

EXPLORING THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

Considering Aspects of the Charismatic Phenomenon:
Its Beliefs, Claims and Practices; Are They Biblically Sound?
Compiled by Ron Myers

FOREWORD: There are various contrasting views and opinions concerning the Charismatic movement, along with its beliefs, claims, and practices. All of which begs the question: Are today's Charismatic exhibitions genuine? Meaning, are they manifested by the unction and power of the Holy Spirit? Are they good, right and true, blessed of God? Or imitation? ...manifested through human emotions or euphoric highs, either of which can induce ecstatic utterances, or perhaps through hypnotic suggestion, brought on by repeatedly mouthing words or meaningless sounds. Or, not of human or Divine origin at all? ...possibly even demonic in nature; Satan having the ability to camouflage himself as an *Angel of Light*, influencing thoughts and actions. (2 Corinthians 11:14)

Also, is the Apostolic gift of tongues and the Charismatic-Pentecostal practice of tongues-speaking one and the same? And, for which purpose do you believe God ordained the gift of tongues:

- a) As a *sign of confirmation*, verifying the Gospel message to the Jews? (Acts 2:1-12; 1 Corinthians 1:22)
-or-
- b) As a *form of worship*, to be practiced and propagated by believers? (1 Corinthians 14:22-23)

Are today's tongues and healings biblically sound? Can both *a* and *b* be true simultaneously? Are these opposing positions equally valid, depending on one's preference? Do today's tongues and healings have a scriptural basis? Are they God-ordained and empowered? ...or not? We have an indisputable final authority, God's Word, which implores us to diligently "*Study to show oneself approved unto God, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing (correctly interpreting) the Word of Truth.*" (2 Timothy 2:15) God's Word also implores us in 2 Peter 1:16-21, not to follow anyone's personal interpretation. Peter recounts here that, even though he was an eyewitness to Christ's glorious transfiguration, he implores us to follow God's inspired prophetic Word, not grandiose-sounding stories, experiences, or dubious hearsay.

As for references to tongues in Scripture, as with any other biblical subject, they should be interpreted and understood according to their original ^{a)}contextual surroundings, ^{b)}intended grammatical meaning, and ^{c)}historical setting of the evidence. Not by emotional experiences, personal preferences or allegorical presuppositions – while disregarding the benchmark of sound biblical interpretation, which is the hallmark of applying these three fundamental principles: a, b and c. St. Augustine wrote: "*When the regard for truth has been broken down or even slightly weakened, all things will remain doubtful.*"

Likewise, are personal experiences or feelings coequal indicators of truth when placed alongside God's inspired Word? No! God's eternal Word is unequalled and always takes precedence. As we walk by faith, we experience life-lessons whereby we mature and know Christ better. (Philippians 3:10) But, are experiences a valid means of establishing one's doctrinal convictions? And, are things that vacillate (uncertain feelings and emotional experiences) be on the same plane as God's unwavering truths and promises, as recorded in Scripture? Furthermore, are Charismatic beliefs, claims and practices supported by the Word of Truth? Scripture reminds us that: "*Every Word of God is pure (error free).*" (Proverbs 30:5) And, "*Forever, O LORD, Thy Word is settled (established) in Heaven.*" (Psalms 119:89)

On that basis, when examined against Scripture, the Charismatic Movement either stands or falls, including its belief in and practice of tongues, healings, etc. This stimulated my interest to the point where I decided to do a more in-depth look into this subject. After observation, research, study of

Scripture, and prayerful reflection over a five-decade span; the following formulate my conclusions, which have helped shape my own views. My objective is to be factually honest yet kind; fair-minded yet candid; respectful yet uncompromising in my assessments, desiring to present you with a definitive answer, endeavoring to speak the truth in love. (Ephesians 4:15; Colossians 4:6)

Upon reading this paper, you may agree with my evaluation of this watershed issue, or not. Either way, please hear me out because you will likely gain information that you may not have previously realized, some of which is quite alarming. I am fully aware that multitudes of good people are involved in the Charismatic movement, sincere Christians who love God and desire to live for Him. Many are involved because that is all they have known; others were drawn in for various reasons, not being fully aware of all its implications. It is these to whom I am addressing this paper.

On the other hand, due to a weak view of scriptural authority, the Charismatic movement is a breeding ground for an array of types: false apostles; flamboyant televangelists; prosperity gospel showmen; faith healers, etc. Many of these self-serving charlatans are very personable and convincing. But beware! When truth is mixed with error, it can be hard to discern between the two because the demarcation line becomes blurred. For example, if you were thirsty and were offered a cup of cool water, but suspected it might be tainted with poison, would you still want to drink it? (Matthew 7:15)

Are these truly God's messengers? Or are they false prophets, or false apostles? Those who deceive and feed off naïve seekers? ...all the while amassing personal fortunes, houses, lands, and private jets for themselves? (2 Corinthians 11:13; 2 Peter 2:1-19; Jude 1) This, along with promoting false teachings replete with allegorized meanings, "*proof texts*" taken out of context, and private interpretations based on personal notions instead of Scripture; all to persuade the uninformed. And yet: "*We have a more [indisputable] word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts:*" (2 Peter 1:19).

And yet, their burgeoning number of devotees are convinced that they manifest genuine biblical signs and wonders; just like the divine manifestations exhibited by Christ's Apostles. Are these truly God's messengers, or are they deceiving and leading their devotees astray?

WHAT IS AN APOSTLE? The Greek word *apostolos* means an Official Messenger or Ambassador, sent as an authorized representative of a kingdom or nation. Scripturally, the term refers to the *Twelve Apostles* whom Christ personally picked from among His disciples and appointed as His *Special Envoys* to initiate the proclamation of the Gospel message to both Jews and Gentiles throughout the known world. These were men who had seen Christ in His resurrected Body, including Paul. (Acts 1:2-3, 9:3-6)

Revelation 21:14 gives the actual number of Apostles that Christ chose as His Official Ambassadors: TWELVE. He endowed them with special miraculous gifts to perform signs and wonders, performed to validate the Gospel message to unbelieving Jews, who require miraculous signs to convince them the thing being done is of God. (1 Corinthians 1:21-23) The time period was during the initial establishment of The Church before the New Testament canon was complete. (1 Corinthians 13:8-10) God initiated these signs and wonders through His *twelve* chosen Apostles on a temporary basis. Today, some believe in a theory called "Apostolic Succession," meaning the continuation of the Apostolic sign gifts through to the present age. This theory aligns with Pentecostal and Charismatic thought. However, most Bible scholars disagree with this view.

INTRODUCTION – Some Background Information: During Old Testament times, when God was about to do something significant among His Chosen People, the Israelites, later also called Jews (2 Kings 16:6), He would validate it through supernatural manifestations of His mighty power, done through His chosen servants. Dr. Jared Wilson, pastor, author and teaching professor at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary wrote; *“Whenever God does a mighty work, it has been through some very insignificant instrument.”*

MOSES: In the book of Exodus, we see Moses, whom God chose as an instrument to lead His people Israel out from under bondage under the cruel reign of the Egyptian Pharaoh. God caused various loathsome plagues to befall Egypt before Pharaoh finally complied and let them go. The last plague being the death of every firstborn Egyptian son. As they were departing, Pharaoh changed his mind and angrily led his elite army in hot pursuit. The Israelites found themselves helplessly trapped on the shores of the Red Sea with no way to escape. Yet, as Moses held up his staff, God caused a mighty wind to blow, which parted the Red Sea's waters from shore to shore. All the Israelites escaped, walking across on the dry seafloor. As they reached the safety of the far shore, God then released the two great walls of water, which came rushing back together, drowning Pharaoh's pursuing army, including Pharaoh himself. (Exodus 14:21-15:10)

Note: SCUBA divers, who explored the bottom of the Red Sea at that location, discovered the remains of horses' and men's bones, as well as pieces of coral encrusted chariots—even pieces of Pharaoh's personal gold-clad chariot—all of which had been there thousands of years, ever since the day in history that it occurred. ([Video documentation of the Red Sea crossing discoveries](#).)

God then miraculously led the Israelites throughout a prolonged 40-year wilderness journey, providing sustenance for them and protecting them from their enemies. (Nehemiah 9:21) Despite their continual waywardness, unbelief, and complaining, God led them back to conquer and inhabit the land that He had promised their Patriarch Abraham would be theirs forever. God even provided a miraculous cure (a type of Christ) when they were all dying of poisonous snakebite. (Numbers 21:8-9, John 3:14-15) It is estimated that there were at least two-million Israeli men. Some sources say that, counting women and children, brought the total count to *circa* five million people. God performed these miracles by his mighty power through His chosen servant, Moses, who had once fled Egypt for forty years before the great *I AM* chose him at the *burning bush* to return to deliver His people Israel. (Exodus 3:1-17)

ELIJAH: We also see God's prophet Elijah as he stood alone against the 400 Prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:11-40), challenging them to prove their false god Baal's existence, to ultimately show who was truly God, Jehovah or Baal. Contending with them, Elijah challenged them to prepare an altar with a bull offering to Baal. Then, to call on their false god Baal to come down and consume the bull offering by fire. Elijah taunted and mocked them as they cut their bodies, crying out all day long to their non-existent god, Baal, to come down to consume the offering. When they were completely exhausted and had finally given up, Elijah poured buckets of water on the bull offering he had prepared for Jehovah God, drenching the offering, the altar, the wood, and the surrounding area around the offering site until all was dripping wet.

Then, Elijah called upon God to prove Himself real before His wayward people. Immediately, God sent fire down from heaven, consuming the bull, the soaked wood and soaked altar. God's holy fire even licked up the water in the trench surrounding the offering. (v. 36-38) Elijah then ordered all the false prophets of Baal to be rounded up and executed on the spot, proving that Jehovah was truly God and that He abhorred false gods and false prophets who led His people astray. Again, it was God who performed these miracles through His chosen servant, Elijah, who later covered and fled for his life from the wicked, Baal-worshipping Queen Jezebel's threats. (1 Kings 19:1-3)

CHRIST: We then see the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, whose advent was prophesied throughout the Old Testament; born of the virgin Mary through a miraculous, fatherless conception. (Luke 1:26-35, Galatians 4:4) We see His sinless life, His Divine manifestations of supernatural power over sickness, nature and even death itself. (John 10:38) And, His substitutionary death on the Cross as our sin-bearing Savior, followed by His bodily resurrection from the grave three days later, just as He had foretold. We then see His appearance before hundreds of eyewitnesses, inviting some to touch Him and watch Him eat, proof positive that He was not a ghostly apparition. (1 Corinthians 15:4-8) James, Peter and John even saw Him in his Divine glory on the Mount of Transfiguration with Moses and Elijah at His side. (Mark 9:2-4) Many others witnessed His bodily ascension back to the realms of glory, where He is now seated at the right hand of the Heavenly Father, as our High Priestly Advocate and Intercessor. (Acts 1:9-11, 1 John 2:1)

THE CHURCH AGE: Then, at the onset of the Church Age—recorded by Dr. Luke in the Book of Acts—Christ sovereignly initiated various miraculous signs and wonders, to be displayed through His personally-chosen Apostles; Paul being the last. (Acts 9:3-6; 1 Corinthians 5:8-10) These things were done to validate the Gospel of the resurrected Messiah to the hard-to-convince Jews, who consider signs and wonders as Divinely-initiated confirmations of God's workings on their behalf, just as he did in the Old Testament, through Moses and Elijah. (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:22)

It is generally accepted that the Church Age began at Pentecost with the coming of the promised indwelling Holy Spirit (John 14:17, 16:13-15), accompanied by the proclamation of the wonderful Gospel by the Apostles to visiting Jews in their own languages and dialects, unknown to the speakers, astounding their hearers, who reacted in v. 8 with, "How is it that we hear, each in our own "native-born" dialect (Greek: *dialektos*)?" (Acts 2:4-12) God also performed other miraculous signs and wonders through these men to validate the Gospel. Most Scholars believe these sign gifts were eventually withdrawn as the Church became firmly established and the New Testament canonical writings were completed. Example: Paul, who once had the Apostolic gift of miraculous healing, had to leave his sick friend *Trophimus* in the city of *Miletum*, unable to accompany him to Rome. (2 Timothy 4:20)

Question: Would not Paul have miraculously healed his friend if he still could? (Acts 19:11-12)
And, were Paul's supernatural Apostolic sign gifts beginning to wane? (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:10)

PRESENT-DAY EVENTS: There is presently a phenomenon gaining increasing popularity called the Charismatic movement, which seeks to resurrect or emulate what God did through His Chosen Apostles, as recorded in the book of Acts. This present-day movement began in the 1960s at St Mark's Episcopal Parish in Van Nuys, California, initiated by the Rev. Dennis Bennett. Bennett announced to his congregants one day that he had received the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit, accompanied by speaking in tongues.

