

**NOTE:** The titles included in the following handouts for the **SIGNS AND WONDERS** sermon series are:

1. The Gospel of Power
2. What Spirit Is Behind the Power Encounters
3. The Truth About Pentecost
4. Speaking In Tongues
5. Healing, Miracles, & Other Wonders
6. Dreams, Visions, and Prophecies
7. Prayer Warriors, Prayer Walks, and Prayer Offensives
8. Waves of the Spirit

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## **THE GOSPEL OF POWER**

**Evidence of True Or Counterfeit Revival?**

### **HANDOUT 1**

By

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"Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you.' Away from me, you evildoers!" (Matt 7:22-23, NIV; cf. GC, pp. 588, 589).

**The Gospel of Power.** Today, there seems to be a shift away from the power of the gospel to *the gospel of power*

. This new gospel centers around charismatic leaders, not our Lord Jesus Christ. The religion that results is characterized by a zealous interest in supernatural manifestations, miracles, church growth, and political power.

**Manifestation of Power.** The defining characteristic of the gospel of power is the experience of certain physical phenomena.

*Toronto Blessing* . (laughing in the spirit), "stuck" in the spirit,

*Prophecies and words of revelation*

, healings and healing ministries, power evangelism, spiritual warfare (warfare praying, prayer warriors and deliverance ministries), etc.

**Paradigm Shift?** "Christianity is undergoing a paradigm shift of major proportions—a shift from faith to feelings, from fact to fantasy, and from reason to esoteric revelation. This paradigm shift is what I call the Counterfeit revival. . . . Some of the most recognizable names in the Christian community are endorsing this paradigm shift with little or no reservation. The appeal is so staggering that churches on every continent are now inviting their people to 'experience' God in a brand-new way" (Hank Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival* [1997], p. 9).

**A New Wave of the Spirit?** C. Peter Wagner, professor of Missions and Church Growth at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, describes this paradigm shift as the “third wave of the Holy Spirit.”

The emphasis of the Third Wave is upon “signs and wonders,” understood as (1) miraculous, or “power,” healings; (2) deliverance from demons and demonic powers; (3) “words of knowledge,” generally believed to be the gift of prophecy; (4) force of prayer and the celebration worship style (Gerhard Hasel, *Speaking in Tongues*, 9).

**Charismatic Worship Style.** The supernatural phenomena usually occurs within the context of charismatic worship. In this worship, praise-singing plays a central role, preparing the worshiper for the miraculous manifestations. Generally, charismatic worship is characterized by an ecumenical spirit which allows a great deal of theological pluralism and ignores denominational boundaries. However, the distinctive feature of most charismatic worships, is the ability of its members to “speak in tongues” (glossolalia).

**Who Are Attracted to Charismatic Movements?** (1) sincere Christians who have a strong desire to have a new and better religious experience. (2) successful individuals who have come to realize the emptiness of success; (3) people with problems that seem to defy all efforts at solving—health, financial, marriage, uncertainty about their future, etc.. (4) those with strong evangelistic or missionary interests. (5) those seeking vibrant worship experience.

**How Are the "Gifts" Received?** The experience of the supernatural manifestations (tongues, laughter, healing, etc.) do not "just happen" at any time or to anyone. Those who experience them are normally "set up." (1) they must have a strong craving for this "gift."; (2) they must be indoctrinated, giving a "biblical" teaching to explain their need and the alleged solution; (3) they must pray and sometimes fast for the "gift"; and (5) they must be in a location that is conducive for the "gift"

**The Appeal of Charismatic Worship.** (1) there is the appeal of *a deep devotional experience*; (2) there is *the appeal of an uninhibited style of worship*; (3) the *emphasis on high ethical standards* for its members.; (4) *the lack of class distinctions* --on account of status, race, religion, or educational background; (5) the *appeal of active evangelism and church growth*

**Some Troubling Aspects of the Movement.** (1) the style of worship; (2) the baneful impact or consequences of supernatural manifestations; (3) the pursuit of happiness, not true holiness--i.e., the emphasis tends to be here and now--the gospel of wealth and health; pleasures, profits, and honors of the world, etc. (4) experience over Scripture; (5) questions about what power is at work, if it is not leading to "all truth" ? What power is behind the supernatural manifestations? If the "Spirit" that is behind the contemporary Charismatic movement is the same Spirit of truth described in the Bible (John 16:7-14), why does the Spirit not lead charismatics into "all truth"? Is it the power of the Holy Spirit, or is it the power of another spirit (cf. 1 John 4:1)

## Warnings about Deceptive “Signs and Wonders”

The Bible teaches that the presence of the supernatural is not necessarily the presence of the divine. In other words, miraculous “Signs and Wonders” can be counterfeited.

(a) Not all miraculous “signs and wonders” are from God. Eg. Egyptian magicians could match most of Moses’s miracles (Exo 7:8-8:18). Satan himself can masquerade (2 Thess 2:9-10); the second beast of Revelation 13 “performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men (v. 13).

(b) Signs and wonders performed within the church can have a deceptive force. Note carefully **Deut 13:1-5**  
. The Bible does not question the reality of those signs and wonders. But it makes it clear that they are deceptive, designed to draw people away from God.

(c) False prophets can perform signs and wonders using God’s name. For example, false prophets in the OT used Jehovah’s name (Jer 28). In the NT, Jesus warned that people He does not know will use His name to do miracles (Matt 7:22-23). So the question is not whether God’s name, or even Jesus name is used. But rather, which God and which Jesus (Matt 24:24, 25; cf. 2 Cor 11: 13-15). The critical test is not the display of power, even in Jesus name. Rather it is obedience to His will and fruit bearing (Matt 7:20, 23) .

(d) Fascination with and the frequent demands for miraculous signs and wonders at the expense of faith in Christ and His word are denounced in Scripture as the resort of an “evil and adulterous generation” (**Matt 12:38-45**; cf. 16:1-4; Mark 8:11-12; Luke 11:16, 29).

(e) The only sign that is necessary for those who demand signs and wonders is the sign of Jonah, pointing to the death and resurrection of Christ (Luke 11:29-32; Matt 12:39-40). The purpose of sign and wonders is to point to Christ and His Word. *The greatest evidence of a miracle is a person's conversion.*

(f) A person can see even genuine signs and wonders and still not be saved. E.g., the religious leaders in Christ's day were convinced that Jesus actually performed miracles. But many of them did not believe in Him; they rejected Christ and crucified Him (John 11:47-57).

(g) It is far more important to know and to do God's will than to perform miraculous signs and wonders. After the disciples returned from the mission trip and reported of how “even the demons submit to them, Jesus said to them: “Do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

## Warnings About Counterfeit Revival

The Bible teaches that there will be a revival in the last days, an outpouring of the Spirit as on Pentecost: Joel 2. But the Bible also teaches a counterfeit revival, a deception by Satan using signs and wonders, which will lead to “a falling away” (2 Thess 2:3), “giving heed to seducing spirits” (1 Tim 4:1), “false teachers and damnable heresies” (2 Pet 2:1), “errors” (3:3), and teachers of fables (2 Tim 4:3-4). The Gospels predict an increase of unbelief and false prophets (Matt 24:11-12), and even a real decline of faith (Luke 18:8). Jesus Himself repeatedly exhorts us to have extraordinary watchfulness. **Matt 24: 4, 5, 11, 23-25**

These warnings are presented in the context of the end-time, the second coming of the Lord. The apostle Paul warned: 2 Thess 2:1-3--a falling away first, through lying signs and wonders (vv. 9-10).

**1. Two Kinds of End-Time Revivals.** Ellen White confirmed that in the last days, there would be two kinds of revivals--a true revival and a false revival. One will be the work of the Holy Spirit and the other will be the work of Satan. And both kinds of revivals will impact the whole world.

**2. True Revival.** "Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children" (GC, 464).

**3. Counterfeit Revival.** "The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work [of revival]; and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavor to prevent it by introducing a counterfeit. In those churches which he can bring under his deceptive power he will make it appear that *God's special blessing* is poured out; there will be manifest *great religious interest*. Multitudes will *exult that God is working marvelously* for them, when the work is that of another spirit. Under a religious guise, Satan will seek to extend his *influence over the Christian world*" (*Great Controversy*, 464)

Notice some characteristics of this counterfeit revival: "Popular revivals are too often carried by *appeals to the imagination*, by *exciting the emotions*, by *gratifying the love for what is new and startling*. Converts thus gained have *little desire to listen to Bible truth*, little interest in the testimony of prophets and apostles. Unless religious service *has something of a sensational character*, it has no attractions for them. A message which appeals to unimpassioned reason awakens no response. The plain *warnings of God's word*, relating directly to their eternal interest, *are unheeded*" (*GC*, 463).

"[1] While it [spiritualism] formerly denounced Christ and the Bible, it now *professes* to accept both. [2] But the Bible is interpreted in a manner that is pleasing to the unrenewed heart, while its solemn and vital truths are made of no effect. [3] Love is dwelt upon as the chief attribute of God, but it is degraded to a weak sentimentalism, making little distinction between good and evil. [4] God's justice, His denunciations of sin, the requirements of His holy law, are all kept out of sight. [5] The people are taught to regard the Decalogue as a dead letter. [6] Pleasing, bewitching fables captivate the senses and lead men to reject the Bible as the foundation of their faith. [7] Christ is as verily denied as before; but Satan has so blinded the eyes of the people that the deception is not discerned" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 558)

*"None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. . . Are our feet planted on the rock of God's immutable word? (GC 593-594)*

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**What Spirit Is Behind Today's Power Encounters?**

## Good and Evil Angels

### HANDOUT 2

By

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**Key Text: Gen 3:1-5.** Ever since the fall of Adam and Eve, spiritualism has been pervasive. The foundation was laid in the Garden of Eden when Satan told Adam and Eve (Gen 3:4, 5):

(a) “Ye shall not surely die”—psychics, necromancy, seances, ghosts, belief that man is immortal, reincarnation, etc.

