this area? Obviously not! Instead, there is a growing toleration of error! For example, there was a time not long ago when Pentecostal people would not think of tolerating or accepting Catholic doctrines, such as the mass. Things are different today. Hear what a Pentecostal-Charismatic leader, Vinson Synan, chairman of the New Orleans '87 Charismatic Congress said to the non-Catholic participants: "If you want to see something beautiful, come see a spirit-filled Catholic mass!" What spiritual folly and blindness! There is nothing "beautiful" about false doctrine, especially that taught in the Roman mass. And it certainly is not a "Holy Spirit filled" mass! The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth and not the spirit of error (1 Jn. 4:6).

Another example: David DuPlessis, an international Pentecostal leader known as "Mr. Pentecost," in the book A Man Called Mr. Pentecost, describes his experiences as he attended sessions of the 1964 Vatican Council in St. Peter's Basilica, Rome, in these words:

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I sat virtually alone as the special mass was celebrated . . . I was certain I could feel the fresh breezes of the Holy Spirit in that colorful, yet sadly solemn, and heavily liturgical moment in church history. Yet, as happened every morning during my weeks there, I felt myself melting and breaking, actually weeping openly as the mass unfolded.[3]

Describing a session of the 1975 Congress on the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church, held in St. Peter's Basilica, Mr. DuPlessis said:

> During the celebration of the Eucharist, there was singing with the Spirit, gently, tenderly, reverently and absolutely fitting. It was indeed a Pentecostal service, with Pentecostal manifestations and very evident Pentecostal blessings . . . no one had expected such a rich and positive manifestation of a new Pentecost.[4]

Our question is this: If this was indeed a genuine moving of the Holy Spirit, a "new Pentecost," why would the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, choose to thus reveal Himself and bless during the celebration of a heretical Catholic mass?

Today, too, there is a growing trend among Charismatic's to emphasize the ministry of "prophets." A generation of "new prophets" is coming on the scene. These new leaders continue to preface their "prophecies" with "thus saith the Lord," "God told me," "God spoke to me," "God's message for you is." And thousands are deceived into believing that these "messages" are from God Himself, even as Scripture is. The terrible fact is that so many of these "prophecies" are not accurate, are contrary to Scripture, are counterfeit, leading many unwary souls astray. If these "prophecies" were genuinely from the Lord, Holy Spirit inspired, there would be NO error! The fact that there is error at all (some admit up to 35% error and even more) proves that this is not a work of the Holy Spirit—the Spirit of truth (Deut. 18:22).

Many strange and bizarre doctrines are either being revived, such as the "Manifest Sons of God" teaching, or are

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being introduced as a result of new "prophecies." And naturally so, when Scripture is replaced by so-called prophecies, foolish, false, damnable doctrines will result. Remember! The Scriptures warn us repeatedly about false prophets, especially in the last days (Matt. 24:11,24; 2 Pet. 2:1-3; 1 Jn. 4:1).

Beware! There is only one "sure word of prophecy" (1 Pet. 1:19)—the written Word which was "once [for all] delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

For further information on modern "prophets," see O TIMOTHY magazine, Vol. 7, Issues 8-9, 1990, and Vol. 7, Issue 10, 1990. This is available from Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061-0368. See also "Latter Day Prophets—The Kansas City Connection" by Albert James Dager (Media Spotlight, PO, Box 290, Redmond, Washington 98073).

Charismatics and ecumenicity

There also is an accelerating movement toward ecumenicity, as the previous paragraphs indicate. At New Orleans '87, of the 40,000 present, about one-half were Roman Catholics. At Indianapolis '90, of the roughly 25,000 present, about 48% were Roman Catholics. At these conferences, Charismatic's from many denominations, including the Catholics, mingle and fellowship together in an ecumenical unity that is not based on sound biblical beliefs, but largely on a common "experience," that of "tongues speaking." This is indeed a shaky foundation for fellowship or unity, especially as "tongues speaking" is and can be counterfeited. We must ask: Are these modern "tongues" the same as those referred to in the Book of Acts?

Regarding "experience," the Mormons also believe in and experience "tongues speaking," and they also use "experience" to prove that the book of Mormon is true by urging readers to test it by reading till they experience a

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"burning in the bosom." And Mormons testify to this experience. Question: Does this "burning in the bosom" experience really prove that the book of Mormon is genuine Scripture? I believe not! "Experience" is not a reliable foundation for faith or practice. Yet Charismatic's by the millions are building their fellowship and unity upon it. This error will ultimately lead to greater deception, acceptance into fellowship of even non-Christian religious organizations, and acceptance of the papacy as the head. It will finally become a part of the antichrist world church (Revelation chapters 17,18).