These things piqued this writer's curiosity about the validity of Bennett's claim and the tongues movement in general. Did Bennett experience biblical tongues? ...as in Acts 2:4-12. Was his experience brought about by the power of the Holy Spirit, or was it of fleshly origin? ...induced while seeking and striving to manifest the desired gift of biblical tongues. Meaning, was Bennett's manifestation *bona fide* or an involuntary expression of emotionally-charged ecstatic utterances, brought on by sensations of euphoria? ...which has been proven psychologically possible.

This newly-birthing Charismatic movement (*a *misnomer*), was a spin-off of the Pentecostal renewal movement, which began on January 1, 1901. A woman, Ms. Agnes Ozman—a student at Charles F. Parham's Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas—after great seeking, was allegedly given the ability to speak, read and write in Chinese. (A very dubious claim, but possible through *other* spiritual forces.) This was an outgrowth of the earlier Holiness movement that Parham taught, which sought to attain a higher plane of spirituality. That seeker movement had grown out of the Wesleyan Holiness tradition. *The Greek term *Charisma* means a *free gift*, which usually refers to Salvation (Romans 6:23), not the tongues seeking movement.

These higher-plane seeker movements somehow seemed more attractive and fulfilling than simply following scriptural instructions to: "Abide in Me" (John 15:4); "Walk in Newness of life" (Romans 6:4); "Put on Christ" (Romans 13:14); "Walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:16); "Walk in Good Works" (Ephesians 2:10); "Walk in Love" (Ephesians 5:2); "Walk in Him" (Colossians 2:6); "Walk in Truth" (3 John 1:4); all of which provide a visual picture of the step-by-step, moment-by-moment faith-walk life of the believer's fellowship with God.

Don't they realize? God has already given us *everything* we need for godly living: ^{A)} We've been "*Given Every Spiritual Blessing in Christ*" (Ephesians 1:4); ^{B)} "*We are Complete in Him*" (Colossians 2:10); ^{C)} We have been "*Granted All Things pertaining to Life and Godliness.*" (2 Peter 1:3) As dedicated and godly as the seeker-movement leaders were, one might wonder whether they truly understood the significance of God's Word concerning the faith-walk life. Or, like today, did they disregard these truths in their seeking after a higher plane of spirituality or elusive second-blessing experience?

The point being, there is *nothing* to seek after or gain that God hasn't already provided each and every born-again believer at the moment of Salvation—other than to mature in our knowledge and understanding. A study of the Apostle Paul's prayers for believers will reveal that, what we need is: "*the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,*" and "*an enlightened understanding of God's greatness,*" as well as "*the riches of our eternal position, our inheritance, and unfathomable Love In Christ.*" Finally, to "*walk worthy and pleasing to the Lord with thankful hearts in the knowledge of His will.*" I suggest that you review Paul's prayers for believers, found in Ephesians 1:16-23, 3:14-21; Philippians 1:9-11; and Colossians 1:9-12.

In retrospect, there is no proof, of which this writer is aware, that any of the seeking and striving efforts of these various movements succeeded in attaining a genuine higher plane of spirituality. Neither was there any verifiable evidence that these movements were Divine confirmation of any biblical transitional period where actual signs, wonders and miracles were in evidence, such as those mentioned in the INTRODUCTORY section above.

THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT: The major difference with the Charismatic movement is that it took on a life of its own in varying degrees as it spread. John MacArthur stated that Calvary Chapel's hippie outreach became the genesis for the movement. It readily spilled across denominational and theological demarcation lines in epidemic proportions, be it evangelical, mainline, liberal or ecumenical. This "new enlightenment" even found its way into heretical sects and cults. Those which denied the authority of Scripture, the Deity of Christ and Salvation by Grace alone through faith alone took on a Charismatic flavor. These included Mormonism, whose adherents claimed it helped them to follow Mormon rules. Also, Roman Catholicism, whose adherents said that it made their worship of Mary more fulfilling.

As the Charismatic movement grew, the focus evolved until so-called tongues and healings became the litmus test for acceptance and fellowship. Absolute fundamentals of the faith once delivered unto the saints (Jude 1:3) were ignored. Including pillars like: authority of Scripture; Christ's Deity, His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, death and bodily resurrection; Salvation by Grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, being born again through trusting in Christ's substitutionary death and redeeming Blood atonement, et al. This omissions ought to have raised bright red flags to its more conservative adherents. (John 1:12, 3:14-18, 3:36; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 4:3; Titus 3:3-7)

In seeking to achieve a higher plane of spirituality, some sincere but untaught believers are still being captivated by the ecstatic *tongues* phenomenon, which often supplants regular worship services. (1 Corinthians 14:23) Here's an example of a tongues utterance, recorded during a Charismatic meeting: *"*Shalalama, balalama, bubalama, shalalama, bugalala, shalalama.*" Linguists have analyzed these types of consonant-vowel combinations and concluded that they are *not* actual languages but merely **repetitious mutterings*. Actual languages are structurally complex since God created them at the Tower of Babel. (Genesis 11:5-9) **Point 12, p. 5, Tongues – A Private Prayer Language; by D. Cloud (2009).

Concerning needing a Heavenly prayer language – every time God or Angels visited mankind, they spoke in human languages. Biblical examples: God's conversation with Adam and Eve in the Garden (Genesis 3:9-19); The angels who visited Abraham and Sarah – one being The Lord Himself in a pre-incarnate *Christophany* (Genesis 18:1-31); The Great "I AM" speaking to Moses from the Burning Bush (Exodus 3); The Archangel Gabriel speaking to Zacharias, Elizabeth, Mary and the Shepherds concerning the advent of both John the Baptist and Jesus (Luke 1 & 2); The Heavenly Father extolling praise on His Son (Matthew 17:5; Luke 3:22, 20:13); Angels appearing as white-robed men speaking to the women at Christ's empty tomb (Matthew 28:6); and who later exhorting onlookers to quit staring into the empty skies. (Acts 1:11) Finally, when Jesus prayed to His Heavenly Father, He spoke in a human language, not some unintelligible so-called heavenly tongue. These examples beg the question: Why the claims of needing a Heavenly prayer language considering that both God and His Angels have always communicated with mankind using human languages?

Most Christians are unaware of the fact that even heathen Buddhist and Brahman priests and priestesses practice these same ecstatic utterances when spirits descend upon them during annual temple ceremonies in Bangkok. I have viewed this on a video recording, given to me by a Thai Buddhist friend. It is sobering to think that the sounds these godless souls utter are of the exact same basic vowel-consonant construction and cadence as Christians who *claim* to speak in biblical tongues by the power of the Holy Spirit! In fact, the heathen priests and priestesses involved in these annual events also practice healings, miracles, and slayings in the spirit. Sound familiar? This is all done amidst their idolatrous surroundings. Who or what could be empowering this heathen phenomenon? Could it be fleshly emotionalism or possibly demonic? One thing is for certain; they are not being empowered by the Spirit of God!

I recently viewed another video of a Thai Buddhist priest coaching and cajoling some followers to let their intellect go and practice by repeating a hodge-podge of syllables. They all snickered and called it gibberish. He countered by claiming it was an Angelic Language! What do you think it was that he was promoting? Is God causing ungodly heathen to do the same things that Charismatics claim God is empowering them to do in their meetings? Zealous Charismatics also coax non-speakers to open their mouths and begin by making noises. During one meeting where tongues were being practiced, there was a visitor in the audience who was fluent in various Chinese dialects. He was aghast upon hearing one of them curse God in one of the dialects. Who do you suppose was empowering that display?

On a more chilling note, ex-Satan worshipper John Ramirez—once the third-highest in rank in a New York City satanic cult before he accepted Christ—testified that he often watched his own father speaking in ecstatic utterances whenever he worshipped Satan, mystical or occultic chanting that corresponded with Charismatic tongues. Examples like this should be significant enough to cause Charismatic devotees to question the validity of their claims and practices. Is God in collusion with the realms of heathen darkness? The answer is a resounding No! Never! Who then is behind these kinds of manifestations that Charismatics believe to be God-ordained? Instances of heathen and satanic manifestations like this should give thinking Charismatic adherents and their "fellow travelers" (*non-participating supporters*) serious pause.

Consider how Pharaoh's sorcerers were able to produce serpents from their staffs that resembled God's Serpent, which was transformed from Aaron's Staff when he threw it down before Pharaoh upon God's command. In the end, these were proven counterfeit upon being consumed by Aaron's Staff, turned Serpent. (Exodus 7:8-12) This is an example of how Satan, in his limited power and subtle craftiness, has the ability to transform himself into resembling an "Angel of Light" (2 Corinthians 11:14), causing things not genuine to appear amazingly genuine, until being found out.

And yet, Christians who practice Charismatic tongues ♥believe they are empowered by God to emulate that which He ordained through His twelve hand-selected New Testament Apostles at the onset of the Church age as a miraculous sign gift to confirm the Gospel message to the Jews, who seek affirmation. (cf. Acts 2:4-12; 1 Corinthians 1:22)

Note: ♥This belief is called the *Apostolic Succession* or *Continuationist View*. See ADDENDUM on page 33 under ††Cessationists versus Continuationist Views.

The Charismatic movement continues to splinter off into various subgroups as new and more-unusual manifestations occur. And, it appears that there is no end in sight. These presently include: uncontrolled *holy* laughter; uncontrolled twitching and jerking in a semiconscious fetal position; barking; howling; dancing; leaping; running and crawling around – all done supposedly under the unction and power of God's Holy Spirit. This strange phenomenon is often called The Toronto Blessing. Does anyone see a problem here? Charismatic claims and practices have caused no end of confusion as to where the truth lies. Whatever happened to "*Let all things be done decently and in order*" as a standard for meeting together to praise and worship the Lord? (1 Corinthians 14:40)

One should keep in mind that the Book of Acts is Dr. Luke's ongoing account of events as the Apostles spread the Gospel under the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. As such, unlike Paul's teaching epistles, Acts is not to be espoused as a teaching epistle to be followed. (1 Corinthians 11:1) And yet, Charismatic adherents still strive to emulate the Book of Acts in the power of the flesh.

To arrive at an accurate and balanced determination concerning these watershed issues, one's conclusions *must* be based solely on the rightly-divided (*correctly parsed and interpreted*) Word of Truth (2 Timothy 2:15); and not influenced or persuaded by emotional impressions; likes; dislikes; personal motives; personalities; peer pressure; or giving heed to hearsay accounts (1 Timothy 4:1-2) and so-called proof texts, which are typically quoted only in part, misapplied, or taken out of context – all of which confuse and mislead. Nevertheless, prayerful discernment is of prime importance, since, "*by their fruits, ye shall know them*," i.e., the character and actions of false teachers. (Matthew 7:16, 20)

THE MINISTRIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

What are the various ministries of the Holy Spirit during the present Church Age? A further look at the Person and work of the Holy Spirit—the third Person of the Trinity or Godhead—according to the Word of God.

What is the Holy Spirit's Ministry Among Believers?

The instant one receives Christ, that person is saved from sin's penalty forever and separated unto God. From that moment on, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in that person's life, who is born into God's family and becomes one of His Holy Saints. He gives that person Eternal Life and He seals the believer with His abiding presence unto the day of final redemption, signifying ownership. (Ephesians 1:13-14)

Jesus promised that, after He was gone, He would send the Holy Spirit, to draw alongside us as our Comforter, Helper and Guide (Greek: *parakletos*). He is also our Teacher, Counselor, Intercessor and Advocate. He will bring Christ's Words to remembrance the moment we need them. (John 14:16,26, 16:7) He intercedes for us and strengthens us in times of weakness. (Romans 8:26) He empowers us for spiritual service, distributing spiritual gifts to each of us as He wills, for the function of the local Body of Christ. Most significantly, the Holy Spirit *always* glorifies (*exalts, magnifies, uplifts*) and testifies of Christ, never Himself. (John 15:26,16:14) This is in direct contrast to what Charismatics and Pentecostals emphasize and propagate.

At the beginning of the Church age, God gave the offices of Apostles and Prophets on which the Church was established, Jesus being the most important component. (Eph 2:20) These foundational offices were in operation until the completion of the New Testament canon. God also gave miraculous Apostolic sign gifts which accompanied these offices – tongues, healing, and working of miracles. These were authenticating proofs that the Holy Spirit was now working through the Church. (Acts 2:1-14, 4:1-16, 5:12-39; 1 Cor 14:20-22; 2 Cor 12:12).

What is the Holy Spirit's Ministry Among the Unsaved?

- 1) He convinces unbelievers of God's existence and power through observing Creation. (Romans 1:18-20)
- 2) He convinces (convicts) unbelievers of their Sin, of God's Righteousness, and of the coming Judgement. (John 16:7-11)

3) He restrains unrighteousness or anti-God lawlessness and anarchy until Christ Raptures (calls up) His Church. The Holy Spirit shall also be taken up at that time, since He indwells every believer. (2 Thessalonians 2:7)

What is the Anointing of the Holy Spirit?