(b) “Your eyes will be opened”—Third eye, ability to see into the future, astrology, horoscopes, palmistry, tarrot cards, pendulums, crystal ball, zodiac, etc.

(c) “You will be like God”—Belief that human beings are gods, needing only to develop their god consciousness or potential.

**Warnings:** The Bible warns and imposes a death penalty upon those who practice spiritualism (Deut 18:9-14; Jer 27:9, 10; Exo 22:18; Lev 20:27; Gal 5:20-23)?

**Two general attitudes towards the supernatural:**□

**1. *Skepticism/Disbelief:*** Though the Bible affirms their reality (including the existence of Satan), some view some to view a belief in the supernatural as relics of superstitious beliefs or primitive/medieval past. Skepticism and disbelief due to the influence of (a) Enlightenment rationalism, a worldview that rejects the existence of the supernatural realm; eg. Deism, atheism, materialism, secular humanism; (b) advances in science and technology leads

**2. *Uncritical Acceptance/Gullibility:*** While skepticism abounds in the West and among the educated, I have discovered to my dismay that many are very gullible to the deception of spiritualism, which often masquerades in the name of science, meditation, parapsychology, etc. This uncritical acceptance is due a number of factors: (a) the spread of paganism, New Age, Pentecostal/Charismatic movement; (b) respectability of s  
*cientific spiritualism*

which attributes supernatural powers not to good & evil forces, but to electricity, magnetism, or latent forces within the human mind; this belief has been popularized by movies (e.g., Star Trek), certain Nintendo games, Harry Potter books (with his two famous wizards; a book that has been translated into more than 40 languages, with almost 80 million copies sold), popular sports and political figures; (c) religious pragmatism which maintains that whatever works for me is OK; (d) biblical illiteracy; (e) difficulties, illnesses, trials, etc. that make desperate people to go out to seek lying signs and wonders.

## How Widespread is Spiritualism?

1. Revival of old-fashioned spiritualism: Examples: Convention of witches in England; NY bread dough floating in the air; organ playing by itself in a Chicago church; increase in astrology, horoscope, etc.

2. Disguise of old-fashioned spiritualism---repackaged to make it respectable and appealing; Anto La Vey and his church of Satan signs members up; cute girls on TV asking us to “dial you psychic”; Miss Cleo; Courses offered in Universities; Proliferation of New Age practices—yoga, TM, Psychic surgery; psychics sometimes employed by police and FBI in crime investigations, business men in oil drilling, etc.

3. Inroads of spiritualism into Christian churches:

(a) many spiritual churches and prophets, healing and doing all kinds of miracles;

(b) rise and spread of Pentecostal/charismatic churches and worship styles—speaking in tongues, faith healing, Toronto Blessing, slain by the spirit (Rodney Howard Brown, Oral/Rich Roberts, Benny Hinn, Pat Robertson, Carol Arnot, Reinhart Bonnke, etc.

(c) traditional Protestant churches being pentecostalized or charismaticized.: chnges in their worship styles; praise worships, deliverance ministries, prayer warriors and new forms of prayers, etc.

(d) Roman Catholicism: Marian apparitions in Fatima, Portugal (1971), Garabandal, Spain (1961), Akita, Japan (1973), Medjugorje, Yvooslavia (1981); recitation of rosary & use of scapula, resulting in healings; charismatic renewal, etc.

(e) Angel appearances: TV/Bookstores; Harry Potter books; Becky's former church

(f) Appearances of Jesus or claims to be Jesus

**Issues:** If all these miracles, wonders, prophesyings, tongues, angels, Marian apparitions, etc. are of God, then we must embrace them as evidence of revival and outpouring of the Holy

Spirit. But if these manifestations are not of God, then they are the most dangerous. But if these supernatural manifestations are not of God, then they are the most dangerous deception ever invented by Satan. For the Bible warns us that: (a) not all miracles, signs, and wonders are from God (Matt 24: 4, 5, 11, 24; Rev 13:13, 14); (b) not all visitations of “angels” are from God (2 Cor 11:14); (c) not even all miracles, signs and wonders, etc. performed in Jesus name are of God (Matt 7:21-23).

**Our Responsibility.** Scripture urges us to “prove all things and hold fast to that which is good” (1 Thess 5:21). We are to “test the spirits to see whether they are of God” (1 John 4:1). But in order to test the spirits, we must know the truth about them. One reason for the ongoing deception is the failure to search the Scriptures to discover what the Bible has to say. Consequently, God’s people “are destroyed for a lack of knowledge” (Hose 4:6). A knowledge of the truth is one of God’s ways to set us free (John 8:32).

### The Truth About Angels

**How Many Classes of Angels Are There?** There are two classes—*good* and *evil* angels. The good angels are described as “holy” (Matt 25:31), and the evil angels are described as “wicked” or those who “sinned” (Matt 25:41; 2 Pe 2:4).

**How did we get these two classes of angels?** Rev 12:7-9, 12

**How much does the Bible reveal to us about the angels—whether good or bad? What are their abilities and limitations?**

(a) Nature (noting the implications of these characteristics) (Heb 2:7; 1:7; cf. Ps. 104:4; 1 Cor 15:44; Luke 24:39; Heb 13:1, 2; cf. Gen 18-19; Mark 5:1-5; Matt 28:2, 3).

(b) Speed: Eze 1:11, 14 (NB: limitations, not omnipresent)

(c) Knowledge: 2 Sam 14:20; cf. Acts 10:1-6 (NB: limitations, future and reading of thoughts)

(d) Strength: Ps 103:20; cf. 2 Pet 2:11; Mark 5:1-5 (cf. combat with Assyrian soldiers with 185,000 killed in a night)

(e) Number: Dan 7:10; Rv 5:11; Heb 12:22

Summary: **Eph 6:10-12**

**Why Must We Not Be Afraid of the Unseen Supernatural Forces?**

God has commissioned His good angels to do the following for us:

(a) shield us (Ps 34:7)

(b) guide us (Ps 91:10-13)

(c) fight for us (1 Sam 17:45)

(d) protect us (Dan 6:22)

(e) deliver us (Acts 12: 5-9)

(f) provide for us (1 Kings 19:5-8)

(g) be our guardian angels (Matt 18:10)

(h) work for our salvation (1 Pet 1:12; Luke 15:10)

(i) strengthen us (Luke 22:42-43)

(j) finally rescue us (Matt 25:31)

**What Decision is Required of Us?**

James 4:7; 1 Pet 5:8; Eph 6:10-11

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## **THE TRUTH ABOUT PENTECOST**

**Acts 2:12, 22-36**

### **HANDOUT 3**

By

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We cannot talk about the counterfeit revival without first understanding the true revival. Our study will center on Acts 2, the New Testament chapter that deals with the greatest revival in Christian history. It happened on the day of Pentecost.

### **Three Facts About the Revival on the Day of Pentecost**

A careful study of Peter's sermon in Acts 2 reveals three important facts about the revival that took place on the day of Pentecost:

(i) It focused *on Scripture*; it was actually a Bible study; Peter's Pentecostal sermon is captured in twenty-six verses (Acts 2:14-36, 38-40). Of the 26 verses that captures the sermon on the day of Pentecost, 13 verses (or half) consisted of direct quotations of Old Testament passages. He quoted from Joel 2:28-32 (Acts 2:16-21), Psalm 16:8-11 (Acts 2:25-28), and Psalm 110:1 (Acts 2:34-35). Of the remaining 13 verses, 11 are devoted to an exposition/explanation of those Old Testament passages, and 2 verses were direct appeal (vvs. 38-40).

In other words, the sermon that brought about a revival and 3,000 baptisms on the day of Pentecost, consisted of thirteen verses of Bible quotations and thirteen verses of exposition on

those Old Testament Scriptures!! It was a Bible-based message. Peter did not waste the time of his congregation by telling jokes and stories.

(ii) It focused *on “present truth”*; the apostle explained to the people the prophetic significance of events taking place in their day. But Peter correctly understood that what had happened was a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. In Acts 2:14-18, Peter quoted from Joel 2:28-29—to show that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was prophesied by Joel the prophet. Notice that besides Joel, other prophets also prophesied about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (cf. Isaiah (32:15; 44:3); Ezekiel (39:28, 29); Hosea (6:3); John the Baptist (Luke 3:16; Mk 1:8), and Jesus Himself (Luke 24:44-49).

(iii) It focused *on Jesus*; the people saw Jesus Christ in His true light. On the day of Pentecost, as Peter preached his Bible-based sermon, those who listened to his message caught a glimpse of Jesus Christ in a completely new light. They saw Jesus as Savior and Lord. In

**Acts 2:22-33**

, Peter quoted Psalm 16:8-11 to show that Jesus of Nazareth, the Carpenter from Galilee who was crucified on passover Friday, was actually Israel’s promised Messiah. Unlike king David’s body which was buried and which saw decay, the body of Jesus Christ, the true “Son of David,” did not to see decay. For He rose triumphantly from the grave.

Later in **Acts 2:34-35**, Peter also quoted Psalm 110:1 to show that Jesus was not just the “Son of David,” but was greater than David. He was the “Lord of David,” who had been exalted in heaven, sitting on the His throne at the Father’s right hand. Notice carefully the use of the idiomatic expression “at the right hand” (or “on the throne”) in verses **25,**

**30, 33, 34**

:

The idiomatic expression “at the right hand” indicates a place of honor and power. In the ancient world, *when a person is described as being “at the right hand” of someone, it suggests greatness, strength, unsurpassed superiority, favor, authority and power.* Even today, *when we speak of someone being the “right-hand man” we mean that that individual possesses tremendous ability or power; without him nothing can be done well.*

Thus, to speak of Jesus as being on the right hand of the Father is to speak of His position of special honor and privilege (cf. Ps. 45:9-10; 1 Kings 2:19), and His unsurpassed strength, power and authority--especially His power to save and sustain (cf. Exo 15:6; Ps 74-10-11; 118:15-16; Lam 2:3). Peter summarized:

“Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36). By means of the Old Testament passages, Peter explained that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was *evidence* that Jesus was alive and was seated on the throne.