In Acts chapter 8 we read of a man named Simon who had miraculous powers and had persuaded the Samaritans that he was God's man. They said, "This man is the great power of God" (v. 10). But they were wrong, as verses 18-24 clearly indicate. The miraculous powers exhibited by this man were Satan's counterfeits. The Samaritans were deceived by this man's ability to perform the miraculous.

The "Miracles, Signs and Wonders" emphasis in the Charismatic Movement today is ensnaring millions. They are basing their faith on "experiences" and not on the Scriptures. Remember that "in the last days . . . evil men and seducers shall become worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:1, 13).

Miracles will be prominent in the last days, but they will not necessarily be of God, but satanic. People will "experience" these things, and be deceived by them (Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:8-12; Rev. 13:11-18). John Wimber and his Vineyard organization is a strong exponent of miracles, signs, and wonders.

These are days of great deception when we need to stand very firmly on the written Word of God. "Let no man deceive you!" (2 Thess. 2:3).

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Charismatics and Evangelism

Have Charismatic's forgotten the true Gospel? Are they preaching "another gospel" (Gal. 1:6-7)? Apparently so. Look at David DuPlessis' statement again:

I recalled that, in only a few years, the Catholics had already taken the message of Pentecost to ninety-two countries.[5]

Notice that the Gospel (I Cor. 15:3-4) has been displaced by another message! Christ commanded us to "preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15). Is Mr. DuPlessis accepting the ministry of charismatic Catholics as the proclamation of the genuine Gospel of Christ's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection, or is he rejoicing that "another gospel" (charismatic) is being preached? The Lord's command is not just "to preach," or to preach any kind of message, or any kind of doctrine, but to preach "the Gospel." To do anything less is to invite God's curse (Gal. 1:8-9).

It was "the Gospel" that Paul proclaimed (I Cor. 2:2; 15:1-4) and of which he was "not ashamed" (Rom. 1:16), and of which he said, "it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth . . ." But Charismatic's are seeking another kind of "power."

Not only are Charismatic's replacing the all important message, "the Gospel," but are failing to "preach the Gospel to every creature." Exceptions are now being made. Just a few years ago the practice was to send missionaries to Catholic countries to evangelize Catholics. Today, instead of evangelizing them they have a tendency to join them and work together alongside them in evangelizing others.

In the Aug.-Sept. 1977 issue of *Melodyland Magazine*, Ralph Wilkerson, in an article entitled, "Becoming One that the World Might be Won," wrote about a Charismatic gathering held in Latin America:

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> The morning before we left to come home, DuPlessis spoke to us from John 17:21. Later in the meeting, a Roman Catholic priest from Guatemala City spoke in an unknown tongue, and the interpretation was given by an American pilot. … The interpretation was that the Roman Catholics and Protestants will march together around Latin America demonstrating, unity, and once they do this, the world will believe. … There will be approximately 1,000 teams, with each team made up of a Catholic and a Protestant from Latin America.

Strange? I wonder what kind of "gospel" they will preach?

But this should not really surprise us because back in 1975 David DuPlessis already recognized the Catholic Church as part of Christ's body. Writing about his participation in the 1975 Congress on the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church, in St. Peter's Basilica, he stated: "[We] knew that we were firsthand witnesses to another of the mighty surges that the Lord was more and more frequently sending upon His body, Catholic and Protestant alike."[6]

Today that recognition of the Catholic Church has grown immensely. So, why evangelize the Catholic millions! Just accept them as they are in spiritual darkness and error and work side-by-side with them to convert the world "by the year 2000!" But we MUST ask: To WHAT or to WHOM will they be-converted?