In His relationship to the believer, the Holy Spirit is spoken of three times in the Scriptures as *the Anointing*. However, the term Anointing is the equivalent of His indwelling each child of God, which is mentioned many times. Since every Christian has received the Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19), every Christian has received the Anointing. This is clearly indicated in the three passages in which the word appears: (2 Corinthians 1:21; 1 John 2:20 & 2:27) *Major Bible Themes, Lewis Sperry Chafer.*

What is the Baptism With the Holy Spirit?

(Jesus Christ does the Baptizing) The Lord Jesus Christ *baptizes* each believer with the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. (Mark 1:7-8; I Corinthians 12:12-14). Upon His ascension back to be with The Father in Glory, Christ sent the promised Holy Spirit, to indwell or take up residence within the heart and life of every Born-again Believer at the moment of Salvation. This also signified the beginning of His Church, or what is known as the Body of Christ, as well as the Church Age. (Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16; John 14:17; Ephesians 1:13-14)

What is the Baptism By the Holy Spirit? (Note: By and With are often used interchangeably.)

(The Holy Spirit does the Baptizing) Upon salvation, the Holy Spirit "baptizes" (places or incorporates) every Believer into the Body of Christ, which consists of all repentant sinners, who have become Born-again Saints or God's Holy People. (1 Corinthians 12:13) Compare the *Aorist* (*super-perfect*) Greek tense of Baptized used here to the *Perfect* tense of "Rooted" in Ephesians 3:17b, and Colossians 2:7. Meaning done once, permanently, for eternity!

What is the Baptism Of the Holy Spirit?

Charismatics and Pentecostals believe in the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit." Meaning, they believe that speaking in tongues is evidence of having received the *Holy Spirit*; proof of receiving full Salvation. When in fact, all believers receive the Holy Spirit (*Spirit of Christ*) upon conversion. (Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13-14) Their belief in a second work of grace or higher plane of spiritually—an offshoot of the holiness movement which initiated the term—is why they are self-persuaded that they need to spread the tongues doctrine.

One Charismatic leader states that this is an "*overflowing and overwhelming with the Holy Spirit, releasing all holy emotion in us and 'we all speak in tongues.'*" The key phrase is *RELEASING ALL HOLY EMOTION*, resulting in so-called speaking in tongues as a group experience. "*All speaking in tongues*" is *not* sanctioned in 1 Corinthians 14:23. A search of the New Testament shows 30 matches for the phrase "*of the Spirit*," none of which are in the context of being baptized in any way. Consequently, these two claims – evidence of a second or higher spiritual experience; and, the gateway to speaking in tongues – are without any scriptural merit. Whereas, the undeniable evidence of the Spirit's control of one's life is manifested in a transformed, Spirit-empowered, godly lifestyle! (Galatians 5:16-25)

What Does It Mean to Be “Baptized with Fire”?

What did John the Baptist mean when he said of Jesus, both in Matthew 3:11 and Luke 3:16: “He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire”? The correct meaning of this statement is not difficult if one does a little contextual exegesis ...like read the following verses. Many fail to consider the context in this passage and misinterpret the term “fire” as meaning a fiery zealotry for the Lord and His Word, which sounds right at first.

However, when this is read within its context, John clearly explains what he means by “fire” in the very next verse of both texts: “Whose [winnowing] fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his [threshing] floor and will gather the wheat into his [barns]; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.” John is clearly referring to the fire of God’s Judgement! People will either be Saved (*the wheat*) or Judged (*the chaff*) for eternity, depending on their relationship with Jesus Christ. Meaning, that they will either be *baptized with the Holy Spirit* into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13) or *baptized with the Fire* of Judgement into eternal damnation with flames that cannot be quenched. (If this seems dubious, it is suggested that you exegete these passages and those in Revelation about the *unquenchable* fires of judgment.)

What Is the Fire That Cannot Be Quenched?

The fire that cannot be quenched is the fire of Judgement, found in eleven places in the Old Testament, as well as in Matt 3:12, Mark 9:43-48; and Revelation 20:10, where “*the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone ...tormented day and night for ever and ever.*” Also, in Revelation 20:14 & 15 “*Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire, And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*”

What Is the Unpardonable Sin of Blaspheming or Profaning the Holy Spirit?

Bible scholars believe that the unforgivable sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit is, not only attributing His miracles to Satan’s power, but its root cause, i.e., *blatant, willful unbelief*. That is, rejecting His appeal to receive Christ’s offer of salvation. How can a person’s sins be forgiven if that one rejects Christ’s Deity and Messiahship? (Matthew 12:31-32) Therefore, the unforgivable sin is directly related to spurning the Holy Spirit’s pleading to receive Christ as Savior. That is, to turn away after receiving the knowledge of the truth, since there is no other means of salvation from sin besides Christ’s Blood sacrifice: *The Lamb of God* who takes away the sin of the world. (John 1:29; Hebrews 6:6, 10:26)

Furthermore, how could Christ offer God’s Kingdom to the people by the power of the enemy, Satan? ...as Christ’s detractors arrogantly claimed. (Matthew 12:24) In driving out the Legion of demons, Christ was visually demonstrating that He had far greater authority than Satan did over the demonic world.

In conclusion, a study of this passage refutes the Charismatic notion that these verses refer to a person rejecting the tongues movement is both false and contextually inviable. In all probability, the Charismatic claim that their *tongues* speaking is ordained and empowered of God may itself be an offense against the Holy Spirit.

What Does It Mean to Be Filled with The Spirit?

To be filled with the Spirit, as expressed in Ephesians 5:18, speaks of the comparative similitude of being drunk with wine. The analogy meaning, if one is filled with wine, his or her words and actions show that he is under the control and influence of the wine. Like *Driving Under the Influence* (DUI). Conversely, when one is filled with or controlled by the Holy Spirit, his or her actions and words show that he is under the control and influence of the Holy Spirit. Which, could be called *Walking Under the Influence* (WUI). Incidentally, this verse is a command (imperative mood) in the Greek, meaning a scriptural command to *walk* or *live* yielded to the Spirit of God's control of one's life.

Synonymous terms can be seen in other similar passages: Walk in the Spirit; Walk by faith; Walk in newness of life; Walk in Christ (Colossians 2:6); Be led by the Spirit (Romans 8:14). The same principle is seen in the parallel passage of Galatians 5:18-26 speaking of the works of the flesh-life versus the fruit of the spirit. It admonishes the believer to allow the Spirit's control of one's life so that the fruit of the Spirit of Christ may be evidenced, not the flesh. There are only two lifestyle choices for the Born-again Christian: the Christ-Life (*the New Man in charge*) versus the Flesh-Life (*the Old Man in charge*). Compare Paul's personal testimony in Galatians 2:20: "*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*"

What Is the *Authentic* Spiritual Gift of Tongues?

The authentic biblical gift of tongues was the God-given Apostolic gift to supernaturally proclaim the Gospel message to uninitiated Jews in their own language or dialect, which the speaker did not know. This is clearly seen in Acts 2:1-12. However, in 1 Corinthians 14:2, 4, 13, 14, 19 and 27, the Apostle Paul is correcting the Corinthian believers use of inauthentic tongues, i.e., *heathen babbling prevalent in the area*. Whereas, authentic Tongues, along with the other supernatural sign gifts (Miracles and Healings), were given by Christ *specifically* to the twelve Apostles at the onset of the Church age, when the New Testament Scriptures were not yet complete. As these were nearing completion, the Apostolic Sign Gifts waned and thus ceased to be in operation. What does that say about present-day tongues? ...and, those trying to force it on others by telling them to *vacate* their minds, open their mouths, and begin to make sounds? Authentic or inauthentic?

Important Note:

All spiritual gifts are given by God the Holy Spirit, severally according to ***His plan*** for serving the Body of Christ in the local church. Furthermore, spiritual gifts cannot be prayed for or strived after, because they are given according to God's Sovereign choice, "*distributing to each individual as He wills.*" (1 Corinthians 12:4-11) Dr. Wilbur N. Pickering, Th.M., PhD, retired Bible translator in Brazil with SIL-Wycliffe Bible Translators puts it this way: "*No one gets a spiritual gift just because he wants it; the Holy Spirit has His own criteria for distributing them.*"

What is Spiritual Power?

We see examples of true spiritual power exhibited throughout the book of Acts. It is generally associated with the bold and fearless proclamation of the Word of God, often in the face of imminent personal danger. We see this in the life Peter, who stood before the Jews and boldly proclaimed the Gospel message at Pentecost, whereupon three thousand souls came to Christ (Acts 2:14-41). Then, we see the boldness of both Peter and John, whom God used to heal the paralytic man and were warned by the Jewish authorities not to speak in the Name of Jesus again. Yet they continued to speak of the resurrected Christ with great power and authority; whereupon, many praised God in one accord. (Acts 3:1, 4:33)

We also see the boldness and wisdom of Stephen, the recently appointed Deacon. He exuded both faith and power as he confounded his detractors, cutting the hearts of the enemies of the Gospel to the core, whereupon he was stoned to death for his unflinching testimony. (Acts 6:5, 7:60) We then see the Apostle Paul, who witnessed to others of the miracles and healings that occurred on his sea journey to Rome. We also see his preaching and teaching with confidence and boldness in his rented residence in Rome for a two-year period, before being martyred for his unflinching testimony. (Acts 28:1-31)

What Is Spirituality?

According to Dr. Charles Ryrie, professor emeritus of Dallas Theological Seminary: *"Spirituality, is Christlikeness that is produced by the fruit of the Spirit [in and through the life of the believer]. What better portrait of Jesus Christ is there than love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Galatians 5:22-23)? These characteristics describe the fruit of the Spirit, and they picture our Lord. Spiritual power is not necessarily or usually the miraculous or spectacular but rather the consistent exhibition of the characteristics of the Lord Jesus in the believer's life. And this is the activity of the Holy Spirit of whom the Lord Jesus said, 'He shall glorify Me.'" (John 16:14) ...for the fruit of the Spirit* is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth, (Ephesians 5:9)*

The conclusive point is: Either God is behind the present-day tongues movement or He is not; it's as simple as that! Those who claim that the Holy Spirit is the empowering agent of their ecstatic tongues-speaking are quick to accuse those who don't agree as blaspheming the Holy Spirit, referring to Matthew 12:31-32 and Mark 3:28-29. Is this truly the case? Is that what these verses are referring to, contextually speaking? Can a believer truly commit the unforgivable sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit? Sound Bible scholars do not believe so, nor does this writer, because the test in question describes those who reject the Holy Spirit's wooing to accept Christ's Deity as being the Incarnate Son of God, and shun His free offer of deliverance from sin as their prophesied Messiah.

When my wife Cheryl and I were in training for the ministry, preparing for service in Thailand under the auspices of The New Tribes Mission (NTM), all things Charismatic were still in their infancy. The time was the early 1970s and there weren't any clear-cut lines of demarcation at that juncture. So, conservatives were all waiting and watching. Many, including this writer, were wondering whether some of the reports being bandied about might not actually be of the Lord's doing.

In focus at the time were the events spoken of in a recently released book: Like a Mighty Wind: by Mel Tari and Cliff Dudley (ISBN 9780892211234). It recounted various supernatural manifestations; purported to have taken place on the Indonesian island of Timor in 1965 as the Gospel made its way into remote regions of the island. Our bookstore at the NTM Language and Linguistics Institute even had the newly-released book in its racks. We knew of *bona fide* reports where God had shown Himself real in special ways to get people's attention where the Gospel was being proclaimed for the very first time. Given the time period—the little-known Charismatic movement still in its infancy—we wondered if these events might not be authentic as well.

This writer's initial thoughts on the subject at that juncture, was if God is truly in this, then He can surely engift me with the Thai language, saving much time and effort by by-passing the need to spend years of in-depth language and culture study trying to master the difficult Thai tonal language. However, this writer did not seek after anything; simply stating here of being open to the Lord's giving the Thai language supernaturally if He so chose.

If anyone could use the biblical gift of tongues, it's church-planting missionaries as they seek out and evangelize yet-unreached lost tribes or ethnic people groups in obedience to Christ's prime directive. (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15) Needless to say, that did not happen. However, what God did give was vision, desire, perseverance and some natural ability to help me gain mastery, not only the Thai language, but in two other local-area tonal languages as well, and partially in a third language.

In doing so, I spent thousands of hours in language and culture study, and practice, as I endeavored to identify with the people on a close level in their daily lives. I laughed with them during times of joy; grieved with them during times of sadness; sat with them eating their food; helped during planting and harvest, helped build and repair houses, etc.—all to befriend and gain their trust, to effectively communicate the Gospel in a cross-linguistic, cross-cultural, readily understandable manner.

Concerning the purported signs and miracles on the Island of Timor, it later came to light that they were debunked by missionaries ministering in the general vicinity. I knew one missionary personally, both of us being in the same conservative mission organization, New Tribes Mission. He told me how numerous people who had read the book came there and traveled throughout the area, seeking out the people and villages where these things were said to have taken place. He went on to say that, to the best of his knowledge, none were ever found, and none of the locals ever heard of any names or places mentioned in the book, likely because they did not exist. I view these types of reports as being in the same category as what the Scriptures call "lying wonders." (2 Thessalonians 2:9) My fellow missionary friend added that a Pentecostal

husband and wife team serving there, having seen through the whole scenario, became disillusioned to the point where they left the Pentecostal-tongues movement altogether, reportedly later returning to serve under a conservative mission organization.