### **The Best Kept Secret About Pentecost**

Can be found in the most comprehensive Old Testament prophecy about Christ-- prophecy about the major redemptive events in Christ's life—His death, resurrection, ascension, ministry in heaven, second coming?

(Isaiah 53? Daniel 9? Psalm 110? Lev 23,? Etc.).

### **Brief study of Leviticus 23**

Passover—Fulfilled by Christ (**1 Cor 5:7**)

First Fruits/Wave Sheaf—Fulfilled by Christ (**1 Cor 15:20-23**)

Pentecost—Fulfilled by Christ ((**Acts 1:4-5, 8; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 2:22ff.; Psalm 24:7-10**)  
**(DISCUSS FULLY):**

*The best kept secret regarding what actually took place on the day of Pentecost is that, on that day, in the courts of heaven above, the enthronement of Jesus<sup>1</sup> Christ was completed. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit was simply the evidence*

that Christ was now on the throne. It was the first “presidential” act of Christ signaling to the whole world that He was now on the throne, and He would do everything possible to save humanity.

“Christ's ascension to heaven was the signal that His followers were to receive the promised blessing. . . . When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. *As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended*

*upon the disciples in rich currents,* and Christ was indeed glorified,  
even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity.  
*The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration  
was accomplished.*  
According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers as  
*a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was  
the Anointed One over His people*  
(  
*Acts of the Apostles,*  
38-39, emphasis mine).

“When Christ entered within the heavenly gates, *He was enthroned,* amid the songs of millions  
of angels. *As soon as this  
ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon His followers*  
in rich currents according to Christ's promise, and they were no more orphans” (  
*The Signs of the Times,*  
May 17, 1899, emphasis mine; cf.  
*Christ's Object Lessons,*  
120).

**Illustration with Joseph:** Genesis 45:23-28. The donkeys, wagons, and gifts sent to Jacob  
was a confirmation that Joseph was not dead, but alive; he was not simply alive, but on the  
throne. In the same way, the message of Pentecost is that Jesus is alive. . . . He is on the  
throne. . . and He Has given His Spirit as a Gift to the world.

*“The donation of the Holy Spirit was the greatest gift God could bestow upon finite man. This is  
free to all and in this gift there could be no computation;  
this endowment specially signaled the enthronement of the only begotten Son of God in His*

*mediatorial kingdom.*

In this the gift of the Comforter the Lord God of heaven demonstrates to man the perfect reconciliation which He had effected between Himself and men, which hope, says the apostle, 'we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered'" (

*Manuscript Releases,*

Vol. 6, p. 224, emphasis mine).

"The Holy Spirit was to descend on those who love Christ. By this they would be qualified, in and through the glorification of their Head, to receive every endowment necessary for the fulfilling of their mission. *The Life-giver held in His hand not only the keys of death, but a whole heaven of rich blessings. All power in heaven and earth was given to Him, and having taken His place in the heavenly courts, He could dispense these blessings to all who receive Him. The church was baptised with the Spirit's power.*

The disciples were fitted to go forth and proclaim Christ, first in Jerusalem, where the shameful work of dishonouring the rightful King had been done, and then to the uttermost parts of the earth.

*The evidence of the enthronement of Christ in His mediatorial kingdom was given.*

God testified to the great work of atonement in reconciling the world to Himself, by giving Christ's followers a true understanding of the kingdom which He was establishing upon the earth, the foundation of which His own hand had laid" (

*Bible Echo and Signs of the Times*

, May 22, 1899).

**Illustration:** Getting my children from Ghana to the USA

**Some Relevant Implications.** The knowledge that Jesus is alive and on the throne has some radical implications for Christians. □ *Because He is on the throne, all will be well* . No one needs

to fear. All power in heaven and on earth has been given to Him. We are in safe hands. Let's look at ten (10) implications of this best kept secret regarding Pentecost.

1. Jesus is now our Prince and Savior, offering repentance and forgiveness to us. Acts 5:30-31
  
2. Jesus is now our Heavenly High Priest; we can go boldly to the throne of grace. Hebrews 8:1-2; 7:25
  
3. Jesus is now interceding for us; He will not condemn, but will save all who call upon Him. Romans 8:34 (cf. 9:24)
  
4. Jesus is in control over all things—human and governmental affairs, angels, principalities, demons, etc. Hebrews 1:3, 13; Eph 1: 20-33; 1 Pet 3:22
  
5. Jesus can help us live victorious lives, as we set our eyes on things above. Colossians 3:1-2
  
6. Jesus will help us endure to the end, keeping us from being weary and discouraged in the Christian race Hebrews 12:1-3
  
7. Jesus will give us courage, even in the face of death; we can cherish a forgiving spirit towards those who are hurting us. Acts 7:55-60
  
8. Jesus has given us the Holy Spirit to guide us, comfort us, and equip us in all things. Acts 2:33
  
9. Because Jesus is on the throne, seated at the right hand of the Father, and because Jesus has given us His Holy Spirit, *we should not be moved*. Acts 2:25.

10. *We shall be overcomers*, even as Jesus also overcame and is seated on the throne. Revelation 3:21.

Martin Luther captured these implications of Jesus's sitting on the right: "Though my enemies and all the world oppress me, persecute me, and drive me out, I still have a Lord who is, and wants to be, my Lord because God has promised this to me. He sits higher and is more powerful than they all, and He occupies this high place in order to defend and protect me. Likewise, though I am often assailed by sin and God's wrath, which make my heart heavy and troubled, I shall not on that account be forced into despair. He sits up there also for the purpose of preventing sin, or anything whatever, from damning me or pushing me into hell. Thus, even though death attacks me and devours me, it cannot hold me. I must become alive again because this Lord sits on high and lives eternally" (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 13, p. 242).

Ellen White also understood this important truth: "The Elder Brother of our race is by the eternal throne. He looks upon every soul who is turning his face toward Him as the Savior. He knows by experience what are the weaknesses of humanity, what are our wants, and where lies the strength of our temptations; for He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. He is watching over you, trembling child of God. Are you tempted? He will deliver. Are you weak? He will strengthen. Are you ignorant? He will enlighten. Are you wounded? He will heal. The Lord 'telleteth the number of the stars;' and yet 'He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.' Ps. 147:4, 3. 'Come unto Me,' is His invitation. Whatever your anxieties and trials, spread out your case before the Lord. Your spirit will be braced for endurance. The way will be opened for you to disentangle yourself from embarrassment and difficulty. The weaker and more helpless you know yourself to be, the stronger will you become in His strength. The heavier you burdens, the more blessed the rest in casting them upon the Burden Bearer. The rest that Christ offers depends upon conditions, but these conditions are plainly specified. They are those which all can comply. He tells us just how His rest is to be found" (*DA*, 329).

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## **Speaking in Tongues: Blessing or Curse?**

### **HANDOUT 4**

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One of the most common supernatural phenomena in the gospel of power movement is “speaking in tongues” (or glossolalia), the speaking of unintelligible ecstatic utterances.

## Some Tough Questions

(1) What exactly does the Bible teach about speaking in tongues? Is biblical tongues the speaking of an unintelligible ecstatic utterance, or is it the supernatural ability given individuals to speak real foreign languages? (2) Which power is really at work when people "speak in tongues" (gibberish)? Is it a divine power having its origin in the Holy Spirit, or is it a counterfeit manifestation wrought by Satan? If contemporary tongues (glossolalia) is of God, Christians must embrace it and yearn for it. But if it is not from God, it is the most dangerous deception ever invented by Satan; should be avoided like a plague.

## Contemporary Speaking in Tongues

The distinctive feature of most charismatic worships, is the ability of its members to "speak in tongues" (glossolalia), a practice considered to be an/the initial evidence of the Holy Spirit's baptism. Charismatics offer three major explanations for their speaking in tongues.

*1. Soteriological Explanation.* The positive assurance of their *acceptance* by God , the evidence that a person has been saved.

*2. Existential Explanation.* A rapturous experience--a feeling of *spiritual "high"* that lifts them from their slavery to a life of sin, and gives them a feeling of being spiritual or close to God.

*3. Eschatological Explanation.* A *foretaste* of how it will feel like to be able to employ the "heavenly" language--the language used by the Holy Spirit to communicate with angels. Some charismatics argue that just as every country has its lingua-franca, so heaven also has its own language; and they have been given the privilege of speaking this heavenly language (this is a *eschatological* explanation of tongues, assuring recipients that they will make it to heaven).

Whatever, the explanation, the general belief is that speaking in tongues is *an* evidence, if not *the* evidence, of one's baptism in the Holy Spirit.

### Some Key Questions on Speaking in Tongues

1. *Do we still need the gift of tongues in the church today?* □ Mark 16:15-18; 1 Cor 12:4-11, 28-30; Rev 14:6: **YES.**

2. *Must everyone speak in tongues (or possess the same gifts of the Spirit)?* 1 Cor 12:4-11, 28-30; cf. Rom 12:3-8: **NO.**

3. *Who imparts the gift of tongues?* 1 Cor 12:1, 4-7 (cf. Acts 1:4; Eph 4:8, 11ff.): **Members of the Trinity, but dispensed by the Holy Spirit.**

4. *What is the purpose of biblical tongues (and all the gifts of the Spirit, for that matter)?* Acts 1:8; 1 Cor 12:7; Eph 4:11-14:

**Witnessing and Edification of church**

5. *What is tongues? Is biblical tongues the speaking of an unintelligible ecstatic utterance, or is it the supernatural ability given individuals to speak real foreign languages?* The confusion arises because of two passages in the Bible. Mark 16:17 (

*new*

tongues) and 1 Cor 14 (

*unknown*

tongues; vv. 2, 14). Some also, on the basis of 1 Cor 13:1, claim tongues is an “angelic language” (GIVE BRIEF RESPONSE).

**Meaning of “New” (Mark 16:17)**

The adjective “new” in the phrase “speak in new tongues” translates the Greek adjective “*kainais*.”

