

What I Believe and Teach Concerning the Charismatic Movement:

By Ron Myers

Being Independent Baptist by persuasion and orientation, and conservative in faith, doctrine and practice, I believe and teach the following:

There are a variety of contrasting views and opinions concerning the Charismatic Movement, along with its beliefs, claims and practices. Bottom line: today's manifestations are either genuine—manifested under the unction and power of the Holy Spirit—or deceitful counterfeits, manifested through other means. In other words, they are either fact or fiction. It cannot be both ways, because God does not share His Glory with another (*Isaiah 42:8*). The following are my personally-held views on the subject, gained from both study and personal observation, of which I have sought to remain objective and fair in my findings. After reading this paper, you may or may not fully agree with my position on this watershed issue. Either way, please hear me out first. I believe you may gain some relevant information that you might not have previously been aware of. I maintain that the movement, albeit full of many sincere people, is fraught with illogical pseudo spirituality that depends on feeling and emotion—as opposed to genuine, biblically recorded, God-ordained signs and miracles.

During Old Testament times, when God was about to do something significant among His people, the Jews, He would validate it to them through supernatural manifestations, done through His chosen servants, i.e., Moses, Elijah, *etc.* Later, we see Christ's virgin conception, remarkable miracles, and bodily resurrection. Then, at the onset of the church age (*Acts 2*), God initiated various miraculous signs and wonders at the hands of His chosen Apostles; Paul being the last one (*Acts 9:3-6; 1 Corinthians 5:8-10*). These were done to validate the Gospel of the resurrected Messiah to the unbelieving Jews, who consider such things as Divinely-initiated confirmations of God's workings on their behalf. (*cf. 1 Corinthians 1:22*)

The Church Age began at Pentecost with the coming of the promised indwelling Holy Spirit and the deliverance of the Gospel message by the Apostles to visiting Jews in their own spoken languages (*glossa*) and dialects (*dialektos*), unknown to the speakers. God also performed other miraculous signs through them to validate the message. These signs eventually waned as the Church took hold and as the New Testament scriptures were established. (*cf. 1 Timothy 4:20*) However, there is presently a movement gaining popularity called the Charismatic Movement that seeks to resurrect or emulate what God did through His chosen Apostles. This movement started in the 1960s at St. Mark's Episcopal parish in Van Nuys, California, initiated by the Reverend Dennis Bennett. Bennett alleged to his congregation one day that he claimed to have received the *fullness and power of the Holy Spirit, accompanied by speaking in unknown tongues*. (Note: More likely emotional or fleshly ecstatic utterances.)

This Charismatic movement was an outgrowth of the Pentecostal renewal movement, which began in the early 1900s as an offshoot of the Holiness movement—neither of which were confirmation of any new Divine revelation or era. The difference being, the Charismatic phenomenon spread irrespective of established denominational, doctrinal, or other ideological boundaries. This newfound "enlightenment" was soon propagated across most denominations and sects in varying degrees, regardless of whether evangelical, independent or mainline liberal. Even sects and cults that denied the authority of scripture or the deity of Christ took up the Charismatic banner, including Roman Catholicism and Mormonism.

As the movement grew, the focus evolved until so-called tongues and healings became the litmus test for acceptance and fellowship, overlooking more-essential matters, like foundational doctrines, i.e., scriptural authority, salvation by Grace alone, being born again through faith in the Blood atonement of the resurrected Christ, *etc.* These alone 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; Titus 3:3-7*)

Unfortunately, sincere people are still being enamored and beguiled by this dubious phenomenon. Most are unaware that even heathen Buddhist and Brahman priests and priestesses practice these same *ecstatic utterances*. It happens on the occasion of spirits descending upon them during certain annual temple ceremonies. (I have personally seen this on a video recording given to me by a Thai Buddhist friend.) The sounds voiced by these godless souls are the same type—including vowel-consonant construction and cadence—as those who *claim* they speak in so-called biblical tongues by the power of the Holy Spirit! Who or what, then, could be empowering this phenomenon? ...God, the flesh, or even demonic spirits?