NOTE: Other missionaries, fluent in various remote South American Indian languages, have told how they had attended some Charismatic meetings as an experiment while home on furlough. During these meetings, where so-called *tongues* were being practiced, they stood and spoke briefly in the respective remote tribal languages that they knew, then sat back down. The missionaries attested that, in each instance, any alleged interpretation given didn't come close to what they had said. If the purported Apostolic gift was present, their attempts of *interpretation* would have certainly coincided with what was said. This certainly attests to the questionable validity of Pentecostal and Charismatic claims of possessing the Apostolic spiritual gift of "Interpretation."

Concerning speaking actual languages, consider the fact that this writer and many other non-charismatic missionaries are more fluent and able to teach or converse in spoken Thai than most of the Pentecostal or Charismatic missionaries in Thailand. If claimants truly possessed the biblical gift of tongues, they should be able to speak flawless Thai, just like a native-born national speaker. Also, if they possessed the actual spiritual gift of healing, would they not be going from hospital to hospital healing the sick and incurably afflicted, just like the New Testament Apostles did? Instead, they put on staged events with purported claims of miraculous healings, all of which have been proven invalid upon post-event investigation, or even by later testimony of the disillusioned recipient!

Furthermore, the modern-day tongues and healing movements have little to do with proclaiming the Gospel message to the unreached as occurred in the Book of Acts. First, they have been proven *not* to be actual spoken languages by linguistic professionals who have studied them. Second, if anything, it's more about self-edification or egotism, as purportedly having attained some higher level of spirituality, not unlike the goal of the original twentieth-century seeker movements.

As things continue to progress, I lean more-conclusively towards the ††Cessationist view (see ADDENDUM on page 33). After careful consideration, I have concluded, to my own satisfaction, that the various modern-day tongues and healing movements, including assertions of the miraculous, are more fallacious and of uncertain origin than they are genuine, no matter what dedicated adherents may claim. These manifestations are typically either emotional or fleshly grandstanding at best, or of demonic influence at worst, but unlikely of any real Divine origin.

Those who openly practice and advocate these things – or *fellow travelers* who help to propagate them – spread misinformation and confusion, mixed with just enough truth to confuse and mislead innocent seekers and bystanders. Keep in mind that all true spiritual gifts are given to each individual believer by God as He decides; not acquired by being sought after, pressured into, or prayed for, and He doesn't pass out fraudulent ones either. Biblical tongues were, in fact, a sign for unbelievers – essentially the Jews who seek God-given signs – to convict of sin, repent, and believe upon hearing the Gospel; declared to them supernaturally in their own heart languages and even village dialects. (Acts 1:5-8; 1 Corinthians 1:22, 12:11, 14:22)

The whole matter rests on biblical authenticity or lack thereof. If present-day manifestations were truly authentic, it would be as a result of God reestablishing genuine New Testament Apostleship. Unbelieving Jews would likely be present, experiencing actual Divine miracles. They would also hear the Gospel about their Messiah's wondrous acts on their behalf, being spoken in their own native tongues or dialects, unknown by the speakers (as seen in Acts chapter 2:5-8), not the dubious ecstatic utterances that are being propagated in viral proportions today.

On the other hand, some conservatives deny the validity of biblical tongues altogether. They claim that the Apostles did not supernaturally announce the Gospel, declaring the wonderful works of God to the visiting Jews at Pentecost by speaking in the visiting Jews' own languages or dialects which the speakers did not personally know. (Acts 2:4-12) No, they assert that it was actually the visiting Jews who simply "heard" the message in their own languages; emphasizing *heard*. Therefore, they imply that the miracle was not in the *proclamation*, but in the *hearing*.

This is clearly an intentional misrepresentation of the passage, based on personal denial of the text, including faulty hermeneutics. In other words, they choose to disavow the miraculous; that God's empowering the Apostles to declare the Gospel in other languages unknown to them never took place on that day at Pentecost. One might even wonder whether these ones also questioned the miraculous events of the Old Testament in the times of Noah, Moses, and Elijah, or even the six 24-hour day Genesis account of Creation.

On the other hand, those who claim to be modern-day Apostles are self-deceived at best and liars at worst, deluding many, including themselves. It is evident, according to the prophetic Word in Revelation 21:14, that there are only twelve God-ordained Apostles. For proof, just count the foundations containing the names; *"And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE LAMB."* Note the definite article, **'the'** that precedes the word Apostles, which denotes the exact number: "THE TWELVE" (Luke 6:13). Of these, neither Judas nor his replacement, Matthias (chosen by men), were valid. Paul, the twelfth and last apostle, was chosen directly by Christ on the road to Damascus. (Acts 9:1-16) He defended his Apostleship in his epistles, like 1 Corinthians 15:9 and 1 Thessalonians 2:6. Consequently, anyone claiming self-appointed apostleship today, or claiming to have had some dream where Christ spoke to them, giving them *new, extra-biblical light*, is a false apostle and a false teacher, so stay away.

Furthermore, if these present-day miracle-workers were truly *anointed* and *empowered* of the Lord, would they not be seeking out hospitals and hospices throughout the land; go up and down the halls and into every room, healing the sick, the crippled, the hopelessly infirmed and the dying? ...even going into funeral homes and cemeteries where bereaved relatives are sorrowing over the loss of their loved one -- walk up to the caskets of the dearly departed and command them to arise? Why don't they? Because they can't, that's why! So, they resort to hypocritical sleight of hand as they rake in the cash to pad their own lavish lifestyles.

Peter describes these types in 2 Peter 2:17-19: *"These are wells without water, clouds drifting in the winds, speaking great boastful words; alluring people by fleshly lusts; servants of corruption; promising freedom but bringing bondage; reserved for the mists of darkness."* Jude describes these in 1:12-13 as: *"Corrupted beasts, evil speakers of good, dangerous hidden reefs, spots in your midst, clouds without water, wild foaming waves, and wanderings stars reserved for darkness."*

Not being truly anointed or empowered of God, they put on staged fakery; further deceiving misinformed, ignorant seekers and the weak in faith. It has been proven that their staged *healings* are not produced through the power of the Spirit of God, but by sleight-of-hand, trickery and the power of the flesh—possibly even by demonic influence! As the Apostle Paul warns: *"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their consciences seared with a hot iron."* (1 Timothy 4:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12)

I was exposed to some of this "pseudo-apostolic" Charismatic behavior while strengthening a dwindling city church in my adopted home province in Northeast Thailand. Its pastor had resigned and its membership had fallen until only one family remained. This occurred in the early 1980s when various undesirable groups were eyeing this church, as well as our surrounding village works, hoping to assimilate whomever they could into their fold in typical sheep-stealing fashion. I saw that same sheep-stealing, church take-over scenario played out numerous times in the Northeastern Thailand region where I ministered.

I had just moved our family from our remote village outpost into town, where I planned to spend most of the time on the Isan New Testament translation. However, of necessity, it was partially put on hold, since our village folks looked to this dwindling city church (rightly or wrongly) as their elder in the faith. That being the case, we could not afford to see the city church flounder or become another Charismatic outpost. I was friends with that particular evangelical mission's field director, who welcomed my presence and willingness to intervene.

I became their interim pastor-teacher, sharing leadership responsibilities with the person whom I was discipling—my gifted translation assistant, Pastor J. Never having been grounded properly, it was thrilling to hear him expound on his newly acquired understanding of God's saving Grace. The congregation grew in strength and number as I taught foundational truths. Pastor J. later assumed full responsibilities when I returned to the States on furlough, under whom the church continued to thrive and grow through his capable leadership. We would share Sunday morning teaching responsibilities, work on the Isan New Testament translation and visit church members during the week, and evangelize unreached ethnic Phu-Thai villages on Saturdays; where, we saw many receive Christ and get baptized.

Things were going great. The city church was growing stronger in both faith and number in a real grass-roots fashion as it got back on its feet. Then, one Sunday morning when I arrived, a panel truck with license plates from another province was parked out front and an unknown group was conducting an impromptu meeting without our knowledge or permission.

There were at least 10-12 of them, sitting in a circle, simultaneously jabbering away in tongues. I remember that it sounded very strange, more like the chirping of many birds than any actual language. This was a chilling experience because it brought to mind Isaiah 8:19: “...*them that have familiar spirits, and wizards that peep and mutter.*” They were also trying to force our people to speak in these so-called tongues as well. Stepping up to intervene, I asked what they were doing, but they continued. As I was speaking, some from their group approached me, gesturing and loudly imploring God specifically to “cast out the demon”...meaning me! These uninvited invaders were being demonically led and needed to leave, not me.

Pastor J. arrived at that juncture, and was just as surprised as I. We started to extract our people out from the circle. These were mostly new, uninformed believers, ignorant of the implications of what was happening. Visibly frustrated, he promptly called the local police, who came and carted all these uninvited strangers off to the local police station for detention and questioning. What they had done was a chargeable offense under Thai law: Disturbing the Peace!

We later learned how this group had gotten there. A young Christian lady in our congregation who worked locally had taken it upon herself to invite them, without checking with us first. She had recently arrived from Bangkok and had earlier come to faith through this Charismatic group, some of whom were her friends. We were aware of her background and had admonished her about these teachings. Yet, it was obvious that she was not convinced, and remained deeply influenced by this group.

Pastor J. and I were concerned that she had been offended by how things had gone down. However, the next Sunday she came to the service seemingly as happy as ever. She gave testimony that she had gone along with her friends the previous Sunday afternoon, to hold a meeting at the local prison. She praised the Lord how one of the prisoners had been “restored” of a condition where one leg was supposedly shorter than the other from birth; an oft-repeated Charismatic claim. She was apparently sold out to the Charismatic agenda.

During the following week, I contacted prison officials whom I knew, asking if anything had occurred out of the ordinary during the group’s visit. They said none of them had seen or heard of anything out of the ordinary. I then asked them specifically about the alleged short leg healing incident. They denied that anything had happened, to the best of their knowledge. These officials were honorable men. If anything had truly occurred in the realms of the miraculous, as was claimed, news of it would have surely spread far and wide. There was nothing, yet these types of claims get bandied about as being the truth, which helps further propagate lies, false doctrines, and false practices – lying wonders, as I call them.

In hindsight, I don't presume that this dear young lady, whom I love in the Lord, was lying when she stood up and shared that following Sunday. However, I do believe that she was being deceived by spiritual lies (lying wonders), as were her Charismatic friends. That was the last we heard of them.

The young lady forgave us and was later joined in marriage, performed by an Isan pastor friend, to an Isan Army Sergeant, Mr. S., whom I had led to faith during their courtship days. He is now a retired Army Colonel, lay-pastoring of a village church that was established during my earlier village ministry. Being a *straight-shooter*, Mr. S. doesn't appear to have bought into his wife's views.

Years later, while I was on an extended sabbatical and Pastor J had started a discipling and church-planting ministry in an adjoining province—leaving the city church strong and growing on its own—this young lady, now a married woman with a family, declared herself to be a spiritual leader there under the new weak pastor. From that self-appointed position, she has propagated tongues (ecstatic utterances) to about everyone who still attends there—despite having sat under our clear teaching to the contrary.

Sweet on the surface, she has proven herself to have a strong, unteachable spirit behind her winning smile as she spreads this tongues doctrine, all in direct disobedience to Scripture—as many other Charismatic leaning women have done and continue to do. I was recently told that meetings there have now been reduced to communal speaking in euphoric ecstatic utterances—a so-called personal prayer language. (cf. 1 Corinthians 14:23) As stated previously, whatever happened to "*Let all things be done decently and in order*" as a standard for meeting together to worship the Lord? (1 Corinthians 14:40)

Note: See remarks concerning women holding positions of spiritual authority over men, and their speaking in tongues, starting on page 29: *A brief exegetical look at 1 Corinthians 14*. Also note that women, by their very nature, continue to play a major leadership role in propagating the Charismatic tongues movement. (cf. Genesis 3:1-13; 1 Timothy 2:12-14)

CHARISMATIC PRACTICES: Typical Charismatic practices include the following:

- ✓ Spreading false or highly-exaggerated reports concerning tongues, healings, and miraculous occurrences
- ✓ Seeking out non-charismatic churches and believers with their message of attaining a higher level of spirituality
- ✓ Attempting to convert churches by forming subversive fifth column groups within, eventually splitting or claiming the church
- ✓ Making incredulous claims of the miraculous on Charismatic TV shows which are applauded without any doubt concerning their validity
- ✓ Coaxing or cajoling non-charismatic Christians to speak in tongues (fleshly ecstatic utterances) by letting their minds go free and mouthing disjointed sounds

CHARISMATIC CLAIMS: Include assertions that modern *Tongues* is:

- ✓ A personal prayer language whereby to speak to God. (Note: God & Angels always spoke in human languages when visiting people.)
- ✓ Praying in the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:26; Ephesians 6:18; Jude 1:20) means speaking to God – using unintelligible utterances.

