

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication
Copyright 1999 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with
the restrictions stated in the B4Ucopy.txt file on this CD.

* * * * *

SPIRITUAL GIFTS -- HEALING AND TONGUES

By Westlake Taylor Purkiser

An analysis of the Charismatic Revival

Nazarene Publishing House
Kansas City, Mo.

First Printing, 1964
Printed in the United States of America

* * * * *

Digital Edition 06/28/99
By Holiness Data Ministry

* * * * *

CONTENTS

01 -- Chapter
02 -- Chapter
03 -- Chapter
04 -- Chapter
05 -- Chapter

* * * * *

01 -- CHAPTER

There is a widespread ferment moving through the organized church in America today. Many are calling it a "charismatic revival." This is a strange but meaningful name. It joins the common religious word "revival" with a technical biblical term, charismata.

Charismata is a Greek word used in the New Testament chiefly in connection with the gifts of the Spirit. It means "gifts of grace" or "gifts involving grace [charis] on the part of God as the Giver." It is defined as "divinely conferred endowments."

This is the word used in I Cor. 12:4-11 and Rom. 12:6 to describe such spiritual powers as wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, anointed preaching (prophecy), spiritual discernment, speaking other languages, the translation of languages -- together with serving, teaching, exhortation, giving without display, church administration, and works of charity-fifteen in all.

In recent years there has been greatly renewed interest in these gifts of the Spirit, or at least in some of them. In part, this is the outgrowth of a new sense of the importance of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life. For many centuries the Holy Spirit was the forgotten Person in the Godhead. Even today, with a growing interest in the theology of the Spirit, there is only a fraction of the theological literature devoted to the Third Person of the Trinity in comparison with the material about God the Father and Jesus Christ, the eternal Son.

Yet much of the theological discussion of the Holy Spirit concerns doctrine to be explained rather than a Person to be experienced. It is in the area of experience that the charismatic revival has moved. It is not enough to know about the Holy Spirit. Our knowledge about means little unless it results in acquaintance with Him in His life-giving, cleansing, and empowering work.

In actual practice, the charismatic revival of today is chiefly concerned with two or three of the gifts of the Spirit listed in the Scriptures. It has concentrated largely on the gifts of healing and on languages and the translation of languages.

Each of these gifts has had its counterfeits and frauds. Not only Christian groups but non-Christian movements have given much attention to healing, for example. Couéism, [Couéism n. a system of usually optimistic auto-suggestion as psychotherapy. Etymology E. Coué, a French psychologist d. 1926] Christian Science, hypnotism, and primitive witch doctors do effect some cures and can produce their testimonials.

Further, even within the circle of orthodox Christendom, the gifts of divine healing have been shamefully exploited. Some have given it blatant advertising, promising strange results such as the filling of teeth, hanging crutches and wheelchairs from the poles of their tents, and operating in an atmosphere of hypnotic emotion -- until those who remember our Lord's frequent injunction to those whom He had healed to "go, and tell no man" have revolted in utter disgust against the whole business. In E. Stanley Jones' phrase, "We have allowed the queer to queer it for us."

But things have changed within the last few years. It is now not only the cultists and fringe operators who are concerned with divine healing. It is a large and growing circle of men and women from so-called "old-line churches," Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian, for example, who are preaching and practicing divine healing.

One outstanding example is Rev. Dr. Alfred Price, whose weekly service for divine healing in St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in downtown Philadelphia has become an established institution with an unquestionable record of good results. The Order of St. Luke the Physician is composed of ministers and laymen largely from the traditional churches, and dedicated to the ministry of healing within the church.

It is this writer's conviction that this is all to the good. The Church of the Nazarene has always believed in and practiced prayer for the sick, anointing with oil, and laying on of hands. This is not something "tacked on" to the gospel. It is an authentic part of God's plan to meet all our human need according to His will. In this area, we have a challenge to take seriously and emphasize more what has always been part of our heritage.

Nor is it necessary to claim a prior divine gift of healing in order to pray for and anoint the sick in faith. Careful students of the New Testament have noticed that it does not speak of a "gift of healing," but of "gifts of healing" and "gifts of healings." These are specific gifts of faith and power for specific instances of illness.