In 1 Chronicles 12:32 we read of "men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do." In these confusing days we need to "understand" our times. This can only be done by a careful and prayerful study of and dependence on the written Word of God. Psalm 119:130 states: "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

"For ever, a LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." (Psa. 119:89)

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Charismatics and Changes
Postscript to Fourth Printing (2000)

The first three paragraphs following below are excerpts from a general mailing that I sent out in 1984:

> Because of a growing concern in evangelical Christendom about the growth of the Charismatic Movement and its apparent attempts to cooperate with the Roman Catholic system, I feel constrained to make the enclosed information available to Christian leaders and institutions and interested Christians generally, with the hope that it will be of some help and guidance in these troubled and confusing days. This is being sent out, not to antagonize or for argument, but to warn and to help in the cause of our Lord, Jesus Christ (Acts 20:31; Col. 1:28).
>
> Recently, a pastor, who had come to talk to me, said, "I never knew that this was going on! Why doesn't someone tell us these things?" I replied, "That is just what I am trying to do." It requires time and financial expense, but God's people need to be alerted to the 'Back-to-Rome' trend that is growing in momentum today (1984). Some estimate that there are over 40 million Charismatic Catholics today. They are becoming the dominant force in the Charismatic Movement. The Pope is carefully and cleverly keeping them inside the Roman system, apparently hoping by this to draw the millions of Protestant Charismatics and Pentecostals back into his organization. Apparently he is succeeding. The key word is "unity." But what kind of unity? Will it be a unity based on the fundamental truths of Scripture and on the Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ? Or, will it be based on "experience" (a Charismatic experience)?
>
> A prominent warning in the Scriptures and one that is particularly applicable for the closing days of this Church Age is: "Be not deceived" and "Let no man

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> deceive you" (See Matt. 24:4,5,11,24; 2 Thess. 2:3; 1 John 3:7). According to 2 Tim. 3:13, tremendous deception will be a characteristic and sign of the "last days" (2 Tim. 3:1). We dare not take these warnings lightly! We need to carefully examine and analyze what is going on in Christendom today with open Bibles and hearts before God, lest we too be caught up in the current excitement about 'unity' and 'renewal' which is being fostered by the Pope. Remember the warning of 2 Thess. 2:3 "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a [the] falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition . . ." I believe that today we are witnessing a "falling away" from the Truth, from the genuine Gospel. Bible truth (doctrine) is being neglected. "Experiences" are replacing doctrine. Let us heed the warning of Isa. 8:20 "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

The above was written in 1984. We could ask, "Have there been any changes since then?" The answer would have to be a definite "Yes!" The Charismatic Movement has certainly not declined or faded away, as some told me that it would. But it has and is growing tremendously. There have been great changes in the Charismatic Movement:

I. Changes in Numerical Growth

Pentecostal/Charismatic churches are among the fastest growing churches today. This is true of the non-Catholic part of the Charismatic Movement. All one needs to do is to look around and notice the many new Charismatic churches that they are starting and their strength and prominence on radio and television. And take note too, of the advances that they have made into the older "mainline" denominational churches. But it appears that today (2000) the growth of the Catholic Charismatics is even greater that the non-Catholic Charismatics. In 1984 the estimated number of Catholic

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Charismatics was about 40 Million. A 1996 estimate was 320 million. And now in 2000, it likely is considerably in excess of that figure. They are now the prominent force in the Charismatic Movement. Yes, there have been great changes in numerical growth. But this is not the end. It appears that it will culminate in the unity of Catholic and Protestants into one large world church, built on this common Charismatic "tongues-speaking experience." Will it become the "harlot church" of Revelation chapter 17?

2. Changes in Charismatic Spiritual and Religious Influence

Naturally, because of their large numerical increase, all "Christendom" must be affected. Notice particularly their influence in the following areas:

A. Changes in the Conduct and Order of Church Services

Non-Charismatic churches are now greatly influenced by Charismatic conduct and style of worship, etc. A member of a large Baptist church told me recently that his church was now more "Pentecostal" in conducting its services than the Pentecostal church. This can now be said of many non-Pentecostal churches, but that was not the case generally in 1984!

B. Changes in Outreach, Fellowship, and Cooperation

At least two significant Charismatic outreach efforts are having their effect on Christendom: "The Promise Keepers" and "The Alpha Course." Both involve non-Charismatics and Catholics. Both of these organizations originated in Charismaticism (which some evangelicals unfortunately do not realize), and they are very effective in "charismaticizing" our churches as well as breaking down the barriers between Protestants and Catholics. Remember the Apostle Paul's solemn warning in Acts 20:29-31. The Church's greatest danger is not from outside, but from within the Church,

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C. Changes in the Church's Music

This is a most significant change! Music and singing has been a very important factor in the life of the Church and the believer. So the type of music and the content and words of the songs and hymns will have a profound effect on the life and growth of the believer and his church. Consequently, this area of the Church's activity needs to be examined very carefully and prayerfully.