A few English translations render this Greek term with the word “strange” (NEB, TEV). These translations are based on the dynamic method of translation, which does not follow the historic literal-word-for-word method. They are the authors own interpretation or understanding.

*The meaning “strange” is never used in the New Testament when the Greek term is **kainais***

*, as is the case in Mark 16:7.*

There are two words for “new” in the Greek language of the New Testament: **kainos** (used here

in Mark 16:7 in the plural form

*kainais*

), and

**neos.**

While the two terms can be used interchangeably, there is a slight difference in meaning:

“Of the two most common words for 'new' since the classical period [in Greek], namely *neos* and

*kainos*

, the former [

*neos*

] signifies 'what was not there before,' what has only just arisen and appeared,' the latter [

***kainos***

] 'what is new and distinctive' as compared with other things.

***neos***

is new in time or origin, i.e., young, with a suggestion of immaturity or of lack of respect for the old. . .

***kainos***

is what is new in nature, different from the usual, impressive, better than the old, superior in value or attraction” (J. Behm, “

*kainos*,”

in The

*Theological Dictionary of the NT*,

ed. Kittel, vol. 3, p. 447).

Thus, according to Mark 16:7, “To speak with 'new tongues' means to speak in 'languages' which were 'new' to the speaker, i.e., those, which he had not acquired by normal learning processes, though they could have been acquired in this way under normal circumstances. There was also a new quality to the language spoken” (Gerhard Hasel, *Speaking in Tongues: Biblical Speaking in Tongues and Contemporary Glossolalia*, p. 62).

## The Problem in 1 Cor 14

Two conflicting interpretations on the nature of tongues brought forth in 1 Cor 14:

(a) Those who understand tongues to be unintelligible ecstatic utterance or gibberish base it on verses 2, 14. This is the Pentecostal/Charismatic position.

(b) Those who understand tongues to be the supernatural ability to speak real foreign languages, hitherto unknown and not learned by them, base it on verses 6-13. Until recently, this has been the unanimous position of traditional Christian churches and also the Adventist church.

(c) Both sides interpret the meaning “edifying” (vv. 4-5) differently.

The problem raised by 1 Cor 14 has to do with one’s method of interpreting the Scripture. What should a person do, when a passage or chapter of the Bible seems to conflict? *A responsible method of interpretation seeks to understand the meaning of an obscure passage by clear one, comparing Scripture with Scripture*

. We study all that the Bible has to say on the topic, to see whether other parts of Scripture will shed light on the problem passage. This is especially important since the same Greek word *glossa*

is employed wherever speaking in tongues occurred in the Bible. By studying the nature of the “tongues” in every occurrence, we can ascertain whether speaking in tongues is unintelligible or intelligible.

## Manifestations of Tongues in the Bible

1. *Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost; Peter and all disciples present (Acts 2)*. STUDY: **Tongues a real language:**

“The Holy Spirit did for them that which they could not have accomplished for themselves in a lifetime. *They could now proclaim the truths of the gospel abroad, speaking with accuracy the languages of those for whom they were laboring. This miraculous gift was a strong evidence to the world that their commission bore the signet of Heaven. From this time forth the language of the disciples was pure, simple, and accurate, whether they spoke in their native tongue or in a foreign language.* . . . and those who understood the different languages testified to the accuracy with which these languages were used by the disciples” ( *Th*  
*e Acts of the Apostles,*  
pp. 39-40).

NOTE: The miracle at Pentecost was NOT a gift to *hear* and *understand* different languages. It was not a gift of hearing given to the listeners, but rather a gift to enable believers to speak (Acts 2:4). It is not called the gift of ears for the listeners but the gift of tongues for the speakers. The sign was not ears of fire on the listeners, but tongues of fire on the ones preaching.

2. *Caesarea, in the home of Cornelius; Peter present (Acts 10:44-47; 11:15-17)*. STUDY: **Once again, tongues a real language.**

3. *Ephesus, in connection of 12 disciples of John the Baptist; Paul present (Acts 19:1-17).*  
**STUDY: *Again, tongues a real language:*** □

Note: Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians from Ephesus.

### Summary & Conclusions

1. The same word *glossa* used in 1 Cor 14, is the same employed everywhere else. In all instances (Acts 2, 10, 11, 19), the word *glossa* refers to speaking real foreign languages.

2. In all instances the tongues spoken was understood.

3. Peter was present at Pentecost and Caesarea. He knew what true tongues was.

4. Paul was present in Ephesus (Acts 19). He knew what true tongues was when he wrote his first letter to Corinthians from Ephesus.

5. Luke, the traveling companion of Paul, wrote Acts 2, 10, 11, 19, linking Peter and Paul's experience together.

Therefore, *biblical tongues is the miraculous, supernatural ability given by the Holy Spirit to*

*believers to speak real foreign languages they had not previously studied or known for the purpose of communicating the gospel message. Biblical speaking in tongues is, therefore, not the speaking of gibberish .*

**What was the problem at Corinth?** Some church members were using their real gift of speaking in foreign languages (tongues) in the church, when no one understood them. Paul was simply saying that whenever you come to church, don't use those foreign tongues unless someone can interpret. If you insist on doing so, though God understands what you are saying, no one there understands you. You may be speaking the mysteries of the Gospel, but since members can't understand your foreign tongue, you are speaking in the air. Hence no one is edified.

The point therefore is that, in the Bible tongues is always the supernatural ability to speak in foreign languages so as to communicate the gospel. *Therefore the gibberish that is characteristic of the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement is NOT the biblical tongues.* We cannot accept today's glossolalia (speaking of gibberish) as the biblical tongues. It must, therefore, have its origin in a source *other than* the Holy Spirit. It is Satan's counterfeit.

### **What Spirit Is Behind It?**

The glossolalic experience as a *powerful religious phenomenon* in which a real supernatural power is at work. The decisive question is: What spirit is behind it? From our studies we conclude that it Satan's counterfeit. Ellen White also perceptively wrote:

“Some of these persons have exercises which they call gifts and say that the Lord has placed them in the church. *They have an unmeaning gibberish which they call the unknown tongue, which is unknown not only by man but by the Lord and all heaven. Such gifts are manufactured by men and women, aided by the great deceiver.* Fanaticism, false

excitement, false talking in tongues, and noisy exercises have been considered gifts which God has placed in the church.

*Some have been deceived here*

. The fruits of all this have not been good. "Ye shall know them by their fruits." Fanaticism and noise have been considered special evidences of faith. Some are not satisfied with a meeting unless they have a powerful and happy time. They work for this and get up an excitement of feeling. But the influence of such meetings is not beneficial. When the happy flight of feeling is gone, they sink lower than before the meeting because *their happiness did not come from the right source.*

The most profitable meetings for spiritual advancement are those which are characterized with solemnity and deep searching of heart; each seeking to know himself, and earnestly, and in deep humility, seeking to learn of Christ” (

*Testimonies*

1:412).

## **True Gift of Tongues & Interpretation of Tongues**

*Gift of Tongues.* In the last days, as deception increases, the need to spread the true gospel language to all parts of the world will become critical. But there's a problem: We don't have all the resources, personnel, and time to study all the languages of the world in order to proclaim the gospel. God, however, has the answer. The Holy Spirit will fulfill this need by giving individuals the ability to speak those foreign languages so that they'll preach and teach the gospel to all the nations (Rev 14:6, 7; cf. Matt 24: 14). This is the manifestation of the true gift of tongues.

*Interpretation of Tongues.* In addition, in some places God will raise up people who will not speak in tongues (foreign languages), BUT instead, they will be enabled to understand other foreign languages (languages they hitherto never studied) so that they will be able to interpret to others. This is the true gift of “interpretation of tongues.” For example, I may go to a location where no one may be able to understand my English, French, or Ghanaian language. God can raise up a local person there to understand my languages in interpret it to the local people.

Both the true gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues are, are real known languages-NOT meaningless gibberish.

### **Guidelines for Tongues**

When at our worship services we speak in foreign languages (the true tongues of the Bible) or interpret them, here are guidelines to follow:

1. Only one person may speak at a time. There should be no spontaneous outbursts with many people speaking at once (1 Cor 14:26, 27).
2. No more than two or at the most three people should speak at any given service (1 Cor 14:26, 27).
3. There must be an interpreter of the foreign language so that the entire congregation will

receive the benefit of what is spoken and participate in the worship service (1 Cor 14:28).

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**LYING SIGNS, WONDERS & MIRACULOUS HEALINGS:**

**HANDOUT 5**

By

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Two general attitudes to the subject of signs, wonders, and miraculous healings: (1) *Skepticism/Disbelief* ;

(2) *Uncritical Acceptance/Gullibility*

### **Some Basic Facts on Miracles, Signs, and Wonders**

1. God performs miracles and wonders. (a) In the OT; (b) Christ—Acts 2:22; (c) Apostles—Acts 2:43; 5:12 (cf. Paul and Barnabas Acts 14:3; 15:12; Stephen, Acts 6:8; and Philip, Acts 8:13; Paul Rom 15:19; 2 Cor 12:11-12).

2. Not all signs were miraculous. In the Bible, not all “signs and wonders” were miraculous. Several prophets performed ordinary actions that were symbolic in nature, hence described as “signs.” These were acted parables (Eze 12:1-11; 24:15-27; Isa 20:3). Isaiah himself designates himself and the children the Lord gave him as “signs and wonders” from the Lord Almighty (Is 8:18; cf. Matt 16:3).

3. But more frequently, when the Bible uses the expression “signs and wonders”, it refers to supernatural acts of God carried out to: (1) redeem His people and at the same time (2) exact judgment on His enemies (Exo 7:3; Deut 26:8; cf. Ps 135:9; cf. Neh 9:10; Ps 105:27; Jer 32:21; Acts 7:36). Other texts include; cf. Exo3:20; 8:23; 10:1, 2; 11:9, 10; 15:11; Num 14:22; Deut 4:34; 6:22; 7:19; 26:8; 29:3 Joshua 3:5; 24:17). But those “signs and wonders” that redeemed Israel were simultaneously terrible judgments against those who turned against God. (Deut 28:46; cf. Jer 32:20; Dan 4:2-3; 6:27).