Few have been more liberally endowed with the gifts of the Spirit than St. Paul. Gifts of healing were given him on many occasions. Yet sometimes they were unavailable, as when he left Trophimus sick at Miletus (II Tim. 4:20), and urged Timothy to pamper a weak stomach (I Tim. 5:23); or when he prayed three times concerning his own "thorn in the flesh" and received a larger blessing than specific healing, the sufficient grace of Christ (II Cor. 12:7-10).

All of this does not mean that the dedicated work of doctors and nurses is unimportant. The devout Christian recognizes all healing as the work of God, even though the poultice of figs be applied (Isa. 38:21) and oil and wine be poured into the wounds (Luke 10:34). God heals through creation, the ways of which we are just beginning to learn -- as well as through Christ.

We should preach and practice, believe in and call for, the ministry of divine healing. We should do this, not as bait to trap the otherwise unconcerned, not as a hook for the curious or sensation-seeker, but as a true and important part of the provision of God in Christ to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory. In the exercise of prayer, faith, and obedience, gifts of healing are given to the glory of God the Father.

* * * * *

02 -- CHAPTER

Not only have the gifts of healing come into prominence in the charismatic revival, but there also has been widespread attention given to the gift of languages and to a lesser extent to the "interpretation" or translation of languages. This has come to be known as "glossolalia," another strange name derived from two Greek New Testament words: glossa, meaning "tongue or language"; and lalein, meaning "to speak."

Here again there is a general parallel with healing. Glossolalia, or "tongue speaking," has been practiced outside evangelical Christian circles across the centuries: by the heretical Montanists of post New Testament times, by the Roman Catholic Port Royal Jansenists, by the early Mormons, and by some pagan cults in India and Africa.

Until recently in orthodox Christian circles, speaking in tongues -- specifically, unknown tongues -- was confined almost entirely to those churches and groups known as "Pentecostal." The

Pentecostal movement, according to its own chroniclers, had its rise in the early days of the twentieth century, and in America at least stems in large part from the famous Azusa Street revival which began in Los Angeles in 1907.

Twentieth-century Pentecostalism has had an exemplary zeal for souls, an aggressive evangelistic outreach, and as a result has grown by leaps and bounds. It has added, however, a completely new teaching never known before in the history of Christian doctrine, namely, that "the initial physical evidence of speaking in tongues signals the infilling of the Holy Ghost," to quote the words of Thomas F. Zimmerman, general superintendent of the Assemblies of God.

But what is commonly known as speaking in tongues has now moved out beyond the circle of Pentecostalism as such. Ministers and communicants in various "old-line" denominations -- Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Methodist -- are speaking in tongues in what are reported to be increasing numbers. So widespread has this become that it has received a name, "neo-Pentecostalism" or "the new Pentecostalism."

Serious Christians, concerned about having the best God has for them in this world, are vitally interested in anything related to the spiritual life. Much about the older Pentecostalism was not attractive to many. In fact the association of the name "Pentecostal" with the practice of speaking in unknown tongues and the teaching that such is the only valid sign of the fullness of the Holy Spirit led the Church of the Nazarene to drop the name from its official title back in 1919, when "The Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene" became "The Church of the Nazarene." In this way, the church sought to dissociate itself from the extremes which characterized Pentecostalism as such.

It is proper now to inquire if we should take any different attitude toward speaking in tongues since it has become "respectable" and has spread to denominations whose worship, to say the least, traditionally has been free from any trace of emotionalism or fanaticism.

The answer must be found in two considerations:

What does the Bible teach? What, if anything, does the modern phenomenon of speaking in tongues add to the spiritual life that the best gifts and the more excellent way of which Paul speaks in I Corinthians 12 and 13 do not offer?

For Bible-believing Christians, the evidence of the Scriptures is all-important. Experience may confirm but it cannot control biblical interpretation. To this, therefore, we should first give our attention: What does the Bible teach about miraculous speaking in languages other than those learned naturally? How is such related, if at all, to the baptism with or fullness of the Holy Spirit?

It is interesting to note that languages first appear in the Bible as barriers which separate men from one another. At the tower of Babel (Genesis 11), different languages were part of God's judgment on the sinful pride of man. The widely diverse human languages of today had their origin at Babel, a word which has come to mean unintelligible speech.

It is also interesting that, while all the essential characteristics of the age of the Spirit are freely foretold in the New Testament, there is no mention of languages or tongues in connection with it. Isaiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Zechariah, and Malachi all speak of the fruitfulness and blessing, the fiery cleansing, the freedom in prayer, the law of God reinforced in the soul, the grace and vision which were to come, but breathe no word of an important physical sign or evidence such as tongues is claimed to be.

