

The

B a p t i s m

of the

Spirit

by

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"Baptism of the Spirit"

There is abroad in our land and others a religious movement which gives the appearance of exalted spirituality. It pretends to possess the gifts which the Holy Spirit bestowed upon the Church in the days of the Apostles. This movement naturally attracts the attention of Christians and arouses their interest. Many want to draw near and see this "burning bush" more closely, and they wonder: Is this indeed from God? What could be wrong with it? Does not St. Paul treat it at length and even recommend it? Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had those gifts in our churches?

Movements and gifts of this sort have occurred a few times since New Testament days, but have really blossomed in the 20th Century. The modern Pentecostal movement sprang up just after the turn of the century, chiefly in southern California. An Agnes Oxman received laying-on of hands and spoke in tongues on Jan. 1, 1901. In 1906 seven more spoke in tongues. A mission was established on Azusa St. in Los Angeles. It received widespread attention from the press. From that point onward, the movement grew. The doctrine of the movement is sometimes known as the Full Gospel, meaning spiritual gifts besides mere salvation. It is also known as the Foursquare Gospel. Its four points are: entire sanctification, Baptism of the Spirit with tongues, faith healing, and premillennialism. The Pentecostal churches, the Nazarenes, churches of God, and others owe their origin to this movement. But lately it has gone ecumenical and has infiltrated all the church denominations. This new thrust is fostered by the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship, International, founded in 1953. It appears that the modern gifts do not occur spontaneously, but only after contact with some other person(s) with the same powers.

It is important for us to evaluate this movement, since the Bible commands us to "try the spirits, whether they be of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1. It is also important because we do not want to condemn a movement if the Holy Spirit is truly its Sponsor, nor approve it if it is wicked. We do not want to quench the Spirit or despise prophesyings nor speak a word against the Holy Spirit, which are very grave sins. Some say we are doing just this, because they notice that many people have been morally renewed through their experience of being "baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Is this, then, a Baptism of the Spirit? If we stick to Biblical language, we say no. The word "baptize" is used to refer to water-baptism, the Baptism of the remission of sin. Figuratively, it is used of tribulation, Mt. 20:22. In Hebrews 9:10 it refers to "divers washings". Eph. 4:5 tells us there is one baptism only, and Mark 16:16 infers that it is necessary for salvation. Hebrews 6:2, interestingly, speaks of a "foundation" of the "doctrine of baptisms" (plural). Probably this refers to the baptism of each individual; but in any case it is certain that baptisms other than water baptism were not intended here, since St. Paul says there is "one baptism." Finally, we have the references to baptizing with the Holy Ghost and with fire, but we hasten to note that the book of Acts refers to Pentecost as the fulfillment of this prediction. So "Spirit-baptism", in the sense intended today, is not a Biblical term.

The important question, however, whether we call it a baptism or Pentecostalism or Corinthianism or a charismatic movement, is this: is it genuine, i.e., does the Bible say the Church will always have such a movement? or does it at least say that it will be revived at the end of days, just prior to Judgment Day? Is it, as many Pentecostals contend, necessary for the true church to have this "fulness of the Spirit"? In answer we say:

I. Where special charismatic gifts are required as proofs of true Christianity, there the Gospel of grace is already perverted. We all know full well that we are saved by grace through faith alone, without the works of the Law. But if some further experience or some higher level of spirituality is demanded, then we are not saved by faith at all, but by something else. As F.D. Bruner writes, "the moment any rite, any obedience, any experience, no matter how buttressed with Scripture or with 'angels from heaven' becomes a supplement to faith or a condition for fulness before God, then the anathema must be announced and the warning to avoid false teaching urged with all possible seriousness." ¹

With which special gifts could we stop and be assured of our salvation? In Mark 16:17 there are five signs (not gifts) mentioned that will follow them that believe. Why specialize in tongue-speaking and healing? Why not include poison-drinking, snake-handling and devil-expulsion? If the tongues are a proof of faith, then I should be able to drink poison harmlessly as another proof. Why not also add the healing shadow of the Apostles (Acts 5:12ff.)? Or the moving of mountains, together with other wonders more spectacular than Jesus Himself ever did? John 14:12. There is no end to the standards one could impose as tests of "true church" if we follow Pentecostal logic. The genuine, Scriptural standards, or outward marks of true faith, are different. They are: continuing in His Word, John 8:31f.; confession of faith, Rom. 10:9-10; mutual brotherly love, John 13:35; and the fruits of the Spirit mentioned in Gal. 5:22-24.

