

Questions for Bible-Loving Charismatics

Preface

This is not meant to be a derogatory paper (though it does contend), but a genuine concern to guide into truth. I am not concerned with bashing Charismatics but with educating and provoking unto righteousness. As an ex-Charismatic in a cutting edge radical Charismatic church, I seek to help those who are in the dark but don't know it. I intend to keep my comments to a minimum and let Scripture speak for itself, but some comments will be necessary; especially when the Charismatic argument is based on Scriptural silence or false history. May God open our eyes to the truth so that the Lord Jesus may be glorified.

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Spiritual Gifts

Tongues

How do you know that your tongue speaking is from God?

Many occult religions manifest tongues in the same way as Charismatics, i.e. babbling noises that are not human languages. Why is your not occult?

Do you not know that Biblical tongues in the early church were known human languages and not incoherent sounds?

And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marvelled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how *is it that* we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs
Acts 2:6-11

Do you not know that Biblical tongues were not prophecies, nor speaking to other humans, nor personal encouragement, nor a personal prayer language. They were specifically praising God in human languages by people unlearned in those languages.

We hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God. Acts 2:11

In fact 'tongues' means language or dialect (or a tongue in the mouth). [Rev 10:11, 11:9, 16:10, 17:5]

The Bible states that when tongues ceased, they ceased forever of their own accord. They were specifically for the time of establishing the early church as a testimony to the universality of the Gospel to all nations, the opposite of the curse of Babel. All churches accept that tongues ceased by around the end of the first century. Thus how can tongues have re-appeared today when they ceased forever centuries ago?

As for tongues, they will cease, 1 Cor 13:8. 'Cease' is *pauo*, meaning to cease by itself. It is a different word from the word used for the ending of prophecy and knowledge (*katargeo*) which means 'rendered inoperative, destroyed' as at the end of the age when other things are also destroyed [e.g. 1 Cor 15:24-26]. Note

Greek scholar AT Robertson who says, '*They shall make themselves cease or automatically cease of themselves.*' *Robertson's Word Pictures* on 1 Cor 13:8.

Do you not see that if tongues ceased by c. 100 AD that tongues today cannot be of God and must be a counterfeit of Satan?

Prophecy

How do you know that prophecies in your church are from God? Many occult religions and cults manifest prophecies in a similar way to Charismatic churches. Why is yours not occult?

It is insufficient to say that you know deep inside that it is safe. Your inner feelings can be corrupted and are no guide to what is true.

'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?' Jer 17:5.

He who trusts in his own heart is a fool. Prov 28:26

Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. Heb 3:12

You need an absolute guide and authority to truth, which is only found in God's word.

All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 2 Tim 3:16

Jesus answered and said to them, 'Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God?' Mk 12:24

For whatever things were written before were written for our learning. Rm 15:4

For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account. Heb 4:12-13

Do you not realise that NT prophecies are not like OT prophecies? OT prophecies established Scripture as a foundation for the elect, which the apostles expanded and testified to, forming the essential bedrock of the church. The New Covenant changed church offices, like priest, king and prophet. Thus NT prophets never use the prefix, 'Thus says the Lord'.

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*. Eph 2:19-20

Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in *both of* which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Saviour. 2 Pt 3:1-2

Are you not aware that any supposed prophet whose prophecy fails to come to pass must be disciplined by the church? Under the Old Covenant the penalty was death!

'But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.' And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' - when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that *is* the thing which the

LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.
Deut 18:20-22

Why are so many Charismatic prophets who are guilty of many failed prophecies not disciplined at all?

Are you not aware that if a prophet, whose prophecies do come to pass, leads people astray after false doctrine and gods, he must be disciplined by the church also?

If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods' -- which you have not known -- 'and let us serve them,' you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice, and you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn *you* away from the LORD your God. Deut 13:1-5

Did you not know that prophecy in the church today is the encouragement and edification of believers by powerfully explaining God's word in a relevant way?

He who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. ... he who prophesies edifies the church. 1 Cor 14:3-4 [Only the application of God's word, the Bible, brings edification (building up) and exhortation (admonishment and encouragement).]

Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. 1 Tim 4:13

Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict. Titus 1:9

Now Judas and Silas, themselves being prophets also, exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words. Acts 15:32

Healing

Why is there a focus upon healing in Charismatic churches? Do you not realise that there is no case of a believer being healed in the NT but several of workers being sick?

Epaphroditus ... was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. For indeed he was sick almost unto death. Phil 2:25-27

No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities. 1 Tim 5:23 [Re: Timothy]

Trophimus I have left in Miletus sick. 2 Tim 4:20

What proof have you that healing is an automatic privilege and included in the atonement?

But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. Isa 53:5

This does not refer to physical healing but to the healing of sin sickness. It is typical Jewish parallelism where the same thing is spoken of in different ways to emphasise the point. The verse is all about sin and being delivered from it. 1 Pt 2:23 confirms this, 'who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness -- by whose stripes you were healed'.

Indeed, sickness is common amongst the Lord's people and is even used in God's chastisement of wayward sons.

Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many sleep [i.e. die]. 1 Cor 11:27-30

The healing ministry of Jesus was different. This was an especial manifestation of divine power to affirm his Messiahship.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will? Heb 2:3-4

The church does not minister with the same power that Jesus manifested.

What about Jn 14:12

'Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father'.

There is no promise here that a believer will automatically perform miracles as Jesus did (e.g. walking on water). The promise is that greater things will occur because of Jesus' ascended ministry in heaven. The works involved are chiefly that of preaching the Gospel with power to convert many people and change nations. Jesus only ministered in Judaea but the church has affected the world. Jesus never saw 3,000 or 5,000 converted at once, but the early church did. It is a greater work to see a man regenerated than to see him healed physically.

The promise of power given to the church by the Spirit is the power to witness,

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. Acts 1:8

In fact God promises tribulation and suffering to the church, not prosperity, comfort and healing.

We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God. Acts 14:22

If children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together. Rm 8:17

Share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God. 2 Tim 1:8

All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. 2 Tim 3:12

The word of knowledge

Why do you think that the word of knowledge is prescience?

The Charismatic practice (of knowing secret thoughts and inner conditions) is commonly exhibited in occult groups and is called *kardiognosis*, but this is never promised to the church. The word of knowledge is exactly that, it is passing on knowledge; i.e. the gift of didactic teaching required by elders for the church. Early Pentecostals accepted this (in

fact many still do) but rogue teachers developed the modern Charismatic practice as they became infected with occult ideas in the 1940s in a heretical Canadian movement called 'Latter Rain'. It was further developed in the Healing Movement of the 1950s, as an offshoot of Latter Rain, especially in the ministry of arch-heretic William Branham who did not even believe in the Trinity.