It is true, of course, that we turn to the New Testament for final light on any biblical truth. Any doctrine must be tested by the example and teaching of Jesus, the experience of His people as recorded in Acts, and the teachings of the apostles in the Epistles and Revelation.

It is noteworthy that Jesus Christ, to whom the Father gave the Spirit without measure (John 3:34), and whose ministry of healing is so well known, is nowhere said to have spoken any other language than the native Aramaic of Palestine, although like most of the people of His day He probably spoke in addition both Greek and Latin.

Nor in His teaching concerning the coming of the Spirit is there any word of a miraculous gift of other languages. John and Jesus both foretold the baptism with the Spirit, and Jesus made a number of references to the coming and ministry of the Comforter, but never in this connection did He speak of tongues.

In fact there is only one reference to "new tongues" in the Gospels, and that is not in connection with the baptism with the Spirit but as one of five signs which should follow "them that believe," a reference to saving faith in general (Mark 16:16-18).

It may be admitted that "the argument from silence" is not final. But neither is it unimportant. If Jesus, by example and in teaching, stressed the baptism or fullness of the Spirit without a single word about other languages, then these could hardly be the only valid initial physical evidence of the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

* * * * *

03 -- CHAPTER

We are concerned with the question, Does the Bible give a basis for the teaching that speaking in other languages, particularly unknown tongues, is a sign of the baptism with the Holy Spirit?

Although the Old Testament and the Gospels contain much truth about the age of the Spirit, both are silent with regard to any initial physical evidence such as speaking in other languages. But what about the Book of Acts, the experience of the Early Church?

Here we find that on three occasions, when the Holy Spirit was given, the persons receiving spoke in other languages. These instances were widely separated in time and place: the first Christian Pentecost in Jerusalem, approximately A.D. 30 (Acts 2); some ten years later in

Caesarea (Acts 10); and fourteen years after that in Ephesus (Acts 19). Each of these is important, and deserves our consideration.

First, when the Holy Spirit came upon the Church on the Day of Pentecost, there were three great dispensational signs marking the beginning of a new age. There was the noise of a mighty rushing wind, symbolizing the power of the Spirit. There were the cloven tongues of fire resting upon each disciple, typical of the purifying work of the Spirit. And there was the miraculously given power to speak other languages, standing for the productiveness of the Spirit-filled life.

But there were no unknown tongues at Pentecost. In fact the gift there was given for the very purpose of preventing unknown tongues. The native language of the Galilean disciples (Acts 2:7) was a distinctive form of Aramaic easily recognized by those living in other parts of Palestine (Matt. 26:73). But the Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamians, Judeans, Cappadocians, and men of Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Rome, Crete, and Arabia each heard them speak "every man in... [his] own tongue" (Acts 2:8) wherein he was born "the wonderful works of God" (v.11).

If the disciples had spoken their own native language, they would have been speaking a tongue unknown to multitudes in that cosmopolitan crowd. Instead, the Holy Spirit prevented unknown tongues by giving them the utterance of the wonderful works of God in the languages and dialects (Acts 2:6, 8) of the lands from which the people came.

Here was an eloquent testimony that God was reversing what had been brought about by man's sinful pride at Babel. It was a demonstration to all ages of the breaking down of the barriers between nations through Christ and His gospel. It was a striking witness to the universality of the gospel message, to men of every tongue and in every clime.

If today, as has been reported, there are instances of persons actually speaking other languages, there would be no reason to deny the work of God. But to insist or even imply that speech which no one present can understand and which generally shows none of the characteristics of actual human language is the same as the miracle of Pentecost is to fly in the face of scripture itself and can result only in utter confusion.

Many years later the "Gentile Pentecost" in Caesarea took place, as recorded in Acts 10. Here it is reported that speaking in languages took place. But the amazing thing is that when Peter reported the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius and his household, as he did twice, he said absolutely nothing about the speaking in tongues, for the "gift" of Acts 11:17 is "the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38) not the gift of tongues. In the original Greek, even the word for "gift" is different -- not charisma as in I Corinthians 12, but *dorean*, the term always used in speaking of the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church.