Requiring supernatural gifts also perverts the doctrine of the Trinity, for it considers the Spirit's presence something different from the Son's. Hoekema notices that according to the false doctrine of Pentecostalism,

if one has not received the Spirit-baptism, one is living without his God-appointed Leader. He may have received Christ at the time of his conversion, but he is still leaderless! To have merely Christ in his heart is to have an inferior, second-rate kind of Christianity! How utterly at variance this is with the Bible! Christ teaches otherwise: 'He (the Spirit) shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you' (John 16:14). To exalt the work of the Spirit is praiseworthy, but to exalt the Spirit above Christ is an error ••••²

Supernatural gifts in the Bible were not marks of faith, but marks of the true Apostles of Christ. Throughout the book of Acts, such gifts are bestowed only on the Apostles and by the Apostles on others. They were not given to third parties. Every instance of speaking in new, tongues happened in the presence of the Apostles. In some

cases, as in Acts 19:6, it was by the laying-on of their hands. Sometimes, as in the case of Cornelius, Acts 10:45-47, it was without their hands, but while they preached.

The Bible is plain in teaching that these supernatural gifts were marks of apostleship. In Mark 16, where such gifts are foretold in verse 17, we see in verse 20 that the disciples went out and preached, "the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following." This is the purpose the signs fulfilled: confirming the Word. So Paul expelled devils, Acts 16:18; on Pentecost the apostles spoke in foreign languages; Paul was unharmed by the serpent's bite, Acts 28:5; many disciples laid hands on the sick and brought them recovery; and it is reported in tradition, outside of Scripture, that John drank poison without harm,³ as did also Justus Barsabas, the disciple who lost the election to Matthias in Acts 1.⁴

This truth, that the gifts signified apostleship, is underlined by Acts 2:43, where it does not say that all performed wonders, but "wonders and signs were done by the apostles." And in Acts 4, after being threatened by the Jewish authorities, Peter prays to God, "stretch forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus." A few verses later we see that the prayer was answered in this way: "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them." In Romans 15 Paul teaches that the gifts were to serve the work of missions, "to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God.

In Hebrews 2 it is implied that the age of such wonders is over, for it says salvation "was confirmed (aorist tense) unto us by them that heard him, God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to His own will." (Compare Mark 16:20) Finally, and most cogently, St. Paul shows that he is equal to the other apostles by the signs which he did, saying in 2 Cor. 12:12: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."

The wonders and gifts continued only for a while, just in order to make the church known while there were not yet teachers enough to carry the Word everywhere. And when the generation of the Apostles went to their reward, the gifts were no longer needed and fell into disuse. The great preacher Chrysostom said such things used to occur, "but now no longer take place."⁵ Augustine also remarks, "These were signs adapted to the time, for there behooved to be that betokening of the Holy Spirit in all tongues to show that the Gospel of God was to run through all tongues over the whole earth. That thing was done for a betokening and it passed away."⁶ In his tract on Baptism, he informs us that in former days such things were the credentials of the faith, but by his own day no one expects the laying-on of hands to produce any speaking with tongues.⁷

But, argue the advocates of the modern charismatic movement, Paul lists supernatural gifts as the normal things in the churches in passages like 1 Cor. 12:28, "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

But we answer that this passage teaches no such thing. The church no longer has apostles; why must we conclude that it has all the rest of the offices and gifts named? The very reason such special gifts are not present today is, because the apostles are no longer present. We also note that the next verse says, "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?" From this passage it is perfectly clear that special gifts are not necessary as signs of true faith, since not everyone possessed them, even in the early church. See also 1 Cor. 12:4-10. And when Jesus says the signs will follow them that believe, He certainly did not mean that every true Christian would be able to do one or more of these things by virtue of his own faith. He was saying that the signs would come forth by their Gospel labors to vindicate their work.