The heathen priests and priestesses involved in these events also practice healings, miracles, and slayings in the spirit, all done in the midst of their dark, idolatrous surroundings. Furthermore, ex-Satan worshipper John Ramirez (*once ranked the third highest Satan worshiper in New York City until he accepted Christ*) testified that he often watched his own father speaking in ecstatic utterances (*tongues*) whenever he worshipped Satan. These two examples alone should be profound indicators; enough to cause followers to question the validity of Charismatic claims and practices. Is God causing ungodly heathen to do these exact same things? Does God share His glory with heathen darkness? If not, then who is behind these things? These are just a couple instances of manifestations that *should* give Charismatic adherents and "fellow travelers" (*non-participating supporters*) serious pause as to the validity of what they have chosen to believe as being God ordained. Consider how Pharaoh's sorcerers produced serpents that looked like God's serpent, but were proven counterfeit. (*Exodus 7*)

And yet, Christians who practice this phenomenon claim they're *anointed* of God—divinely empowered to emulate what He did through the New Testament Apostles. Does anyone see a problem here? This has caused no end of confusion as to where the truth lies. The movement continues to splinter off into various groups as new and different weird manifestations take place; be it "holy" laughter, barking, howling, dancing, rolling, running, leaping, or crawling around, *etc.*, all done *supposedly* under the power and direction of the Holy Spirit. What ever 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: One must keep in mind that the Book of Acts is Dr. Luke's historical account of occurring events as the Apostles spread the Gospel under the Holy Spirit's guidance and empowerment. As such, unlike Paul's admonitions in his epistles, Acts is *not* to be regarded as an instruction manual to be followed. (*1 Corinthians 11:1*) Yet, Charismatic adherents mistakenly seek to emulate the Book of Acts in the power of the flesh.

To arrive at a balanced and accurate determination concerning these issues, one must base his or her conclusions on the rightly-divided Word of Truth (*1 Timothy 2:15*), and not be overly influenced by emotional impressions, likes or dislikes, personalities, giving heed to hearsay accounts (*1 Timothy 4:1*), or so-called proof texts—typically misapplied or taken out of context. All of these tend to be confusing and misleading at best. Nevertheless, prayerful discernment is of prime importance, since, "*by their fruits ye shall know them*," their personal lives often being found in disarray.

Either God is behind these manifestations or He is not; simple as that! Those who claim that God is, are quick to accuse those who don't of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. (*Matthew 12:31-32; Mark 3:28-29*) But is this truly the case? ...is that what these verses are referring to? ...and, can a believer truly commit the unpardonable sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit? Most Bible scholars don't believe so, nor does this writer, since it describes those who reject the Holy Spirit's wooing to receive Christ, not question doubtful events. (*John 3:36, Acts 4:12, Hebrews 10:26*)

While my wife Cheryl and I were in training for the ministry, preparing for Thailand under New Tribes Mission (NTM), all things Charismatic were still pretty-much in their infancy. The time was the early 1970s and there weren't a lot of clear-cut lines of demarcation drawn at that juncture. Many conservatives, including myself, were wondering if the things that were being reported and bandied about might be of the Lord.

In focus at the time were the events being spoken of in a new book: *Like a Mighty Wind* (ISBN B0006WFSO0). It described accounts of various supernatural or miraculous manifestations—said to be taking place on the Indonesian Island of Timor—as the Gospel made its way into remote, yet-unreached regions. We knew that God often shows Himself real in various special ways during the initial stages, when and where the Gospel is being proclaimed for the very first time; so, we obviously wondered whether these Timor events might not be authentic.

These purported miracles were later debunked by both Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal missionaries ministering in the general vicinity. I knew one of them personally, being in the same mission organization as I was at the time (NTM). This *Newtriber* shared with me personally how numerous seekers had later traveled throughout the area, seeking out the people and villages mentioned in the book where these things were said to have taken place.

However, he added that none were ever found, and no one locally ever heard of any mentioned in the book, mainly because they didn't exist. (*I personally view these types of things as being in the same category as what the Scriptures call "lying wonders," according to 2 Thessalonians 2:9*) Concerning the Pentecostal husband and wife team there, my missionary friend reported that they became disillusioned over the whole scenario and left the Pentecostal-tongues movement altogether, later returning to serve under a conservative organization.

My position on the subject at that initial juncture was, if God is truly in all this, then He surely can engift me with the Thai language, saving me much time by totally by-passing the need to spend years of in-depth language study trying to master a difficult tonal language. However, I didn't seek after anything, like an *experience*; I'm simply stating here that I was open to the Lord's giving me the Thai language, if He so chose.

