

*TONGUES, PROPHECY  
AND KNOWLEDGE*

# COUNTERFEIT SPIRIT

*IN THE  
CHURCH TODAY*



BELIEVE NOT EVERY SPIRIT BUT TEST THE SPIRITS

Dr Bruce Woolard Ph.d

# COUNTERFEIT SPIRIT

By

DR BRUCE WOOLARD

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## *Preface*

It is almost trite to say that the Church has problems, and the chief reason for these problems is the fact that the individual believer has problems. The Church is people; the Church is not a denomination nor an organisation nor a building. The Church is people, and people who make up the church have problems.

I was reared in a Pentecostal Church and became an ordained minister in the Pente-Charismatic movement. I'm more persuaded today than ever before that a counterfeit spirit has sown the seed of deception in the modern Christian church. I'm not putting down all Pentecostals and Charismatics because I am convinced that many who are in the movement are also concerned with what's happening in their fellowship. There are many fine people in the movement who are confused with experiences they wrongly attribute to the Holy Spirit. One of the blights upon the Church today is the emphasis upon the spectacular. There is no doubt that God is a miracle working God, but the lack of discernment in Christianity today is of deep concern to many thinking Christians.

May this book help you to unshackle yourself from the chains of deception and stimulate a genuine desire for truth.

# INTRODUCTION

Satan is an imitator, a counterfeiter. One of his devices is to offer a forgery, so close to the genuine, even believers are deceived. I know of no doctrine more fraudulently imitated than the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The modern charismatic movement is an example of subtle deception, the devotees of this sect are victims of delusion. The misleading of their minds results, not from ignorance of the person and work of Christ, but because they are confused and befuddled about the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is true that the Holy Spirit does not exalt Himself, but it is equally true that the Word of God establishes Him in the exalted position of a member of the Godhead, co-equal with the Father and the Son. The Corinthian charismatic catastrophe resulted from blindness concerning the office and operation of the Holy Spirit. For the same reason, the Corinthian problem remains with us today. I have observed that unless there is a return to scriptural teaching on the person and work of the Holy Spirit, we can expect growing confusion. The very heart of a truly spiritual life is in the teaching of the Word of God. Some of our experiences may add up to nonsense, but the Bible does make sense. When the sincere student searches the Scriptures, he discovers that the truth sets him free from all extra biblical ideas. The Lord Jesus said, *"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"* (John 8:31, 32).

The purpose of this book is to help you, the Believer, to study the Word Rightly Divided (2Timothy 2:15) and equip to you to properly discern truth.

# COUNTERFEIT

# 1

**S**ome people have not learned that Satan is not an innovator, but an imitator; He is a copyist, but his copies are counterfeit. Jesus warned His own to beware of Satan's emissaries, He said, "*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits ...*" (Matt. 7:15,16). Other "spirits" produce their fruits, and the Holy Spirit produces His fruit. The tragedy lies in the fact that too many persons can discern neither the spirits nor the fruits. Read carefully the following divinely inspired words from the pen of the apostle Paul:

*For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works*  
(2 Cor. 11:13-15).

The early church was experiencing the peril of the counterfeit. The demon of darkness appeared then as an angel of light, causing Paul no little concern and consternation. He said to those believers, "*But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*" (2 Cor. 11:3). There can be no doubt that Satan is behind the religious activity of the other "spirits."

It seems quite clear that there were in Corinth men who were preaching a brand of Christianity, which was not of God. They regarded themselves as very special people, super-spiritual.

Tragically, the Corinthians gave them a hearing; therefore, Paul exposed them for what they were, false

Apostles masquerading as Christian witnesses 2 Cor 11:14 & 15. Paul added that all who are guilty of such deeds will have an end corresponding to their deeds (11:15). But much damage had already been done. An evil spirit had penetrated the church in Corinth, adding to the already existing Corinthian confusion. The believers there did not "try the spirits." They were long on the gift of tongues, but short on the gift of "discerning of spirits."

Verse 3 says, *"The serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety."* Now please note 1 Timothy 2:14, which says, *"And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."* Why did Satan come to Eve first rather than to Adam? Obviously he believed he could deceive her with greater ease than he could deceive Adam. In this he was correct. And again the Scriptures give us the reason. You will find it in Peter's First Epistle, where he writes, *"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel . . ."* (3:7). God says the wife is the weaker, and therefore more susceptible to Satan's subtlety, an easier prey for the spirits.

A medical doctor was treating a Spanish speaking husband and wife. This couple were devotees of Mary Baker Eddy and her religious system known as Christian Science. The doctor had prayed that the Holy Spirit might make it possible for him to witness about Jesus Christ and His great salvation. So that he might be prepared, the doctor worked hard on improving his Spanish. On one of his visits, the prayer was answered as the Holy Spirit opened the door for a witness.

During the course of the conversation, the woman said, "Doctor, how do you know Mary Baker Eddy is not right? She uses the Bible."

"Yes," replied the doctor, "but she uses the Bible on condition that you be guided by her 'key to the Scriptures.' If Mary Baker Eddy is correct, what about the millions who lived and died during almost nineteen hundred years before Mary Baker Eddy was born?" The woman could not grasp the point the

doctor was making. Suddenly her husband's face became aglow, and he cried, "I see it now!" The Holy Spirit had taken those Scriptures the doctor used in his witness, and at once the truth was grasped. Both the man and his wife received Christ that day as their Saviour and Lord. That man discerned the spirits (Mary Baker Eddy founded the Christian Science Movement the roots of which are found in spiritism).

Had Mary Baker Eddy yielded to the Holy Spirit and not been led by another spirit, she never would have started the evil system that has blighted millions. Yes, there is "another spirit" (2 Cor. 11:4), but that "spirit" is not the Holy Spirit.

### **WHAT ABOUT MIRACLES?**

One of the blights upon the church today is the emphasis upon the spectacular, that which smacks of the miraculous, the supernatural. Everything connected with genuine Christianity is supernatural, including the Bible, the virgin birth, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, the New Birth, and much more. What many cannot see is that Satan can imitate gifts and miracles. The miracles that God performed through Moses and Aaron were duplicated by the magicians of Pharaoh (Exod. 7:8-12). An evil spirit matched a miracle of the Holy Spirit.

Robert K. Massie, in his book *Nicholas and Alexandra*, relates how a miracle deceived the Czar and Czarina of Russia and ultimately destroyed their empire.

Federovna, the German wife of Czar Nicholas II, gave birth to a son, the heir to the Russian throne. In a matter of weeks, the doctors discovered that the infant had haemophilia, an incurable blood disease. The members of the royal family were greatly disturbed by the doctors' discovery, because to them the child's death would be disastrous.

But a greater tragedy occurred. In Russia at that time was a wicked man, a religious mystic by the name of Gregory Rasputin. Some recall him as "the mad monk of Russia." In desperation the czar and his Czarina sought the powers of Rasputin for the healing of their son.