If supernatural gifts are so necessary to the church, why is it that the church did not possess them for about 1800 years? The few instances mentioned during that long period are either of questionable authenticity or are connected with heresy, and do not pass the test of Deuteronomy 13:1-4, "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet . . . and that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death." The historical examples adduced by today's Pentecostals are chiefly as follows. Tertullian challenged heretics to produce signs such as tongues. But Tertullian belonged to the Montanist sect, a pietistic-millennialistic religion that sprang up in the 2nd century and disappeared in the sixth. Francis Xavier, the Jesuit missionary, is said to have addressed the Japanese in their own tongue miraculously. But Xavier himself contradicts this by saying he had to study very hard to learn the language.⁸ Then there are the persecuted Huguenots of southern France in the early 1700's, but their movement was discredited when it was predicted that a Dr. Emes would rise from the dead in 1708 and failed to do so. About 100 years later the Irvingites arose in Scotland. But some of the first to speak in tongues among them later confessed that it was not by God's Spirit that they had spoken at all. And even as they flourished, they divided into factions which denounced each other as evil spirits.⁹ So there was no authentic pentecostal movement since apostolic days. Stagg assesses the situation correctly when he says,

If it is indeed to be seen as an evidence of the Holy Spirit's work, why did it have such an inconsistent and intermittent history? Again, if it were as significant as Pentecostals maintain, would it not have occurred regularly and without letup throughout the many centuries of Christian history? Could it ever have been so suppressed by action of the church that clear evidence could not always have been seen?¹⁰

If special gifts are required as proofs of true Christianity, then we must set aside 1 Cor. 14:22, "Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not." It is wrong when Pentecostals themselves demand signs and accept people as full members only after they have shown some special powers. Our assurance of salvation does not come from our own powers, but from the Word, the explicit promise of Christ in

the Gospel. It is wrong when such gifts are treated as part of the real or "full" Gospel, promised to all, or a higher plane of sanctification; for in the New Testament such gifts are defined as attestations to the Gospel, not supplements, to it.

Therefore, if we do not enthusiastically line up in support of Pentecostalism, but rather ignore, doubt, question, or even oppose it, we are not opposing the Holy Spirit at all. We are not sinning, but following Christ's command to "try the spirits" and to "hold fast that thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

II. Bodily healing is not necessarily promised believers. Healing is another fundamental article of the "foursquare Gospel." But it is a false article, opposed to many passages of the Bible. Why, for example, does Christ commend the believers at the Last Day with the words, "I was sick and in prison and ye visited me"? Matt. 25. Why does He not say, "and ye healed me"? Or why does Paul say, "Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick"? How could he be so callous if he had the power to heal? The answer is simply that healing was not a permanent institution, nor was it given to all or for all.

But what of that passage in James 5, "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, etc." Concerning this passage we should note, first, that it is the pastors or elders of your own church that should be called in. Secondly, it is not laying-on of hands nor a professional faith-healer that heals, but "the prayer of faith." Thirdly, the anointing with oil is not a special sacred act with healing power, but refers to a standard way of treating the sick in ancient times, recommended by the great Greek physician Galen. It was often used for wounds, Luke 10:34, Isa. 1:6. The modern equivalent would be administering medicine.¹¹

Advocates of divine healing often refer to the atonement, saying that Christ took away all the consequences of sin, and faith should accept "full" salvation. They employ passages such as "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, and with his stripes we are healed. B. B. Warfield has explained that such ideas

betray us into a long series of serious errors. They imply, for example, that, Christ having borne our sicknesses as our substitute, Christians are not to bear them, and accordingly all sickness should be banished from the Christian world; Christians are not to be cured of sickness, but ought not to get sick. They imply further, that, this being so, the presence of sickness is not only a proof of sin, but argues the absence of the faith which unites us to Christ, our Substitute, that is saving faith; so that no sick person can be a saved man. They imply still further that, as sickness and inward corruption are alike effects of sin, and we must contend that sickness, because it is an effect of sin, is removed completely and immediately by the atoning act of Christ, taking away sin, so must also inward corruption be wholly and at once removed; no Christian can be a sinner. Thus we have full-blown 'Perfectionism'.¹²

And Perfectionism, as we all know, is an anti-Christian error. James writes (3:2), "In many things we offend all."