- ✓ Evidence of salvation, the implication being: no speaking in tongues equals no salvation.
- ✓ Evidence of being "baptized" with the Holy Spirit (Compare this to the section: **THE MINISTRIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**, starting on page 8).
- ✓ Evidence of possessing "Name It – Claim It" faith (Preaching a false "Prosperity Gospel").
- ✓ Evidence of there being modern-day Apostles and/or Prophets with alleged ability to heal, perform miracles, and receive new revelations from God.
- ✓ Claims of supernatural healings of various injuries.
- ✓ Claims of being able to speak things into existence.
- ✓ Claims of being able to control the weather by commanding it to change.

TYPICAL FALSE SIGNS OF THE MIRACULOUS: (usually staged before large audiences)

- ✓ When one is full of the Spirit, gained through periods of intense seeking, that one receives a supernatural anointing of power
- ✓ Heal the weak and sickly by having them touch an "anointed" piece of their clothing—handkerchiefs, neckties, etc.
- ✓ Drinking or anointing recipients with free packets of "blessed" holy water, said to cause miracles to occur in one's life, with incredible "claims" to back it up.
- ✓ Heal the weak and sickly by sprinkling them with anointed holy water.
- ✓ Make wheelchair-bound paralytics or cripples walk normally again, right on stage.
- ✓ Cause the deaf and dumb to speak and hear.
- ✓ Restore sight to the blind.
- ✓ Make short legs grow, etc., canes, crutches or wheelchairs are typically tossed aside, only to be retrieved later.
- ✓ Raise the dead back to life – the most dubious of all their claims.
- ✓ And, receive new, extra-biblical visions, revelations and messages "directly from God!"

Anyone who claims they receive new revelations directly from God, like the Prophets of old, treads on very dangerous ground. Adding to the Word of God comes with dire consequences. (Deuteronomy 4:2, 12:32; Revelation 22:18) The inspired Word of God is perfect; complete as God gave it, contained in the 66 books of the Old and New Testament canon. Yet, they allege that any new truths they receive are valid and equal to how the Apostle Paul received the Gospel in a vision directly from Jesus Christ. (Galatians 1:12) These assertions only bring glory to themselves, not to God, and He shares His glory with no one. (Isaiah 42:8) Even worse, these claims undermine the final authority of the written Word of God! The warnings in 2 Corinthians 11:13-14 state that *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."*

A prominent Charismatic pastor-teacher claimed in writing that: *"Once the Holy Spirit releases [sic] to come up into your soul, you are going to be as close to Him, God, and Jesus as you*

possibly can get while living down here on this earth. Through the Holy Spirit, you will have direct access, a direct connection to both God and Jesus in heaven. This gift is just going to bring you that much closer to the Three of Them, due to the fact that He will now be residing with you up in your soul area. You will be truly Spirit-filled when this happens."

Do not be misled! This is pure conjecture; shown to be false by numerous Scripture passages about the believer's spiritual inheritance and authority, based on one's eternal position *In Christ*. First, God's inspired Word plainly states that, at the moment of salvation and the new birth into God's Family of Saints, we have been blessed by God Himself with all spiritual blessings in Christ (Ephesians 1:3), as well as everything pertaining to life and godliness, and great and precious Promises whereby we are partakers of the Divine Nature through the knowledge of Him. (2 Peter 1:3-4)

Furthermore, we have immediate access to the Father at any time, which has already been freely granted to us through Christ, our Intercessory High Priest, and Advocate. (Hebrews 4:14-16) And, the gift of God is Eternal Life in Christ, given through the indwelling Holy Spirit at the time of Salvation. (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9)

Also, what does this man mean by "*Up Into Your Soul Area*"? Where is that? What scripture does that come from? There is none of which this writer is aware. Possibly, a new Charismatic revelation? The Apostle Paul said he was given the authentic, certified Gospel directly in a vision by Jesus Christ Himself (Galatians 1:11-12), yet Paul never mentioned anything about the concept of a *Soul Area* in his letters to Timothy or to the churches. This is likely more spiritual-sounding conjecture.

Another alarming claim among Charismatics is that born-again Christians can allegedly become "*demonized*" unawares—their term. (*This sounds strangely akin to Animistic practices in Thailand, where calamities can befall someone, caused by some unhappy spirit entity.*) In this case, the hapless Christian is supposedly not fully possessed, just partially, or whatever. They go through all sorts of contortions and long prayer vigils to deliver the so-called demonized believer. I'm not sure how they knew he or she got that way initially, or clues that, that one has been delivered.

I was made aware of a situation where strivings went on in intervals for many days and nights trying to free a perplexed female missionary candidate who someone assumed was *demonized*. These beliefs and practices are without substance. Satan himself is probably amused, having been able to get Christians off-track once again. Granted, a believer may be influenced through suggestion, but never indwelt, i.e., demons taking up residence in the heart of a born-again believer alongside the Holy Spirit. Never! No matter what they might claim, can a born-again Christian be unwittingly *possessed* or *demonized*! Since the Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of every believer, darkness and evil cannot coexist in His presence. (John 8:12, 14:30; Ephesians 1:13; 1 John 4:4)

On another occasion, a Charismatic faith healer – himself oddly frail and sickly in appearance – frequented some of Thailand's churches on an annual basis to promote his purported *gift* of miraculous healing. I recall how he had once held a staged event in

Phnom Penh, Cambodia, replete with all the typical fanfare and accoutrements. This was shortly after Pol Pat's heinous and brutal *Killing Fields* regime had fallen and the country had just reopened to the outside world. Flyers were distributed in blanketed advertising campaigns, decorated with colorful photos and grandiose claims.

The event was reportedly packed as the typical healing show began. The hapless yet hopeful Cambodian people, having just endured years of devastating terror and heart-wrenching sadness, were hungering for genuine hope and truth. What a wonderful opportunity it would have been to communicate the Gospel of God's lovingkindness, hope, and deliverance from sin and death through the Lord Jesus Christ! However, all the seeking Cambodians got that day were staged scams put on by the so-called healer; which, they immediately saw through. In near-riotous fashion, they drove the impostor and his crew off the stage and out of town ...to the point where the authorities were mobilized to protect them as they fled the country. Which, one might say, is just what they deserved. It's unfortunate how elements like this are somehow able to gain entry.

This certainly does not imply that God cannot or does not heal or perform the miraculous today, because He can and does, for which this writer has first-hand knowledge, having both experienced and witnessed many things while taking the Gospel to unreached people groups in the regions beyond—Northeast Thailand in this case. However, be assured that God does not operate through staged events, or before an audience where prideful, glory-seeking men and women gather wealth unto themselves on the backs of a misled, deceived audience. The God of light and righteousness is not involved in things like this, nor does He share His Glory with another.

These present-day claims and staged pseudo-manifestations are typically performed where misinformed and misled people are deluded and drawn in. (2 Timothy 3:13) Those who deceive them, and themselves, try to emulate in the strength of the flesh what God's Holy Spirit chose to do by sovereign design through His chosen Apostles at the advent of the Church Age. Many of these events were recorded in the Book of Acts by Dr. Luke; the Apostle Paul's constant companion, akin to a traveling correspondent, even following Paul to Rome. (2 Timothy 4:11) This was before the 27 books of New Testament canon that we enjoy today were complete.

As previously stated, we need to keep in mind that the Book of Acts was penned as an historical account, recorded by Dr. Luke to inform his friend Theophilus of events that were taking place during the birth and growth of the Church, just as he did in the Gospel of Luke concerning The Living Christ. Therefore, Acts is not a teaching or didactical book, as are Paul's Epistles, many of which Paul is correcting erroneous teaching and practice. Also, events about Paul's life recorded in the last chapters of Acts were a blow-by-blow narrative, set down in journalistic fashion by his companion, Dr. Luke. Therefore, the accounts recorded in Acts are not teaching examples to be emulated. Nor is Acts a behavioral manual or handbook—unlike Proverbs or the Book of James—but it remains an historical account of the ministry of the Apostles at the onset of the Church Age, under the empowerment and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

To their credit—although it's unclear how they parse things—a few noted Charismatic-leaning leaders correctly believe that biblical tongues are *not* a sign for believers, but for unbelievers. (1 Corinthians 14:22) However, many others are spiritual hypocrites, con artists who peddle the Word of God deceitfully for personal gain and not for God's Glory. (Philippians 3:17-19) These types are practiced stage actors who appeal to the flesh by telling convincing tales of how they experienced something miraculous, or how one can enjoy prosperity by sending a sizable “seed gift” to their ministry. These are the only ones who prosper by deceiving greedy people who want to get rich quick, not knowing God's ability to supply their every need. (Psalms 23; Philippians 4:19)

If these types are truly born-again believers—although many are not—this writer is obligated to count them as brethren in Christ, even though they hold to unbiblical views on the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. Some would say this is a secondary fellowship issue. I do not agree, because false doctrine leads good people astray, even some who are grounded in the faith. Therefore, I cannot in good faith fellowship or work together with them in their endeavors in the light of their heretical views, divisive doctrines and goals—things that confuse and mislead believers.

King David writes in Psalm 133:1, “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” The Prophet Amos lays down a scriptural principle in 3:3, “How can two walk together except they are agreed?” They cannot. What these aforementioned types promote corrupts the clear teachings of God's Word, such as salvation by Grace and the believer's faith-rest walk in Christ. Rather, they pervert and add to the Gospel of Grace, promoting emotionally-charged ecstatic exhibitions and other unscriptural phenomena, of which they readily approve ...including women speaking in tongues, who are commanded to remain silent and not hold spiritual authority over men in a church setting. (1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:12) In doing so, these types place themselves under God's judgment. (Galatians 1:8; 1 Timothy 5:24-25; Revelation 22:18-19)

They also show little respect for others who don't adhere to or help promote their doctrines and practices. They employ deceptive tactics as they seek out and infiltrate established churches using Fifth Column, Trojan-Horse methodologies. They gain willing followers on the mission field by tempting the destitute and poor through giveaway programs, causing disruption, confusion, splits and division in churches as they sheep-steal and spread their false doctrines to gain new adherents to their anti-biblical practices.

Then, they brazenly claim that they have *established* new churches; removing any church signs and putting up their own, sending photos to their supporters. When confronted, some have admitted that establishing new churches among the unreached is too difficult, so they resort to invading existing churches; promising various types of assistance while maligning those who established the work. They justify their actions by saying their ministry is to “*strengthen existing churches.*” The Apostle Paul knew these types well. He constantly dealt with the legalistic *Judiazers* who tenaciously tagged him around; disrupting his work while spreading their false doctrines ...boasting of their superiority

while defaming Paul, who was forced to defend himself and his ministry to the churches. (2 Corinthians 11:1-12:13; Galatians 5:1-12, 6:13-14)

Nowadays, these types readily accept disfellowshipped Christian leaders without following through in addressing their undealt-with sin issues. This writer has seen it occur in Thailand on numerous occasions at the hands of Pentecostals! They embrace those who are under discipline by their own organization or group. Those found to have been living in immorality or other types of unacceptable, unchristlike behavior; things not God-honoring or becoming to a Christian. These unrepentant ones often carry deep-seated grudges for having been exposed and humbled. As such, they often swear to exact revenge by assisting in the above-mentioned sheep-stealing programs, dividing and wreaking havoc on as many as they can as they help introduce tongues into churches established by their former group.

The Apostle Paul clearly warned: *"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses 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."* (Romans 16:17-18)

This writer believes and accepts as divine truth without question, every miraculous account recorded in Scripture. God, who dwells in timeless eternity, is all-knowing, all-wise, all-powerful and sovereign; across all ages and dispensations. I also know by personal experience that God is not only righteous and just; but also full of loving-kindness, compassion and grace. As such, He is ready to fully forgive all who come to Him in repentance and faith in the Name, Person, and atoning Work of His only-begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. (John 1:12, 3:36; Acts 20:21)

I also realize that God does many miraculous things yet today, mostly behind the scenes. There are numerous accounts—this writer having been personally involved in some—where God has gloriously revealed His presence, power, and protection to missionaries and in infant local churches. Also, in the midst of totally-unreached primitive peoples where the Gospel message is only just arriving. Yet, these manifestations tend to decline once the Gospel gains a firm foothold and growing, self-governing and propagating churches have been established where God's Word is available in the local language.

I also know that God does not work through, or share His glory with unscrupulous men or women who promote a false gospel for financial gain: *"deceiving others and being deceived."* (2 Timothy 3:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12) These types arrange staged, emotion-packed meetings where people are brought up from the audience prearranged, tapped on the forehead and faint or fall down trembling, said to be [†]Slain in the Spirit and/or *healed* of whatever ailment. These manifestations are supposedly done through the power vested in the performers, who gain fame and amass great fortunes at the expense of their highly impressed followers. Some suggest that the so-called *slain* ones have actually responded to hypnotic suggestion, an induced trance-like state in anticipation.