4. If the Exodus was the most prominent “sign and wonder” in the OT, in the NT it is the coming of Christ which is looked upon as the major redemptive-historical act of God. Christ’s coming brings salvation to the people who accepted Him and judgment to those who rejected Him (cf. Acts 2:19, 22; cf. Joel 2:30).

2. Satan also performs miracles, signs and wonders

2 Thess 2:1-3, 9; Rev 13:14; cf. 16:14; 19:20

### **Some Key Questions on Signs and Wonders**

**Q1.** *Should we expect to see miracles, signs and wonders in the church today?* Cessationists

say No. But Bible says Yes. Mark 16:15-18; 1 Cor 12:7-11; 28-30; The existence of Satan's lying signs and wonders, and Christ's warning about them also suggest that we should expect to see them in the church today.

**Q2.** *What is the ultimate purpose of true signs and wonders?* In the OT, the purpose of "signs and wonders" was to call people back to the saving acts of God (Deut 6:20-24). They were designed so Israel would believe, and not to forget, the wonders performed by God (Ps 78:11-12; 106:7; 77:11, 15; 105:5). Similarly, in the New Testament, the Bible teaches that besides the immediate relief to its recipients, the ultimate purpose is to bring people to faith in Christ and His Word. John 20:30-31. Signs are like signposts; they point to realities beyond themselves. All true signs from God must lead to a belief in the Word of the Lord and the Lord of the Word.

**Q3.** *Can the experience of signs, wonders and miracles save a person apart from a saving faith in Christ and His Word?* No. The Gospel of John compellingly addresses this question. This NT book emphatically teaches that unless miracles lead to a conversion or a total surrender to Christ and His Word, they are of no benefit to its recipients.

(a) John 2:23-25—people's "belief" and following of Christ was not genuine.

(b) Nicodemus, John 3:1-3—Though Nicodemus had seen We are not born again by experiencing or witnessing signs and wonders, but by experiencing conversion. John 5:24. The greatest miracle is the new birth. The Bible does not say there is joy in heaven when the lame walk and the blind see; but when a sinner turns to Christ (Lk 15).

(c) Feeding of 5,000, John 6:2, 14, 15—faith of people is not genuine cf. John 6:26-36, 47-51, 60-66—The purpose of the feeding of the 5000 was to point to Christ as the Bread of Life; but the people did not believe this, so they left. Peter’s reply to Christ as to whether they also will leave (“To whom shall we go; thou has the word of eternal life” cf. v. 69) suggests that only Christ and His word can save. John 12:37---Though Christ did all these miracles, the people did not believe.

(d) Thomas, John 20:24-28, 29-30; 2 Cor 5:7—“We walk by faith, not by sight.” cf. 1 Pet 1:8, 9

We conclude that apart from saving faith in Christ and His Word, the experience of signs and wonders alone—even the true signs by Christ---cannot save anyone.

**Q4.** *Are miracles evidence of truth or of power from God?* Some say so (on the basis of John 3:2b). But the Bible teaches otherwise. John the Baptist was the greatest prophet who ever lived (Matt 11:11). He was anointed by the Holy Spirit even from the time of his conception (Lk 1). Yet the Bible says he performed no miracles (John 10:41). Jesus refused to perform miracles to Herod. Only a perverse generation seeks signs and wonders (Matt 12:39).

**Q5.** *Can Satan perform miracles to deceive Christians?* Yes. Matt 24:4, 5, 11, 24, 25; 2 Cor 11:13-15

2 Thess 2:9;

**Q6.** *How did Jesus Heal?* Though Christ saw healings and exorcisms as attestations of His messianic work (eg. Matt 8:16-17; 11:4-6; cf. Isa 35:5-6; 61:1-2), in His ministry, healings and exorcisms are always placed in a subsidiary role to his teaching and preaching.

(a) The healing came while he was teaching or preaching (Mark 1:14-15, 21, 35-39; 2:2, 13; 3:14, 22-23; 4:1; 6:1-2, 34; 7:14; 8:31, 34; 9:30-31; 10:1; 12:1, 35).

(b) Apart from one or two summary statements (eg. Matt 4:23), when Jesus heals individuals or casts out demons from them,

(i) either the initiative is with the sufferer (Matt 8:3-4; 9:20-22, 27-31; 17:14-18; Mark 1:23-26; Luke 7:1-10; John 4:46-54)—including the initiative of the sufferer’s friends (Matt 9:27-31; 12:22; Mark 1:30-31, 32-34; 6:55-56)

(ii) or Jesus may take some initiative with an individual after His purpose for being there is established on some other basis. For example in the case of the crippled woman of Luke 13:10-13, “Jesus was *teaching* in one of the synagogues, and a woman was there . . . *When Jesus saw her, he called her forward*” (cf. Matt 12:9-13; John 5).

One prominent Evangelical NT scholar summarizes: “There is no record of Jesus going somewhere in order to hold a healing meeting, or of Jesus issuing a general invitation to be healed or of Jesus offering generalized prayers for healing. Where Jesus does undertake to heal an individual, the procedure is never prefaced by some generalizing announcement (there

is no 'I have a word from the Lord: there is someone here with back pain, and God wants to heal you'), and the result is never ambiguous" (D.A. Carson)

### **Some Facts on the Issue of Miraculous Healing**

1. Christ gave the gift of healing to His church. Matt 10:1—to the Twelve; Cf. Acts 8:5-8; 19:11-12

Mark 16:15-18—to the church throughout the ages

2. God does not always heal. 2 Tim 4:20—Though Paul healed many people, he left Trophimus sick in Miletus. It was apparently not God's will that Trophimus be healed by him. 2 Cor 12:7-10—Paul himself couldn't be healed of his "thorn in his flesh." He had to surrender to God's sovereign will for him. Thus we cannot command, insist or demand that God heals every disease we have. To do so is to invite Satan .

3. Satan also heals. Acts 8:9-11, 12-13, 18-22—healing through sorcery; Luke 13:10-16—paralytic woman bound by Satan. If Satan can bind, he can also loose, causing "healing." If Satan can possess people he can also leave them at his pleasure, resulting in "healing." See Mark 5:1ff.—Demoniacs of Gadara; Luke 8:1, 2 (cf. Mark 16:9)—Mary and her seven evil spirits; Luke 9:37-42—the epileptic boy

When God casts out demons, it is genuine healing. But when Satan “leaves” people he has possessed it is not true healing, for in this kind of “healing” satan actually keeps them in firmer grip and deceives many more people as a result.

### **Some Key Questions on Miraculous Healing.□**

There are three key issues to be addressed in the contemporary approach to faith healing:

Do demons inhabit or indwell *believers*, plunging them into all kinds of health, financial, etc. problems?

Does God allow Satan to tempt,try or afflict believers externally? If so why?

(c) Does God ever withdraw His protective shield from people, allowing Satan to take full control over them? If so, why?

## 1. Can Demons Indwell Christian Believers?

2 Corinthians 6:15-16; Colossians 1:13; Romans 8:37-39; 1 Cor 15:57; 2 Cor 2:14; 1 John 2:13; 4:4.

Given these biblical teaching, we affirm that demons *cannot* indwell a true believer, a person who is fully converted. According to 1 Pet 1:5, when Christ reigns in a person's life, that person is kept by God's power. As a result, "the evil one does not touch him" (1 John 5:18). Indwelling by demons is only evidence of a lack of genuine salvation.

## 2. Does God Permit Satan to Afflict Christians Externally?

Yes. Examples: **Job** (1:7-12; 2:1, 3-7); **Paul** (2 Cor 12); **Peter** (Luke 22:31-32).

These examples teach us that though demons cannot indwell true believers, God sometimes permits Satan to afflict them externally. We do not always know why God permits it, but we do know that when He does so, He controls everything and ensures that even the afflictions by Satan works for our good and to His glory (cf. Rom 8:28). None of these Bible characters sought to command, rebuke or bind Satan. They simply surrendered to God's will in their lives.

### 3. Does God Withdraw His Spirit's protective shield from those who reject Him, enabling Satan to control the disobedient?

Yes. The Bible teaches that sometimes God actually hands people over to Satan to punish them for their sin and disobedience. Examples:

--*Saul's torment* (1 Sam 16:14, "the Spirit of the Lord departed. . . an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him);

--*Judas' satanic betrayal* (John 13:26-27; 22:3-5---"Satan entered into Judas. . .");

--*"A So-Called Brother"* in Corinth (1 Cor 5 "delivered to Satan)

--*Hymenaeus and Alexander* (1 Tim 1, delivered "over to Satan, so that they may be taught not to blaspheme" (1:18-20);

--*Ananias and Sapphira* (Acts 5:1-11, "Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Spirit" ; God allowed judgement to come upon them.

Above examples show that although demons cannot inhabit true believers, God can remove His protective shield, enabling demons to take control of disobedient and unrepentant Christians for their sin. The way to avoid this kind of judgment is not to say "Satan, I bind you," or to "command demons" to come out. Rather, it is by receiving the truth in God's Word, and living by the truth.

### 2 Thessalonias 2:9-12.

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## **Dreams, Visions, & Prophecies**

### **How Do We Distinguish Between True and False Prophets?**

#### **HANDOUT 6**

By

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Today, many advocates of the gospel of power claim to be prophets, maintaining that God has been communicating direct messages to them through angelic visits, dreams and visions, words of revelation. E.g, the Kansas City Prophets—a group of evangelistic speakers believed also to be prophets. Among them are Mike Bickle, John Paul Jackson, Bob Jones (not the Bob Jones of the university by that name) and Paul Cain, (considered the most prominent of the Kansas City prophets). William Branham, etc. Among those who acknowledge Paul Cain's influence on their ministries are Jack Coe, A.A. Allen, T. L. Osborne, Oral Roberts, Kenneth Hagin, and Benny Hinn. Both Benny Hinn and Paul Cain believe that William Branham was a prophet. Every country has its own lists of prophets. In Roman Catholicism, the virgin Mary is also appearing to many people and communicating messages. So also are dead people believed to be saints. They also are working miracles.