Concerning the healers, we are also led to wonder: If they are so full of the power and love of the Spirit, why do they not go empty the hospitals? Or again, Why do they have such faith in doctors as diagnosticians, but so little use for them as healers?

III. Seeming miracles do not prove godliness, but are in fact suspect. This truth is certainly clear from Scripture. We already noted Deut. 13, where false prophets produce signs and wonders, but use them to lead believers astray. Moses confronted wonder-workers in Jannes and Jambres, the Egyptian sorcerers who reproduced some of Moses' signs. And Jesus says that on the Last Day, "many will say unto me, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matt. 7:22ff. Again, He says, "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before." Matt. 24:24-25.

Seeming miracles are no proof of the right church or the pure doctrine, because they might have some cause other than in God. They might be natural, or they might be works of Satan. Most of the miracles done by the wonder-workers are miracles of healing. (No one today performs miracles over nature, such as stilling storms or purifying water; compare John 14:12.) But others have produced the same works. Religions as different as Christian Science, the Roman Catholic Church, and Buddhism produce healings that are equally spectacular. Outwardly, there is usually no way to tell divine from devilish works. The doctrine must determine which is which. Where the sign supports the Scriptural doctrine, it maybe genuine; otherwise we know it is not from God. It is the doctrine, then, that lends its testimony to the wonder, not the other way around. It is true, of course, that Jesus refers the doubters to His miracles, saying, "The works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." John 5:36. Hence we do not say that miracles prove nothing at all. But we must say they prove nothing if they be without the doctrine. If the doctrine agrees with Scripture, the miracles maybe divine. Christ's doctrine was Scriptural. He did not invent new doctrines.

There have been some very exciting wonders performed over the centuries. The Roman Church, of course, leads all competition. It has Lourdes and other shrines where thousands have been cured of every kind of sickness. It even has La-Salette, which kept producing healings even after being declared a fraud. It has healings performed with holy water and with the ashes of saints. It also has the stigmata, or wounds in the hands and feet, in the side, and around the crown of the head, which occur only on Fridays or only on Good Friday. There have been several hundred cases of this wonder, yet even the Roman Church backs away from most of them, due to the wicked character of many of the bearers.¹³

John Gerhard points out that some of the Papal miracles are magical, meaning they are

devilish, employing the sign of the cross, religious words, ceremonies, astrology, or a number of crosses or candles. Other miracles are simply absurd or shameful; some are silly and childish. Many are used to confirm idolatry, superstition, and false worship, as of the virgin Mary. And then there are some, such as occurred in heathen lands in the course of genuine Christian mission work, where the miracles confirmed the fundamentals of the faith. Only these last are genuinely Christian miracles.¹⁴

To refer to still more spectacular miracles, there are recorded cases where the bodies of saints were immune from corruption for many years; or at least noteworthy portions of the body remained so uncorrupted. The body of the famous Bernadette of Lourdes is a case in point. She died covered with tumors, but 30 years later her body was reportedly free from them and not decayed. Does this prove that Rome is right? By no means. The same thing has occurred with people who were not saints at all.¹⁵ And, of course Rome still contradicts Scripture.

Wonder-working is also no proof of the sanctity of the person doing the wonders. I recall seeing little items in the newspaper twice this year where renowned faith-healers died of alcoholism. This is as Jesus says, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Why is it, though, that such wonders do not occur among the orthodox any more? Is there something wrong with us? In the first place we may point out that the charge is not quite true. A few rare wonders have occurred when they were needed. Martin Luther was poisoned one time in Wittenberg, and he was spared.¹⁶

Nevertheless, there are good reasons why signs and wonders do not normally occur among us. One reason is that our doctrine is not a new one at all, and so needs no miracles. We rest on the apostolic Word and on the apostolic miracles. New miracles are not needed as proof. We are members of the one holy Church, the same body in which the miracles were once done. That body does not need to prove itself again and again.