Note: The dictionary definition to be [†]*slain* means to be killed intentionally with premeditation. It does not mean to get tapped on the forehead and, upon cue, fall backward onstage into a catcher's arms before returning to their seat in the audience; all of which occurs by prearranged design. Granted, some may be overcome with the emotion of the moment and

faint or swoon and have to be awakened. Where is that found in Scripture? ...other than in Acts where Ananias and Saphira plotted to lie to the Holy Spirit.

Again, I view these unbiblical types of staged displays as being very-much akin to the lying wonders of the last days (2 Thessalonians 2:9), in that they deceive and mislead the unsuspecting. Actually, the only people recorded in Scripture who were truly *slain by the Holy Spirit* were Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10), i.e., the husband and wife team who conspired to lie to the Holy Spirit and paid for it immediately with their lives upon executing their plan before the Apostle Peter.

IN REVIEW:

Of a truth, the Scriptures clearly teach that ALL born-again believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit in His Divine fullness at the moment they believe. (Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30) The Scriptures also clearly state that, if anyone does not have the Holy Spirit, that person is not one of God's redeemed Holy Ones or Saints. (Romans 8:9) These passages certainly counter the theory that "ecstatic utterances" (tongues) is required as a sign of having received Salvation or the fullness of the Spirit, nor does it have anything to do with it, as espoused by Pentecostal and Charismatic types whether they admit it openly or not.

In the light of this, they concede that we who do not do tongues *might* have some of the Holy Spirit, yet not in His entirety because we cannot experience the fullness of His power without speaking in tongues. This claim is indefensible and not supported by any Scripture. Especially in the light of the rhetorical statement in 1 Corinthians 12:30: *"Do all have the gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?"* So, we either have the Holy Spirit or we don't. Those who don't, are *not* saved. Actually, the Spirit's power is revealed through the lives of those who maintain a consistent walk in fellowship by keeping short accounts with God concerning sin—something often missing in the lives of those who make such claims. Concerning keeping short accounts with God, A.W. Tozer said: *"The unattended garden will soon be overrun with weeds, and the heart that fails to cultivate truth and root out error will shortly become a theological wilderness."*

Given fully and freely, Scripture tells us that the indwelling Holy Spirit—our helper, teacher, comforter and guide—takes up residence within the heart and life of every believer at the moment of Salvation. (1 Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 1:13-14) He engifts us with eternal life as He regenerates us into *New Creations in Christ* (2 Corinthians 5:17) upon our demonstrating "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 20:21) Whereupon, He saves us to the uttermost, seals us, and places us into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13), and keeping us eternally safe and secure by the power of God unto the Day of Redemption—Christ's return in the air to receive all believers unto Himself for Eternity. (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 1 Peter 1:3-5)

Therefore, according to Scripture, we who are born-again into God's eternal Family of Redeemed Saints through the New-Birth experience, have the Holy Spirit in all of His fullness abiding within in all of His fullness, not just in part as these types would wrongly claim if we don't receive their tongues teachings. (John 1:12-13; John 3:3-7; 1 John 5:10-13) How does one dissect God? However, the real question is; does God have all of us? As we yield our

lives to His will (Philippians 2:13), we grow in grace and knowledge as we mature and gain godly wisdom (Philippians 3:10; Colossians 2:6-7). This entails maintaining spiritual fellowship through keeping short accounts with God through confession of sin, by consistently walking in the light as we maintain fellowship through living and walking in the truth. And, as believers, our eternal position (or standing) and inheritance is "In Christ" and can never be lost. (John 3:16, 3:36, 10:27-30) Hence, the indwelling Holy Spirit seals us, matures us, comforts us, convicts us, guides, teaches and uses us as He fills our hearts with His peace and joy until Christ's return. (Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30)

Truly, the most powerful and convincing example of God's manifestation of the miraculous is the supernatural spiritual new-birth experience (2 Corinthians 5:17), which transforms an unrighteous hell-bound sinner into one of God's Holy Ones, having received forgiveness and declared justified by the Righteous Judge Himself. (Romans 5:1) At that moment, an instantaneous change occurs when one is transformed from condemned sinner to redeemed Saint and integrated into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:13) These ones have become regenerated into new persons in Christ, being born-again into God's family of the Redeemed; not evidenced through mouthing ecstatic utterances (tongues), baptism, communion, or trying to keep themselves saved by following a list of manmade rules or admonitions, but by the power of God. (1 Peter 1:5)

After having received Christ in August 1963, this writer was invited to a Sunday evening meeting at a Pentecostal church in a nearby city. These folks were certainly more animated than the little country church where I attended, and they all seemed to be enjoying themselves. The sporadic organ and piano riffs were loud and lively between lulls. During the preaching, a woman sitting near the front began to noticeably sway and shriek at intervals, with the pastor's encouragement.

She soon shrieked, jumped up and rushed to the altar where she kneeled and shouted out something I couldn't follow. She then returned to her seat, noticeably spent. That's strange, I thought. It was an emotionally-charged ecstatic utterance or tongues that she was shouting out. After the service, another woman approached me, saying matter-of-factly that she had once been a Baptist until she received the gift of tongues and would never go back—as if I was missing out on something special. Go back from what? From this strange carrying-on? Frankly, it's *not* about being a *Baptist* or anything else, but about receiving salvation by Grace and pursuing a God-honoring lifestyle, according to the truths of God's written Word. (2 Timothy 2:15-16) **Note:** Without question, highly independent women are prime players in the tongues movement.

So, what are we lacking without tongues and all that it entails? Nothing! According to John 3:16, God loves us and gives us Eternal Life. In Hebrews 7:25, He has forgiven and saved us to the *uttermost* from a Hell-bound eternity. Ephesians 3:17-21 says, Christ dwells in our hearts by faith; being rooted eternally in God's incomprehensible and unfathomable Love. First Corinthians 12:13 says we have been placed into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit, having drunk deeply of the Water of Life according to John 4:14 and Revelation 22:17. Second Corinthians 5:17-21 says, we are new persons in Christ, Who made us His ambassadors; having taken all our sin upon Himself

and giving us His own Righteousness in return. Second Corinthians 1:3-4 tells us, we have peace, comfort, guidance and joy, given to us by the indwelling Holy Spirit of Ephesians 1:12-14.

Continuing: Hebrews 7:25 reassures us that we, for eternity to the uttermost! Ephesians 1:3-4 says, we have been given every spiritual blessing in Christ; and, that we now stand holy and blameless before a righteous and holy God, in Love. First Peter 1:3-4 says, we have been given a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ and an unfading inheritance reserved in Heaven for us. Second Peter 1:3 says, we have been given all things pertaining to life and godliness and called to live a virtuous lifestyle. Yes, we have all these things and more. What else could anyone want or need—*except for the awaiting Glories of Heaven?* The only alternative is to be lost in one's sin, resulting in having to face the Supreme Judge at the Great White Throne Judgement; then, spend eternity in the unquenchable flames of the Lake of Fire, one's name not being found in the Book of Life!

Concerning the desire to seek present-day wonders and miracles, the greatest of all miracles is the spiritual new birth, exemplified in a transformed lifestyle of any sinner, and evidenced by a yielded life and a consistent walk in fellowship with God under the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 2:12; Colossians 2:6-7) Striving to attain anything more is futile because there is no more. We have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ (Ephesians 1:3) and we've been given everything pertaining to life and Godliness. (2 Peter 1:3) The changed life in Christ is a bona fide a walking miracle—transformed from death to life, darkness to light. Unexplainable by the world yet manifested before all onlookers—the outworking of new life in Christ is a growing, maturing process. Like a new-born infant; as Christians, we don't attain adulthood during the first days our being born-again. (1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 1:5-9, 3:18)

I had the opportunity to know personally two men of God who are successful pastors, both of whom were once heavily involved in the Pentecostal and the Charismatic movements respectively. One, Pastor G, had once pastored Pentecostal mega-churches. He even held large tent meetings where things mentioned in this paper were practiced. During his involvement, he told me that he began to realize that their key doctrines and practices concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer were *not* aligned with scripture. In his quest, the more he studied God's Word the more convinced he became, to the point he could no longer continue. He also realized that doctrines and practices of Baptists were more attuned to Scripture. Subsequently, Pastor G left his former associations and became a loving and caring preacher of Baptist persuasion and a trusted friend of this writer.

My other friend of whom I speak is Pastor C, my former next-door neighbor who pastored a Bible Church located nearby. I didn't realize—until he told me one day—the extent to which he had been involved in the Charismatic movement. I asked him what had happened. He went on to say how he had begun to sense that things they were practicing and promoting were like empty window dressing. And, that all those involved seemed to be trying to keep up a facade to maintain acceptance within their peer group. It was then that he came face-to-face with the error of the whole

thing and left the Charismatic movement altogether, along with his wife and family. Pastor C once wrote: *"Grow in your relationship with God through a true knowledge of His Word."*

During our conversation, he explained that, as human beings, those who lack a sense of positive self-worth tend to seek acceptance within a group, often conforming to that group's norms, including behaviors, attitudes, speech patterns, and dress codes, all to earn their acceptance and approval. As if saying: "My friends are doing it, why shouldn't I? I don't want to be left out, or miss God's blessing. What if they don't like me anymore? In other words, self-worth can often be directly related to acceptance by one's peers and societal surroundings, more than seeking God's approval. (2 Timothy 2:15)

This writer recently had the opportunity to befriend a neat Thai Pastor and his wife. Pastor B had just completed his doctorate at Bob Jones University (BJU) and was in the process of raising support to return to Thailand, as a missionary to his own people. Their testimony was unique in that they had initially been part of the Charismatic movement in Bangkok. The wife told me apologetically that it was all they knew; that is until they met some solid, mature believers from a conservative church. Something clicked, and they realized that what they had been involved in lacked the same depth of reality and purpose. Disassociating themselves from any Charismatic ties, they sought out a solid biblical education at BJU. Their goal now is to work as a team to start a conservative church in Bangkok. There, they will provide a solid alternative with foundational teaching to help ground those caught up in the same tongues belief system that they had come out of. The wife will be working with the women and children.

In the spirit of the Apostle Peter's timeless statement, a former Charismatic, in a blog he calls: *A Journey Into, Through, and Out Of Charismania*, wrote: *"Now that I'm in a different place in my Christian faith and no longer put much stock in the idea that we should be focusing so much on [seeking some new dream or vision] from God, but instead ought to focus on the written Word He's already given us."*

As a matter of clarification, this writer fully realizes there are many sincere Christians who love the Lord and seek to live for Him; and yet, find themselves involved in afore-described unscriptural aspects of the Pentecostal or Charismatic movements. These are often unsuspecting recipients of misleading and erroneous teachings on the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer—which is what it actually is—and are not perpetrators; of which there are many. Typically, they might have grown up within these belief systems; or pressured into it because someone tried to force them to speak in so-called tongues, as is typical.

Concerning Rich Charismatic Perpetrators: I recently had the opportunity to meet the nephew of a world-famous Charismatic Superstar when his nephew spoke at a local church conference. He had once been actively involved in his uncle's staged performances as a *catcher*—when people were "slain in the spirit" they fell into his arms. He also did event planning. As a family member, he enjoyed a truly lavish lifestyle, lived in palatial multi-million-dollar mansions, drove a fleet of exotic cars, had a closet full of expensive suits, traveled in private jets,

and stayed in luxurious multi-roomed royal suites in five-star hotels as he traveled the world with his famous uncle, one with gold furnishings at an amazing \$25,000 per night's stay. Only one thing he lacked; a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ!

During the course of events, he met and was attracted to a conservative young Christian lady. Her lifestyle was different; and, she spoke of things he did not know—being saved, knowing the Lord, etc. As their talks of spiritual things progressed, he became increasingly aware of his lost condition, and that what he had been involved in was a huge, deceptive façade, built on the backs of Christians. It took a while, but this attractive young Christian lady was instrumental in his receiving Christ—now his wife and mother of his children. He went on to complete his Bible education, including a doctorate at a prominent seminary. He presently co-pastors a conservative Bible church in southern California where he delights in preaching the Gospel. He is a published author and also takes numerous speaking engagements, exposing the deception of what he was once involved, concluding it is a microcosm of the whole lavish prosperity-gospel scene, saying his relatives and the people with whom he was formerly associated are *not* born-again Christians and know little or nothing of true Christianity. He now holds Bible studies with his unsaved relatives, which has generated genuine interest among some. Of his famous uncle, he says he has a very kind personality.

IN SUMMARY: Consider the Apostle Peter's telling statement concerning trusting in the final authority of the written Word of God over all else, including visions, dreams, emotions, and experiences. Peter saw it all, and yet he wrote: *"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables (fictitious or hearsay accounts) when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ but were eyewitnesses of His majesty (on the Mount of Transfiguration). For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'* And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount. Yet we have also a more sure word of prophecy (God's inspired, written Word); *whereunto ye do well that ye take heed..."* (2 Peter 1:16-19)

As stated in the Foreword; upon reading this paper, you may find yourself in full agreement. Or, you might dismiss my conclusions as being biased and mean-spirited; or, just out of touch with the times—of which I have sought to avoid. Or, you might be inclined towards my findings, yet not ready to go as far as to say that some of these things I describe might not be of the Lord since you know some very nice people that are involved in this movement. It is certainly your prerogative to feel that way. However, this writer is focusing more on beliefs, claims and practices than on individuals.