The practice of Charismatic 'words of knowledge' to reveal secrets is occultic.

Discernment of Spirits

Why do you think that this gift pertains to 'deliverance ministry' or exorcism?

Discernment of Spirits is the gift to discern the root source of error in false teachers and false prophets.

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1 Jn 4:1

It is a gift that is required by elders in order to protect the flock.

Are you not aware that there is no command for believers to seek being delivered of evil spirits and that there is no teaching on it for leaders since believers need no such ministry? However, this ministry is common in occult circles and shamanism, indeed it is an integral part of witchcraft.

The ministry of Jesus in casting out demons was to the unsaved only. Biblical teaching on dealing with sin and satanic warfare never mentions the need for believer's exorcism, but explains our spiritual weapons, primarily faith in the truth, righteousness and the word of God. God has provided every means in grace for the victory of the elect (prayer, Scripture, teaching, encouragement, fellowship etc.) without any need for casting out spirits because they cannot co-habit the human spirit with the Spirit of God.

Have you not heard of recent cases where people have died as a result of deliverance ministry?

Recent cases involved children, and even infants, from Black Pentecostal churches in London. But this sort of tragedy has repeatedly occurred in Charismatic circles. Even at the beginning of Pentecostalism, Charles Parham's disciples killed a sick woman.

One old woman, already tortured with rheumatism, was twisted and bent and pounded by these fanatics, who considered the woman's shrieks of agony as the dying cries of the 'demon of rheumatism'. The old lady died that same afternoon and two of the murderers were her own children, able-bodied men.¹

There have been very many cases where people have been seriously injured as a result of the antics of deliverance ministers, including deaths. These things have occurred throughout the period of Pentecostal/Charismatic history. These evil fruits of this wicked ministry are proof positive of its occult roots.

¹ CW Shumway, *A Study of the Gift of Tongues*, Univ. of Southern California, (1914), p158-159.

Charismatic doctrine

Baptism in the Spirit

Can you find any apostolic command to seek an experience called 'the baptism in the Spirit'?

The answer is no because there is no such command anywhere; in fact, there is no subjective experience called 'baptism in the Spirit' at all.

What is the baptism with the Spirit?

Scripture explains that this is the baptising of the whole body of Christ into the Spirit, as a direct result of the pouring out of the Spirit without measure upon the ascended Christ in heaven. This occurred at Pentecost when the whole church was united with Christ in one spiritual life.

For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body -- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free -- and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 1 Cor 12:13

The Greek tenses here are aorist, i.e. they refer to a past action that is finished but has repercussions in the future. The prophecy of John the Baptist, regarding being baptised in the Spirit, pointed forward to this event. There is only one baptism in the Spirit, and that was at Pentecost. The idea of multiple baptism for many people is heresy; as is the idea of a special 'second blessing' that only certain people in the church experience. It is also an insult to the godly men of the past who never needed such an experience to do great things for God.

Where did the Charismatic idea of the baptism of the Spirit and the resultant gift of tongues come from?

It arose in the later part of the American Holiness Movement but was fully developed in the early years of the Pentecostal Movement, particularly by Charles Parham. The phrase came from the writings of John Fletcher of Madeley, who used it in connection with a baptism of love that led to instant perfection. He did not teach the Charismatic version of it, but like other Methodist ideas, it was reformatted into a Charismatic version. Pentecostals developed other erroneous ideas about Spirit baptism, including a baptism with fire, a baptism with dynamite and other novel ideas related to gaining special power.

Are we not to seek any experiences of the Spirit?

Yes, we are commanded to keep being filled with the Spirit every day.

Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God. Eph 5:18-21

The Greek term, 'be filled' implies to be continually filled. Notice that the results of being filled are not falling over, being healed or being emotionally excited. It results in ministry to God and to others in the church – speaking doctrine to one another in singing, praising God, giving thanks to God and everyone submitting to everyone else.

The Old Covenant system

Are you aware that a great deal of Charismatic practice is Old Covenant in nature?

There is a serious failure to properly apply Biblical rules of interpretation. It is crucial to understand that the Old Covenant was a period of shadows pointing to the reality to come in Christ alone. The NT revelation, the teaching of the apostles, represents the final words of Christ from heaven to his church, inspired by the Spirit, as he promised (Jn 16:13). We

can only understand the OT in the light of the NT. Old Covenant forms must be interpreted by apostolic doctrine.

For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things.

Heb 10:1 [The Mosaic Law (referred to here), is the centre of the Old Covenant.]

The shadows only give a vague definition of the full truth that was to be manifested in Christ.

So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. Col 2:16-17

Sabbath keeping, Jewish feasts and diet (indeed, all focusing upon Israel and Judaism) are external Old Covenant forms, which have ceased and are spiritually dead. The reality that these pointed to is in Christ. Following these forms results in fleshly bondage (Gal 2:4, 4:9, 24-25, 5:1) and drifting from Christ.

Thus Christ is the true High priest; he is the Good Shepherd; he is the one sacrifice for sin; he is the sweet smelling aroma of a crushed life pointed to in the holy spices; he is the fulness of what the great feasts symbolised. The fulness of the covenant promised to Abraham is found in Christ, Abraham's true Seed, not in fleshly Israel, nor in Charismatic churches.

Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as of many, but as of one, 'And to your Seed,' who is Christ. Gal 3:16

The Old Covenant promises and prophecies are fulfilled in Christ, the end and fulfilment of the law.

For Christ *is* the end of the law. Rm 10:4

The inheritance is not a fleshly, earthly, Jewish kingdom, nor Charismatic kingdom ministry, but a heavenly, spiritual body in Christ. In Christ, believers partake of this inheritance.

In Him also we have obtained an inheritance. ...the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance. Eph 1:11, 13-14

Those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. Heb 9:15

Thus it is vital that believers understand how to interpret OT texts. What is wrong is to take parts of the Old Covenant as they stand, say for instance priestly vestments, and appropriate them for today as ministers garb (many Pentecostal churches do this). This is an error. The garments speak of the spiritual glory and virtues that clothe Christ. Equal errors are: dedicated church buildings, a clergy - laity split, a hierarchical leadership, a theocracy, instrumental music, emotional, fleshly worship based on the senses, strict tithing, feast days, focusing upon Israel, state churches, authoritarian leadership or sacramentalism. Failure to see the spiritual nature of OT types, symbols, practices and prophecies lead to a host of errors and lead people away from centring upon Christ.