Every time Rasputin said prayers over the sick child, there would be a definite improvement. After each session with the child, Rasputin would remind the parents that the child could live only as long as they followed his instructions. Because of their love for the child and their dreams for the future of the empire, they bowed to Rasputin's every request.

With a word the wicked Rasputin could obtain the appointment or dismissal of any government official. Those who were under his influence and control he caused to be appointed; those who were not he had dismissed. It did not take long for this demon-possessed evil man to have the entire Russian government under his control.

The bitter fruits that followed plague civilisation to this day. The royal family was murdered, followed by civil war and the take-over by the Communists. One government official who survived that disaster said, "Without Rasputin, there could have been no Lenin." Czar Nicholas II and his Czarina Federovna were deceived through a miracle. They could not discern the spirits.

These forces are at work in our midst today.

*"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1).*

## **A DISCERNING CHURCH**

Have you read recently the Lord's warning to the church at Ephesus? The church in the city was not perfect. It had a major weakness: Jesus said, *"Thou hast left thy first love"* (Rev. 2:4). But in spite of its weakness, the believers could discern the spirit.

Jesus said, *"Thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried [i.e., tested] them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars"* (Rev 2:2) Apparently the assembly in that great city did not have all the gifts, but they

did have the gift of "discerning spirits". It was this gift that spared them from the Corinthian confusion.

It is interesting that Paul had warned the elders at Ephesus to be on their guard against a false spirit. *"And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church."* He said to them, *"For I know this, that after departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them"* (Acts 20:17,29, 30).

Serious problems among Christians could be corrected if only we would be led by the Holy Spirit and not another spirit.

Remember that a counterfeit banknote is made to deceive the holder. Any criminal wanting to deceive the public will not make a counterfeit note out of sandpaper and put the image of Micky Mouse on it. He would counterfeit the note to make it look like the genuine. Too often Christian leaders identify with ease the cults and modern day sects but fail to speak out against covert ministries.

# CONTROVERSY

## 2

**T**he controversy of tongues in the modern Church has left many believers confused. People who claim to have had the experience or manifestation of tongues have continued either experiencing further manifestations or have been left disillusioned about what tongue speaking ought to have accomplished in their Christian lives.

Ernest R. Campbell in his commentary on First Corinthians bases his viewpoint on the Greek New Testament in a verse by verse study on

1 Corinthians 13. Let us consider what he discovered from the Greek text in relation to tongues, prophecy and knowledge.

### 1 CORINTHIANS 13:6-13

#### **6. "Does not rejoice in injustice, but rejoices with the truth;"**

The Greek phrase translated that love does "not rejoice in injustice" may also be rendered that love is *not glad on the basis of iniquity* (Rom. 9:14; Heb. 1:9).

The Greek phrase translated that love "rejoices with the truth" means that *it is joyful together with the truth of God's Word* (John 17:17; Col. 1:5).

#### **7. "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."**

The Greek verb translated "bears" means that love *holds up against, holds off and forbears* all things. Another possible rendering would be that love *covers, conceals and hides* the faults of others (9:12; 1 Thess. 3:1, 5).

The Greek verb translated "believes" means that love *trusts, relies upon* and *has confidence in* all things. We interpret this statement to particularly refer to the Word of God, for it is trustworthy, because it has been spoken by a trustworthy God, the Creator of all things (Gen. 1:1; John 1:5; 1 Cor. 2:10; 1 Thess. 2:13).

The Greek verb translated "hopes" means that love *looks for, expects* and *anticipates* all things. We interpret that this refers to all things relating to the blessed hope, the coming of Christ for the members of His Body, the Church (Titus 2:13; 1 Thess. 4:13-17).

The Greek verb translated "endures" means that love *remains under, it bears up under* and *continues firm*. Regardless of circumstances, love will remain constant (Rom. 5:8; Heb. 12:3).

**8. "Love never fails; but whether there are prophecies, they will be done away; whether languages, they will cease; whether knowledge, it will be done away."**

According to verses 8-12, the various sign gifts were only partial, and when that which is perfect is come, they will cease to exist. This is exactly what took place after the final laying aside of the nation of Israel (Acts 13:46; 18:6; 28:28; Rom. 11:25, 31) and the Truth for the Body of Christ, the Church, was perfectly revealed, particularly, in Ephesians, Colossians and Philippians. Following the writing of these epistles, there is no further record of sign gifts in the New Testament.

With respect to love, which was not a sign gift, Paul says that it "never fails." The Greek verb translated "fails" means that it never will *fall* or *become null and void*. The number one characteristic, which God wants in the lives of all believers, is *love*. Other temporary gifts will be done away with, cease and end, but *love is permanent*; it is the first fruit of the Spirit (John 17:24; Gal. 5:22; 1 Tim. 1:5; 1 John 4:7).

With respect to prophecies, Paul says, "They will be done away." The Greek noun translated "prophecies" as used in this context, refers to one of the early gifts given to members of the Church (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10; 13:2). It was a gift which enabled those to whom it was given to *recall and speak the Truth of the Mystery*, via the Spirit, to those in local assemblies (v. 2; 14:22; Eph. 3:5). The person who had the gift of prophecy *edified, exhorted, encouraged and taught believers* (14:3-4, 33). With respect to unbelievers, prophecy *convinced and convicted* them of their sin (14:24).

Even though gifts of prophecies were very important for establishing the Church, Paul says, "They will be done away." The Greek verb translated "they will be done away" is in the future tense and passive voice, which means that the same God who gave them will *remove, cancel and make them null and void*. With the writing of the New Testament epistles, this gift was no longer necessary.

With respect to *languages*, Paul says, "They will cease." The Greek noun translated "languages" refers to the *known foreign languages* which were being spoken in the Corinthian church due to its unique melting-pot location.

The Apostle Paul clearly predicts that these known foreign languages will cease. The Greek verb translated "will cease" means that *they will pause, stop and leave off*; in other words, they will be *non-existent*. Even though this gift ceased with the laying aside of Israel, approximately 60 AD, due to ignorance of the Word of God man vainly try to simulate it today.

With respect to knowledge, Paul says, "It will be done away." The Greek noun translated "knowledge", as used in this context, refers to a special Divine insight and enlightenment given to certain believers for the establishing of the early Church. In the preceding chapter, it is listed as one of the gifts, which the Holy Spirit gave for the benefit of all believers (12:8). According to verse 2 in this chapter, it

appears that it is associated with the Mystery, i.e. knowledge revealed via the Mystery. It may be an ally of the gift of prophecy.

The gift of knowledge, like the gift of prophecy, "will be done away," *removed, concealed and annulled*. The fact that the same verb is used regarding the cessation of both tends to tie them together (14:6).

### **9. "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part."**

The Greek phrase translated "in part", as used in this verse, means *in part, partially, hence imperfectly*. At the time Paul was writing this epistle, he says that we only partially and imperfectly know. The Greek verb translated "know: used with the above modifier, means that his perception and understanding of Church truth was still *incomplete*.