A second reason is that there is no promise in the Bible that the truth will be so confirmed and supported until the end of the world. As a matter of fact, the opposite is predicted. Jesus said that in the last days there will come false Christs, and especially the greatest of them all, the Antichrist, "even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders," 2 Th.2:9. In Revelation 13:13f. is the same prediction: "He doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast."

The presence of the lying wonders in the world is a test for the "believers. Moses says, Deut. 13:3, "for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." Will we follow the wonders, or will we follow the words of Him who said there would be wonders aimed at deceiving us, which we must avoid? Maximus the Confessor, champion of orthodoxy about 600 A.D. said, "In the time of the Antichrist, the good will not do miracles, and in this will appear their constancy."¹⁷ And Gerson, a contemporary of Luther, remarked, "The many

miracles of today are suspect. The past miracles should suffice, if you believe them."¹⁸ These statements are quite Scriptural. Jesus taught us, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16. And Peter, too, who saw the glory of Jesus on the Transfiguration Mount says, "We also have a more sure word of prophecy." 2 Pet. 1:19.

IV. If prophecies do occur, they must be carefully tested with Scripture. Prophecies, to my knowledge, have not occurred in the orthodox church for centuries, but they have been offered in some other bodies. They are easily tested with the Word of God; for, sooner or later, the prophet gives himself away by telling his favorite wicked teaching. From my own experience I can testify concerning a wire recorded prophecy which foretold a "rapture." The rapture is a supposed sudden removal of all believers from the earth at the beginning of the millennium. But the doctrine of the millennium is a false, unbiblical doctrine. The same prophecy, which was issued in 1962 or 1963, predicted a great and spectacular spiritual awakening to occur downtown in the city of Ft. Wayne, Ind., just two years later. It never occurred. The prophet was clearly false.

V. While tongue-speaking could issue from the Holy Spirit 1 Cor. 12:28-29, it can also issue from Satan, 1 Tim. 4:1, or from the spirit of man, who is inwardly corrupt. Here arises a question of interpretation: Are the tongues which are discussed in 1 Corinthians the same as those mentioned in Acts? If they are, then we are dealing with speech which is sensible and coherent, but in a foreign language. This is not the case with the tongue-speaking found today, despite some unsupported claims to the contrary. Stagg reports that tape-recorded speeches were analyzed by linguists and found to be no languages at all.¹⁹

If the Corinthian tongues were not the same as those in Acts, then we must point out that their use is no proof that anyone is filled with the Spirit of God. Tongues have been produced otherwise than by the Spirit. The early Gnostics an anti-Christian sect, produced such words and speeches.²⁰ Irenaeus [21] reports a certain Marcus bestowed a phony spirit on a woman, using flattery to puff her up until she considered herself a prophetess. The Ranters, who flourished in England during the age of Cromwell, and who were frequently accused of lewdness, also spoke in tongues. Tongues were found among the early Quakers and Methodists, not to mention the Mormons (Mormon 9:7) and the Shakers, who practiced community of wives.²¹ It is also reported that a Dane named Peter Freuchen lived among the heathen Eskimoes in Greenland. In one of their religious rites he heard some of them speak in a strange tongue. He writes, "If there is such a thing as speaking in tongues I heard it then. But while the priest was supposedly in a coma, he opened his eyes and he smiled at Freuchen, saying, "Just lies and bunk, the whole thing."²² Finally, we must note also the observation of H.A. Ironside, to the effect that the Pentecostals, all with tongues, assert that the tongues in the opposing parties are of Satan, whereas their own are from God. Thus they cancel each other out.

We are not ready to say that all tongue-speaking is directly inspired by the devil, by any means. It comes from within man, it seems. Examples analyzed by students of the mind have been classified as "decomposed speech,"²³ forming no pattern or words; but only a disconnected repetition of broken sounds. It is, in the word of a Presbyterian who had spoken in tongues, a case of "auto-suggestion, self induced - piously, yes, but wrongly and unscripturally."²⁴ It is not a spiritual phenomenon, but an induced human reaction, serving, perhaps, as a release of some pent-up fervent feelings, especially in this age when people feel uncomfortable and out of place talking religion.