If anyone could use biblical tongues in this day and age, it's pioneer church-planting missionaries as they seek out and evangelize yet-unreached people groups. Needless to say, that didn't happen. What God did give me, though, was the desire, diligence, perseverance, vision, and an amount of natural ability to help me gain mastery in, not only the Thai language and culture, but other local-area languages as well—spending countless hours and even years of in-depth language and culture studies and practice as I identified with the people in their daily lives.

NOTE: I know of other New Tribes missionaries who, being fluent in various remote South-American Indian languages, attended some of these Charismatic meetings while home on furlough. There, they stood and spoke a few sentences in the various remote tribal languages they had learned; done as a test. They all attested that the interpretations offered were nothing at all similar to the words they delivered using the difficult Indian languages—proving again the doubtful validity of the Charismatic movement.

You see, the focus of the modern-day tongues movement is not about verbally proclaiming the Gospel message to the unreached, as it was proclaimed to the unbelieving Jews as seen in Acts 2:4-11. No, it's about personal fulfillment and spiritual pride, as having attained some new level of spirituality. (*On a side-note, consider the fact that I am more fluent in spoken Thai than many of the Pentecostal or Charismatic missionaries whom I know of.*)

As time passes, my commitment to the ^{††}*Cessationist* view has further solidified. After careful consideration, I have concluded to my own satisfaction that the various modern-day tongues movements, including assertions of the miraculous, are merely bogus claims and fraudulent manifestations of uncertain or dubious origin. They are typically either emotional or fleshly grandstanding at best, or of demonic influence at worst, but positively *not* of divine origin. Those who openly practice and advocate these things (or *fellow travelers* who help propagate them) spread misinformation and confusion, mixed with just enough truth to confuse and mislead innocent seekers. Bear in mind that all true spiritual gifts are given severally to each believer by the Holy Spirit as He wills; not acquired by being sought after, pressured into, or prayed for—tongues being a sign for the unbeliever, to convict and convince to believe. (*1 Corinthians 12:11, 14:22*)

The whole matter rises and falls on the fact of biblical authenticity. 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, spoken in their own native tongues or dialects, tongues unknown by the speakers *as per Acts chapter 2*, not the dubious carryings-on that are being propagated today.

Conversely, there are some conservatives today who deny the validity of biblical tongues, claiming that the Apostles did not actually announce the Gospel supernaturally, i.e., declaring the wonderful works of God to the visiting Jews by speaking in the Jews' own languages, which the speakers did not personally know. These types assert that it was actually the visiting Jews who simply "heard" the message in their own languages—emphasizing *heard*. They imply that the

miracle was in the *hearing* and not in the declaration. This is clearly a misinterpretation of the passage, based on personal denial of the text and faulty hermeneutics. In other words, they disavow the miraculous; that God having empowered the Apostles to declare the Gospel in other languages unknown to them, never took place on that day at Pentecost.

On the other hand, those who claim to be modern-day Apostles—sincere as they might be—are self-deceived at best and liars at worst... deluding many, including themselves. It is clearly evident, according to the prophetic Word recorded in Revelation 21:14, that there are only *twelve* God-ordained Apostles. 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: "twelve" (Luke 6:13).

Furthermore, I maintain that *if* these so-called present-day miracle-working "healers" were truly of the Lord, would they not be going up and down the halls, and into every patients' room of hospitals and hospices throughout the land, healing the sick, the crippled, the infirmed, and the dying? Instead, they put on staged fakery, further deceiving the misinformed and the weak in faith. However, not being authentic, their staged healings (so-called) are *not* produced through the power of the Holy Spirit of God, but by the power of the flesh—some even being demonic in nature! "*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 conscience seared with a hot iron...*" (1 Timothy 4:1-2)

I was directly exposed to this Charismatic 'pseudo-apostolic' behavior while involved in strengthening a dwindling city church in my adopted 'home' province in Northeast Thailand. It had fallen into spiritual disrepair, and was close to closing down. This was in the early 1980s, when various undesirable groups were eying this church—as well as our surrounding village works—hoping to assimilate us into their fold. I had just moved into town, and wanted to spend all my time specifically on the Isan New Testament translation. However, it was not to be, since our village folks looked to this church (rightly or wrongly) as their elder in the faith. We could not afford to see it flounder or become another Charismatic outpost.