Next, Paul says that "we prophesy in part." The Greek verb translated "prophesy." as used in this verse, primarily means to *teach Divinely revealed truth* (14:3-4; 24, 31). When Paul was writing to the Corinthian church, he acknowledged that all the truth pertaining to the Church, the Body of Christ, had not been revealed to him. At that point in time the truth for the Church, the Mystery, was still in the process of being revealed to and through the Apostle Paul (2:7-10).

### **10. "But whenever the perfect may come, that which is partial will be done away."**

The Greek noun translated "perfect" conveys the idea of *that which is completed or fully accomplished*. The Greek verb translated "may come" is in the subjunctive mood, and refers to the time when that which is perfect may *come or arrive*.

The question is — to what does the coming of that, which is perfect, completed and accomplished refer? There has been a great deal of speculation regarding the meaning of this verse.

In view of all the evidence we prefer the interpretation that *the perfect* refers to the *completing and accomplishing of the revelation of the mystery*, i.e., after the nation of Israel has been laid aside (Acts 28:28).

After the period covered by the Book of Acts, during which time the Kingdom was *offered*, the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth was *confirmed*, and churches were multiplying, the miraculous sign gifts *disappeared*. In other words, the disappearance of the sign gifts, concomitant with the writing of Ephesians and Colossians, strongly suggests that the phrase "the perfect" is to be identified with the mystery Truth revealed in these epistles (Eph. 3:2-12; 6:19-20; Col. 1:24-27; 4:2-4).

The Greek verb translated it "will be done away" may also be rendered it will be *idled down, made inactive and brought to an end*. This means that Paul's partial knowledge of mystery Truth, and his limited ability to prophesy, will cease when the fullness of the Mystery is revealed unto him.

The truth of the Mystery was progressively revealed to Paul. For example, in the first epistle he wrote, First Thessalonians, he speaks about the coming of Christ for His Church, commonly known as the rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-17). In this epistle he refers to the Mystery as wisdom from God which was given to him through the Spirit (2:6-10). In the Book of Romans, he refers to the truth of the Mystery as essential for establishing believers (Rom. 16:25). In Ephesians it is revealed in the Mystery that the Gentiles have the right to share equally with the Jews in the Body of Christ (Eph. 3:6).

**11.** *"When I was a child, I was speaking as a child, I was thinking as a child, I was reasoning as a child; when I had become a man, I have ceased from the things of the child."*

The first four verbs in this verse are in the imperfect tense, and as such, they indicate what Paul *was continually doing* as a young child. He uses this phase of his childhood, with its immaturity, as an example of his present status, when he wrote this epistle. Even as he was operating on an immature level as a child, likewise, as he writes, he has not yet received a full, mature revelation of all the truth encompassed in the Mystery (Eph. 3:10-11).

The last two verbs in this verse are in the perfect tense, and as such, indicate the course of action Paul *had taken* when he became a man. His status as a man left behind the immature things of his childhood, such as his partial knowing and prophesying. His manhood state represents his anticipation of the time when he would have all the Mystery truth revealed unto him, something which he apparently foresaw would take place after Israel's ultimate rejection of their Messiah (Acts 28:28).

**12. "For now we see through a mirror obscurely, but then face to face; now I know partially, but then I shall perfectly know even as I have been perfectly known."**

The thought is that as Paul was writing he saw through a mirror "obscurely" or *dimly*. He undoubtedly has in mind a polished metal mirror, which at best, would give one an obscure, dim and ambiguous image of the real thing. This describes Paul's limited comprehension of Mystery truth when he wrote this epistle from Ephesus, approximately six years before the laying aside of Israel with her sign gifts.

Speaking of the future time when that which is perfect is come, Paul says, then we will see face to face. In comparison to seeing a face dimly and obscurely in a mirror, he likens the coming of *the perfect* with seeing face to face. We interpret this to mean that when all the truth of the Mystery is revealed unto him, all dimness and obscurity will cease, and he will

clearly see the fullness of God's purpose through the Church (Eph. 1:22-23).

Paul again reiterates the statement he made in verse 9, namely, that "now I know partially." But with respect to the future he says, "Then I shall perfectly know even as I have been perfectly known." The two Greek adverbs translated "then" refer to the time when that which is perfect is present. We interpret Paul as saying that at that time he will perfectly know the full truth of the Mystery. It appears to us that this full revelation of the Mystery is exactly what God reveals through him in both Ephesians and Colossians. Even as God has perfectly known Paul, and made him the chief apostle for the Church, likewise. God will give to him the full and perfect knowledge of the Mystery.

**13. *"And now abides faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."***

The Greek verb translated "abides" means *remains, continues and endures*. The thought in verses 8-12 is that certain things are going to cease and come to an end, and that, which is partial and incomplete, will cease. On the other hand, Paul says that three things will remain, continue and stay fast as they are, namely, *faith, hope and love*. This triad is basic and foundational for all believers (Col. 1:4-5; 1 Thes. 1 3; 5-8).

Speaking of these three things, faith, hope and love, Paul says that the greater is love. The Greek word translated "greater" is a comparative form, and it is correctly translated greater rather than greatest. This superiority of love is confirmed in Paul's epistle (Rom. 13:10; Gal. 5:22, Eph, 3:18-19; Col. 2:2; 1 Tim. 1:5).

# CESSATION

# 3

When Paul, the Apostle, declares in 1Cor 13 that tongues, prophecy and knowledge will cease, he attaches this statement to the following: *"that which is perfect is come then that which is imperfect is done away."* The question many ask is what is meant by "perfect" and what is meant by "imperfect." In terms of the context of these statements the Apostle makes reference to childhood and growing up into adulthood. The "childhood stage" is the imperfect phase of the development of knowledge, truth and revelation, for the Church. The "adulthood stage" is symbolic of perfection, in terms of full maturity. Therefore, Paul suggests that the reader understands that when he wrote to the Corinthian Church, the Body of Christ, was in the childhood stage of development and, therefore, tongues, prophecy and revelatory knowledge were necessary. Now that God has given to the Church a complete and full revelation, perfection and completion, to the Church is a reality. In other words, prophecy in the childhood stage was given in part not in fullness. Prophecy and knowledge were partially imparted to Believers, but now that the full revelation has come, through the completion of the Word of God, the Bible, prophecy as a foretelling, tongues as a sign/gift and revelatory knowledge have ceased. If this was not the case, then the revelation of God's word to the Church would still be in flux, and, therefore, the Bible incomplete.

Modern day Believers have departed from Biblical authority and have embraced a new authority based on experiential manifestations. We are reminded in 1 Timothy 2:5 that there is only one mediator between God and Man and that is the Lord

Jesus Christ. When we trust in the word of a prophet he becomes the conduit of so called blessing. This is an insult to the Word of God and will result in spiritual bankruptcy. As a former Pentecostal pastor I have seen many families and individuals wrecked and destroyed through trusting in the word of "seers." The enemy of your soul will always offer a trade off for blessing. In other words, the devil will give you what you are asking for if you will allow him to take part of your soul and destroy your confidence in truth. A false pseudo-authority is the blight of modern day Churches. The Lord will hold leaders accountable for misleading innocent and naïve believers who have a sincere desire to serve God. Do not replace Jesus as your mediator with some modern day prophet.