A great deal of what passes for orthodoxy of doctrine and practice in Charismatic churches is essentially cancelled Old Covenant forms transferred into modern life. The Biblical church is nothing like this; indeed to emphasise that the church was not following the patterns of the Old Covenant temple worship, the apostles modelled (under the Holy

Spirit's guidance) the local church meeting on the synagogue. This was a small, local meeting ruled by a plurality of male elders with opportunities for open participation.

To demonstrate that the NT church is not Old Covenant in nature, observe that:

- The NT church had no dedicated buildings.
- The NT church had no instrumental music.
- The NT church had no mediatorial priests. 'For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,' (1 Tim 2:5) [When a Charismatic apostle or prophet states that he hears from God and then passes that on to the church through the leaders, he is acting as a mediator. This is blasphemy. All believers are priests with equal access to God; 'you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.' (1 Pt 2:5)]
- The NT church had no hierarchical leadership.
- The NT church had no large meetings.
- The NT church had no platform ministry and no clergy / laity split.
- The NT church had no house groups, cell groups or related smaller congregations.
- The NT church had no office, administrators or office workers.
- The NT church had no women's meetings, Gospel meetings, children's meetings, men's meetings or healing meetings. There were no regional celebrations or inter-church ecumenical meetings. There were no Alpha Courses, men's breakfasts or national gatherings.
- The NT church had no dancing, jumping, falling over or other exotic behaviour.

The Old Covenant is external, fleshly, earthly, material, objective and temporary. The New Covenant is spiritual, heavenly and eternal. All external religion (based upon outward things and the senses) is fleshly and unspiritual. [See also 'leadership' 'worship' and 'church' in this paper.]

Law

Do you accept that Christians must keep God's law?

There is great confusion over this issue. Many Charismatics are antinomian; that is, they deny any form of law keeping. Misinterpreting Paul's statements on law, they not only deny legalism but also deny that Christians are obligated to obey any law. They fail to see that we must keep the Law of Christ (Gal 6:2) and thus they become unrighteous in behaviour.

On the other hand there are many other Charismatics who follow erroneous Jewish Root teachings and seek to establish the cancelled forms of Mosaic Law (*the Torah*). In their effort to establish the principle of law they opt for the externals (the very opposite of Jesus' teaching); thus some extremists even try to become Jewish by changing their name, observing the feasts, meeting on Saturday and some even submit to circumcision. Even more moderate Messianic believers call Jesus 'Yeshua', refuse to write out God's name, follow rabbinic methods and focus their attention on Israel in a sacramental manner.

Have you not observed the many apostolic statements regarding the need to obey God's commandments?

For the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'You shall not covet,' and if *there is* any other commandment, are *all* summed up in this saying, namely, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' Love does no harm to a neighbour; therefore love *is* the fulfilment of the law. Rm 13:9-

If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord. 1 Cor 14:37

Fulfil the law of Christ. Gal 6:2

For you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus. 1 Thess 4:2

Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 1 Jn 2:3-4

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. 1 Jn 5:2-3

This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it. 2 Jn 1:6

These refer to the eternal obligation of men to obey God's moral law. This law was present from creation and was summarised in formal statutes in the Mosaic Law. The form of the Mosaic Law was temporary (Gal 3:19; Heb 9:9-10) pointing to the inability of man to obey it and the need for a divine deliverer (Gal 3:24). The Mosaic Law (Old Covenant) leads to death, condemnation and cannot bring life (Rm 7:10; 2 Cor 3:6-7, 9) and this form of law is done away with in the cross. All aspects of it, ceremonial and civil and the mere external form of moral duty, were rescinded (Rm 10:4; Heb 7:12, 18, 8:13). Moral obligation to God is now not just external but internal motivation (not just murder but hating). The law of Christ is the spiritual application of the moral law in a believer's new nature which the Spirit enables believers to obey.

But this *is* the covenant [i.e. the New Covenant] that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Jer 31:33

The focus of law is now Christ; the standard of human obligation to God is Christ; the measure of human righteousness is Christ (Eph 4:13; Col 1:28). Any supposed law which deviates from Christ is anathema; this includes all forms of Jewish law keeping. Any denial of the need for law keeping is also anathema. Thus Jewish root legal traditions, a Messianic focus on the *Torah*, as well as Charismatic antinomianism (denial of any law) are not only false but are an abomination to God. Both bring bondage; the first is a bondage to the slavery of Judaistic dead forms; the other leads to a bondage to Satan and sin.

For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.' Rm 8:13

Yet not even Titus who *was* with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. And *this occurred* because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour. Gal 2:3-5

For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage. Gal 4:24

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. Gal 5:1

Jesus answered them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.' Jn 8:34

Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? Rm 6:16

For by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. 2 Pt 2:19

Are you not aware that we do not follow Jewish laws and interpretation, rabbinic ideas (e.g. Midrash), or the Mosaic Law?

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, **having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances**, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace. Eph 2:14-15

Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as *though* living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations - "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle," which all concern things which perish with the using -- according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, *false* humility, and neglect of the body, *but are* of no value against the indulgence of the flesh. Col 2:20-23

Not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. Titus 1:14

Eschatology

Which camp do you fall into regarding the end?

Charismatics mainly fall into one of two streams, Dispensationalism (such as those who focus upon Israel or a secret rapture) and Dominionism (those who focus upon apostles and prophets). These have a different view of the millennium; Dispensationalists believe in a premillennial coming of the Lord (which ushers in a 1,000 year reign of a Jewish kingdom); Dominionists favour postmillennialism; i.e. things get better and better and the church rules the world (after a global revival under super apostles & prophets) before Christ returns.²

QUESTIONS FOR DISPENSATIONALISTS

Where can you find a secret rapture in the NT?

You cannot because there is no reference to it anywhere. The different words for Christ's coming are interchangeable and synonymous.³ There is no secret coming for the church before the tribulation. The following passage is used to support this wrong teaching,

For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 1 Thess 4:15-17

Note that this says nothing about a *secret* rapture, nothing about a quiet return of the Lord in secret to grab saints before the tribulation. It is a very public rapture. There is nothing quiet about this return; it is with a divine shout, the voice of an archangel and the trumpet of God. These are things that the whole world will hear. This alone ruins the secret rapture idea. Then, it is clear that the coming of the Lord results in the death of all men. Many Scriptures affirm this⁴ but here we see that the dead in Christ (who are currently in

² There are other interpretations, such as Historic Premillennialism and Postmillennial Reconstructionism, but these need not be developed here.