While St. Paul treats the gift of tongues in a large section, more than two chapters of 1 Corinthians, he does so to show that the tongues were a very minor gift. He stopped short of banning the use of tongues, but he rates them very low and foretells their end. It has often been pointed out that Corinth was a problem congregation. Paul calls them babes (3:1-3) and disorderly (14:23), and there were sins of sex, offense, pride, and contentiousness. These were the tongue-speakers, and proud of it. Paul warns them that their tongues threatened fellowship by engendering pride and vitiated the influence they might have on unbelievers. Only jealousy, pride, and competition were fostered by their tongues.

Tongues are not an important gift. Jesus never spoke in tongues. For the conversion of the heathen, Paul says prophecy is far more efficient (14:24). The gift is not listed among the qualifications for a pastor in Timothy and Titus. At the end of 1 Cor. 12, tongues are listed last among the gifts, since they are least important, not most, and do not reflect a higher fulness of the Spirit. Tongues are not mentioned at all in the lists of gifts to the church in Rom. 12:6-8 and Eph. 4:11-12, nor among the fruits of the Spirit in Gal. 5. Paul says that instead of concentrating on tongues, they should "covet earnestly the best gifts," 12:31. Tongues are quite useless for the church if they are not interpreted, 14:27. They are not even of much value for oneself. He says, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also." 14:16. Hoekema observes here: If we pray without understanding, how do we know we are really praying? Jesus gave His disciples a model prayer rich in content, when they asked to be taught to pray. He did not give them advice for praying in a new tongue.²⁵ If we are weak in prayer, we can better enlist the intercession of the Holy Spirit, who pleads for us with groanings which cannot be uttered - in any tongue. Rom. 8:26. And finally, Paul says charity is far more important than tongues. Without love a man with tongues is empty and useless.

As is true with the other wonders of New Testament times, God did not promise that tongues would continue or be revived, but, quite the contrary, He foretold that they would cease. "Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail (literally, be put out of commission); whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." In the next verses he explains that knowledge and prophecy will be superseded by the fulness of perfection in eternal life. But he does not speak so of tongues. He simply says they will stop, even if the others should abide in an incomplete state during this life. And stop they did. After the apostolic age, as we have seen, tongues disappeared. And if anyone should insist that they are being revived now in the latter days, he must prove it from the Bible, which however, contains no such proof. The

chief passage used to prove the idea is Joel 2:28ff, where it is said that the Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh in the latter day. But that passage does not apply. Peter tells us that it was fulfilled on Pentecost. And in addition, we notice not a single word mentioning any gift of tongues.

There are many who contend that tongues are part of a spiritual awakening that will sweep away secularism and reunite and revitalize the fragmented Christendom.²⁶ But the facts speak otherwise. The Pentecostal movement has produced some bitter fruits. Stolee²⁷ mentions the "horrid trail of schism, immorality, and insanity that everywhere has marked its inroads into the church." Instead of uniting and purifying the church, this movement has divided and corrupted. It fosters an indifference to the doctrines of God's Word, and this in two ways: 1. It diverts men from the solid truths of the Gospel of salvation to another Gospel, which is really a man-made law, and which teaches that you must speak in tongues in order to be an authentic Christian or you must be healed or free from disease, or you must produce some other spectacle of spirituality. Thus either (a) the hope of the Gospel is withdrawn, since you have not produced enough fruits nor been blessed with enough signs; or else (b) spiritual pride is engendered, so that men are led to believe that they need not repent. They suppose that they are "in", for they have spoken in heavenly tongues; or (c) what interest is there in the blessings of Holy Baptism, when it is considered merely a preliminary? Or what interest in the Lord's Supper, which is so: plain and common? Or why prevent women from preaching, if they have the Spirit? 2. Indifference to doctrine is also fostered in another way: by the practice of unionism. People who have these spiritual gifts feel themselves united, whether they agree in doctrine or not. It is the common experience that is thought to be important to religious unity. But this is a false principle. In 2 John it is plainly stated, "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." (vv. 9-10) It makes no difference to these new disciples whether they believe in millennium or not, or hold to Calvinism or Arminianism or even Roman Catholicism; they are one in their spirit. Such a spirit, we can be sure, is not from God. The Holy Spirit warns us that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." 1 Cor. 5:6.