Do not trade with a counterfeit! Use the genuine product. In the long term it will bring you great blessing and comfort.

# CONFUSION

# 4

God is not the author of confusion. He is the God of order 1 Cor 14:33 & 40. As a teenager growing up in a Pentecostal environment I was exposed to manifestations that were supernatural and, undoubtedly, these experiences impacted the lives of people. I noticed that many Believers, in the local church, of which my parents were members, claimed to possess certain gifts that made them more powerful and influential in the Church. Some of the Believers, who were less gifted, and more dependent in temperament became entrapped and mesmerized by these, so-called, gifted or superior saints. This resulted in deception and corruption. I would require more pages and more ink to describe the horror and tragedies that plagued families enslaved by these, so-called, prophets. The circle of Christian friends who serve the Lord in our local Church became disillusioned to the point that some of them became agnostics. Today some have experienced spiritual "burn out". Their lives have been ruined and scarred. It is on the basis of my background that I am able, through God's Grace, to share with you what I sincerely believe is a blight and not a blessing in the Church today.

My experiences and supernatural manifestations gave to me a false sense of security and importance that made me believe that I was more gifted than the average Christian. At the young age of seventeen I experienced the supernatural ability to speak in foreign languages. I believed that God had given to me the gift of healing (many people I prayed for experienced a warm tingling sensation and showed signs of improvement in their health). Those that were cripple threw away their

crutches and some discarded their wheelchairs. A boy, in one of our healing rallies, claimed to have had his sight restored. Others claimed they had been cured of cancer. My ministry, as a young adult, flourished and I was invited to speak at many churches promoting this new movement of healing and blessing. The exorcising of demonic spirits became the order of the day. I believed that God was at work. As I grew in the maturity of the Word of God I began to identify inconsistencies in the movement. I was faced with a dilemma. Either my experience was of God or a deluding spirit. I had to personally rationalise my experiences in the light of revealed truth contained in the Bible. This painful odyssey revealed many great truths to me and I found comfort, in the fact, that many sincerer Pentecostals and Charismatics felt the same way. It is often difficult to evaluate truth when one is preoccupied with teachings that are spurious. One's perception creates reality within one's mind. Experiential Christianity challenges expositional authority. I had to weigh up my experiences in the light of expositional truth. I began to notice the lack of ethics and morality among the Believers who claimed super experiences. While they purported to be spirit filled, and spiritual, their lifestyles, attitudes and behaviour maligned their characters. There was something drastically wrong with people in the movement. They were "super spiritual" in one instance and "grossly immoral" in the another. Surely, their behaviour, I thought, was the result of pseudo-Christianity. Was it possible that I, who claimed to have possessed special gifts, from God, was also deceived? Were these experiences imposed on me a gift from God or were they from another dimension? If we, in the movement, were the children of light why was there so much darkness and deception? I began to read the Scriptures more thoroughly and examine the passages that most Pentecostals and Charismatics employ in their attempt to justify their experiences. We were experiencing a repeat of the Corinthian catastrophe. The believers in the

Corinthian church magnified the more showy and spectacular gifts to the extent that others in the assembly were made to feel that they were nothing and had no gift at all. Some of them were beginning to doubt that they were part of the Body of Christ. This is precisely what happened to my friends. Were we deceived? We were trading in a counterfeit? In order to gain credibility error will always ride on the back of truth. There is much that I experienced, in the movement that I will treasure for the rest of my life, but there are some manifestations that I encountered that came from the prince of darkness.

Too often believers are told that tongue speaking is unique to Christianity and that the modern day movement will usher in a time of revival and utopia. The experience of the early Believers is used as a benchmark by most Charismatics who measure their spirituality in light of the record in Acts. They fail to recognise that Acts is a transitional book and therefore not normative for following Christian generations. For example: it's not a norm that tongues of fire appear on people's heads at a prayer meeting; neither is it a norm that people, like Ananias and Sapphira, are struck down dead when not sincerely contributing to the Church collection, neither is it a norm for preachers to shave their heads to win the favour of some sect.

So what is modern day tongues? From what spirit does it come? It is most enlightening to discover that the Red Indian shamans experience the speaking in tongues to communicate with their ancestors. The Zulu witchdoctor in Africa lays claim to the same manifestation. Mormons and Christian Zionists also claim to have the gift of speaking in foreign languages. Spirit mediums, including occultists, all claim to possess this gift. Speaking in tongues are not exclusive to Christian sects. The history of the Church dating back centuries testify to the

fact that many cults and religious groups have experienced this manifestation.

In Hinduism and eastern religion, a mantra (repeating of sacred phrases) or a mandala (checkered object) including incense serve as a means of altering the consciousness of the subject. In some Christian circles a Christian mantra or repeated phrases, including the repetition of songs, helps to bring the worshipper into a new paradigm. When this altered state of consciousness occurs, the speaking in tongues or gibberish may follow. What transpires is that the conscious mind "switches off" and the "sub-conscious" mind becomes functional. This is very similar to what happens when someone talks in his or her sleep. (They do not speak with the conscious mind but with the subconscious). So there is a psychology to tongues. No one has ever been able to conclusively prove that the tongues that they speak are foreign languages. In contrast, linguists concur, that based on the recordings of "tongue speakers", the components and construction of words that normally form the basis for articulate speech are significantly absent. In plain language the subconscious language is gibberish. This does not imply that every time a person speaks in tongues that some evil spirit is at work. Neither does it imply that when they speak in tongues God's spirit is giving them the ability to do so. What it does suggest is that speaking in tongues is a phenomenon that may occur when a person ceases to use the faculty of conscious thought and the process of rational thinking is, therefore, interrupted. Subjective experiences will most likely follow.

The primary approach to Christian truth is objective not subjective.

# CHARISMA

# 5

The following viewpoint expressed by Nat Florian was published in a Christian Magazine, Life in the Son, it underscores the manipulation used by modern day "prophets" to deceive Believers today.

Hebrews 1:1-2 says that in time past God spoke to the fathers by the prophets but in these last days has spoken to us by His Son. Does this not indicate that if any prophetic message was to be given that God would do it by His Son? Since the Son dwells in each and every believer, it follows then that all believers because they contain Christ have received the prophetic word.

In my opinion most "prophecy" spoken in Charismatic circles today is not a forth telling of what God is doing or intends to do but is an exhortation which usually contains some form of "must do" law, rather than (or mixed with) who we are in Christ. The "prophet" may really express some form of exhortative gift but may also be climbing a misperceived spiritual ladder for position or control over other believers. **This, so called gift, if exercised with the latter heart motivation, might better be called "manipulophecy" spoken or ministered by a "mini-prophet."**

I don't mean to make light of such abuse or misuse of a gift or counterfeit gift used innocently by well-meaning but unlearned people. Many new and inexperienced believers are also overly influenced by the flashy use of such a gift. God's purpose in bestowing gifts must therefore be to magnify Christ in the individual not the individual himself.