It is very apparent that Charismatic influences in this area are very great already. For instance, the growing use of choruses instead of hymns. In some churches hymn books are rarely used. This has and is causing debate, strife, and even division. Look at your chorus and hymn books. Realize how many of the authors or writers are Charismatics. Naturally, their doctrines will slowly come into your church-via music. Guard this "door of entrance" to your church!

The sad part of all this is that our Christian musicians and young people are greatly tempted to emulate the music and manners of worldly musicians, many of whom are irreligious or godless, promoting an evil lifestyle.

Please take note of the following paragraph from 0 TIMOTHY magazine, (Vol. 17, Issue 8, 2000) by David W. Cloud:

At the heart of the battle about music in the churches is the very character of God. Our concept of God will determine what kind of music we use to worship Him and the manner in which we worship Him. If we think that God is a cool dude who hip-hops to modern rock music (as some "Christian" singers say), we will worship Him with such music and our lifestyle and very appearance will reflect this concept of God. If, on the other hand, we believe that God is a fearfully holy God before Whom the hosts of Heaven fall in awe and reverence, our worship music and our very

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lifestyle and appearance will reflect holiness and separation from the world.

AMEN!

3. Changes in Attitude Toward Bible Doctrine and Truth

A few years ago the attitude of some Pentecostal/ Charismatic people toward Bible Truth began to take a turn away from solid Bible-based thinking and teaching to an unbalanced emphasis on LOVE and EXPERIENCES. This was exemplified by a statement made by a Charismatic preacher to the effect that "God has in these last days laid aside His Word in order to bring us all together in love." (I know of no Scripture to support such teaching.) This thinking seems now to have permeated much of the Charismatic Movement. Why can we say so? How else can you then explain the acceptance of Catholic tongues-speakers as genuine born-again Christians? They are now being recognized generally by Charismatics as being part of God's family and loved as such. Just a few years ago, evangelical Christians could not and would not accept Roman Catholics as genuine Christians—for biblical reasons relative to "how" they became "Christians." Were they "saved" by faith in the finished work of Christ at Calvary, by grace? Or, did they profess to be Christians based upon the unscriptural man-made ceremonies and rituals of their church?

Pentecostals and Charismatics faced a dilemma. They had to make a choice. Would they accept the "tongues-speaking" evidence of millions of Catholics as proof that they were now real Christians, fully "brethren-in-Christ?" Even though they did not accept them as such before they spoke in "tongues?" Would an "experience" (tongues-speaking) be proof of their salvation instead of Bible based repentance and faith in the Saviour, the Lord Jesus (Eph. 2:8-9; John

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1:12-13; Acts 16:31; 1 John 5:10-13)? "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

An elderly Christian acquaintance of mine was questioned by a Charismatic: "Have you spoken in tongues yet?" My friend replied, "No." then the Charismatic replied: "Then you have nothing!" In those four short words this man belittled simple faith in Christ and exalted "faith" in a questionable "Charismatic" experience of modern "tongues speaking." To this man, "tongues speaking" has become "everything." Notice how easily and subtily a vital Bible truth can be discarded and then replaced by a lie!

Apparently there has been an alarming "change" in the attitude of non-Catholic Charismatics about what the Bible teaches about being saved, justification by faith, and the new birth.

It also appears that more and more Charismatics are accepting the belief that speaking "in tongues" is **the** sign of being a born-again Christian, and that if a professing believer in Jesus Christ does not speak "in tongues" he is not born again. (Incidentally, that is being taught by some Alpha Course teachers today.) There is no Scripture that supports such teaching. But 1 John 5:1 reads "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Notice that it does not say "whosoever speaketh in tongues is born of God." Notice also that this teaching directs our attention away from faith in the Person and Work of our Lord Jesus in salvation (which has been the Church's main message for nearly 2000 years), and substitutes a "faith" in a questionable "experience" of "tongues speaking." Is this a departure from "the simplicity that is in Christ" that Paul referred to in 2 Cor. 11:3?

We must also ask the question: "Is modern tongues speaking a valid ministry of the Holy Spirit, or could it come from other sources?" If it is not of God, then it could be from

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the sinful, deceitful heart of man himself. We read in Jeremiah 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Self-deception is possible! "Let no man deceive himself" (1 Cor. 3:18); "For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself"(Gal. 6:3); "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).