Actually, Peter's report to the Council in Jerusalem (Acts 15) states that the essential nature and seal of the baptism with the Spirit is not tongues, but the purifying of the heart by faith. When Peter wanted to prove beyond doubt the identity of the work God had done both in Jerusalem (Acts 2) and in Caesarea (Acts 10), he said, "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them,

purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8-9). The "clincher," if one may use the term, was not speaking in tongues -- although, again, how easy it would have been to report that fact! -- but that Pentecost is a purifying experience in the hearts of those who receive it.

Still much later, at Ephesus after Paul had baptized the twelve disciples he found there, as he laid his hands upon them, "the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied" (Acts 19:6). The term here translated "tongues" is *glossais*, the same term identified in Acts 2 as languages and dialects.

It is hard to believe that it is just accidental that speaking in other languages should be mentioned only on those key occasions when the universal gospel broke through the limitations and restrictions of Judaism. In Jerusalem (Acts 2) the languages were spoken to those who were predominantly Jews of the Dispersion, living in the Gentile world, but still worshipping God after the manner of Moses. The languages in Caesarea (Acts 10) were spoken by those who were "God-fearing" and devout, proselytes to the faith of Judaism. But the languages at Ephesus, spoken by those converted from raw paganism, indicated that the gospel would not stop with Jews or their proselytes, but that it was for men of all races and nations of the earth who would believe and receive the Holy Spirit.

However, the evidence of Acts is not complete until we look at the times when the baptism or fullness of the Spirit is described or mentioned without any reference to other languages. It happened in Acts 4:31, in the great prayer meeting held after the threats of the Sanhedrin against the gospel. For many, this was probably a new endowment with the power of the Spirit, a fresh anointing. But since all were filled, it is impossible to escape the conclusion that there were many in the company who had been converted since Pentecost to whom this was the initial fullness of the Spirit. Yet there is no suggestion that any of the group spoke with other languages at that time.

The same is true in Acts 8, where the Samaritan Pentecost is recorded. Much has been made of the fact that Simon the sorcerer offered money for the power to induce the gift of the Spirit, and it has been argued that he must have heard speaking in tongues in order to know that the Samaritans had actually received the Spirit. But this is to discredit the accuracy of the account which says that it was what Simon saw, not what he heard, that convinced him of the reality of the work (Acts 8:18).

A third instance of the coming of the Spirit is implied in Acts 9:17-19 in regard to the sending of Ananias to Saul of Tarsus in order that he might receive his sight and "be filled with the Holy Ghost" (v.17). While Paul later wrote (I Cor. 14:18) about his speaking in other languages (or a gift of tongues, if such be implied), it is not reported at the time of his baptism with the Spirit nor is there any suggestion in I Corinthians 14 that what was being discussed there was in any way related to the fullness of the Spirit.

While at three crucial and strategic times in the spread of the gospel, other languages were reported in the Book of Acts, yet there are many references in the same book to the fullness of the Spirit or receiving the Spirit in contexts in which there is no allusion, directly or indirectly, to speaking in tongues (Acts 1:5, 8; 4:8, 31; 5:32; 6:3,5; 8:15,17-19; 9:17; 11:15-16, 24; 13:9, 52; and 15:8).

In the face of this, it is totally impossible to argue reasonably that speaking in other languages -- known or unknown -- is the only valid evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

* * * * *

04 -- CHAPTER

The evidence of the new testament on the matter of other tongues is not complete without a survey of the teaching of Paul in I Corinthians 12 and 14. It seems quite clear that no possible case may be made from the Book of Acts for the modern teaching that speaking in other languages, known or unknown, is any sort of evidence-initial or otherwise -- of the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

But in one of the twenty-one letters of the New Testament the Apostle Paul does include some teaching on the matter of spiritual gifts in general, and other languages in particular. In the study of I Corinthians on this subject, we face immediately three major difficulties.

First, there is the sorry spiritual condition of the church at Corinth. Serious perversions of Christian faith and practice appear in the first letter. The church was a deeply troubled church. It was certainly the least exemplary of any of the churches to which Paul wrote, the churches of Galatia not excepted. It was described as carnal (3:1-2). Immorality of the most vicious sort was tolerated in it (5:1-2). The members were taking their personal differences into the courts of law (6:7-8). The authority of the apostle himself was challenged (9:1-12). The sacrament of the Lord's Supper had become a time of revelry instead of sanctity (11:18-34). Doctrinal errors included the denial of the resurrection by at least some of the number (chapter 15).