³ Dispensationalists state that the different Greek words used refer to two different types of Second Coming.

⁴ Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed - in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 1 Cor 15:51-52 When

heaven) are transformed in the flesh first. Then the living saints 'who are left alive and remain' are transformed in mid-heaven with the heavenly saints. Saints are the only ones left alive because all sinners die at Christ's glorious coming to be resurrected for eternal judgment. After this all saints are forever with the Lord. There is no millennium, just eternity with the Lord.

How can you justify a future Jewish kingdom?

Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you [Jews] and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. Matt 21:43

But the sons of the kingdom [Jews in context] will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matt 8:12

Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, 'The kingdom of God does not come with observation.' Lk 17:20

Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' ... 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.' Jn 3:3-5

The kingdom is Christ, not an external Jewish shadow of him. All those in the kingdom are those in Christ; those submitted to the reign of God in Christ. The temporary Jewish expression of the kingdom under the Old Covenant is taken away from them. All Judaisers ignore Matt 21:43.

How can the ascended and glorious Christ, in the fulness of perfect holiness, reign over sinners during a millennium? Sinners would be obliterated.

Where is there any teaching on a future millennium? If it is so important, why did the apostles not explain it properly?

Rev 20:1-7 does not teach a future earthly millennial kingdom at all. The period described is the binding of Satan so that he does not deceive the nations; i.e. does not succeed in building a global world empire and destroy the church. If Satan had not been restrained, the church would have been destroyed. In this period the reigning saints are disembodied, persecuted believers reigning in heaven with Christ (not earthly saints at all, v4). This is the Gospel age from the cross to the end; the church age. At the end of this period, Satan is released (v3, 7) to complete the guilt of men on Earth ripe for judgment and build a global, fascist empire that persecutes Christians. Then the end comes suddenly.

QUESTIONS FOR DOMINIONISTS

Do you expect things to get better and better (as triumphalist Dominionists do)?

Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Matt 24:9-10

Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, 'Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?' And I said to him, 'Sir, you know.' So he said to me, 'These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' Rev 7:13-14

Christ returns all the living sinners are killed stone dead by his holiness, then every person who has ever lived will be raised up in an immortal body to be sentenced to an immortal punishment.

Do you expect a coming global revival where the church will rule the world?

Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come unless **the falling away comes first***, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition ... And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thess 2:3-12

Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. Matt 24:9

It was granted to him [the beast, Antichrist] to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. Rev 13:7

Do you think that Christians cannot be deceived at the end?

For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ... Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ... For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Matt 24:5, 11, 24 [The elect will not be deceived, but many in the church will be, showing that they were never really converted at all.]

But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. 2 Pt 1:1-2

For some have already turned aside after Satan. 1 Tim 5:15

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron. 1 Tim 4:1-2

Are signs and wonders a good sign of the end?

The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish. 2 Thess 2:9-10

For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Matt 24:24

Is a prophetic movement a good sign of the end?

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. ... Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' Matt 7:15, 21-23

Many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. Matt 24:11

Charismatic church practice

Church

What is the local church?

It is the community of believers in a local area.

The church in Cenchrea. Rm 16:11 [Cenchrea was a district of the cosmopolitan city of Corinth.]

To the church of the Thessalonians. 1 Thess 1:1 [Thessalonika was a provincial Greek city; the capital of one of the Roman districts of Macedonia.]

Are there any large churches mentioned in the NT?

No; none at all.

Why are NT churches small?

Because they meet in homes. This is not a house-group or a cell-group of a larger church. NT churches were all house-churches; a functioning community with elders. There is no such thing as a house-group or a cell-group.

The church that is in their house. Rm 16:5

The church that is in their house. 1 Cor 16:19

Nymphas and the church that *is* in his house. Col 4:15

To the beloved Apphia, Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house. Philemon 1:2

What about large meetings in Acts?

There is no evidence of large congregations in Acts at all. The early Christians gathered together in Solomon's porch in the temple precincts before they had understanding of how to establish meetings properly (Acts 5:12) [note that elders don't appear until chapter 11]. They did not have a formal worship service there or the temple police would have arrested them; it was where they initially ministered the Gospel and healed people.

Paul's hiring of the Hall of Tyrannus in Ephesus was for public disputation. It was used as a public debating chamber and Paul grasped this opportunity to preach the Gospel (Acts 19:19).

Are there any dedicated church buildings in the NT?

No; there are none. Such a thing is against God's command and a waste of his money.

The Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands. Acts 7:48

What about large Charismatic churches in expensive buildings?

This is anathema to God. It is against the whole thrust of apostolic teaching and practice. It is not only a waste of money and a waste of human energy in the many jobs it necessitates, but it also develops the church into a homogenous mass under the control of men based on worldly principles of government. All large churches end up being organisations based upon worldly principles of management.

What is the centre of NT church life?

It is breaking bread, or the Lord's Supper.

Now on the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread. Acts 20:7

What is the basis of the church's ministry on Sunday?

It is mutual edification, corporate ministry, exhorting one another. This will comprise of teaching, Bible reading, singing, encouraging, admonition, praying and intercession.

That I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. Rm 1:12

Since you are zealous for spiritual *gifts, let it be* for the edification of the church, 1 Cor 14:12

Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. 1 Cor 14:26

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit *of all*, 1 Cor 12:5-7

Therefore comfort each other and edify one another. 1 Thess 5:11

Leadership

Who leads the church?

Only elders and no one else (deacons deal with practical matters, such as distribution of gifts to the poor).

For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you. Titus 1:5

So when they had appointed elders in every church. Acts 14:23

Why elders (plural)?

There was to be a plurality of equal elders in church government to ensure no despotic rule by one man.

Can anyone else lead the local church?

No!

Is there any mention in the NT of a senior pastor?

No!

What is the NT role of an apostle?

He is a church planter, a church worker, sent from the home church with their support and authority, to be a missionary and found new churches.

If *anyone inquires* about Titus, *he is* my partner and fellow worker concerning you. Or if our brethren *are inquired about*, *they are* messengers [lit. 'apostles'] of the churches, the glory of Christ. 2 Cor 8:23

Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger [lit. 'apostle']. Phil 2:25

Do we see a difference amongst the apostles in the NT?