However, other Christians (known as cessationists) argue that with the death of the NT apostles and the completion of the NT books, the gift of prophecy has ceased. They believe that there cannot be prophets in the church today.

### **Two Sources of Supernatural Communication**

**(a) God and His True Prophets.** Ever since sin disrupted the direct communication of God with human beings, the Lord had employed various means to speak to us. He has often revealed His plans to His prophets through dreams, visions, angels, etc.(Amos 3:7; Num 12:6, 8; Zechariah 4:1). However, the clearest revelation of God's will to humanity was given through His Son Jesus Christ (Heb 1:1, 2). Today God continues to speak to us through His inspired Word, as illumined by the Holy Spirit.

**(b) Satan and His False Prophets.** The Bible also teaches that, in an effort to confuse and

deceive the world, Satan communicates through false prophets. Over the years, he has used all kinds of means, including crystal balls, palm readings, tea leaf deciphering, star gazing, oscillating or divining rods, glass tilting, table turning, hypnosis, and claiming to talk with the dead.

The Bible not only condemns false prophets, but it also condemns the modes Satan uses to communicate with them. See **Deut 18:9-12** (passage lists fortune tellers, astrologers, magicians, female psychics, charmers, spirit mediums, male psychics, necromancers; cf. Dan 2:2, 10, 27).

See also Lev 20:6; 27; 19:31; Isa 47, 13, 14; 2 Cor 11:13-15 According these Scripture passages, all who do these things are an "abomination" to the Lord. For this reason, Christians should have nothing to do with them.. Revelation 21:8 The abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers ... shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

**The Issue Today.** Recognizing that many Christians will not be easily misled by false prophets, Satan is today employing means God has frequently used to communicate with His true prophets—dreams, visions, angels, etc. And he is doing it in the church, using God's (or Jesus) name. It is for this reason that the issue of dreams, visions, and words of revelation is today generating considerable discussion.

## Has the Gift of Prophecy Ceased Today?□

According to the Bible, the answer is No. There are three lines of evidence for this: (a) The prophet Joel prophesied about an end-time revival in which there will be an outpouring of the Spirit, with the result that there will be a restoration of the gift of prophecy (Joel 2:28-29); (b) The Bible's teaching of spiritual gifts also makes it clear that "prophecy" is one of the gifts to be found in God's church till he comes (1 Cor 12:4-11; 28; Eph 4:11-13). (c) The book of Revelation also teaches that God's end\_time remnant church keeps "the commandments of God" and has "the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev 12:17). In a later chapter of that book, we are told that "the testimony of Jesus is *the spirit of prophecy*" (19:10, emphasis mine). In other words, there will be a restoration of the gift of prophecy in the last days. God still communicates to people through dreams, visions, angelic visits, as He had done in the past (Num 12:6, 8; Zech 4:1)

***What Biblical Examples Show that God Communicates to People through Dreams and Visions?*** There are many natural reasons/causes for dreams and visions: overeating, stress, worry, anxiety, etc. But the Bible also teaches that when God has an important message to reveal, He sometimes communicates through dreams and visions. The following are some examples: Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Egyptian Pharaoh, Balaam, Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar, Habbakkuk, Zechariah, Malachi. In the New Testament, examples include Joseph (husband of Mary), wisemen from the East, Peter, Ananias, Paul, John, etc.

***What Can We Learn from the above examples?*** (a) God gives prophetic dreams and visions to His true prophets; Num 12:5, 6, 8; Joel 2:28. Sometimes He withholds these prophetic messages, when there is apostasy.(1 Sam 3:1). Where there is no vision, the people perish (Prov 29:18). (b) Besides prophets, God also gives dreams and visions to specially chosen individuals, who have a part to play in God's redemptive plan. Eg. Abimelech, Butler and baker in jail with Joseph, Balaam, Nebuchadnezzar, Pilates wife etc. (c) Non of the prophetic dreams deal with trivial matters (the color of your underwear, your boyfriend will break up with you, etc.). (d) As prophetic messages, dreams and visions are given to encourage, instruct, and warn God's people.

**Can Satan Also Give False Dreams and Visions?** Yes. Satan counterfeits everything God does. We must not be surprised that his false prophets also are given dreams and visions. Deut 13:1-5; Jer 23:29-32; Jer 29:8,9

### **Some Tests for True and False Prophets**

The Bible offers us a sound principle in our attitude towards prophecy: “Quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesyings; prove all things and hold fast to that which is good” (1 Thess 5:19-21). But how are we to “prove all things”? How can we tell if a person is a true or false prophet?

1. Do all their predictions come true? Jer 28:9. If a prophet is of God, the things he or she says will come to pass. Note, however, that accuracy alone does not automatically qualify a person as a true prophet. Deuteronomy 13:1-3 warns that false prophets can give signs that will come to pass and then use their influence to lead people to follow other gods. A true prophet must lead people to worship God according to the Bible.

2. By their fruits (Matt 7:15-20). But remember that it takes time to really know the fruits. Patience is needed (cf. celebration churches that popped up in the 1980s and early 1990s in the SDA church. Where are they now?)

3. Teaching on Christ (1 John 4:1, 2)—His deity, virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, substitutionary death, physical, bodily resurrection, ascension, heavenly ministry, second coming.

4. The quality of their spiritual leadership: (a) Are they qualified to be leaders? 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; (b) Are they good examples to God's flock? 1 Pet 5:1-4; (c) Are they faithful to their calling? Acts 20:22-35; (d) Are they greedy, in their love for money and earthly things? 2 Pet 2:1-3; (e) Do they preach the Word, only the Word, nothing but the Word? 2 Tim 4:1-5

5. Are all their teachings in harmony with the inspired Word? Is 8:19, 20; Gal 1:8, 9 (e.g. tithe, the only means of support; no extra jobs once being paid by tithe; healthful living [tobacco, alcohol], etc.)

6. Do they uphold the Law of God, including the seventh-day Sabbath? John 14:15, 16, 21; Acts 5:32; 1 John 2:3, 4; 5:2, 3

**Ellen G. White, A Recipient of the Gift of Prophecy.** On the basis of these and other tests, Seventh-day Adventists accept Ellen G. White as the recipient of the true gift of prophecy. Her

writings have been a source of encouragement and inspiration to many Christians around the world. These writings are often referred to as the

*Spirit of Prophecy*

or the

*Testimonies*

. The expression “testimony of Jesus” or “the spirit of prophecy” refers to *all the messages of instruction, encouragement, and correction given by God to His true prophets*

. (For more on this, refer to my latest article “Understanding the Spirit of Prophecy: Key Questions and Principles” in the latest issue of

*Adventists Affirm*

)

### **Do We Need the Spirit of Prophecy Today?**

Yes, indeed! The Bible says we should accept the Spirit of Prophecy. In 1 Thessalonians 5:20, 21 we are told, “Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” First Corinthians 12 also says there are many gifts in the church, including the gift of prophecy. All these gifts will be present in the church until Jesus comes (Eph 4:7\_13). If we accept the other gifts of the Spirit, we must accept the gift of prophecy as well. In fact, the Bible singles out this gift as one identifying characteristic of the end\_time church (Rev 12:17; 19:10). Whenever God gives a gift to His people, they must respectfully accept it. Moreover, belief in the Spirit of Prophecy is one of the Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh\_day Adventists, the body of doctrines identifying us as a church. Seventh\_day Adventists believe that the writings of Mrs. White, as a genuine manifestation of the Spirit of prophecy, are a precious gift from God, to be cherished and appreciated. These writings, like the Scriptures, are to help prepare us for heaven. Even now, as they lift our gaze toward things eternal, they give us a foretaste of what God has prepared for those who love Him.

**What is the purpose of the Spirit of Prophecy?** Since the Bible is the supreme norm for Christian doctrine and practice, why did God give the Spirit of Prophecy writings? Ellen White offers at least five major reasons. (1) To bring people back to the Word they have neglected

(5T:663); (2).To vividly impress truths of revelation already revealed” (ibid., p. 665). (3) To call us to holy Christian living (ibid., 2:605). (4) To help us understand the Scriptures: “God has, in that Word [the Bible], promised to give visions in the

*#last days\**;

not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people,

*and to correct those who err from Bible truth*

” (

*EW,*

p. 78, latter emphasis mine). Elsewhere she explained that the light God gave her “has been given to

*correct specious error and to specify what is truth”*

(3

*SM,*

32, emphasis mine). (5) To shield us from error that will come into God\*s church in the last days

(

*This Day with God*

, p. 126).

“I am instructed that the Lord, by His infinite power, has preserved the right hand of His messenger for more than half a century, in order that the truth may be written out as He bids me write it for publication, in periodicals and books, Why?—Because if it were not thus written out, when the pioneers in the faith shall die, there would be many, new in the faith, who would sometimes accept as messages of truth teachings that contain erroneous sentiments and dangerous fallacies. Sometimes that which men teach as *#special light\** is in reality specious error, which, as tares sown among the wheat, will spring up and produce a baleful harvest. And errors of this sort will be entertained by some until the close of this earth\*s history” (*This Day with God*, p. 126).

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## **Spiritual Warfare & Prayer Warriors:**

### **□ How Should We Fight the Enemy?**

## **HANDOUT 7**

By

(c) Samuel Koranteng-Pipim, Ph.D

Director, Public Campus Ministries, Michigan Conference

### **Introduction**

A new approach to spiritual warfare is sweeping through Christian churches and missions today. I say a “new approach” because, historically, Christians have always believed that there is a conflict between Christ and Satan, good and evil, and truth and error. Adventists describe this cosmic conflict as “the great controversy” and have taught that the weapons of our warfare are: a faithful adherence to the teachings of Scripture, total surrender and abiding faith in Christ, loving obedience to all His commandments, and a devotional life of persevering prayer and

worship.