In order to "walk by faith" in obedience to a prophecy (manipulophecy) believed to be of God. I have seen people write cheques that they could not afford to give, or quit their jobs and move to some other location without a new job, or start a business without sufficient knowledge and financing, or sell their belongings to enter the mission field, and countless other acts defying common sense. Little of this activity ever leads to a real fulfilling expression of Christ in the life of the believer. This goes on repeatedly in the body of Christ today (particularly in Charismatic circles) where the "gifts" are frequently exalted and exploited simply because those involved either in the giving or receiving of "manipulophecy" do not know who they really are "in Christ." If they are not honestly deceived into thinking such activity is of God, but partake in the like with full knowledge of its deceptive and devastating effect on others, then they, by their own actions, heap condemnation on themselves, for the misery and confusion that they purposely sow among unlearned believers!

When someone is given the ear of an audience, particularly a group of believers desiring to hear from or see some sign from God, that someone is in a tremendous position of power over the audience. There is a great potential for this power to be abused or misused especially when believers involved are unsure of who they are "in Christ." Most teaching and preaching of prophecy or any gift ministered today is given from the perspective of the believer being outside of Christ and in a mode of striving to get closer to Christ. The believer not knowing who he is "in Christ" and who Christ is in him does things by law in order to be of God. The believer who knows who he is "in Christ" simply is who he is in Christ, that he may then do by grace what the Holy Spirit enables him to do. Remember we are secure in Christ.

As we gain experience it becomes easier for us to predict results or consequences from observed patterns of personal activity or natural phenomena. This ability to anticipate might

be erroneously called a prophetic gift. I believe it would be more accurately termed "creative intelligence." The prophetic books of the Old Testament and the Book of Revelations were quite obviously composed from information that was beyond mortal imagination of correlative ability. This kind of prophetic activity is rarely (if ever) exercised accurately today. Any inaccuracy in prophecy during Old Testament times would result in the stoning of the "false prophet" according to Jewish law. I imagine, Jeanne Dixon and other prognosticators would have been stoned for being 100% inaccurate in their foretelling. When a "prophet" errs in today's safer environment we can, if we are aware of who we are in Christ, discern between prophecy and manipulophecy without fear or condemnation from the mini-prophet for "despising his prophecy." We recognise in every believer, with whom we fellowship, a vessel containing a unique expression of the greatest prophet "Christ." As Scripture says, the spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet which does not mean an elite group of people, but includes everyone who is aware that Christ lives in him. So we do not have to allow ourselves to be "manipulophesised." Prophetic words are often spoken to or over Believers when Christian's fellowship together. We have the liberty in Christ to accept, to shelve, or to reject the words without condemnation.

It is my personal wish, hope, and prayer, that all manipulophecy would cease, giving way to a greater emphasis on the Scripturally weighted truth of the "in Christ" position that every believer has. Lack of understanding this truth is probably the largest if not the only reason for the disunity that exists in the universal body of believers. I recognise, however, that God is able to permit these unfortunate abuses of gifts to bring believers to a greater understanding of truth. Those who never do realise their position in Christ, but act out of misguided motivation to gain more favour with God, blindly continue on in frustration, striving, under law, for what is

already theirs by grace. By grace we are saved (Ephesians 2:8).

# COMMUNION

# 6

**B**reakdown the word "communion" and you will be left with two words "common union." The Christian community is a communion of Believers who are united in a common purpose to be a witness for Christ in the world.

The gifts given by the Holy Spirit to Believers are meant to build up or edify the Church. The gifts are not given so that individuals will feel important or to feed their egos. The express purpose is to build up, to edify the Church. The word "edify" is used in relation to edifice. The word edifice means a building, in other words, the gifts are given to the Church to build up the community so that it may aspire to Christ's character.

## THE DISTRIBUTION OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The Lord Jesus Christ is in heaven; He is no longer on this earth in bodily form. Therefore, if He wants a particular task done for Him here on the earth. He needs someone to do it. If He wants His gospel told, He must find people to tell it. If He wants others taught, He must find a teacher to teach them. Christians are the Body of Christ, the voice for Him, the hands to work for Him, the feet to carry His message and run His errands.

He has no hands but our hands  
To do his work today;  
He has no feet but our feet  
To lead men in His way;  
He has no voice but our voice  
To tell men why He died;  
He has no help but our help  
To lead men to His side.

In order to accomplish His work on earth, the ascended Lord gave gifts to men. It is part of the Holy Spirit's function to distribute these gifts. Again I remind you that it was on this subject that the Corinthian believers were ignorant (12:1;14:38). The confusion and disorder in the life of that assembly were the result of their misunderstanding of the gifts and the purpose of their distribution. Also, the gifts dispensed by the Holy Spirit were not to be confused with the natural talents and abilities that some had when they were born. Some children have a much higher intelligence quotient than others. Paul is not speaking about those creative talents; he is speaking about gifts supernaturally bestowed upon a person when that person is regenerated.

The Word of God spells out what these gifts are" He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for [unto] the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11, 12).

Paul includes another list in his Epistle to the Romans:

"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy, according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness" (12:6-8).

Look now at the list Paul gives in 1 Corinthians: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues" (12:8-10). "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (1 Cor. 12:28).

The important lesson we must learn is that all gifts are sovereignly dispensed by the Holy Spirit.

## THE DISCOVERY OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Not all the gifts are necessarily given to every succeeding generation. By this I mean that some of the gifts were never intended to be exercised, permanently, throughout the church age. There were, then, temporary gifts such as the apostle and prophet, the gifts of healing, working of miracles, discerning of spirits, and speaking in tongues.

The gift of apostle and the gift of prophet, as these gifts relate to their respective offices, were temporary. The church was "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Eph. 2:20). We do not need the office of an apostle or a prophet today, because we have the Scriptures. When missionaries and preachers carry God's Word to people to whom that Word has not come, they are doing the work of the apostle and the prophet; however, the offices *per se* were temporary. They are not being given today.

The gifts of healing, working of miracles, discerning of spirits, and speaking in tongues seem also to have been temporary gifts. It is true that the power to work miracles was given to the disciples (Matt. 10:1-8), and they did minister that power. However, there were times when they were not able to use the gift (Matt. 17:18, 19). Later, when our Lord sent out the Seventy, it was necessary that He give them the gift to perform miracles (Luke 10:1-9). After our Lord's resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit, the gift of tongues was added. These were *sign* gifts involving a miraculous demonstration of supernatural power. They were given temporarily to authenticate both the message and the messenger of God before the writing of the Scriptures was completed. God continues to perform miracles today; however He is not bestowing those sign gifts to men.