One might ask: "What's wrong with Catholics, Mormons (LDS), Jehovah's Witnesses, Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Humanists, Atheists, or just plain unsaved nominal Church-goers (*Christians in name only*)?" As stated, you may know some really good people who are of these persuasions; maybe even a spouse or someone whom you highly esteem. Good people can be led astray by teachers of unsound doctrines, so we should all be vigilant; yours truly included. Be like the Bereans, who always verified in Scripture what was being taught. (Acts 17:11; Colossians 2:8; 2 Timothy 2:15, 4:3-4; 2 Peter 3:17) I have intentionally left the major players alluded to here unnamed—only pointing

out their beliefs, claims, and practices. Things which directly violate the truths of God's Word; many overwhelmingly so, to the point where they ought to be embarrassed. Why aren't they? Because their hearts have become calloused. God's Word plainly states that these types: "Speak lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." (1 Timothy 4:2)

Concerning the Ladies: By God's design, they are usually more sensitive and emotionally attuned to things than their male counterparts. That's a positive trait for their family role as wives, mothers, and housekeepers, which also makes them strong and resilient persons. Although equally as intelligent and capable as men and maybe even more so in certain situations, God also blessed them with the role of followers in the marriage relationship. On the *con* side, due to their emotional makeup, they can be more susceptible to suggestion since they are often the first to yield to things like the modern-day tongues movement.

Please understand ladies, this is not a gender-bashing thing, because men can succumb to these things as well; yet, they tend to hold back, being more cautious by nature. Dr. Owen Strachan, Professor at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, stated that: *"The historical understanding of the mutually complementary roles of men and women in the church is that they are equal in the eyes of the Lord, and yet God has assigned different [leader-follower] roles to each."*

In the Garden, Adam followed Eve's lead in her disobedience—of which there are various explanations—who, being deceived by Satan's lies and subtle suggestions of grandeur, succumbed and disobeyed God's direct command and warning, resulting in *The Total, Irreversible Fall and Separation of Humankind from God!* Consequently, God, in His Divine wisdom and sovereignty, has declared the husband as head and leader of both the household and the local church setting, with both husband and wife being in submission to each other in marriage and both to Christ. (1 Corinthians 14:34; 2 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:21-28; 1 Timothy 2:14)

A BRIEF EXEGETICAL LOOK AT 1 CORINTHIANS 14:

A short exegetical look at 1 Corinthians 14 will show that:

(1) Chapter 14 is a continuation of chapter 13, where Paul makes an important distinction. Initially, Paul speaks hypothetically, using "if" or "though." (vv. 13:1-3) He then gets to the heart of the matter—spiritual understanding and maturity, where genuine, selfless **Love** supersedes all else even Faith and Hope. (vv. 13:4-13) Yet, Christ's Love was tough, righteous love, like when He drove the money changers out of the Temple. Then, in His next breath, He healed the blind and the lame who had come to seek Him out at the Temple. (Matthew 21:12-14)

CHAPTER 14: (not necessarily listed in order)

(2) Prophesying is a sign gift for believers—of prime importance in a church setting for teaching, comforting, edifying and guiding believers. (vv. 14:3, 22-25)

(3) Tongues is a sign gift for use among unbelievers—for declaring the Gospel in languages of those in surrounding unreached areas; languages unknown to the speaker. (v. 14:21)

(4) The operation of tongues is not intended for a Church setting. (v. 14:22)

(5) When Paul said "*I wish you all spoke in tongues; but rather that you prophesied*" (v. 14:5), he did not mean mouthing unintelligible ecstatic utterances (cf. v. 4) as is seen today (Note-2, pg. 31), but intelligible human languages as he did as an Apostle, a miraculous sign gift for proclamation of the newly revealed Gospel message to unbelievers (Jews), who seek miraculous signs to validate anything new as being from God. (Acts 2:4-12; 1 Corinthians 1:22)

Concerning the Biblical Use of Tongues: Paul told the Corinthians that he was headed for the yet-unreached regions beyond their location (2 Corinthians 10:16); where, what with the many unique unreached language groups unknown to Paul, his God-ordained Apostolic gift of Tongues would be put to good use as he delivered the Gospel message to them. There are countless unique languages and language families in the world today. In Thailand alone, there are known to be well over fifty different languages, and different language families, along with various dialects and subdialects.

incidentally, this writer has learned four Thai-related languages in the *tai-kadai* tonal language family—three of them to a point of fluency—all for the purpose of being openly received, communicate the Gospel effectively in a cross-cultural setting in the heart language of the hearers; and, be able to teach, counsel, and articulate various aspects of Bible doctrine, including the faith-walk life.

Continuing; on the remote island of New Guinea, there are myriads of uniquely different tribal languages, different from village to village, valley to valley and hilltop to hilltop. These, not to mention the countless unique tribal languages spoken throughout the Indonesian and Philippine Islands, as well as those spoken among the remote North- and South American Native tribal groups—all of which comprise areas of the *10-40 Window!* Which begs asking; wouldn't the Apostolic gift of tongues be of great value to reach these unreached people groups in expediting the fulfillment of Christ's Great Commission before His return? Personally, and without any hesitation, this writer would certainly be open to that! And yet, God in His infinite, sovereign wisdom has chosen not to make that Apostolic gift available for today; else those who claim to have it would certainly be led of God to use it for that.

(6) Due to their spiritual immaturity and lack of discernment, Paul admonished them to "Grow Up" in their misuse of spiritual gifts. I have heard numerous untaught people exclaim: "Forget the theology thing, just give me Love." The answer to that is; understanding God's fathomless Love comes from studying correct doctrine and is not separate from it.

(7) Women are not to teach or hold positions of spiritual authority over men. (1 Timothy 2:12-14) However, there is no scriptural admonition concerning *not* teaching or *not* holding positions of spiritual leadership over other women and children, or even giving women their personal testimony before the church, which I've seen done; women speaking while standing alongside their husbands on the podium as their spiritual head.

(8) Furthermore, women are instructed to remain in silent submission while in church. (1 Corinthians 11:3, 14:34) This admonition is not at all popular among feminist groups like NOW.

(9) Comparative analysis concludes that the operational gift of tongues was restricted to men. The Greek male pronoun is used or intended here, as seen in 1 Corinthians 14:2-4, 13, 21, 28. This is supported by 1 Corinthians 14:34, where Paul states that women are to remain silent.

(10) In a church setting, during a time of prophetic revelation, no more than three men should speak in succession, and at intervals, so all may consider, be edified, enlightened and comforted. (1 Corinthians 14:3, 29)

Paul closes with this admonition (paraphrased): "Did you Corinthians write God's Word or are you its recipients? If you consider yourself a prophet or a spiritual person, please realize that what I am writing here are the Lord's commands, not my own. (1 Corinthians 14:36-37) Therefore, I say, highly regard prophecy (*forth-telling God's Word*) over tongues, and be sure to maintain order and discipline in all things." (vv. 39-40)

Paul was saying that clear, effective communication is of the utmost importance for believers to understand God's Mighty Greatness, His Plan of Salvation, and the Eternal Heritage He has given to all believers, *In Christ*. Paul's prayers for believers in his other letters to the churches contain this same criterion, which is of the utmost importance for the believer's spiritual understanding, growth and maturity; else, why would he have kept repeating himself? (Ephesians 1:15-23, 3:14-21; Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 1:9-12)

Note-1: The time period in all the cities where Paul preached and taught was during the Apostolic age when the New Testament Canon was not yet complete. (1 Corinthians 13:9-10) Although, both the Apostles Paul and Peter sensed that Paul's writings would become a part of Holy Writ (1 Corinthians 14:36-37; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 3:15-16); in the interim, the Gospel message and other New Testament truths were given through the Holy Spirit by means of:

(A) **Tongues:** An Apostolic era miraculous sign gift. It was a temporary gift given by Christ for the supernatural proclamation of the Gospel **to unbelievers**; ^(a) in a non-church setting, and ^(b) in languages that were unknown to the speakers—namely to the Jews residing in other countries. (Acts 2:4-11; Corinthians 1:22, 14:22-25)

(B) **Prophecy:** An Apostolic era teaching gift. It was a temporary gift given for the foundation of the church **for use by believers**; ^(a) in a local church setting and ^(b) with the full comprehension of the speaker and his audience in their own language. Men, under the anointing and superintendence of the Holy Spirit, exclaimed New Testament truths for the "*edification, exhortation and comfort*" of the local church body before the completion of the New Testament. (1 Corinthians 14:3, 21)

Note-2: Concerning the Corinthian church, *ecstatic utterances* were prevalent among sorcerers and witch doctors in the heathen populace of Corinth in those days. It is entirely possible that immature Corinthian believers were affected in their zeal by these surrounding influences, some likely having once been sorcerers or witch doctors themselves; all of which suggests that the type of *tongues* practice Paul was warning them about were the meaningless ecstatic utterances of the area, as opposed to the genuine Apostolic gift, which Paul also mentions.

Everywhere the word tongue (*glossa*) occurs in Scripture, it refers to human languages: *Bible Knowledge Commentary Volume II*, by Drs. John Walvoord and Roy Zuk. Consequently, it has

been suggested by pastor-teacher Dr. John MacArthur that the term *unknown* was inserted in verses 2,4,13,14,19 and 27 in the KJV by its' translators, signifying where Paul was referring to extra-biblical *ecstatic utterances*—the surrounding heathen practice—as opposed to the actual Apostolic gift, where *unknown* was not added. A good example is found in verses 14 and 15; where Paul says in v.14 (paraphrased), *"If my spirit prays in an [ecstatic utterance], it will be unintelligible to me."* Whereas, in v.15 Paul says: *"So, which is it? I will, therefore, pray with both my spirit and my understanding, as well as sing with both my spirit and my understanding."*

God's Word is crystal clear concerning avoiding false doctrines and practices, and the individuals or groups that propagate them; admonishing us to *"Come out from among them..."* (2 Corinthians 6:14-18) Simply stated, it means to not continue to follow or live alongside the things of darkness, or sit under false teachings, called doctrines of demons, propagated by deceiving spirits (1 Timothy 4:1-2) and extra-biblical beliefs and practices; things that confuse and lead people astray from the genuine Gospel message and the unchangeable truths of God's Word. (Colossians 2:8; 1 Timothy 4:6-7)

This would include any individual or group that adds to or subtracts from the foundational truths of Scripture—Six-day Creation, Temptation, Fall, Universal sin, the Deity of Christ, Unlimited Atonement, Salvation full and free by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ's Blood alone, His bodily resurrection, ascension to the right hand of the Father to be our High Priest and intercessory advocate, Rapture, Christ's second coming *et al.* As previously stated, this writer has pastor friends who left the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements who affirm that, when they realized many beliefs and practices were erroneous and unsupported by Scripture, they decided to bow out.

As stated above, far be it from this writer to convolute God's Holy Word or imply that it says something that it doesn't or visa-versa, or seek to limit God in any way. All things considered, the question remains; does the preponderance of evidence support Pentecostal and Charismatic claims of experiencing genuine biblical tongues, signs and wonders?

IN CONCLUSION: The crux of the matter is, the Charismatic movement eagerly promotes things that are clearly contrary to Scripture. Not unlike Paul's assessment of his fellow-Jews in Romans 10:2; *"They have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge."* Do those in the movement exhibit zeal and conviction? Yes, very much so. However, much of the focus appears to be on outward exhibition with little emphasis on inner spiritual maturity.

Therefore, I can unequivocally state that, on the sole basis of scriptural evidence alone, or lack thereof, I must conclude that the Charismatic movement and its beliefs, claims and practices, are heretical in nature, not being biblically sound from its inception. It tends to lead people away from God's revealed truth, and not towards it.

Do Charismatic beliefs, claims, and practices ring true when weighed against rightly divided and correctly interpreted Scripture, exegeted within its grammatical, contextual and historical environs? With all things are considered, the preponderance of evidence tilts heavily towards No! The whole movement and its various components are not biblically sound because they are not aligned with

scripture. Not in agreement? You are encouraged to examine the biblical evidence for yourself.
“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1)

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Rev. Ron Myers
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ADDENDUM, ††Cessationists versus Continuationist Views:**What Does the Term Cessationist Mean?**

In theological terms, the Cessationist view holds that the miraculous sign gifts spoken of in the New Testament (Tongues, Healings, and Miracles) were given by God to His chosen Apostles at the onset of the church age for three distinct reasons:

1. Provide supernatural confirmation of Apostolic authority over the early church, initially consisting mainly of Jews, who require visible signs from God (1 Corinthians 1:22)
2. Help to speed the spread the Gospel and lay the foundation for the early church; and...
3. Give divine guidance and affirmation to early believers while the New Testament Canon was not yet complete. (1 Corinthians 13:8-12) Furthermore, for the sake of clarification, each of the three miraculous spiritual abilities mentioned that will *cease* or *drop away* (v. 8) are all a part of the *Apostolic* sign gifts—Prophecy, Tongues, and Knowledge.