Of necessity, I temporarily assumed the position of pastor-teacher, sharing leadership responsibilities with the person I was discipling—my gifted translation assistant, *Jarat Sirimontri*. Later, he was able to assume full pastoral responsibilities, under which the church continued to thrive and grow through his very capable leadership when I returned to the States on furlough. Until that time, we shared Sunday morning teaching responsibilities and worked on the translation during the week.

Things were going well, and the small group was growing stronger and getting back on its feet. Then, one Sunday morning, when I arrived there was a panel truck parked out front, and an unknown group conducting an unscheduled *ad hoc* meeting without our knowledge or permission.

There were between 10-12 of them, all sitting in a circle, simultaneously speaking in tongues—like birds chirping—and trying to get our people to speak in tongues as well. When I walked up to intervene, asking what they were doing, a couple of their group approached me, imploring God out loud, specifically to "*cast out the demon*"... meaning me!

Pastor Jarat was just arriving. Startled, we both went about getting our people to leave the circle. These were all new or immature believers, ignorant of the implications of what was happening. Jarat then called the local police, who came and carted them all off to the station for questioning—what they had done was illegal by Thai law, *disturbing the peace!*

We later figured out how this group had gotten there. A young Christian lady in the congregation, who worked at the local hospital, had invited them. She had recently arrived from Bangkok, and had earlier come to faith through this Charismatic group, and these were some of her friends. We were aware of her background, and had admonished her about these teachings. Yet it was obvious that she was not convinced, having been deeply influenced by her friends.

Pastor Jarat and I were concerned that we had deeply offended her; however, the next Sunday she came to the service seemingly as happy as ever; whereupon 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 "healed" of a condition where one leg was supposedly shorter than the other from birth—an oft-repeated Charismatic claim.

During the following week I made it a point to contact acquaintances of mine who worked at the prison, asking them if anything had occurred out of the ordinary during the meeting. None of them had heard or seen anything. I then asked specifically about the alleged short leg healing incident. They denied that anything had happened, to the best of their knowledge. These were honorable men, and officials at the prison. If anything had truly occurred in the way of a miraculous healing, as was claimed, news of it would have surely spread far and wide.

In conclusion, I don't believe this dear young lady was lying when she shared that following Sunday. I do believe, however, that she was being blinded and deceived by a spiritual lie (*lying wonders*), as were her Charismatic friends. That was the last we heard of them. The young lady forgave us, and is now happily married to a Thai-Isan Army Sergeant whom I had led to faith.

Charismatic claims include, that *tongues* is: ^{A)} a God-anointed personal prayer language; ^{B)} evidence of salvation; ^{C)} evidence of being "baptized" with the Holy Spirit; ^{D)} evidence of possessing "Name It – Claim It" faith; ^{E)} evidence of being modern-day Apostles or Prophets with alleged ability to heal and perform the miraculous, such as: make short legs grow; heal the infirmed through their touching blessed hankies; restore sight to the blind; cause the deaf and dumb to hear and speak, make paralytics walk, or even raise the dead. These, along with claims of receiving "new" messages directly from God, like the Apostle Paul received the Gospel directly from Christ. (*Galatians 1:12*) These claims only bring glory to themselves, not to God. They also undermine the final authority of the written Word of God! Another very confusing and misleading thing they claim is that true Christians can become "demonized" unawares, so they go through all sorts of contortions and all-night prayer vigils to "deliver" such a one. I have seen it. This is pure bunk. Influence or tempt maybe, but never indwell a believer alongside the Holy Spirit? When God's Spirit enters, darkness has no place. (*John 8:12, 14:30; 1 John 4:4*)

One so-called Charismatic healer—ironically quite frail and sickly in appearance—frequented some of Thailand's churches on an annual basis to promote his craft. One time, he held a staged event in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, shortly after the brutal Pol Pat "Killing Fields" regime had fallen and the country had reopened. The typical braggadocios flyers filled with grandiose claims were distributed, along with blanket advertising campaigns. The event was packed and the typical healing sideshow commenced. The poor Cambodian people, who had endured years of devastation and sadness, were hungering for real hope and truth. What a wonderful opportunity it would have been to communicate God's Gospel of amazing grace and deliverance from sin and death! However, the seeking Cambodians immediately saw through the so-called healers staged scams. 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 called on to protect them as they fled.