There are three gifts that every Christian can have and use:

*Ministering* (which means helping or serving), *giving*, and *showing mercy* (Rom. 12:7, 8; 1 Cor. 12:28). There is no reason

why every child of God cannot show his ability to help other people in need. Sharing our time and money, ministering kindness and mercy to those who are sick and less fortunate than ourselves, gives some indication of the extent of one's spirituality in God's sight.

The big question we all need answered is, "How can I discover my gift?" Remember the gift and the ability to use that gift efficiently must come from the Holy Spirit. A person might have the desire to be an evangelist or a pastor or a teacher; but he should not decide to exercise any gift if he has not received it from the Holy Spirit. Every Christian has some gift. I am not suggesting that all Christians are exercising the gift or gifts that the Holy Spirit has given to them; but each of us has at least one gift, for "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (1 Cor. 12:7).

The following suggestions as to how a person might discover his or her gift have been helpful to me. I pass them along with the prayer that you will benefit from them.

**First**, there is the matter of *information*. Acquaint yourself with the gifts. Know what they are. Read again and again the three passages where the gifts are mentioned. Know which gifts were temporary and which are permanent. By being properly informed, you may discover that you have a gift of which you have been unaware. Then, too, you may discover that you have been using your gift while not aware of it.

We must all appear before the Judgement Seat of Christ to give an account of what we have done, or left undone (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10). Rewards will be given to us, or else withheld from us, for several reasons — including how faithfully we have exercised our gifts. Be informed! Know what the gifts are and which gift or gifts you have.

**Second**, there is the matter of *inclination*. What are your inclinations? What do you enjoy doing? What can you do well? This suggestion might raise a problem in the mind of some of you. Someone might ask, "How do you reconcile your suggestion with the teaching of Paul that the Holy Spirit sovereignly bestows the gifts upon whomever He chooses?" I am not saying

that a person's inclinations are always a sure and safe guide to follow. It is possible that one's inclinations, desires, and aptitudes could be totally different from the gift the Holy Spirit has given. My desire for a certain gift along with my inclination toward the exercise of that gift will not guarantee it. In the final settlement of the matter, the assignment of the gift belongs to the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11; Heb. 2:4). We must leave the choice with Him. Our inclinations, however strong they might be, must never override the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit.

I am suggesting that God, being a God of order, might relate our desires and inclinations to the gift He has given us.

One's desires and inclinations just might indicate possession of a gift or gifts — not necessarily so, but possibly. Do you have the ability to teach, and do you enjoy teaching? Do you have a fine singing voice, and do you enjoy singing? Do you enjoy being a wife and becoming a mother, and are you successful in that dual role? Do you enjoy being merciful and helpful toward others, and do you find it easy to offer your services? I suggest that you consider your inclinations.

**Third**, there is the matter of *investigation*. We must explore and inquire. Naturally we commence with prayer:

Inquire first of God. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5). This is one of God's promises, and like all His promises, we can depend on it because we can depend upon Him. After all, we have only one go-around in this life, and it is a tragedy indeed when a Christian crosses the stage of human experience having failed to discover and develop the gift God gave to him. Inasmuch as everyone is given a gift, each of us must investigate as to what it is. "Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matt. 7:7).

In pursuing the investigation, we should submit our minds to the counsel of older, more experienced, and discerning Christians. Others may detect our gift long before we ourselves are made aware of it. When I was seventeen years old,

my pastor recognised my gift; at that time, I did not know there was such a thing as a spiritual gift. The pastor continued to encourage me in several ways.

He arranged for me to preach, and I have kept busy at it for thirty-five years. He was a real Barnabas, a "Son of Encouragement" (Acts 4:36 NIV). Barnabas recognised Mark's gift and never gave up on him (Acts 15:36-39). God has given this gift of encouragement to guide younger men.

But each of us must be prepared to face the possibility that others might recognise that we don't possess a gift we think we have. A proverb says, "Who so boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain" (Prov. 25:14). I once knew a young woman who thought she had the gift of singing, but I didn't know one person who had the gift of listening to her.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The gift has been sovereignly bestowed by the Holy Spirit. Now we must use it to the fullest for God's glory. Whatever our gift or gifts, there are certain responsibilities on the part of the Christian if the gifts are to be used effectively and efficiently.

**First**, there is the *presentation*. Some might prefer to call it *dedication*. The apostle Paul wrote, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1). Both the gift and the recipient of the gift must be yielded to the Lord: this is a necessary guideline for the development of the gifts. You will observe that immediately after Paul appeals to us to present our bodies, he takes up the subject of gifts (vv. 3-8). After we have presented and dedicated our bodies, we are to dedicate the gifts. This idea of commitment is not to be treated lightly. Remember that your gift is a sacred trust given by God when you were born again. It is not something to brag about or to show off. Paul asks, "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now

if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:7). The discovery of one's gift does not mark a person as someone special or uniquely spiritual. We will never use our gifts as God wants us to do without the control of the Holy Spirit. Yield yourself and your gift to God.

**Second**, there is the matter of *practice*. Discovering a gift should lead to its dedication, then to its development. In plain words, get going, work at it. The existence of a gift demands that it be exercised. Timothy was admonished concerning his gift; Paul said to him, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" (1 Tim. 4:14). Don't be careless about the gift God has given to you. Don't allow it to be dormant, but use it. What we don't use we lose. Work at your gift by giving yourself wholly to it. Diligent utilisation of a gift produces increased effectiveness; failure to use it might render it useless. Paul told Timothy later, "Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee" (2 Tim. 1:6). Fan it into a flame! Possession of a gift demands its practice.

**Third**, there is the matter of *purpose*. In the exercise of his gift, each Christian must examine his motives. None of us has the right to use for selfish ends the gifts God has given to us. The apostle Peter wrote, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10). The exercise of our gifts should be in complete forgetfulness of self. We are "stewards" (caretakers, custodians) of the gifts, and "it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2). Remember that the gifts are given for the common good of the whole body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:7). Since this is the purpose for the gifts' being given, we must therefore judge our motives in our exercise of them. Our gifts are of no merit whatsoever if we fail to use them for the purpose God intended.

# CHRISTLIKENESS

# 7

## THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT REVEALED CHRIST IN US

The Book of Galatians introduces us to the nine fruits of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23).

**Love.** In Greek there are a number of different words for love: (1) *Eros* means the love that is sensual. It can be the love of a man for a woman and vice versa; this is a romantic love. When used by homosexuals, God calls it "vile affections" (Rom. 1:26).

(2) *Phileo* is the love that we show toward our fellow men; a philanthropist is a person who loves and helps mankind;

(3) *Storge* is that wholesome affection that parents have for their children; it is the word for family love;

(4) *Agape* is the particular word for love which Paul used in Galatians 5:22; it means divine love, the very nature of God. "God is love" (1 John 4:8, 16).