Yes, the "tongues experience" seeker can "deceive himself" into a counterfeit experience. But there is a further source of deception that can enter into this procedure—the questionable methods used by others who are praying for and with the "seeker." So anxious are they to help the "seeker" "pray through" and get this "experience" that sometimes they encourage the seeker to "Let go"; or "Let your mind go blank"; or "Don't say another world in English," etc. And with hands laid on the seeker who is praying or praising the Lord, they will shake him/her to get a "tremor" in the voice and then encourage him/her further by saying: "that's it, brother/sister." And then there are others who will even resort to wiggling the, seeker's jaw to produce strange sounds which can then be interpreted as "tongues-speaking." And then someone might shout: "You've got it." And the seeking is over. Many times I've witnessed this type, or similar procedures. My question is, "What has the seeker "got?" And how genuine is "it?" Or, has he/she been deceived by others into a counterfeit man-made experience?

But there is one more source of a counterfeit "tongues-speaking" experience, and this is frightening. Evil spirits can indeed, and do, produce tongues speaking. Spiritists, some heathen tribes, witchdoctors, Mormons, etc. These "tongues" certainly are not of the Holy Spirit, for He is the "Spirit of Truth" (John 15:26; 16:13). Repeatedly God has warned us in His Word about great deception and demonic activity in the last days of the Church Age. Read carefully Scriptures such as 1 Timothy 4:1-2 and notice "in the latter

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times"—"depart from the faith"—"seducing spirits"—"doctrines of devils (demons)." Also 1 John 4:1 and 2 Tim. 3:13 "But evil men and seducers shall become worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." When? "In the last days"—verse 1.

One other important Scripture warning by the apostle Paul is 2 Thess. 2:1-12. Notice verses 10-12 particularly—Truth rejected results in a judgment of greater deception. And Peter (2 Peter 2:1-2) also issues a strong warning about false prophets and deceitful heretical teaching penetrating the Church—when the "way of truth" will be rejected and despised. But the genuine Christian need not be fearful. God knows what is ahead. He will watch over His own!

Startling "changes" are indeed threatening the Church today. Every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ has a solemn responsibility to, first of all, KNOW the truth, then ACT upon it, then GUARD it, and PROCLAIM it. Church leaders and pastors should warn God's people and prepare them for the storms that are coming, even as Paul did at Ephesus (Acts 20:25-31). Notice particularly his statement in verse 31 "Therefore <u>watch</u>, and <u>remember</u>, that by the space of three years I ceased not to <u>warn</u> every one night and day with tears." What devotion to God's call! This is not the road to popularity. Warning messages are not always accepted or appreciated! (That is a sign of our growing apostasy today—2 Tim. 4:1-5). Christian: Let's pray earnestly for our church leaders and pastors in these days that they would have the courage and wisdom to, with Paul, "declare all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

Truth IS important to God, and it also should be important to us, His children! We need to arm and protect ourselves with God's Word in these days of great confusion and growing deception. Look carefully at Eph. 6:12-18 and 2 Tim. 3:13-17. CHOOSE TRUTH! BE NOT DECEIVED!

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Fifty years ago (1950) I had to choose. Would it be Truth at any cost? Yes, there was a price to pay. In the prime of my life then, with a good position in the denomination I grew up in, and the prospect of a good future, I resigned from my position as a staff member in our denominational Bible school and also as Missionary Secretary of our denomination. I had no ulterior motives in doing so. When I was saved, the Lord gave me a great love for His Word and Truth. This was the reason for leaving the "Tongues Movement." We had to "start afresh" in finding a new fellowship and a place of service. And the Lord graciously led and provided. He has been so good! (Psalm 100:5). I am glad that with the writer of Psalm 119:301 can honestly say, and without any regrets: "I HAVE CHOSEN THE WAY OF TRUTH."

Dear reader, may I invite you also to "Choose the Way of Truth?"

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Helpful Books on the Charismatic Movement

Baxter, Ronald E. *Charismatic Gift of Tongues*. Kregel Publications, P.O. Box 2607, Grand Rapids, MI 49501-2607.

Baxter, Ronald E. *Gifts of the Spirit*. Kregel Publications, P.O. Box 2607, Grand Rapids, MI 49501-2607.

Dyck, Carl. *William Branham: The Man and His Message*. Western Tract Mission, 401 - 33rd St. West, Saskatoon, SR, Canada S7L OV5.

Ewin, Wilson. *The Spirit of Pentecostal-Charismatic Unity*. Bible Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1348, Nashua, NH 03061.

Ewin, Wilson. *You Can Lead Roman Catholics to Christ—Charismatic 1980s Edition*. Bible Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1348, Nashua, NH 03061.

Gardiner, George E. *The Corinthian Catastrophe*. Kregel Publications, P.O. Box 2607, Grand Rapids, MI 49501- 2607.

