

PENTECOSTALISM

Not all Christians think God gives you supernatural gifts. Some think such gifts were only for the early Church and have passed away. Pentecostals claim to be still able to exercise the gifts. St Paul wrote, "But if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away". The Pentecostals say the only means there will be no use for these gifts in Heaven. Others think he is telling us why there are no such gifts now and that those who say they have them are deluded. Knowledge in fact seems to refer to religious knowledge. Simple as that. It will be done away which to me suggests Christianity is being prophesied to fall into apostasy. Religious knowledge cannot pass away in Heaven for it would be confirmed there.

The most prolific charismatic "miracle" is speaking in tongues. Because it is so easy to lose your mind and babble it is no wonder. The other gifts are too much work. "The true gift of tongues was the ability to speak in a known foreign language. Nothing in the New Testament suggests that the gift of languages was ecstatic speech. And God would not give a gift that is the same as the one used by Satan to hold people in the grip of false religions" (Charismatic Chaos by John F. MacArthur, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan.) There is no Bible authority for babbling nonsense.

A Charismatic is a person who has the Holy Spirit who gives him or her special gifts. A Charismatic is anyone who is open to the Spirit. All Christians are Charismatic. There are two kinds of Charismatic activity. The first type comprises natural happenings which are considered to be the works of God. An example will be the nice feeling that may follow prayer or finding the right tablets for your bad tummy. The second type looks supernatural or is meant to be shown off as supernatural with its speaking in tongues and other forms of what many see as madness. But we are only interested in the latter type.

The gifts of tongues the latter kind of Charismatic harps on about being able to do is speaking in tongues, interpreting tongues, letting the Spirit speak through her or him, casting out demons and so on.

Charismatic activity appears both in the Old and New Testaments. Some say that as the apostle Paul spends most of three long chapters in his first letter to the Corinthians he was trying to regulate the use of charismatic gifts in the Church there was no way he expected the gifts to ever pass away. Read 1 Corinthians 12 to 14. He tells the people to desire the best of the gifts and prefer prophecy to speaking in tongues.

A lot of Pentecostals believe God is not three people but one person. The Church says that such a doctrine is spiritually dangerous for it denies that God is love for it is presumed God has to be a loving community, interpreted as the Holy Trinity, in order to make sense of the doctrine that God is love. Also if God had nobody to love and had to create us to have others to love he would not be a God. God by definition is that which is perfect and independent. If the charismatic gifts are misleading people by leading them to a unitarian "God" then how reliable are they? Are they gifts or delusions?

Most religions are into charisms. Witches practice a ceremony called Drawing Down the Moon in which a priestess becomes a channel for the Goddess to speak through.

Many Catholic saints allegedly exercised dramatic charisms including clairvoyance.

Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, led his Church into Pentecostal fanaticism such as speaking in tongues and visions. He claimed that visions of Elijah and Elias openly took place in his temple to his congregation during a Pentecostal series of miracles intended to promote Mormonism as the true faith. That should warn us that Pentecostalism does nothing to ensure that the doctrine is right for Mormonism is undoubtedly a hoax and is so far from Christianity that the Roman Catholic Church does not recognise Mormon baptism as valid. The powers if anything increase the possibility of being led astray or deluded.

The fanatical Anglican priest, Henry James Prince, practiced Pentecostalism in the 1840s before he decided that he was the embodiment of the Holy Spirit.

Aimee Semple McPherson was into speaking in tongues and charismatic healing. She built the Angelus Temple in Los Angeles where she pulled in the crowds with her feverish preaching until they grew disillusioned with her after her facelift and sexual peccadilloes. She died possibly by suicide in 1944 and was buried with a telephone in case she would miraculously return to life!

John XXIII prayed for a new Pentecost and some years later the Catholic Pentecostal craze dazzled the Roman Church and

became an important attractant for new converts.

The latest charismatic craze is the new charism which began in Toronto and which is still sweeping through the Christian world. It makes the receiver howl with laughter and even act like an animal. It is totally unbiblical and untraditional so if a Christian accepts the orthodox doctrine that the gospel cannot be added to she has to oppose it. Slaying in the spirit which makes the receiver fall back in a trance has the same faults.

Charismatic Christianity is full of excitement and fun. It gives people the chance to socialise. Those with alleged gifts enjoy feeling special and are overflowing with confidence in the Spirit. It attracts people to the Church and binds them to it. The Churches support the movement just to get power. They have claimed to have examined the Charismatic Movement to see if it has God's approval. If this is true then they know it is just hocus-pocus. The Devil is the indirect ruler of the Charismatics if he exists!

The Charismatic movement thrives on ignorance and emotive manipulation so it is dangerous. There are plenty of stories of Charismatics going off the rails completely. Many are self-styled exorcists and dabble in exorcism which makes them a danger to the mentally disturbed. It also scares the others into blind submission to the leader of the group and the religion. The Charismatic doctrine that they can see into the consciences of others is appalling. It makes people feel ashamed and uncomfortable and could develop the mental disorder of going over-scrupulous in them.

The Charismatic cannot believe that the Charismatic movement's prophets are capable of error. Why? Holding that God speaks through fallible prophets is not being true to the Bible or to the doctrine of the wisdom of God. So to save face about their unbelief in scripture they have to pretend their prophets do not err. The Charismatics have to act as if the messages of the prophets dropped down out of heaven on gold plates. A proper charismatic group has to be authoritarian. It needs to be a cult to be genuine about the gifts.

People who claim to have supernatural charisms are as prone to error as people who don't. Charisms do not give a person monopoly on the truth. And what about the fact that fake charismatics go about unnoticed? Consider the differences - many of them major - between Charismatics and Pentecostals. One camp says the Catholic Church is needed for salvation and others say it is not. That is a major thing. If charisms do not confer infallibility or anything nearer to it, then how can apparitions? What use are they if they are not lamps for the truth? Those who chase apparitions only want to be part of something magical. It is not about goodness or truth. People worry about the bad fruits that follow false apparitions but they forget that merely saying you have had an apparition is a bad fruit. It encourages the thrill seekers. Bigotry starts with opposition to truth - even mild opposition can do this.

Charismatics and Pentecostals are deluding themselves are are playing ouija board but with their brains and hearts and certainly not with their logic!

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