Yes, there are two sorts. There is a difference between 'apostles of the Lamb' (Rev 21:14), i.e. the 12 and Paul who had to conform to specific qualifications, such as having seen the Lord; and 'apostles to the churches' (2 Cor 8:23, 'messengers' is literally 'apostles') who were not of that order but merely missionaries or church planters, an office which continues today. The office of the apostles of the Lamb does not continue and only these exhibited the powerful signs of an apostle (2 Cor 12:12).

What is the role of Charismatic apostles?

They act as archbishops, having authority over the elders of many churches worldwide. This office is authoritarian and unbiblical. Charismatic apostles state that they hear from

God for the church and then pass on that strategy through various hierarchical ranks of leadership. This is not only unbiblical but it is idolatry, setting up a man in the place of God.

Do apostles have authority over churches and people?

Absolutely not. Even Paul, who had some authority over the churches he planted, rarely used any formal authority, preferring to persuade and encourage with gentleness.

I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. 1 Cor 2:3

Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ -- who in presence *am* lowly among you. 2 Cor 10:1

But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. 1 Thess 2:7

Are you not aware that in the church everyone should be submissive to everyone else? We are not especially subject to a man, and certainly not an apostle. However, we must honour elders who have a leading role in the church.

Submitting to one another in the fear of God. Eph 5:21

In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Phil 2:3

All of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for 'God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.' 1 Pt 5:5

Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Heb 13:17

What is the pattern in the early church to determine strategy?

It is by consensus of the whole people. Examine the procedure of sorting out a problem in Acts 15.

And certain *men* came down from Judaea and taught the brethren, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.' Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question. Acts 15:1-2,

And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the **church** and the apostles and the elders. Acts 1:4

We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved. Acts 15:11

Then it pleased the apostles and elders, **with the whole church**, to send chosen men. Acts 15:22

They wrote this *letter* by them: The apostles, the elders, **and the brethren**, To the brethren ... it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you ... For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things. Acts 15:23-28

This is consensus in action. No apostle lorded it over the community. No one decided policy behind closed doors and presented it to the people later. The people were fully involved in the debate over setting policy.

Do prophets have power over the local church?

No. Only elders had responsibility for the church. Other offices (e.g. prophet, evangelist) had access to minister but under the direction of the elders (Acts 15:32).

What about ranking of church officers in 1 Cor 12:28?

And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. 1 Cor 12:28

Firstly, this refers to the conditions of the early church necessary for the establishment of the Gospel and church communities around the world. In this time of formation, the apostles of the Lamb flourished and great power was manifested to authenticate their divine ministry and separate them from other cults in the Roman Empire (Heb 2:3-4). Thus miracles and healings were of great importance for that time. These things passed, as did tongues; tongues have now ceased, the apostles of the Lamb have died out and genuine miracles and healings are very rare.

Secondly, the early church had no Bible, as we know it today. Some copies of apostolic letters and sayings of Jesus would have been rare and expensive. No one is likely to have had the whole Bible. Gradually more people had a whole NT by the third century. In this time prophecy was necessary to establish the brethren and was the impartation of God's word in encouragement and edification.

So the early church needed apostles first to establish a church; then prophets to encourage the church followed by teachers to instruct the church, other gifts followed on. Today the work is similar but the presence of the Bible has made a difference. An apostle (missionary) establishes a new church. Authoritative prophets are not necessary but the prophetic ministry of elders to encourage the church is vital. Then elders teach the church with didactic instruction. Miracles and healings are less important since the church has long been established in the world. Helps are always necessary (in the ministry of deacons for example) and administrations (governing) is required by elders to lead effectively. Tongues have long ceased.

This verse does not establish a permanent hierarchical order of ranking officers in the church for all time. If it did then miracle workers and healers would be always necessary and of greater importance than deacons and the guiding ministry of elders.

Note that what is of value to God in the church, what is of great priority, is the exposition of the word in teaching the flock. Apostles, prophets and teachers all strived to expound God's word in one way or another. The other gifts are of far lesser value.

Do we see any other sort of leadership function in the early church? Do we find worship leaders, childrens' workers, office workers, administrators etc.?

No! None of these exist because they were not necessary in small house churches.

What about administration in 1 Cor 12:28?

And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. 1 Cor 12:28

'Administrations' is the Greek word *kubernesis* which means, 'governing or government' and is based upon the Greek word meaning, 'the power to steer', as in the captain of a ship. It is the ministry of the elder as pastor (shepherd), guarding and guiding the flock of God both in terms of leading strategy (first achieved through consensus) and also in personal counselling. It has nothing to do with the idea of an office worker or general manager.

Do we see many full-time ministers in the NT?

No; it is extremely rare. The only men who received gifts were men who were fully occupied in preaching and teaching and could not work. Such would be apostles who were fully engaged in missionary work or other itinerant ministers.

Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, 'It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables.' Acts 6:2

If we have sown spiritual things for you, *is it a great thing if we reap your material things?* ... Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat *of the things* of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of *the offerings of* the altar? Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel. 1 Cor 9:11-14

Local elders rarely needed to be supported as there was more than one over a small company and ministry was corporate. Even so, Paul is an example of an apostle who still supported himself and others by his own hand, despite being eligible for gifts and he became the chief model for the church.

Is it a great thing if we reap your material things? If others are partakers of *this* right over you, *are we not even more?* Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ. Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat *of the things* of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of *the offerings of* the altar? Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel. But I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me ... What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel. 1 Cor 9:11-15,18

There is no such thing as a salary for full-time men and no idea of consecutive giving to them. Full-time men lived by faith; that is, they trusted God for supply and people were allowed to give to them, as they felt constrained by God.

How did the early church give away its money?

Most of the financial giving of the church was to the poor and needy.

As it is written: 'He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the **poor**; His righteousness endures forever.' ... while *you are* enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God, while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal sharing with them and all men. 2 Cor 9:9-13

If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the gates in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother, but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs. Deut 15:7-8

He who has a generous eye will be blessed, For he gives of his bread to the poor. Prov 22:9

"I [Paul] have shown you in every way, by labouring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Acts 20:35

Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which *you had* previously promised, that it may be ready as *a matter of generosity* and not as a grudging obligation. 2 Cor 9:5 [Most of 2 Cor 8 and 9 regards the giving of the Corinthian church to the famine stricken saints in Judaea.]

What amount do Christians give; is it a tithe of gross income?