It is that seed of divine love which is sown in the heart of the believer the moment he becomes God's child. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Rom. 5:5). *Agape* is a word peculiar to Christianity.

This first-mentioned fruit of the Spirit is an all-embracing love. In this it differs radically from ordinary human love: we humans do not love people we don't like. But God loves every human (John 3:16) simply because He is "the God of love" (2 Cor. 13:11). He proved His love completely and fully, for it was while we were still sinners that Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8). The whole process of salvation originated in the unmerited love of God. This love is so strong that nothing in time or in eternity can separate a child of God from it (Rom. 8:35-39). Paul referred to it as "His [God's] great love" (Eph. 2:4), "which passeth knowledge" (Eph. 3:19), meaning that it is something

which cannot be fully explained, only experienced and expressed.

The love Paul speaks of; this fruit of the Spirit will always seek the highest good of others. It is unselfish, never self-seeking. Humanly speaking it is impossible; it is not a human achievement. It springs to life in us only as we are controlled by the Holy Spirit. And when He is in control of our lives, we will "increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men"

**Joy.** Christian joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit independent of circumstances. It is a distinguishing characteristic of the Christian life. Someone has said that the word *rejoice* is the standing-order of the Christian: whatever else the early Christians were told to do, the exhortation to rejoice headed the list. "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord" (Phil. 3:1). "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say. Rejoice" (4:4). "Rejoice evermore" (1 Thess. 5:16). A joyless life is not the true Christian life. Neither outward circumstances nor people can affect this fruit of the Spirit.

When I examine the many references to joy in the New Testament, I am deeply impressed with the various spheres of Christian experience with which joy is associated.

**Peace.** There are few things for which men have longed for as much as peace. Peace is one of the truly great words in the Bible. The Greek word is *eirene*, and it conveys the idea of right relationships.

Peace describes the right relationship between God and man. However, peace always originates with God. The Bible calls it "the peace of God" (Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:15), because He is "the God of peace," a title mentioned no fewer than six times (Rom. 15:33; 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:20). It is not possible for us humans to achieve this peace; it is something we must accept. God makes it available to us through His Son. Though it is one of God's richest gifts offered freely to all, many do not possess it. This right relationship between God and man, Christ established through His death, "having made peace through the blood of his cross" (Col. 1:20).

**Longsuffering.** This is an interesting word, expressing the idea of patience, spiritual endurance. It is an ingredient missing from the daily experience of too many Christians. Because of the weakness of the flesh, we are short-tempered and too frequently driven to despair. We become irritated too easily. This weakness shows up in our attitude toward both people and events. Some of us can retaliate a wrong hastily and at times with bitterness. William Barclay said, "If God had been a man He would have taken His hand and wiped out this world long ago; but God has that patience which bears with all our sinning and which will not cast us off." This living, forbearing fruit can be produced in the lives of Christians.

Longsuffering describes the nature and character of God. Moses heard God's description of Himself in these words:

"The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering..." (Exod. 34:6). Nehemiah described Him as "God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger . . ." (9:17). The Psalms echo this amazing characteristic of God: "But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth" (86:15). "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy" (103:8). "The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy" (145:8). This is a great truth about God that we need to learn.

**Gentleness.** This beautiful word suggests the ideas of kindness and sweetness, possibly with the stronger emphasis on kindness. In the psalmist's description of God, he used this term frequently: "O give thanks unto the LORD: for he is good [literally *kind*]; for his mercy endureth forever" (Pss. 106:1; 107:1; 136:1). The word *good* here does not mean moral goodness, but kindness. The sheer kindness of God has gripped the heart of the psalmist. The gentleness of God is not a moral attribute; it is His kindness, that kindness which bestows His gifts upon us and draws us to Him. God's kindness is seen in all His dealings with men, whether they be saints or sinners. The psalmist appeals to men to "taste and see that the LORD is good

[meaning gentle, kind]" (Ps. 34:8). " He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" (Luke 6:35).

We may expect, therefore, that we Christians, being indwelt by the Holy Spirit, will be displaying the fruit of gentleness and kindness. We know the value of a coin by the imprint on it; and we know that a person is a Spirit-filled child of God when we see the stamp of gentleness. This fruit of the Spirit identifies a person as belonging to God and controlled by God. One of the tragedies of life is that too few of us display this gentleness in the daily routine. Yet it is one of the garments of the well-dressed Christian. " Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering" (Col. 3:12). The word *kindness* is the Greek word *chrestotes*, translated *gentleness* in Galatians 5:22.

Beloved Christian, when we are filled with the Spirit, the fruit of gentleness cannot be hidden. This lovely fruit banishes all bitterness, roughness, and harshness. It is a kindly thing which treats others as God has treated us." Be ye kind one to another, . . . even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32).

**Goodness.** The Greek word Paul used is *agathosune*, a term not easy to define. One of the difficulties is in the wide and varied use of the corresponding adjective *agathos*. It has been pointed out that in the New Testament, this word is used to describe a gift (Matt. 7:11); a tree (Matt. 7:17, 18); a man (Matt. 12:35); a slave (Matt. 25:21); fertile ground (Luke 8:8); a man's conscience (Acts 23:1); the will of God (Rom. 12:2); the Christian's hope (2 Thess. 2:16); the Christian's works (Eph. 2:10). At once we can see that goodness can and does describe what is excellent in any sphere of life. It is a general term.

The goodness which is the fruit of the Spirit we do not come by naturally. It is not consistent with our fallen, sinful nature. Paul confessed, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing . . ." (Rom. 7:18). "There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3:12). We must remember this when thinking about ourselves. It becomes an easy matter for

us to pride ourselves in our own goodness, when in reality this fruit of the Spirit is the ingredient missing from our lives.

**Faith.** The seventh of the graces in the fruit of the Spirit is misleading in the King James Version. Careful consideration of the original text shows that a better translation would be *faithfulness*. It is the quality of reliability, dependability, trustworthiness, and fidelity. A person on whom we can utterly rely and whose word we can utterly trust we call faithful. Faithfulness defines more clearly what Paul wrote when he said, "The fruit of the Spirit is faith." Faithfulness is one of the essential attributes of God. Again and again we find this word in Scripture used to describe God. He is said to be faithful to His covenants (Deut. 7:9); He is faithful to His calling (1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Thess. 5:24); faithful in caring for His children when they are tried (1 Cor. 10:13); faithful to His creation (1 Peter 4:19); faithful in cleansing us when we confess our sins to Him (1 John 1:9). God's faithfulness remains constant despite the fickleness and faithlessness of men. *Faithful* is the adjective, which characteristically describes God (Heb. 10:23; 11:11). Through many books of the Bible one finds the ever-recurring assuring word, "You can always count on God."

**Meekness.** This is a much-misunderstood word. Today the very sound of this word *meekness* suggests anaemic spinelessness, a kind of weakness. With most people it is not a quality to be admired. Our Lord said of Himself, "I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matt. 11:29), yet He was not weak. When He overthrew the tables of the moneychangers and chased them from the temple. He displayed His power and authority, but it was power and authority under control. All Christ's words and actions were under divine control at all times. There never was a display of hot-headed temper.