Note: In that, the authority of the early church had been established, and the New Testament Canon being complete, Cessationists believe that the Apostolic sign gifts ceased to operate with the passing of the last of the twelve apostles and are no longer in operation today. However, God's power and Divine authority are not lessened whatsoever, or His ability to do whatsoever He pleases in the way of the miraculous for His glory.

In Evangelical Christianity, just as Creationists believe in a literal Creation, Cessationists believe that the manifestation of the miraculous sign gifts (tongues, prophecies, miracles, and healings) ceased at the close of the Apostolic age and the completion of the New Testament Canon (circa 96 AD). However, the spiritual gifts designed for the function and interaction of the Church Body, are still present and in operation today, given by God freely to every believer as He wills for each—not as one might strive after or pray for. (1 Corinthians 12:11)

What is the Continuationists' View:

The Continuationists' or *Apostolic Succession* View directly contrasts to the Cessationists' position. It holds that the miraculous Apostolic sign gifts are not temporary, and the Holy Spirit bestows them on persons even today, not just the original Twelve Apostles during the inception of the Church age. That tongues can be attained by seeking after, coaxing or forcing one to empty one's mind, then mouth meaningless sounds or syllables to get the "gift" started. These views are clearly not supported by Scripture, especially when compared alongside the Apostle Paul's admonition in 1 Corinthians 14:22, that Tongues are for the proclamation of the Gospel to unbelievers, *not* for believers.

Paul's matter-of-fact statement here (v. 22) could not be clearer, yet it is obviously overlooked or deemed irrelevant, since Charismatic thoughts and emotions supersede Scripture, not unlike Papal declarations, which are considered more authoritative than Divine Scripture. I am reminded of Christ's words in Matthew 15:8-9, and Mark 7:6-7, as He quotes Isaiah 29:13: *"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouths and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."*

A Friendly Little Quiz – Just for Fun:

We've all experienced quizzes during our school and college years. Some we "aced" while others not so much. The best ones were those that the prof gave as an open book quiz to do at home and hand it in later. The worse ones were those that the prof gave as a closed book quiz, sprung on the students at the beginning of class, with a certain prescribed time limit before the end of class. That was bad enough; the worse part was that some questions were ambiguous while others seemed to be on subjects not covered in class.

No worries, because this friendly little quiz is the easy type. You won't be graded on it. And, it's an open book quiz that you won't be required to hand in. There aren't necessarily any wrong answers (well, actually there are) and everyone gets a gold star.

In actuality, it is offered so you'll get a clearer sense of where you stand personally in relation to the subject at hand—*The Charismatic Movement: Its Beliefs, Claims and Practices*—as it relates to the Inspired, Written Word of God: your Bible.

I'm sure you're aware that every cult and religious movement, or its offshoots, claim to base their beliefs on the Bible and some person's interpretation thereof. These can easily be discerned as true or false with some comparative analysis against the real thing. The rightly divided, thoroughly exegeted and correctly interpreted *Word of Truth*, as Paul instructs in 2 Timothy 2:15.

Then there are Christ's warnings concerning adding to or taking away from the biblical text. (Revelation 22:18-19) An entry on Gotquestions.org writes: "*These are His words, and He warns against distorting them in any way, whether through additions, subtractions, falsifications, alterations, or intentional misinterpretations.*"

This principle also applies to anyone in general who seeks to intentionally distort the plain meaning of God's Word. Basically, it refers to taking away from the Deity of Christ and the authority of Scripture or adding to the requirements for Salvation.

- 1) According to 1 Corinthians 14:22, of the two different temporary Apostolic sign gifts, Tongues and Prophecy, which was meant specifically for whom, believers or unbelievers?
 - a) Both gifts were meant for both believers and unbelievers.
 - b) Tongues was a sign gift for believers to use – Prophecy was for unbelieving Jews.
 - c) Tongues was meant for reaching unbelieving Jews – Prophecy was for believers.
- 2) According to 1 Corinthians 14:23, did the Apostle Paul encourage the Corinthian believers to all speak in Tongues in unison during their meetings?
 - a) Yes, Paul encouraged this practice, saying that God was greatly glorified and unbelievers were convicted of sin when everyone spoke in Tongues at once.
 - b) No, Paul did not agree with this practice, warning that if unbelievers walked into the meeting, they would think that the Corinthian believers had gone mad.

- 3) According to 1 Corinthians 14:24, what did the Apostle Paul encourage the Corinthian believers to do... Prophecy or speak in Tongues?
- a) Paul encouraged the Corinthian believers to continue speaking in Tongues and not to Prophecy, saying that it would just cause confusion.
 - b) Paul encouraged them stop speaking in Tongues and to Prophecy instead, because it was a special gift God had given to provide instruction to the new church with scriptural instruction during which time the New Testament was yet unwritten.
- 4) Are personal feelings and emotional experiences, including Tongues, coequal indicators of truth alongside God's inspired Word, and valid for establishing one's doctrinal convictions?
- a) Yes, our experiences are real and are ordained of God, so we can rely on them.
 - b) No, feelings and emotional experiences are not trustworthy because they vacillate. God's Word is changeless, because it is established forever in Heaven. (Psalms 119:89)
- 5) According to Matthew 3:11 and Luke 3:16, John the Baptist said: "[Christ] will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." To what was John referring concerning being *Baptized with Fire*?
- a) John was referring to the believer's zeal in the Spirit, or being "on fire" for the Lord
 - b) He was referring to the unquenchable fires of judgment. (Matthew 3:12 and Luke 3:17)
The passage is an analogy: Wheat means believers; barns are Heavenly mansions; chaff means unbelievers, who will face judgment and be "Baptized" into the Lake of Fire.)
- 6) According to Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19 & 12:30; and Ephesians 1:14, does the Holy Spirit abide in His fullness in all those who believe? Or, is speaking in tongues a necessary sign of having received the fullness of the Holy Spirit—a secondary event after Salvation?
- a) Speaking in tongues is the evidence of having received the filling of the Holy Spirit, which occurs separately from and after Salvation.
 - b) Since the gift of Eternal Life is given by the Holy Spirit, He indwells every born-again believer in all His fullness at the instant of Salvation. Ephesians 5:18 commands the believer to "Be filled with the Spirit" (*controlled by the Spirit*). Tongues is *not* involved in any way.
- 7) Do you believe that Apostolic gift of tongues and Charismatic tongues are the same thing?
- Yes, they are the same
 - No, they are not similar, because Apostolic tongues are actually spoken languages of the day.
- 8) Although unintelligible to humans, are Charismatic tongues in fact a heavenly prayer language?
- Yes, they are a beautiful angelic prayer language that enables them users to speak to God.
 - No, it has been proven linguistically that they are merely simple consonant-vowel gibberish.
Actual recorded example: "*Shalalama, balalama, shalalama, balalama, bubalama, shalalama, bugalala, shalalama*"
- 9) Do you speak in Charismatic tongues?
- No, but I would like to.
 - Yes, it's a wonderful feeling and it makes me feel closer to God.
 - Never, because Charismatic tongues aren't real. They're a product of false teaching and emotionally charged euphoric highs, which can induce ecstatic utterances. Some are possibly even demonically induced, the same as what Buddhist priests and Satan worshipers do.

A Recap of Pastor John MacArthur's Position on The Charismatic Movement:

Pastor John MacArthur—founder of Grace Community Church, Sun Valley, CA (c.1956), president of The Master's Seminary (both of which are located in Sun Valley, California), and author of the award-winning MacArthur Study Bible—is a strong Cessationist and a prominent voice rebutting Continuationist beliefs, which are held by both Pentecostals and Charismatics. MacArthur has written three books in support of his position: The Charismatics (1978), Charismatic Chaos (1993), and Strange Fire (2013). He is uniquely qualified to speak on this subject because he watched it develop from its inception. In October 2013, he hosted a symposium at Grace Community Church called "Strange Fire," to mark the launch of his book by the same name. The event featured a number of guest speakers who contended for a Cessationist position while pointing out the weaknesses of the Continuationist position.

In the conference's opening remarks, Dr. MacArthur stated that: *"Watching the behavior of Hindus of the Kundalini cult, it appears that their body movements are almost identical to those of some Charismatics, who mimic the extreme behavior of pagans. This is the work of Satan; it is the work of darkness, and not to be attributed to the Holy Spirit."*

He added: *"The Charismatic Movement has made no contribution to biblical clarity, interpretation, or sound doctrine. It detracts and confuses, and has only produced distortion, disarray, and error. People have been saved in Charismatic churches, but nothing attributed to the movement has been the reason they received Christ. Unfortunately, Evangelicalism has thrown open its arms and has welcomed the Trojan horse of the Charismatic Movement into the city of God. Its troops have taken it over and placed their own Charismatic idol there."*

MacArthur believes that modern-day visions, revelations, voices from heaven, dreams, tongues, prophecies, out-of-body experiences, trips to heaven, special anointings and pseudo-miracles are deceptive lies, wrongly attributed to the Holy Spirit. And, that Charismatics have essentially kidnapped the Holy Spirit and created a golden calf, which they all gather around in worship. Dr. MacArthur believes in Spiritual Gifts for today but holds that the miraculous sign gifts no longer have a function, having ceased with the conclusion of the Apostolic Age and the completed New Testament canon.

He acknowledged that there were those within the Charismatic movement (like Pastor Chuck Smith, 1927–2013) who believed in the authority of Scripture, honored the Lord, and pursued Godly living. And, that the Movement retained enough Gospel truth so that souls could be saved. However, he saw its interdenominational inclinations as being a testimony to the absence of any sound theological position and charged that its theology is both heretical and a departure from orthodoxy. Since everything is defined by experience, the average adherent has a weak view of Scripture, which defines the Charismatic movement in general.

Dr. MacArthur once expressed approval of Chuck Smith because he had authored: A Straight-forward Critique of Charismatic Extremism (1965). This, despite Smith being of Four-Square Pentecostal heritage and founder of the Calvary Chapel movement in Costa Mesa, CA, as well as the House of Miracles commune, designed to reach the *counterculture* Jesus People.

Concerning Smith's exposé, MacArthur commented that:

"I am grateful that some in the Pentecostal tradition have the courage to confront error in their movement and call all charismatics to a biblical perspective—and I wish more of them would do that. I am grateful for those who will speak out against these evil things. One of the pamphlets that first alerted me to the terrible, terrible teaching in the Health-Wealth movement was written by Chuck Smith, pastor of Calvary Chapel, a straightforward critique of charismatic extremism. There are many like him who have taken their stand and I thank God for their courage and their desire to be biblical, and I don't want for any moment for people to think that I don't believe there are such people in that Pentecostal tradition because, in fact, there are.

MacArthur goes on to say:

"I also believe that the seeds of these errors that they wish to fight are sometimes inherent in the very doctrines that they believe. If you believe that the Baptism of the Spirit is subsequent to and separate from salvation, you have now created two classes of believers. If you believe in mystical experience, transcendent esoteric kinds of supernatural things, then what you will do is depreciate study, spiritual discipline and the means of grace by which you grow. If you exalt feeling you will denigrate reason, and open the mind and the spirit to powers that people cannot understand or deal with. As long as these kinds of things lie at the core of Pentecostal tradition the potential for disaster is there, and if you believe that God is still giving revelation of any kind--the lid is off.

"Chuck Smith's book is not only a statement of truth to people who already believe it but an appeal to my Charismatic friends to examine what they believe, as well as an appeal to non-Charismatics to see the difference and to see that the differences are not inconsequential."

However, MacArthur later criticized both Chuck Smith and the Calvary Chapel movement in that they were major players in helping to birth the Charismatic Movement.

He explained that:

"In 1967, a group of 'Jesus Freak' hippies in the beach areas of Southern California got involved in Calvary Chapel, of which the church let their hippie subculture dictate what it would become. Out go the suits and ties, out go the meaningful hymns, out go all the normal, traditional things and in comes the hippie culture—drugs, communal living, free

sex, and all that kind of casual thing. That's a typical Charismatic church, the movement that came from Calvary Chapel. Calvary Chapel leadership essentially said, 'We'll let the culture tell us what we need to be.' Thus, the Charismatic movement is comfortable in Roman Catholicism, and is comfortable in dead denominationalism, et al. I think it's a false form of Christianity."

(Pastor John MacArthur, BA, MA, Th. D)

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THIS WRITER'S COMMENTS: Although Pastor MacArthur's approach may seem harsh to some; this writer understands the validity and pastorally-inspired purpose of Dr. MacArthur's position of shepherding the flock. He has observed the Charismatic movement's growth and its ramifications from its inception to the present and can therefore speak authoritatively.
(Ron Myers)

References available upon request.

Much of this paper was compiled from the writer's own recollection of events.