There is no command to tithe in the NT. The OT tithe was set for the support of the priestly caste and temple offerings and is now gone under the New Covenant. Believers now give their all to Christ at his discretion. They should respond to the Spirit's direction to give as he shows them, both regarding the amount and the recipient; the Spirit will guide the heart of the true believer.

So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Cor 9:7

Worship

Why do you think that church worship requires musicians?

Can you find any support in the NT for a worship band?

Can you find any mention at all of instrumental music in the NT?

You can't because there is none. [The mention of harps in Rev 14:2 and 15:2 refer to a scene in heaven, and even then the mention is symbolic not real.]

Is there any apostolic teaching and guidance about using instrumental music in the church?

No there is none at all.

On what basis do Charismatics use so much instrumental music?

On Old Covenant ritual that has now passed away in the New Covenant. Charismatics select parts of the Old Covenant that suit them and accept that other parts have been cancelled. Thus they agree that blood sacrifices have ceased but they build church buildings corresponding to a temple. They agree that the mediatorial priesthood has ceased but have ranks of officers having effective mediatorial authority in a church hierarchy. They agree that the Jewish feasts have ceased but import the temple musicians who accompanied those festivals. All this is folly. There is no Biblical separation of these functions; they hang together. All of them have passed away and now have spiritual fulfilment. Old Covenant worship is a shadow; New Covenant worship is spiritual reality.

In that He says, 'A new *covenant*, 'He has made the first obsolete. Heb 8:13

Priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things. Heb 8:4-5

For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things. Heb 10:1

The offerings are fulfilled in the sacrifice of Christ. The priesthood is fulfilled in the High priesthood of Christ and everyone in Christ is now a priest with direct access to God. The temple is now the body of Christ - people. Instrumental music is now the harmony of spiritual praise sung by believers. Thus there is to be no instrumental music in church gatherings. Indeed, there was no music in churches for hundreds of years. Only in the Middle Ages were organs widely introduced in Catholic churches and many Protestant churches did not even have these until the mid-19th century. Spurgeon, Luther and Calvin (amongst many others) condemned instrumental music in the church as promoting fleshly emotionalism.

True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. Jn 4:23

Thus true worship is not based upon fleshly, earthly forms, such as instrumental music.

What, then, is the basis of Charismatic worship?

It is fleshly and emotional entertainment, based upon a rock band.

Are you aware of the two forms of apologetic for establishing worship?

These are *the regulative principle* and *the normative principle*. In essence, the regulative principle affirms that nothing can be brought into worship except that which Scripture commands. The normative principle claims that anything can be brought into worship as long as Scripture does not specifically forbid it. Thus the normative principle allows people to do virtually anything at all. Traditionally sound churches, such as Reformed and Protestant churches, followed the regulative principle. Unsound churches, such as Lutheran and Arminian churches, followed the normative principle. Charismatic churches also follow the normative principle, which is unbiblical.

Charismatic Ministry

Falling down backwards (being 'slain in the Spirit')

What proof can you give that this is apostolic and Biblical practice?

There is none at all. Even the *Dictionary of Pentecostal & Charismatic Movements* accepts that there is no Scriptural basis for this.

Did any apostle ever require someone to fall over backwards in order to be healed?

No!

Did anyone ever fall over as a result of God doing something in Scripture history?

Yes. The things that prompted a falling down were: a) fear of God. b) Prostration in worship – but this was rational and conscious and God raises the person up. c) Being struck down in judgment. A) and b) were always falling forwards, face to the ground.

And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces. Lev 9:24

As the flame went up toward heaven from the altar -- the Angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar! When Manoah and his wife saw this, they fell on their faces to the ground. Jdg 13:20

The wrath of God came against them, and slew the stoutest of them, and struck down the choice *men* of Israel. Ps 78:31

And I heard a man's voice between *the banks of* the Ulai, who called, and said, 'Gabriel, make this *man* understand the vision.' So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face ... Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright. Dan 8:16-18

This *was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. So when I saw *it*, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking. And He said to me, 'Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you.' Then the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me, and set me on my feet; and I heard Him who spoke to me. Ezek 1:28, 2:1-2

While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!' And

when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. But Jesus came and touched them and said, 'Arise, and do not be afraid.' Matt 17:5-7

Then Judas, having received a detachment *of troops*, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, 'Whom are you seeking?' They answered Him, 'Jesus of Nazareth.' Jesus said to them, 'I am *He*.' And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. Now when He said to them, 'I am *He*,' they drew back and fell to the ground. Jn 18:3-6

"While thus occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? *It is* hard for you to kick against the goads.' So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand on your feet'" Acts 26:12-16

And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God. Rev 11:16

Are you aware that many people have been injured after being slain in the Spirit?
More honest Charismatics accept this as a fact, such as Francis MacNutt.⁵

Are you aware that Charismatic leaders have been prosecuted and fined for causing injury to people who fell over backwards and injured themselves?

Example: In 1989 Charles & Frances Hunter were ordered by a federal jury to pay \$300,000 in damages to 67-year-old Evelyn Kuykendall who fractured her back in one of their meetings and spent two months in hospital in North Carolina.

Do you not realise that falling over backwards and being rendered unconscious, or exhibiting contortions, is common in occult religions, particularly shamanism and Hinduism?

Have you noticed that testimonies regarding being slain in the Spirit describe something powerful rising from deep within them?

This is proof that the experience is false and mystical. Mysticism is based on fanning what is thought to be the divine flame in every man, becoming lost in a divine feeling, losing oneself, giving over self-control, becoming passive or being drunk in the Spirit and letting go. All these idioms are examples of mysticism. God is not deep within every man; indeed man is by nature corrupt and without God, lost in sins (Eph 2:1-2). Christians also have an old nature deep within which grows in corruption (Eph 4:22-24; Rm 7:17-21). There is no benefit in allowing what is deep within to rise to the surface uncontrolled. When this happens, all sorts of exotic behaviour follows.

Note an example of this,

I was completely possessed with a warm ecstatic ocean of love; it came from the depth of my being. It was like waves of liquid love. Then suddenly I was controlled by laughter. This continued for sometime. When I had opportunity to draw my breath I cried out: THE BLOOD OF CHRTIST ON THIS. Instantly the experience died.⁶

⁵ MacNutt, *Overcome by the Spirit*, Chosen Books, (1984), p170-171.