NOTE: This is not to say that God cannot or does not heal, or perform the miraculous today, because He can and does, for which I can readily attest to first-hand accounts of things that I have personally experienced while serving among unreached people groups in the regions beyond. However, God does not operate on a stage, or before an audience, where prideful and arrogant men or women are gathering glory and wealth unto themselves—for He will not share His Glory with another... (*Isaiah 42:8*).

These claims and pseudo-manifestations typically occur where misinformed and misled people get deceived and suckered in (*2 Timothy 3:13*). Their deceivers try to emulate in the strength of the flesh what God the Holy Spirit chose to do by design through the hands of His chosen Apostles, as recorded in the Book of Acts.

(As I previously stated, the Book of Acts is an historical account, inspirationally penned by Dr. Luke to inform his friend Theophilus of events that were taking place, just as he did in the Gospel of Luke. Therefore, Acts is not a teaching or didactical book, such as Paul's Epistles—even events about Paul's life in Acts were narrative, not teaching. Nor is Acts a behavioral manual, such as the Book of James, but an historical account, period!)

Some Charismatic leaders believe correctly that biblical tongues are *not* meant for believers, but are a sign for unbelievers. Others are hypocrites; spiritual con-artists who peddle the Word of God deceitfully for personal gain and not for God's glory. (*2 Corinthians 4:2, Philippians 3:19*) These are nothing more than clever stage actors who appeal to the flesh by telling convincing tales of how one can prosper by sending a sizable *seed gift* to their ministry. They're the only ones who get rich!

However, if these are truly born-again believers, I am obliged to count them as my brothers and sisters in Christ, although they hold to what I consider as non-Biblical views on the ministry of the Holy Spirit. However, I cannot fellowship with them in their unrighteous endeavors, due to their divisive and heretical views, doctrines, and goals—things that confuse, mislead and ensnare believers unawares. "*Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*" (*Amos 3:3*) *No, they cannot!* In short, the emphasis these types promote opposes the clear teachings of God's Word—salvation by grace and the faith-rest life. Rather, these people pervert the Gospel, placing themselves in danger of God's judgment. (*Galatians 1:8*)

Also, these present-day types show absolutely no respect for others who don't follow their corrupted philosophy and practices. As such, they employ deceptive tactics as they seek out and move in on established churches as well as new works, causing disruption, confusion, and division as they sheep-steal and spread their false doctrines. They then typically claim that they have just "planted" a new church. The Apostle Paul clearly warned: "*Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*" (*Romans 16:17-18*)

As I stated in the above notation, I fully accept all the miraculous accounts recorded in God's Word. I believe that God is All-powerful and Sovereign—throughout all ages and dispensations—from eternity past through eternity future. As such, God can and does do many miraculous things yet today, mostly behind the scenes. There are many missionary accounts (this writer having witnessed some personally) where God has gloriously revealed His presence and power in the midst of primitive peoples, in places where the Gospel message is only just arriving.

On the other hand, I do not believe that God works through (*or shares His glory with*) unscrupulous people; those "*deceiving and being deceived.*" (*2 Timothy 3:13*) These types prefer staged emotion-packed meetings where naive people are brought up from out of the audience, touched on the forehead, and said to be "healed" or "slain in the Spirit"[†] through the spirit-power vested in the performer—who typically gain fame and fortune at the expense of the gullible.

Again, I view these unbiblical types of staged quasi-manifestations as being very-much akin to lying wonders of the last days, in that they deceive and mislead the unsuspecting. (*2 Thessalonians 2:9*) Biblically speaking, the only people recorded who were truly *slain in/by the 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.

[†] Dictionary: To be slain means to be "killed intentionally and with premeditation," *not* get tapped on the forehead, and upon cue, fall backwards onstage into a waiting catcher's arms before returning to one's seat in the audience, which typically occurs by design in most cases.

Actually, the Scriptures clearly teach that ALL born-again believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit in His Divine fullness upon conversion (*Ephesians 1:13-14*). Conversely, the Scriptures also clearly state that, if anyone does not have the Holy Spirit, that person is not one of God's redeemed (*Romans 8:9*). This counters the theory that "ecstatic utterances" is *required* as a sign of Salvation—or has anything to do with it—a belief espoused by most all Pentecostal and Charismatic types.