But in the new approach to spiritual warfare, we are being told that the traditional teaching on the subject is inadequate, and that we need some extraordinary techniques to combat the enemy who is controlling our lives, homes, neighborhoods, cities and countries. The battle plan focuses on powerful weapons of prayer, and provides training sessions to prepare mighty warriors for combat against the powers of darkness. The new approach is called *Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare*, or simply “spiritual warfare.”

### **New Fascination with Prayer**

In this new approach to spiritual warfare, *“a new-found enthusiasm for prayer has swept many churches.”* --Think, for example, about how the “Prayer of Jabez” has become very popular.

--Prayer ministries and prayer departments are popping up everywhere

--Warfare prayers are now popular.

--“Prayer warrior” is the name given to those engaged in this warfare prayer. These “prayer warriors” or “Generals of intercession” employ various types of perambulatory prayers to counteract the territorial spirits.

–Prayer walks, praise marches, prayer expeditions, and prayer journeys to “bind” or “break the strong holds of” demons controlling our neighborhoods, cities, regions, and nations, respectively.

--Special techniques or formulas of prayers are being taught. It includes phrases like:: “I resist, I pull down, I smash, break and destroy the strongholds of Satan” of darkness. Can we bind Satan?

What really is this strategic-level spiritual warfare? Is it biblical? And should we be involved in it?

### **What is Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare?**

Strategic-level spiritual warfare (popular known as spiritual warfare) consists of two major components:

(a) the *theory or doctrine* of 'strategic-level spirits'; this is a complete belief system about demons

(b) the *practice* of 'spiritual warfare' ; this is implementation or the new strategy designed specifically to defeat demons.

When, therefore, people talk about spiritual warfare or warfare prayer, they are referring to the implementation or the practice of combating the territorial demons. It must, however, be emphasized that behind warfare prayer, prayer warriors, and the different techniques of prayer, is a doctrine or theory of territorial demons.

**Doctrine of Territorial Demons.** Warfare praying is based on the fundamental assumption that specific demons control certain assigned territories, and that these demons not merely exercise authority over, but reside within, and are restricted to, that specified location. The territories included: geographical, ethnic regions, geopolitical institutions (e.g., nations or governments), topographical features, ecological features, smaller physical objects occupational enterprises, domestic

**Implications.** Belief in territorial demons suggest that in evangelism, instead of the proclamation of the one Word, we need to devise specialized techniques over each religion, each vocation, each voluntary association, etc.

**The Practice of Warfare Prayer.** Warfare prayer is an *aggressive* challenge, initiated by the Christian, and directed against the demons. The specific purposes of warfare prayers include:

1. Rebuking or binding the demons who have invaded or indwelt *Christian believers*, rendering them ineffective as Christians or depriving them of God's blessings of health, wealth, prosperity, or success.
2. Setting free *unbelievers* or unsaved souls and taking them "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God"

3. Effecting the receptivity of the gospel by rebuking, binding, or cursing the territorial demons that are believed to control or rule a particular home, region, or territory.

**Techniques of Warfare Prayer.** Spiritual warfare specialists believe that we must learn formulas to speak to, confront, command, cast out, and verbally assault evil spirits. There are three major steps in warfare prayer.

*1. Seek the name of the ruling spirit.* The proper name is preferable; but if it proves too difficult to obtain, a functional name is (e.g., “demon of lying,” “demon of anger,” “spirit of poverty,” etc.) is better than nothing.

*2. Identify the demon’s territory.* Identifying the territory ensures that the proper demon is selected, and establishes the boundaries for ministry once the demon is bound. Proponents do “spiritual mapping” by collating and plotting the information concerning territorial spirits and their “strongholds” for distribution and wider prayer. Once this is done, the prayer warriors will conduct their *on-site* prayers (such as “prayer walks,” “prayer marches,” “prayer expeditions,” and “prayer journeys”).

*3. Use the demon’s name in direct rebuke.* Their strategy includes speaking to, confronting, or rebuking demons, and commanding them to leave the person or location, and claiming that individual or region for God.

It must be pointed out that the above formula to confronting demons cannot be found in the Bible, but are often employed by spiritual warfare specialists are the same found in pagan and animistic religions. Writes Paul Hiebert:

[In animism] most things that happen are brought about. . . by spirits, ancestors, ghosts, magic, witchcraft and the stars. It is a world in which God is distant and in which humans are at the mercy of good and evil powers and must defend themselves by means of prayers and chants, charms, medicines and incantations. Power, not truth, is the central human concern in this worldview (Paul Hiebert, "Healing and the Kingdom," in *Wonders and the World*, p.117).

## **Some Key Questions**

The theory and practice of strategic-level spiritual warfare raises a number of questions for Bible-believing Christians. The following are some of them:

### **1. Are there territorial demons?**

The Bible teaches that as a result of the Fall of Adam and Eve, Satan is now the good and ruler of this world. Proponents of spiritual warfare go beyond this teaching when they teach that specific demons control certain assigned territories, and that these demons not merely exercise authority over, but reside within, and are restricted to, that specified location. Among the texts often cited are:

**Mark 5:10:** *"Don't send us out of the area"*

*Objection:* See Luke 8:31, Mark 5:7—the demons were not afraid of deportation, but of torment in Abyss

**Acts 19:28, 35:** *“Great is Artemis of the Ephesians”*

*Objection:* See Acts 19:35.

**Rev 2:13:** *“The place [Pergamum]where Satan dwells”*

*Objection:* If Pergamum is the assigned territory of Satan, then the whole world would be free from his attack. But the Bible teaches otherwise. Moreover, the book of Revelation makes similar comments about Smyrna, Thyatira, and Philadelphia. Smyrna and Philadelphia each contain a “synagogue of Satan” (Rev 2:9; 3:9), while Thyatira is “where Satan’s secrets” are taught within the Church (Rev 2:24). “By the logic of SLSW, if Satan resides in Pergamum but works in Smyrna, Thyatira and Philadelphia, he does a fair bit of commuting! Besides, if he is ruler of Pergamum, what is he doing interfering in the other cities? Of course this is all rather silly, but it demonstrates the absurdity of the woodenly literalistic interpretative method employed to substantiate SLSW.”

## **2. Should Christians Engage in Warfare Prayer?**

Proponents of warfare prayer confront Satan’s demons by (a) naming the spirits, and (b) using the names in direction confrontation and imprecation in an attempt to “bind” the spirits. They often point to the following biblical examples:

**Dan 10:13:** *“Daniel’s warfare prayer.”*

*Objection:*

**Zech 3:1-2:** *Warfare prayer in Zechariah.*

*Objection:*

**Jude 9:** *Warfare prayer at burial ground of Moses.*

*Objection:*

### **3. Should Christians initiate pre-emptive war to attack the “strong holds” of Satan?□**

No!. While the book of Ephesians teaches that there is a war going on, in which “we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph 6:12), Paul makes certain fact clear:

1.Christ has already defeated Satan.

(a) Through His death, resurrection, and exaltation at the right hand of the Father, Satan has been conquered (READ **Eph 1:20-21**). All power (*dunamis, energeia, kratos, isxus*) belongs not to the spirits or to their mediums, but to Christ, who uses it for the benefit and protection of His followers.

(b) Each person who turns to Christ marks an unmistakable break in the control of the demons over the world (**Eph 2:1-6**). Prior to conversion, the individual was under the control of the evil forces of the world and flesh. But at conversion Christ raises the individual up and exalts him to “sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph 2:6; cf. Col 2:15; 1:13). We are on the throne with Christ, and conquerors through Him.

(c) The existence of the church, reconstituted from every nation, proclaims the wisdom of God to the rulers and authorities of the universe that Satan’s power has been broken (**Eph 3:8-11**).

*Christ’s decisive victory over Satan, through His death on the cross, resurrection and exaltation of Christ, as well as through the conversion of each believer and the universally constituted church, suggests that Satan and his forces have no power or control over us—if we remain in Christ.*

2. Though a defeated foe, Satan is still dangerous. Having lost his power and captives taken, Satan is waging a counter attack.

(a) He is like a wounded lion, seeking whom he will devour (1 Pet 5:8)

(b) He is making war with the saints (Rev 12)

3. The Christian's role in the ongoing battle is to stand firm in the face of Satan's counter attack. Our role is not offensive, but defensive. We are to "stand fast" or "stand firm"

--"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **stand** against the wiles of the devil (Eph 6:11);

--"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all to **stand** (Eph 6:13)

--"**Stand** therefore, having your loins girt about with truth and having on the breastplate of righteousness" (Eph 6:14)

The military metaphor of *standing firm* or *standing fast* portrays soldiers, threatened by the enemy, and engaged in close combat. Under fierce assault, the commander does not order them to launch an offensive, but to **hold their ground**. It is a defensive, not an offensive, posture: "*It involves standing firm, holding one's position, resisting, not surrendering to the opposition but prevailing against it*" (Andrew Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Bible Commentary, p. 442).

## **Standing Firm: How to Fight the Enemy**

Standing firm means to hold the ground already taken in the face of an enemy counter-offensive. This is the appropriate stance for Christians. Christ has won the battle; we are to stand firm in the face of Satanic counter attack.

*Stand* is a common exhortation in Paul's writings, and always carries a defensive connotation.

–The Thessalonians are to “stand firm” in the midst of persecution (1Thess 3:8) and in the face of false teaching (2 Thess 2:15)

–The Philippians are to “stand firm” in the midst of persecution, and not to be cowed by fear of their opponents (Phil 1:27-28; 4:1)

–The Colossians are to “stand firm” in all the will of God, lest they be swayed by heresy or seduced by sin (Col 4:12).

–The Corinthians are to “stand firm” in the faith and do all things in the spirit of charity (1 Cor 16:13-14).