⁶ Australian Baptist pastor John Farr, testimony of an incident in 1951. Reported in Nader Mikhael, *The Toronto Blessing and Slaying in the Spirit*, self pub. (1996), p177-178. [Emph. original.]

As he looked to the Lord the inner emotionalism was checked because it was mystical and occultic. Throughout history the wild behaviour and exotic expressions in mystical revivals have been immediately checked when a strong pastor brought order to a meeting and preached Christ. It also explains why strong willed people do not fall for this emotionalism while weak-minded people do.

The experience of the Spirit in Scripture is different. It is spoken of as a falling upon, a coming upon, receiving and an outpouring on.

Then the Spirit came upon Amasai. 1 Chron 12:18

Then the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me. Ezek 11:5

Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. Acts 2:33

Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. Acts 8:17

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. ... the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. ... who have received the Holy Spirit. Acts 10:44-47

And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. Acts 11:15

The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Rm 5:5

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God. 1 Cor 2:2

Can you not agree that the 'slaying in the Spirit' is not only unbiblical, not only leads to dangerous emotionalism and uncontrolled behaviour (as in Toronto) but is mystical and occultic?

Charismatic History

Are you aware of the occult influences present in the Pentecostalist roots?

The wild excesses of the Toronto Experience are nothing new; they have been evidenced in many parts of early Pentecostalism. The most notable being the root of modern Pentecostalism in the Azusa Street 'revival'. In William Seymour's church meetings there were many witches present who scared local believers. They were allowed to perform their rituals in the meeting with no discipline against them. It is testified that there were witches, clairvoyants, mediums, and such like, all practising their rites during the hullabaloo and uncontrolled wild excesses of the general people present. This indecent and wild pandemonium caused Seymour to put his head into a shoebox in order to concentrate on prayer.

Seymour's mentor, Charles Parham (under whose ministry tongues were first experienced in the 20th century at Topeka) visited Azusa Street at Seymour's request. He was incensed by what he described as 'animalism' and 'all kinds of spells' that he said, 'God is sick at His stomach'⁷ and 'horrible, awful shame'.⁸ As a result, Seymour and Parham separated. R. A. Torrey said that the Pentecostal meetings, which he attended, 'seethed with immorality of the grossest character'.⁹ There was so much abandonment in the meetings that indecent familiarity between the sexes became rife; so much so that even Seymour later repudiated

⁷ CW Shumway, *A Study of the Gift of Tongues*, Univ. of Southern California, (1914), p178.

⁸ JR Goff, *Fields White unto Harvest*, (1988), p132. See also SE Parham, *The Life of Charles Parham*, Garland Pub. (1985), p156.

⁹ *Christian History Magazine*, No. 58, p57-58.

speaking in tongues as providing ‘*an open door for witches, spiritualists and free lovism*’.¹⁰ Pentecostal pioneer and apologist Frank Bartleman admitted, ‘*spiritualists, hypnotists ... all the religious soreheads and crooks and cranks came ... This condition cast a fear over many*.’¹¹ There is absolutely no doubt that far from being the revival claimed by Pentecostals and Charismatics, Azusa Street was a hotbed of demonic deception and heresy. This sort of indecent behaviour later plagued missionary plants in other countries¹² and later expressions of the Charismatic Movement (such as Toronto, Pensacola etc.).

The situation at Azusa Street was so out of control that it scandalised the public and was condemned by both the secular press (e.g. LA Times) and other Christian churches. This sort of pandemonium had occurred before, particularly in the American Methodist Camp Meetings, which were also riddled with immorality and ungodly behaviour.

Are there other roots of Charismaticism?

There are many. Some include: the heretical and blasphemous Shakers from which several aberrations were brought into Charismaticism (dancing, running round the room, prophecy, tongues etc.). Edward Irving’s church in Victorian London which first practised spiritual gifts and appointed apostles and prophets. It ended in scandal and much spiritual abuse of the gullible (including Irving, who died a broken man dominated by false apostles leading the church). Many other features have been evidenced in various mystical historic movements and those of enthusiasts (an old term for Charismatics), such as the Cevenols, Camisards, Jansenists, Montanists and others. All were heretical movements (though some began with good intentions) and many did serious damage to the church and to individuals.

False ministries

Are you aware that many Charismatic churches have appointed women leaders?

This is an unbiblical practice. Pentecostal denominations (e.g. Church of God, Assemblies of God) have as many as 25% women ministers. Some ordained women bishops over ministers (Church of God, Pillar and Ground of the Truth). Some of the most powerful leaders were women (Maria Woodworth-Etter, Aimee Semple McPherson, Kathryn Kuhlman, Gloria Copeland, Marilyn Hickey, Annette Capps, Frances Hunter). Modern UK Charismatics also have many female leaders, including women apostles, such as Faith Forster.

I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. 1 Tim 2:12

Are you aware of the long history of scandal, immorality and erroneous practices of Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders?

Examples:

- Arrested and charged with sodomy (Charles Parham).
- Arrested and tried before a lunacy commission (an Azusa Street leader).
- Arrested and charged with kidnapping and manslaughter (Frank Sandford; he was later convicted and sentenced to 10 years in an Atlanta prison).
- Fornication (many cases).

¹⁰ Burgess & McGee (eds.), *Dict. of Pent. & Char. Mvts*, (1988), p36.

¹¹ Bartleman, *Another Wave Rolls In*, Voice Pub. (1962), p51.

¹² See examples in GH Lang’s, *The Tongues Movement*.

- Sexual abuse of disciples (many cases, including Kansas City Prophet Bob Jones and several UK deliverance ministries).
- Fleecing the flock (huge numbers of cases, including all televangelists).
- Divorced or deserted spouses to commit adultery (e.g. Aimee Semple McPherson, Todd Bentley).
- Causing injury to those seeking healing (many cases including Charles Parham, Todd Bentley and Smith Wigglesworth).
- Kicking people seeking healing (Todd Bentley, who kicked a woman in the face; Smith Wigglesworth once even kicked a deformed baby across the stage).
- Depriving people of medical attention so that they died (Frank Sandford).
- Saying someone was healed, but who died shortly afterwards (many cases, including William Branham, Oral Roberts, Benny Hinn).
- Charged with perjury (Aimee Semple McPherson).
- Alcoholism (e.g. AA Allen died of it; Paul Cain).
- Homosexuality (e.g. Paul Cain).
- Selling illegal whiskey (George Hensley).
- Fraudulent healings (many cases, including William Branham).
- Lying (many cases).
- False prophecies. (Very many cases, such as Smith Wigglesworth who predicted Christ's return before 1900 and told people that he would not die but live to be raptured. Gerald Coates' false prediction of an earthquake in Lake Taupo, New Zealand in 1991. Paul Cain's false prediction of a national British revival starting in London in 1990. Maria Woodworth-Etter who said that San Francisco would be destroyed in 1890. Charles Parham who declared that the Second Coming would occur in the 1920s.) G.H. Lang says, *'This false prediction was so constant, so emphatic, so universal as to constitute a major feature of the whole Movement from its start, which forces serious doubt as to the energy animating it.'*¹³

Although many denominations have known scandals amongst leaders, the sheer number of cases in Pentecostalism / Charismaticism is shocking in the extreme.