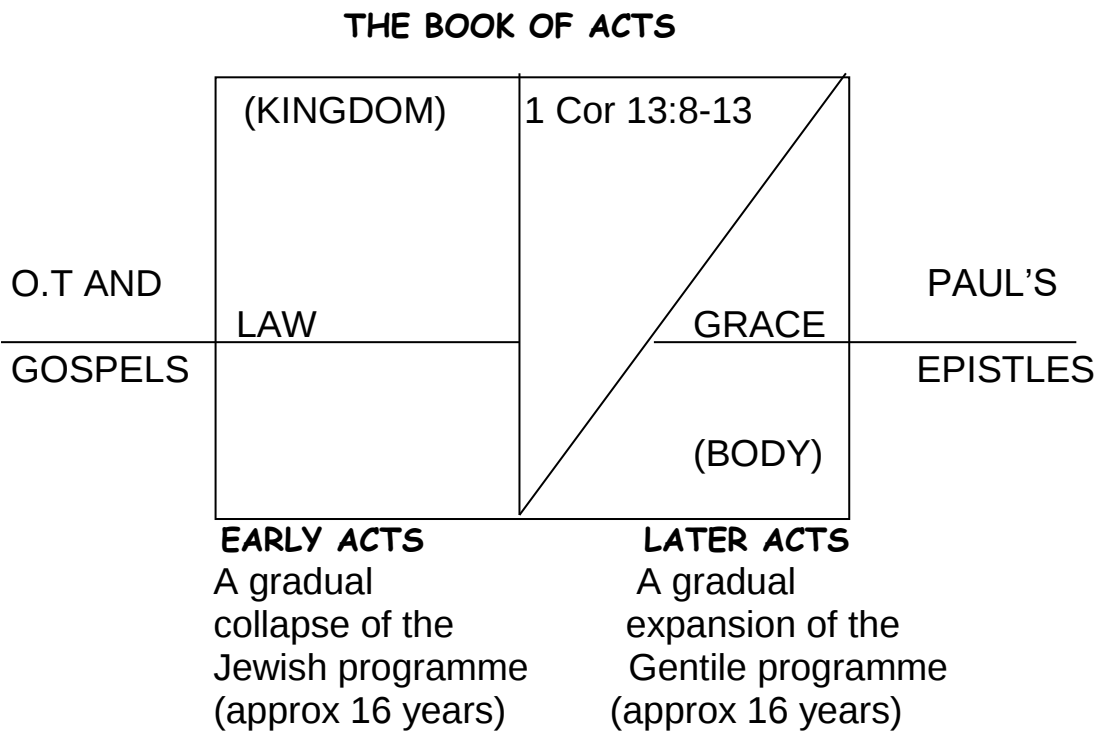
Meekness is an extraordinarily beautiful and powerful Christian grace. It is like a soothing ointment that calms wherever it is applied. The meek Christian is a person who has learned to accept discipline and is therefore under the control of the Holy Spirit. He is trained in the fine art of obeying the

commands of God's Word. He is strong, but his strength is combined to gentleness.

**Temperance.** This ninth and last-mentioned grace in the fruit of the Spirit can be translated *self-control*. It means to take hold of, to grip, to have under control, suggesting self-restraint, self-denial, self-discipline. In the moral and ethical sphere, it describes the person who takes hold on himself, who has a grip on himself, is in full control of himself, so that he can restrain himself in all areas of life.

## DISPENSATIONAL APPROACH

Perhaps the most crucial portion of Scripture connected to the dispensational approach is a study on the Book of Acts. As previously stated the Book of Acts is a transitional book from the Promise of the Kingdom and its postponement to the conversion of Paul and the establishment of the Body of Christ, the Church. It is important to understand that in the Book of Acts we have the focus of the Apostles on Israel and the Coming Kingdom with the spotlight turning from Israel onto the Church, the Body of Christ, the Mystery revealed to Paul.



# DISPENSATIONS – EPHESIANS 3:2-3

PROGRAMME CHARACTER JUDGEMENT SYMBOL TEXT

INNOCENCE

ADAM CAST OUT  
OF EDEN  
23 & 24



Gen. 3

CONSCIENCE

NOAH FLOOD



Gen. 7  
17 – 23

HUMAN - GOV

NIMROD BABEL



Gen. 11  
1 – 9

PROMISE

ABRAHAM SLAVERY



Gen. 12  
1 – 3

LAW

MOSES CALVARY



Col. 2  
14 – 15

GRACE

PAUL RAPTURE



1 Thes.  
13 – 18

KINGDOM

ISRAEL MAGOG



Rev. 20  
7 – 10

LAW

KINGDOM

GRACE

KINGDOM

# CONCLUSION

The secret to successful Christian living is being filled (controlled) by Holy Spirit. Unless the Spirit of God energises us we can never walk in humility, unity, love and wisdom. I want to encourage you to examine the following verses of Scripture and apply them to your life:

The Holy Spirit has sealed you. The moment re-generation occurred (Ephesians 1:13)

All Believers have the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

All Believers have gifts to be used to edify the Church (Ephesians 4:12)

The Lord wants us to be stable Believers who are not tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4:14).

We should study the Word of God Rightly Divided (2 Timothy 2:15).

All Believers have been baptised by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13)

Remember to test the spirits (1 John 4:1).

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We thank the following authors for their contribution to this subject:

Meaningful Bible Study by Timothy F. Conklin  
Be Filled with the Spirit by Lehman Strauss  
Commentary on Corinthians by Ernest R. Campbell  
Life in the Sun Magazine - Nat Florian  
Articles and sermons - Dr Bruce Woolard  
Bible Studies by John MacArthur Jnr

For more information, contact: email: [gracelin@intekom.co.za](mailto:gracelin@intekom.co.za)



This book will help you to understand the dangers facing modern day Christians. It is written in practical terms and gives the reader insight into Scriptures that have been misrepresented for decades.

The author is a former Charismatic Pastor who recognised the dangers in the experiential movement that currently is sweeping the world. This book tenaciously and uncompromisingly challenges manifestations falsely attributed to the Holy Spirit.

**Bruce Woolard** (D.Th. B.min. M.Th. Ph. D) holds a Ph. D in Sociology and a Masters Degree in Theology. He is founder Pastor of St Mark's Congregational Church in Port Elizabeth, Republic South Africa and Senior Minister of St Mark's and St David's. Bruce is a Commissioner of Oaths and a registered Specialists Counsellor with the Counsel of Counsellors in South Africa. He is the author of many Christian books including:

Pawns on the Global Chess Board, The Rise and Fall of Islam, The ABC of the Bible, called to be the Lord's Ambassadors, Wipe away the Tears, When Two Equals One, etc.

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email: [gracelin@intekom.co.za](mailto:gracelin@intekom.co.za)