These exhortations to “stand” suggest that the Christians are under attack; it does not call them to initiate an attack against Satan. This is why James says we must “resist the devil” (Jas 4:7). Because the enemy prowls like a hungry lion, Peter says we must be vigilant, resisting and withstanding him (1 Pet 5:8, 9).

This is what the Bible teaches about spiritual warfare.

**1. The Weapons of Our Warfare (Eph 6:10-17)**

**2. The Prayer during the War (Eph 6:18)**

–Variety of prayer

–Frequency of prayer

–Power of prayer

–Manner of prayer

–Persistence in prayer

–Specific prayer

–Objects of prayer

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## “WAVES” OF THE SPIRIT:

### Showers of Blessing or Floods of Deception?

## HANDOUT 8

By

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*“My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water. . . . Now why go to Egypt to drink water from the Shihor? And why go to Assyria to drink water from the River?” (Jer 2:13, 18 NIV).*

Whether we are aware of it or not, all Christian denominations are being shaped by the message and practice of the gospel of power movement. Practically every church—Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox—is slowly being Pentecostalized or charismaticized. Even in our own Seventh-day Adventist church an increasing number of churches and members are being impacted by this gospel of power. This influence is particularly perceptible in our *worship services*, in our *methods of evangelism*, and in our *approaches to church growth*.

. How is it that many Christian churches are being carried away by the gospel of power's new "waves" of the Spirit?

### **The Waves of the Spirit**

Many expressions are often employed describe what refer to as the "gospel of power movement." Some describe it as the "sign and wonder movement," "faith movement," "celebration church movement," or the "church growth" or "Third Wave of the Spirit" movements. Regardless of the terminology, the distinctive characteristic of the gospel of power movement is its emphasis on power encounters and power evangelism. I will adopt the last designation—the "Third Wave"—to describe how it came about that so many Christians are being shaped by the supernatural manifestations often associated with the Pentecostal/Charismatic movements. The expression "The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit" was employed by C. Peter Wagner, professor of Missions and Church Growth at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, as a title of his 1988 book.

***First Wave: The Pentecostal Movement (1900-- )***. “During a watch night service [in Kasas City], beginning December 31, 1900, and ending on what is technically the first day of the twentieth century, Charles Parham of Topeka, Kansas, laid his hands on Agnes Ozman, who began speaking in tongues and the movement had begun”—the Pentecostal Movement. In that group, others were slain in spirit, jerking, laughing, crying, faith healing, and practitioners of occult and other psychic phenomena. From Kansas, it spread to Texas, then to Los Angeles, California (Azusa Street revival), and later to other US cities and countries of the world. In Africa, it attracted those who had previously been familiar with animistic religions, and who were accustomed to seeing demons, witches, healings, visions, ecstatic dancing, etc. Same in South and Central America.

*Characteristic of 1<sup>st</sup> Wave*. In describing the characteristics of the first wave, Wagner states: “The major characteristic of the Pentecostal movement was a powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit in the realm of the miraculous that most other Christians at the time found highly unusual. Prominent among the miraculous works were what have been called baptism in the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, healing the sick, and casting out demons. It also brought with it an openness and freedom to public worship which at times involved a rather high noise level, praying with upraised hands, emotional demonstrations, falling on the floor, and even some dancing in the Spirit” (Wagner, *The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit*, p. 16)

The majority of Christians did not embrace the Pentecostal movement because they deemed the supernatural phenomena unbiblical. They couldn't accept all the religious confusion, noise, barking, defocation, vomitting and bizzare behaviour as evidence of the Spirit's leading.

***Second Wave: Charismatic Movement (1960- )***. It brought Pentecostalism into traditional churches of Christianity, including Methodism, Presbyterianism, Lutheranism, the Baptist denominations, the Roman Catholic church, etc. It is thus, sometimes referred to as “Neo

Pentecostalism”, but more popularly as the Charismatic Renewal Movement. Our church was only minimally touched by it.

According to C. Peter Wagner, “the second phase of this movement began after World War II when Pentecostal leaders such as Thomas Zimmerman of the Assemblies of God set out to join the mainstream. The beginnings were slow. Some of the Pentecostal denominations began to gain 'respectability' by affiliating with organizations such as the National Association of Evangelicals. Thereby they neutralized the opinion that Pentecostalism was a false sect. . . . In 1960, an Episcopal priest in Van Nuys, California, Dennis Bennet, shared with his congregation that he had experienced the Holy Spirit in the Pentecostal way, and the Charismatic movement had its start.” (Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*, p. 14).

The Charismatic movement became easily embraced because of a number of factors: (1) the *ecumenical dialogue* between Pentecostals and other churches (David du Plessis); (2) Work by the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship International (FGBMFI; Demos Shakarian); (3) Role of young people in Christian fellowships/cell groups and their work in schools, colleges, and universities.

*Characteristic of 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave.* It is significant to note what Professor Wagner says about the distinctive nature of the charismatic movements: “The main distinguishing feature of these new movements is that they are appropriating the dynamic of *spiritual gifts* [my italics] in a new and exciting way. Through their discovery of how the gifts of the Spirit were intended to operate in the Body of Christ, the Holy Spirit is now being transformed from abstract doctrine to dynamic experience” (Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*, p. 14).

“In the first wave, tongues were typically considered *the* evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the second, tongues were thought to be

*an* evidence. Furthermore, while it had been common for first wave leaders to encourage their devotees to become denominational Pentecostals, prominent second wave leaders urged followers to remain in their denominations and effect change from within. They were convinced that only through the restoration of charismatic gifts would there be hope for global revival” (Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival*, p. 143).

***The Third Wave:(1980— ):*** According to Wagner, “The Third Wave is a new moving of the Holy Spirit among evangelicals who, for one reason or another, have chosen not to identify with the Pentecostals or the charismatics. . . . I see it as mainly a movement beginning in the 1980s and gathering momentum through the closing years of the twentieth century. . . . In it the Holy Spirit is ministering in the same miraculous way but with a different flavor. I see the Third Wave as distinct from, but at the same time very similar to the first and second waves. They have to be similar because it is the *same Spirit of God* [his italics] who is doing the work. . . . Within it the sick are being healed, the lame are walking, demons are being cast out. . . . The major variation comes in the understanding of the meaning of baptism in the Holy Spirit and the role of tongues in authenticating this” (*The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit*, p. 18).

*Characteristic of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave:* The emphasis of the Third Wave is upon “signs and wonders,” understood as (1) miraculous, or “power,” healings; (2) deliverance from demons and demonic powers; and (3) “words of knowledge” that come as immediate revelations of God’s mind and heart for the believer and the gathered church; the capacity to utter “words of knowledge” is generally believed to be the gift of prophecy, and “power evangelism,” evangelism that is accompanied by dramatic manifestations of miraculous power.

*Key Leaders:* Paul Yonggi Cho (pastor the worlds largest church in Seoul, South Korea), John Wimber (Association of Vineyard Fellowships), C. Peter Wagner (Professor of Missions and Church growth at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California), the Kansas City Prophets (group of evangelistic speakers believed also to be prophets; they include Mike Bickle, John Paul Jackson, Bob Jones [not the Bob Jones of the university by that name]), Paul Cain (one considered the most prominent of the Kansas City prophets), and William Branham. Among those who acknowledge Branham's influence on their ministries are Jack Coe, A.A. Allen, T. L. Osborne, Oral Roberts, Kenneth Hagin, and Benny Hinn. Both Benny Hinn and Paul Cain believe that William Branham was a prophet).

*Method of Dissemination:* Through church growth and missions classes in Theological Seminaries, through seminars on worship, soul-winning, and church growth, and through a variety of tapes, cassettes, books, magazines, song books, CDs, worship aids, religious TV and radio broadcasts, Promise Keepers, etc.

### **Must We Flow with the Charismatic Wave?**

Throughout our history there has always been a temptation for our ministers to pattern our practices after other churches. Ellen G. White warned against this in her day: "A new order of things has come into the ministry. There is a desire to pattern after other churches" (*Signs of the Times*, Dec. 27, 1899). She expressed her concerns about the influence of other churches on our ministers: "Some ministers are adopting the customs of other churches, copying their habits and manner of labor" (ibid., May 25, 1882). Again she wrote: "They may desire us to unite with them and accept their plans, and may make propositions in regard to our course of action which may give the enemy an advantage over us" (*General Conference Bulletin*, April 13, 1891).

“We are in danger of making blunders in our missionary effort, in danger of failing to realize how essential is the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. A new order of things has come into the ministry. There is a desire to pattern after other churches, and simplicity and humility are almost unknown. Young ministers who desire to be original introduce new ideas and new plans for labor. They open revival meetings and call large numbers into the church. But when the excitement is over, where are the converted ones? Repentance for sin is not felt. The sinner is entreated to believe in Christ and accept Him, without any regard for his past life of sin and rebellion, and the heart is not broken. There is no contrition of soul. The professedly converted ones have not fallen upon the Rock Christ Jesus” (*Signs of the Times*, Dec. 27, 1889).

Earlier in our history, following the disappointment, Mrs. White warned our members not to seek “new light” even from denominations that had their roots in the Advent movement but had not accepted advancing truth: “The different parties of professed Advent believers have each a little truth, but God has given all these truths to His children who are being prepared for the day of God. He has also given them truths that none of these parties know, neither will they understand. Things which are sealed up to them, the Lord has opened to those who will see and are ready to understand. *If God has any new light to communicate, He will let His chosen and beloved understand it, without their going to have their minds enlightened by hearing those who are in darkness and error*” (*Early Writings*, p. 124, emphasis mine).

She continued: “I was shown the necessity of those who believe that we are having the last message of mercy, being separate from those who are daily imbibing new errors. I saw that neither young nor old should attend their meetings; for it is wrong to thus encourage them while they teach error that is a deadly poison to the soul and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. The influence of such gatherings is not good. If God has delivered us from such darkness and error, we should stand fast in the liberty wherewith He has set us free and rejoice in the truth. *God is displeased with us when we go to listen to error, without being obliged to go*” (ibid., pp. 124, 125, my emphasis).