A second major difficulty in dealing with the gift of tongues in I Corinthians is the long absence of anything resembling this particular gift in the recorded history of the Church from the earliest times down to the turn of the twentieth century. Divine healing has been known and prized throughout. But great men of the Spirit whose stature and piety are undebatable did neither experience nor teach the gift of languages. The greatest evangelists who have graced the history of Christendom -- such men as Wesley, Whitefield, Finney, Moody, Sankey, Torrey, Sunday, and many others whose Spirit-anointed ministry is attested in the history of the Church -- have not known a miraculous speaking in other languages. Is one to conclude that these men were not baptized with or filled with the Spirit?

Finally, there is the sharp and almost complete divergence of opinion among equally learned and devout Bible scholars as to the exact nature of what was happening at Corinth. One major view is that the languages of Corinth were like those at Jerusalem -- that is, human languages spoken under the direct and immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit -- not understood by the persons present, but understandable naturally by any who might speak that language. The other major view is that the tongues of Corinth were an ecstatic utterance meaningless to all who might hear except those with a correlated gift of interpretation.

The matter cannot be decided by marshaling authority against authority. Truth can never be established by a "count of noses." The facts are, Pentecostal people themselves tend to claim both. They claim that there are instances where people under the power of the Holy Spirit have actually spoken other languages recognized and understood by those whose native tongues they were. I have numerous reports of such in my file, and have honestly sought some means of independent verification -- albeit without success.

It is quite possible that part of the problem of the Bible scholars here lies in the fact that in Corinth both other languages as at Pentecost and unknown tongues were to be found. There is a remarkable difference, for instance, between I Corinthians 12 where Paul expounds the nine gifts of the Spirit, and I Corinthians 14, where he deals with what might have been a mixed situation.

The most significant point of difference lies in the fact that nowhere in I Corinthians 14 is the Holy Spirit mentioned. The references in verses 2, 15, and 16 are references to the human spirit, not the Holy Spirit, as is indicated by the small letter in the King James Version as well as by the grammatical construction of the original Greek.

Further, the word for spiritual gifts, *charismata*, used so freely in chapter 12, is not used at all in chapter 14. The original Greek word in 14:1 is *pneumatika*, literally, "spirituals," or "spiritual things." This difference in terms could hardly be accidental.

In I Corinthians 12, Paul is dealing with the general subject of spiritual gifts. He lays down three great principles. There are different gifts, but the same Spirit and Lord working in all (verses 4-6), a point to which he returns again and again in the chapter. Apparently one of the errors in Corinth was the supposition that all should or would have the same gifts of the Spirit.

The second principle is that the manifestations and gifts of the Spirit are given to profit withal (verse 7). They are of value for the work of the Church and the building up of the body of Christ in holy unity.

The third principle is that for all the value and importance of spiritual gifts and for all the eager desire for gifts which might be displayed, "yet," the apostle says, "shew I unto you a more excellent way" (verse 31). This more excellent way is the way of love so beautifully described in the Hymn of Love in chapter 13. It is God's kind of love, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, given to us (Rom. 5:5). That one may have gifts without love is clearly seen in I Cor. 13:1-3, and in the acrimonious and bitter letters partisans of the new doctrine sometimes write.

In Chapter 14, Paul deals with what was happening in Corinth. Whatever it was, he was not happy about it. However prized the gift of languages might be, it is far better to speak to men to edification, exhortation, and comfort. He will permit the use of other languages under controlled conditions, but he does not encourage it. As gifted as he himself is, he would rather speak five words that could be understood by those present than ten thousand words which could not.

It could be that our puzzles concerning the interpretation of chapter 14 lie in the fact that Paul knew there were in Corinth both the genuine and the human imitation. Some were speaking languages which educated people would have understood should they come in (I Cor. 14:16,

23-24). Others were expressing religious emotions in vocal utterances that had no meaning unless interpreted.

It is claimed that both kinds of speaking take place today. Could it be that the languages as at Pentecost are the primary subject of I Corinthians 12, and the other "unknown" speaking the primary subject of I Corinthians 14? Perhaps we cannot now know certainly.

But there is no uncertainty at one point. The New Testament throughout makes it abundantly clear that the evidence of the fullness of the Spirit is no physical manifestation that may be counterfeited by the devil or linger after love is lost. It is the grace and fruit of the Spirit: "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." It is love out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and a faith unfeigned (I Tim. 1:5).