Are you aware of the great sins, blasphemies and heresies of modern Charismatic leaders?

A few examples include:

Necromancy

- Benny Hinn said, *'I heard Kathryn's voice and suddenly there she was ... she said "Ask! We're waiting for you to ask! We're praying with you to ask." ... A week later the anointing hit my life.'*¹⁴
- Rick Joyner claims to regularly see William Branham in heaven.¹⁵ Rick Joyner also converses with the apostle Paul. In his book *The Final Quest* he relates visions of meetings with the apostle Paul, who then states that he has been waiting to meet Joyner; note the incredible arrogance of Joyner in considering that Paul looked up to

¹³ Lang, *The Tongues Mvt.* p25-26.

¹⁴ Sermon preached at Blaisdale Arena, Honolulu, 28.2.97 quoted in R Liichow, *The Two Roots of Today's Revival*, p193.

¹⁵ In *The Final Quest* Joyner relates a vision of seeing a man whom he considered had 'gone off the rails' in his teaching yet is sitting on a great throne in the highest part of heaven's throne room. All commentators believe this to be William Branham; Joyner does not name him specifically, however, the description makes this obvious.

him! What is more, he states that Paul fell short in his apostolic calling and work.¹⁶ This contradicts the real Paul who said, 'I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.' (2 Tim 4:7-8).

- Morton Kelsey (who influenced John Wimber) communed with the dead.¹⁷

Blowing the Spirit

This action, whereby the Holy Spirit is supposedly thrust onto a person distant from the preacher, is a blasphemous action. It is common in certain circles, e.g. Benny Hinn. It is a practice of occultists.

Channelling (or clairvoyance)

This is when a leader claims to have received messages from an angel in order to perform healing by prescient knowledge. The action is presented as a Charismatic word of knowledge but the source is a supposed angel. The chief example of this is the heretic William Branham and modern examples are the false prophets Todd Bentley and Paul Cain. Occultists work in exactly the same way.

This is false and occultic. Angelic ministry is not required by believers today since they have God himself dwelling within them. It is the Spirit who leads us into truth, not an angel (Jn 16:13).

Visualisation (imagineering, positive thinking)

This is a technique that supposedly develops faith. It is having a clear, specific goal that is intensely concentrated upon as an image. This is a long-held occult and eastern religious meditation discipline. The most famous Charismatic proponent is David Yonggi Cho, who was influenced by his local variant of Buddhism, Soka Gakkai (Value Creation Society), which practices this.

The Bible makes clear that faith is a gift which comes by the word of God (Rm 10:17).

Divination

Divination is an occult technique by which the future may be known in advance. In Charismatic circles there is a form of this in personal; predictive prophecy. This became a feature of Latter Rain theology and practice, which was then transferred to the Charismatic Movement.

As I have explained, the authoritative role of the prophetic office has ceased. Charismatics wrongly transfer OT prophetic ministry into the modern era.

Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Because you have spoken nonsense and envisioned lies, therefore I *am* indeed against you,' says the Lord GOD. 'My hand will be against the prophets who envision futility and who divine lies; they shall not be in the assembly of My people, nor be written in the record of the house of Israel, nor shall they enter into the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.' Ezek 13:8-9

Sacramentalism

Sacramentalism is the use of material objects or objective rituals in order to promote a spiritual experience or bring about blessing from God.

The Pentecostal leader AA Allen distributed 'miracle saw-dust' *from* the floor of his

¹⁶ Rick Joyner, *The Final Quest*, Morning Star Publications, 1996, pp. 131-132

¹⁷ Morton Kelsey, *Christo*, p39, 148-149; *Afterlife: The Other Side of Dying*.

'miracle valley' tent.¹⁸ Assemblies of God pastors smashed bricks with a sledge hammer while an evangelist threw a bottle of oil into a river as an expression of 'prophetic symbolism' in order to encourage an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Australia.¹⁹ Benny Hinn planned to set up a healing centre in Dallas that will have '*Healing Statues of Biblical saints from the Old Testament. It's going to have a Healing Fountain an Eternal Healing Fire*'.²⁰ Other items and actions regularly used to symbolise or impart spiritual power include: flag waving, banners, candles, gazing at crystals, marching round the room, crosses, pendants, wearing a nail, building a cairn of stones at a meeting, blowing ram's horns, knighting people with a sword, wearing medallions and so on. This sickening list could be prolonged.

This is the occult practice of using charms, fetishes or talismans, which are supposed to have magical power.

Conclusion

I have written more than I intended, and yet we have only touched the surface of the problem. Even this very cursory examination, via questions and Scripture, reveals that the Charismatic Movement is not only heretical and unbiblical, but follows in the tradition of occultism and mysticism, being directly influenced by many historic groups who were anathema to the church. The sheer scale of errors in the movement is shocking, comprising of every known form of heretical teaching known to church history. But worse is the scandalous and wicked behaviour exhibited by many leaders in this movement, which will draw down the judgment of God on the Last Day.

I urge you to consider the content of this paper and seriously consider your active involvement in this movement, which has become a Trojan Horse of heresy and aberrations into the modern church.

Further information

For more information on these and other Charismatic issues, see my papers:

- *Charismatic Catastrophe*
- *A Summary of Occult Inroads into the Charismatic Movement*
- *Nailing Charismatic theology*
- *The Rescue Package*
- *How Charismatic Churches Promote Old Covenant Religion*
- *The Origins of Pentecostalism*

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¹⁸ *Contending Earnestly For the Faith* Journal, 5.2, p21.

¹⁹ *Vanguard*, Issue 10, May 1999, p9.

²⁰ Benny Hinn, from a Video screened on *This is Your Day*, 24 August, 1999; quoted from *Contending Earnestly For the Faith* Journal, 5.2, p21.