The great love chapter, 1 Cor.13, was written to meet the question of the tongues in Corinth, which were used for self. The more excellent way Paul recommends to them is the practice of charity. If they will covet some spiritual blessing, let it be something like prophesy, the exposition and application of divine doctrine, which will edify all the church. Let it not be something for self-centered enjoyment. If you desire gifts, desire them for the benefit of others, not for your own feeling. If anyone should possess the gift of speaking in tongues, let him keep silence in the church until there be an interpreter; and in any case, let the women not speak up at all. (14:28-34)

Paul concludes his treatment of tongues by saying, "Forbid not to speak with tongues." This does not mean we should just let this movement loose, after all. It implies, rather, that if some do fall into this error, we do not simply order them not to use their tongues, but we should instruct them, first of all, to keep them under control (14:27-28), and then also to regard such powers as the insignificant things they are. They must learn to avoid the religious hucksters who peddle lies about spiritual gifts. They should

learn that the pure doctrine is the genuine gift of the Holy Ghost, and that by this all the other gifts must be estimated. They must understand that they were baptized of the Spirit when they were baptized with water and led to the Savior, that they have spiritual strength through faith, the Word, and prayer, and that faith itself is evidence that the Holy Spirit is with us.

I would that ye all spake in tongues; but rather that ye prophesied." 14:5. The Baptism of the Holy Ghost is a precious gift, which Christians enjoy. But its counterfeit leads only to all kinds of uncertainty, wickedness, and woe. Christians should avoid it like the plague.

Soli Deo Gloria'

¹ F. D. Bruner, A Theology of the Holy Spirit. Grand Rapids: Eerdman, 1970, p. 282.

² Anthony A. Hoekema, What About Tongue Speaking? Grand Rapids: Eerdman, 1966, p. 118.

³ Abdias of Babylon, Historia Apostolica, V, 21.

⁴ Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, III, 39, 11.

⁵ Homily 29. Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, XII, 168.

⁶ Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, VII, 497-98.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. IV. The quotation is in section III, 18, 16 & 21.

⁸ Hoekema, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

⁹ Benjamin B. Warfield, Miracles: Yesterday and Today; True and False. Grand Rapids: Eerdman, 1953. (Original title: Counterfeit Miracles. Scribner's, 19) Pp. 142f.

¹⁰ Frank Stagg, E. Glenn Hinson, Wayne E. Oates, Glossalalia: Tongue Speaking in Biblical, Historical, and Psychological Perspective. Nashville, Abirigdon Press, 1967, page 74.

¹¹ See Warfield, *op. cit.*, p. 303. Warfield cites the mention of the medicinal qualities of oil in the ancient authors: Philo (Somn. M., I, 666); Pliny (N.H., 23:34-50); Galen (Med. Temp., Bk. II)

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 307.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 85-87.

¹⁴ John Gerhard, Loci Theologici. Preuss edition; Berlin, 1867, VoL V, pp. 570=572.

¹⁵ Warfield, op. cit., p. 270.

¹⁶ Luthers Saemmtliche Schriften, St. Louis edition, Vol. XV, .446; cf. XXII, 18

¹⁷ Gerhard, op. cit., V, 560.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Stagg, op. cit., p. 15; Hoekema, op.cit., p. 132.

²⁰ Ante-Nicene Fathers, I, 13, 3; cited by Stagg, op. cit., p. 55.

²¹ Stagg, op. cit., pp. 63--66.

²² H. J. Stolee, Pentecostalism: The Problem of the Modern Tongues Movement. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1936, pp. 85-87.

²³ Hoekema, op. cit., p. 132.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 133.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 100.

²⁶ Stagg, op. cit., pp. 16f.

²⁷ Stolee, op. cit., p. 112.

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