Given fully and freely as a Gift of God, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within the life of the believer, regenerating us into new creatures in Christ upon our demonstrating "*repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Whereupon He saves and seals us, and places us into the Body of Christ... keeping us safe by the power of God unto the Day of Redemption. (*Acts 20:21, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 1:13-14, 1 Peter 1:3-5*)

Therefore, scripturally speaking, we who are *born-again* into God's Family of Saints through the experience of the *new-birth*, have the Spirit in His fullness abiding within, not just in part as these types would wrongly claim. How do you dissect God? The real question is; does He have all of us? As we yield our lives to His will, we grow in grace and knowledge as we mature and gain wisdom. This entails maintaining fellowship with God by walking in the light, i.e., living consistently in the truth of which we are "In Christ." Hence, the indwelling Holy Spirit matures us, comforts us, guides, teaches and uses us, as He fills our hearts with His peace and joy.

Truly, the most powerful and convincing example of God's manifestation of the miraculous is the supernatural new birth, transforming an unrighteous sinner into a holy person of God, having been forgiven 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 placed in the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit (*1 Corinthians 12:13*). That is, being regenerated into a completely new person in Christ (*2 Corinthians 5:17*), being born-again into God's family of the redeemed; *not* evidenced through mouthing ecstatic utterances, or anything else.

The personification or out-working of the new-birth is a transformed lifestyle, attributed to simply walking consistently in yielded fellowship with God under the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. (*Ephesians 2:10, Philippians 2:12b*) Not by striving or walking in darkness as before, under the power of the flesh-life, guided by this world's ungodly system, under the persuasion of satanic forces. (*Galatians 5:16, 1 John 2:16*)

Now, that is a *bona fide* living walking miracle, manifested before all onlookers! One must bear in mind that this out-working of new life in Christ is a growing and maturing process, not unlike a new-born infant, who doesn't attain full adulthood during the first days of its life. (*Colossians 2:6-7, 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 1:5-9*)

In conclusion, may I direct your attention to the Apostle Peter's statement concerning the final authority of the revealed Word of God over all else: "*For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour 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; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts*" (*2 Peter 1:16-19*)

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Addendum: *As a matter of clarification, I need to state here that I fully realize there are many sincere Christians who love the Lord, yet find themselves involved in the Pentecostal or Charismatic Movements. These are typically unsuspecting recipients of misleading or erroneous teachings on the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, and are not necessarily cognizant perpetrators of the deceitful practices described above. Typically, they have grown up within the bounds of these denominations or beliefs; or became persuaded later on through naïveté.*

Furthermore, *upon reading this paper, there are those who might find themselves in a quandary; inclined towards my position, yet not ready to go as far as to say that some of these things described above couldn't not be of the Lord. You may know some really nice people that are involved, and it's certainly your prerogative to feel that way. However, it's tantamount to saying: "What's wrong with Catholicism or Mormonism or Buddhism or xyz..." because you've met some really nice people who are of these persuasions. Or, maybe it's an in-law, or aunt, friend, sibling or spouse. I understand your dilemma; yet, it's not about people.*

*It is, however, about beliefs and practices lining up with biblical truth, i.e., the "rightly-divided" revealed Word of God (*2 Timothy 2:15*). Not following or living under false teachings and extra-biblical beliefs and practices, i.e., things that have confused and misled believers and have split families and churches. Many who have left the Charismatic Movement (some with whom I am friends) freely attest of their own volition to the fact that it was all a big empty show... a facade and a dialog they had to continually maintain a before others within the movement.*

*As I stated above, I'm certainly not denying God's Word, nor am I proposing to limit Him in any way; which is impossible. I just don't see the preponderance of evidence supporting the Charismatic Movement as being of the Lord. Do they exhibit zeal? Yes; very much so! Yet it's too often a self-deceiving facade with an emphasis on things that scripture does not convincingly support. That's the crux of the matter. Not unlike *Romans 10:2*, "They have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge." With this, I believe I have proven my point.*

†† In Biblical theology, the Cessationist view holds that the "sign gifts" spoken of in the New Testament were given to the Apostles in early church for three reasons:

1. To provide supernatural confirmation of the apostolic authority of the early church, essentially consisting of Jews, who require signs (*1 Cor 1:22*);
2. To help lay the foundation for the church; and
3. To give divine guidance to early believers while the New Testament Canon was not yet complete.

In that the authority of the early church has been established, and the New Testament Canon is complete, Cessationists believe that the sign gifts ceased to operate with the passing of the last of the twelve apostles and are no longer in operation today—not that God's power and authority is lessened whatsoever.