* * * * *

05 -- CHAPTER

Is it possible fairly to appraise "the charismatic revival," that renewal of interest among Christians in the gifts of the Spirit? That there is a widespread hunger for spiritual reality in the church world is increasingly evident. What part do the gifts of the Spirit play in satisfying this hunger?

First, let it be said that it is not our purpose to criticize the manner in which other Christians worship, either in private or in groups. We would not oppose what others choose to do. Nor do we propose to accept a theory which would measure the quality of the spiritual life by the presence or absence of any of the gifts of the Spirit. Our concern is only to discover, as well as we may, what the sum total of God's Word would indicate to be His truth.

Second, every movement of the Spirit in the Church may be either strengthened or sidetracked by elements which are purely human. It is possible to become so wrapped up in the marginal and the incidental that we miss the central and the essential. The greatest tragedy of our century could be the diverting of interest within the Church from the presence and power of the Giver to any of His gifts. What could be one of the greatest revivals in the history of Christendom may be defeated by preoccupation with the spectacular and bizarre. It is the divine Giver who is to be sought. The gifts are His to bestow according to His will.

There are tremendous risks in identifying unknown tongues as a sign of the baptism with the Holy Ghost. In the first place, the appearance of tongues in other circles than among Bible-believing Christians shows that the devil can counterfeit or imitate this particular manifestation. In the second place, the fact that ability to speak in unknown tongues remains after the Spirit has been grieved away -- and this is the candid admission of many Pentecostal leaders -- confirms the statement of St. Paul that it is possible to speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love (I Cor. 13:1).

As B. F. Neely long ago pointed out, the upshot is that a "sign" which may occur where the Holy Spirit has never been present, or where He has been lost, is no sign at all. The fact that a man

wears a hat would have as much value as an evidence. For if one wears a hat, it is true that he either has the Holy Spirit, he has had Him and lost Him, or he has never had Him. A potentially false or misleading "evidence" is worse than none at all.

It is God's will that all be filled with the Spirit. The unqualified command of the Word of God is, "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5: 18). In this dispensation, God's purpose is to pour forth His Spirit upon all His servants and handmaidens (Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:16-18). It is not His plan that all shall speak with tongues (I Cor. 12:4-11, 29-30). It is therefore quite impossible to argue that tongues is the only valid evidence -- or any evidence at all -- of the fullness of the Spirit.

There is a witness of the Spirit to His sanctifying lordship in the heart and life of the believer. "We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (I Cor. 2:12). "And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us" (I John 3:24). "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" (I John 4:13). "It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth . . . And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one . . . He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (I John 5:6-10).

God has never left himself without a witness. The witness of His Spirit has not dropped out of the experience of His people across the Christian centuries from the time of the New Testament until the twentieth century. In every age there have been the humble, consistent testimonies of those who have walked with God in "full assurance of faith."

Many who have spoken with tongues testify to a new dimension of Christian joy, a deeper love for Christ and for His people, greater power in witnessing and in prayer, and a general heightening of the whole of Christian experience. But these are exactly the results experienced in entire sanctification by thousands who have magnified God in no other language than that in which they were born. It is never the crowing of the cock that lightens the eastern sky and brings the full beauty of the dawn. It is always the rising of the sun.

Dr. A. B. Simpson expressed the heart of the matter in his much-quoted verse:

Once it was the blessing,
Now it is the Lord;
Once it was the feeling,
Now it is His word;
Once His gifts I wanted,
Now the Giver own;
Once I sought for healing,
Now himself alone.

What attitude should we take toward the charismatic revival? Dr. J. B. Chapman recorded his view in the Herald of Holiness in January, 1923. After reviewing the assets and liabilities of the Pentecostal movement of that day, he said:

"So my advice would be that our pastors and members should not be prominent in the matter of cooperating with the 'Tongues' people; but, on the other hand, there is no reason why we should 'go into a tangent' opposing them. Nazarenes do not gain much by 'fighting' anyone. The best way for us is to go on with the mission God has given us in spreading scriptural holiness over all lands and not allow ourselves to become involved in many controversies. Ours is a positive gospel and our relation to every heterodox movement is that we believe we preach something better."

And we shall pray for revival throughout the church world and thank God for every instance where the power of His Spirit has shattered the worldliness and carnality of unsanctified hearts. We shall make sure of our own foundations, and give humble witness to the cleansing and empowering fullness of the Spirit of Christ, who is "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30).

* * * * *

THE END