Gromacki, Robert G. *The Modern Tongues Movement*. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Box 817, Phillipsburg, NJ 08865.

Harlow, R.E. *The Complete Thing*. Everyday Publications, 421 Nugget Ave., Unit 2, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada M1S 4L8.

Long, David Boyd. *What the Bible Teaches about the Gift of Tongues*. Everyday Publications, 421 Nugget Ave., Unit 2, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada M1S 4L8.

MacArthur Jr., John F. *The Charismatics*. Zondervan Publishing Company, 1415 Lake Drive SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

Mackay, Harold. *Speaking in Tongues*. Everyday Publications, 421 Nugget Ave., UnU·2, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada M1S 4L8.

Mayes, Charles W. *A Look at the Modern Healing Movement*. BMH Books, P.O. Box 544, Winona Lake, IN. 46590.

Mayhue, Richard. *Divine Healing*. Moody Press, 820 North LaSalle Drive, Chicago, IL 60610.

Pyle, Hugh F. *Truth about Tongues*. Accent Books, Accent Publications, P.O. Box 15337, Denver, CO 80215.

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Ryrie, Charles C. *The Holy Spirit*. Moody Press, 820 North LaSalle Drive, Chicago, ILL 60610.

Samuel, David. *Pope or Gospel*. Marshalls, 1 Bath St., London, England EC1V 9LB.

Smith, Charles R. *Tongues in Biblical Perspective*. BMH Books, P.O. Box 544, Winona Lake, IN. 46590.

Strauss, Lehman. *Be Filled with the Spirit*. Zondervan Publishing Company, 1415 Lake Drive SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

Taylor Sr. Franklin D. *Should I Speak in Tongues?* Everyday Publications, 421 Nugget Ave. Unit 2, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada, MIS 4L8.

Unger, Merrill F. *The Baptism and Gifts of the Holy Spirit*. Moody Press, 820 North LaSalle Drive, Chicago, IL 60610.

Walvoord, John F. *The Holy Spirit*. Zondervan Publishing Company, 1415 Lake Drive SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

Williams, John. *The Holy Spirit Lord and Life-Giver*. Loizeaux Brothers, P.O. Box 277, Neptune, NJ 07754-0277.

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Books available:

"17 Reasons Why I Left the Tongues Movement" in English, Spanish.

"Receptions of the Holy Spirit in Acts" by the same author

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Reader Responses

We are thankful and encouraged by the many responses from appreciative readers. Here are a few excerpts:

~ Your book has been a tremendous help and encouragement, so just wanted to say a word of thanks. —Institute Biblico "Hebron," Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

~ Thank you for writing "17 Reasons …" I believe this book will be greatly used of God to clear up much misunderstanding, and has certainly been of help to me to discern the confusion in this Movement.—Manitoba.

~ You will never know how much this book has meant tome. All I can say is "Thank you, Lord," for putting this book together. —Saskatchewan.

~ Your volume continues to be a blessing both sides of the border and bilingually. —A Pastor and Mission Director, Phoenix, Arizona.

~ This is an excellent textbook and teaching instrument. —Manitoba.

~ We rejoice that there is such a demand for your books because we rank them as some of the most important books we have ever read and we hope and pray that others will be helped as much by them as we have been. —Ireland.

~ I think we need such books, which in your case did not come out of the "ivory tower" of intellectual debate, but from the crucible of experience. —British Columbia.

~ I was extremely pleased to get your new book. Your tapes and books have been a tremendous help to me in combating the Charismatics in my church. - A Pastor, North Carolina.

~ I thank you for your stand, true to the Lord in this day of compromise. People who believe like you do are rather rare in this day. We must encourage one another. —Alberta.

~ Once again, we want to express our gratitude to you for the book you put out in the English language that delivered our daughter and her husband out of the Tongues Movement. —British Columbia.

~ I am thankful to the Lord that there are still men willing to stand

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up to the error that is affecting the true Church of Christ. I encourage you to continue in your work of informing and equipping the believers. —British Columbia.

~ Thank you for your diligence (and kindness) in handling this disturbing and dangerous doctrine (so-called). Your approach in your writings has been most appreciated. —Colorado.

~ I thank the Lord for leading you to write the book "17 Reasons …" It has become a valuable asset in the homes of many Christians in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. I know that it has been read by many seminary students in various theological and Bible schools here. I know that some copies of your book end up used and read by more than ten people and more than three or four families. —A missionary, Slovakia.